

INSPECTION REPORT

**MORCHARD BISHOP VA CHURCH OF ENGLAND
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Morchard Bishop, Crediton

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113457

Headteacher: Mrs Ann Palmer

Lead inspector: Dennis Maxwell

Dates of inspection: 23–25 February 2004

Inspection number: 256957

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Type of school: | Primary |
| School category: | Voluntary Aided |
| Age range of pupils: | 5–11 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| Number on roll: | 123 |
| School address: | Church Street Morchard Bishop CREDITON Devon |
| Postcode: | EX17 6JP |
| Telephone number: | 01363 877 328 |
| Fax number: | 01363 877328 |
| Appropriate authority: | Governing Body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Rev Brian Shillingford |
| Date of previous inspection: | 01 June 1998 |

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Morchard Bishop is a Voluntary Aided Church of England primary school with 115 children from Reception to Year 6. Very small numbers of children are from ethnic minority backgrounds. The school's aims express the view that Christian principles lie at the heart of how it works. The school seeks to extend children's understanding of today's multi-cultural society through embodying its aims in its life. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is average, and the level of mobility amongst the pupils is also average. The socio-economic circumstances of the families with children at the school are broadly average. The school gained a School Achievement Award in 2003 and makes some provision for Community use. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs is average. The percentage of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need and identified for moderate learning and social, emotional and behavioural difficulties is also average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|----------------|----------------|---|
| 8798 | Dennis Maxwell | Lead inspector | Science Information and communication technology (ICT) Foundation Stage Art and design Personal, social and health education Physical education Special educational needs |
| 9712 | Jan Barber | Lay inspector | |
| 27240 | Tony Hooper | Team inspector | English Mathematics Design and technology Geography History Music English as an additional language |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a good quality of education for the pupils. All members of staff give children a high level of care and consideration. The school has a very good ethos that includes all pupils very well, so that they learn confidently. The headteacher gives very good leadership, supported well by all members of staff, so that pupils achieve well. Children take a good interest in their activities and their behaviour is good. Standards are above average by the end of Year 6 because teaching and provision are good. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards by Year 6 are above average, notably in mathematics and science.
- Pupils demonstrate good attitudes and behaviour, although a few are challenging.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good and has a positive impact on achievement.
- The school provides a curriculum with many rich experiences; the management of the curriculum for Reception children requires a review.
- The subject leaders give good support but need to develop their monitoring skills further.
- Pupils are not always helped sufficiently in the marking of their work or by teachers setting suitable targets which indicate how they may improve.

The school has made good improvements in its effectiveness since the last inspection under the strong leadership of the headteacher, supported by the governors and all staff. It has tackled the weaknesses identified then thoroughly so that there is now better provision in information and communication technology (ICT) and the procedures for assessment are more robust and useful. A good marking policy has been devised, although it is not always applied consistently. Standards at Year 6 have improved faster than the nationally improving trend because teaching is good. At Year 2 standards in writing have declined and are a focus for school improvement. The school has embarked on a focused year for physical education this year and is providing a very good range of activities that enhances pupils' skills. This follows the successful Arts year.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

| Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with: | all schools | | | similar schools |
|---|-------------|------|------|-----------------|
| | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2003 |
| English | B | B | C | C |
| Mathematics | A | C | A | A |
| Science | A | D | A | A |

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Achievement through the school is good overall. Children enter the school at Reception with broadly average attainment and, for many, their communication and language skills are less developed. They achieve satisfactorily and most children are on course to reach the expected goals by the end of Reception because good teaching prepares and reinforces their skills well. In Years 1 - 2 achievement is satisfactory as teachers continue to consolidate pupils' learning. They attain broadly average standards, including in reading, writing and mathematics, by the end of Year 2. The good foundation that pupils receive in the earlier years bears fruit in Years 3 - 6 because here pupils achieve well. Standards are above average by the end of Year 6, showing good improvement since the last inspection, notably in mathematics and science, because teaching and provision are good. This mirrors the results of national tests in 2003.

Pupils' personal qualities and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good. Pupils' relationships with others are very good, as is their interest in school activities, all of which enhance their achievement. The strong sense of community is illustrated by the real care that older pupils show for younger ones. Pupils have good attitudes towards their learning. Behaviour is good, although a few pupils have challenging behaviour at times, which is usually, but not always, managed well through good strategies. The levels of attendance and punctuality are good, since pupils are keen to come to school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education, maintaining the position at the time of the last inspection. **The quality of teaching is good throughout the school.** In Reception, children have many rich experiences so that they learn confidently. In Years 1 - 2, lively teaching challenges pupils to think, so that they learn confidently and apply their skills. In Years 3 - 6 teaching is also good, consolidating earlier learning successfully. The quality of teaching in Year 6 is a particular strength, with high expectations so that pupils achieve well through relevant and challenging tasks. School assessment procedures are good, although teachers' marking is not always sufficiently clear about how pupils may improve. Pupils are given long-term targets to aim for in English and mathematics but clear short-term targets are seldom given to help raise standards.

The school provides a good quality curriculum overall, although opportunities for Reception children to exercise choice tend to be limited by the present organisation of the curriculum in the mixed age class. The level of care and welfare is very good. Links with parents and the community are good, while the partnership with other schools is very good and promotes pupils' learning well.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The school conveys a very good ethos of consideration where all children are included very well. Through the very good and energetic leadership of the headteacher the school has made several good recent improvements. For example, teachers recognise the value of assessments which allow them to identify children not making enough progress so that a short remedial programme is provided. This promotes good achievement. The subject leaders provide satisfactory leadership overall but do not have many formal opportunities to exert their influence. School governance is good. Governors provide good strategic direction and ensure that the school complies with statutory requirements. They give good attention to the principles of obtaining best value in their financial decisions. Some of the issues for development are within the school's improvement plan and there are good evaluation procedures.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents welcome the open nature of the school and the strong sense of community. Most feel comfortable about discussing a problem. Children come eagerly to school and feel it is a safe and stimulating place to learn.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Establish clear and manageable procedures for setting short-term targets for all pupils.
- Continue to develop good marking practices so that the approach is consistent and helps pupils to improve.
- Review the management of the Foundation Stage curriculum to provide more opportunities for choice by the children.
- Extend the role and skills of subject leaders, including monitoring, and share current good practice.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is good and standards are above average. Achievement in Reception and Years 1 - 2 is satisfactory but in Years 3 - 6 achievement is good because good earlier learning is consolidated by effective teaching. Attainment by the end of Reception Year is average. Standards by the end of Year 2 are average and by the end of Year 6 are above average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The Reception and Year 1 and 2 classes lay a good foundation for pupils to achieve well in the junior years through the impact of good teaching.
- Standards are above average by the end of Year 6, notably in mathematics and science.
- The trend in standards in the national tests at Year 6 is above the national trend.
- Standards in music and physical education exceed the expectation by the end of Year 6.

Commentary

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| reading | 15.1 (13.3) | 15.7 (15.8) |
| writing | 13.3 (13.1) | 14.6 (14.4) |
| mathematics | 16.1 (16.2) | 16.3 (16.5) |

There were 19 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English | 27.0 (27.9) | 26.8 (27.0) |
| mathematics | 28.5 (27.0) | 26.8 (26.7) |
| science | 30.0 (27.9) | 28.6 (28.3) |

There were 16 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. The performance of the 2003 Year 2 pupil cohort in the national tests was below average in reading and mathematics and well below average in writing. These pupils' weak writing skills were picked up by the school through their good tracking systems and are a focus for whole school improvement. The well below average standards in writing relate to the high proportion of boys with learning difficulties in the year group, so that the boys' performance was two terms behind the national standard. In contrast, the girls' performance in writing was a little above the performance of girls nationally. There is a similar, but less marked, contrasting performance in reading and mathematics, where the boys' performance is closer to that of boys nationally and the performance of girls is further ahead of that of girls nationally. Standards in the work seen in Year 3 match pupils' below average performance when they were in Year 2, whereas the current Year 2 demonstrates improving standards. The trend in performance in the national tests at Year 2 is below the national trend over the past four years because results in writing have fallen. The percentage of higher-attaining pupils exceeding the expectation in reading and mathematics was broadly average, indicating that good teaching

and provision enable the pupils to achieve appropriately. The results should be treated with some caution because each pupil represents five per cent.

2. Pupils' performance at Year 6 in the national tests of 2003 was average in English and well above average in mathematics and science. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' performance in mathematics and science was well above average, showing that pupils achieved well. The trend in results over the past four years is above the national trend, indicating the strong impact of good teaching and provision. The proportion of pupils exceeding the expectation was higher than the national averages for each of English, mathematics and science. The school's value added score is well above the national and similar school comparisons. The headteacher's very good leadership is a significant factor in the steadily improving standards. She has established good assessment systems, using these to track pupils' progress closely, to set challenging targets and to put short-term programmes in place to meet the specific needs of a few pupils, including those with learning difficulties. In this way, the school has very good inclusive practices. The school did not meet its targets for English and mathematics in 2003 and is likely to meet the very challenging targets for 2004.
3. Children have a wide range of attainment as they first enter Reception, some having more limited communication and language skills or knowledge of the world. Overall, their attainment is broadly average, and a few are on course to exceed the goals children are expected to reach by the end of Reception. Standards of the work seen are broadly average by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6. The impact of good, thorough teaching and good provision for the younger pupils shows in their improving skills but, overall, these come to fruition in Years 3 - 6, where pupils achieve well. In English, pupils are encouraged to use their imagination and pupils in Year 4 have produced some striking images in their poems. Work produced after a visit by Year 6 pupils to the theatre included many imaginative phrases. In mathematics, by Year 2 pupils have a satisfactory understanding of number and recognise number patterns to solve problems. Pupils know regular 2D shapes and recognise their symmetrical properties by Year 4. In Year 6, pupils have good numeracy skills.
4. In science, pupils in Year 1 were challenged to choose the best material to wrap a parcel. They tested them carefully and observed how the properties varied and might be useful. In Year 5, pupils made electrical circuits and explained satisfactorily why the brightness of the bulbs varied. In Year 6, pupils made good progress in their understanding of the circulatory system because the teacher's good subject knowledge had a strong impact on their learning. Pupils have satisfactory knowledge and skills in ICT. There is a developing use of ICT, for example in searching the Internet for information. Standards in most other subjects, where there was sufficient evidence to form a judgement, met the expectation and in music and physical education standards exceeded the expectation.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good overall. There has been a slight decline in this aspect since the last inspection. Other aspects of their personal development, including their spiritual, moral and social development, are very good. Punctuality and attendance are good and have been maintained since the last inspection. Cultural development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils' attitudes to work are positive and in some lessons are very good in response to high quality teaching.
- Most pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good.
- Pupils are keen to come to school.
- Pupils are given increased responsibility as they progress through the school.

Commentary

5. Children entering the school in Reception settle happily into the school. Most children are likely to meet the expectation for this aspect and standards are average. They quickly learn the essential routines and expectations of behaviour, mainly due to the very good induction arrangements in conjunction with the local playgroup. They establish good relationships with each other and the adults with whom they come into contact. They respond positively in work and in play activities.
6. The attitudes and behaviour of pupils are good. Most pupils work hard and listen carefully to their teachers. They are polite, courteous and friendly. Most work well in groups of various sizes, are happy in taking turns and share equipment sensibly. Social skills are very good. Pupils respond appropriately in lessons. Many are enthusiastic learners who take pride in their work.
7. Pupils are respectful to their friends and to the adults with whom they come into daily contact. Behaviour at playtimes is very good, with both break-times and lunchtimes being pleasant and well supervised. Pupils trust adults in the school and most, including those with special needs, have positive attitudes to school and to learning. A particular strength of the school is the very good relationships between all staff and pupils.
8. Provision for personal development is very good and pupils' views are sought in order to take account of their wishes and needs. Independence skills are fostered by pupils being given increasing responsibility as they pass through the school as monitors for the library, games and registers, culminating in organising assemblies and other school events such as the Christmas Party in the later years at the school. They have regular contact with other schools sharing sports and arts ventures. These additional social and educational contacts help to prepare the pupils for transfer to the much larger environment of secondary school.
9. Attendance at the school is good with minimal unauthorised absence. Lessons begin and end punctually. Registers are completed in line with statutory requirements.
10. The spiritual development of pupils is well provided for. In assemblies pupils are told stories from the Bible and other faiths. They are attentive and well behaved and there is a feeling of community. There are opportunities for reflection and these were also seen in art, music and other lessons. Pupils are given knowledge and understanding of their own religion and those of others through the well-planned religious education lessons.
11. The provision for the moral development of pupils is also very good. Pupils are clearly taught the difference between right and wrong. Moral lessons in stories are shared in assemblies and at other times during the day, particularly during class discussions. Pupils care for those who are younger and respect the opinions and property of others. Pupils are expected to behave well and responsibly and to be kind and understanding in their dealings with each other. These expectations are reinforced by praise and positive example.
12. The provision for the social development of pupils is very good. Social development is encouraged by the expectation that pupils will take responsibility for a variety of tasks within the classroom and around the school. Pupils are taught the responsibilities of living in a community. The school also helps to develop a caring attitude towards others through its support of various charities.
13. The provision for the cultural development of pupils is good. Pupils are given information about other cultures through art and religious education and about English culture through history, music and English. The school organises various educational visits and visitors to promote this. There are some shortcomings in the multi-cultural provision necessary to broaden pupils' understanding of living in a multi-cultural society.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence | |
|--------------------|-----|
| School data | 4.8 |
| National data | 5.4 |

| Unauthorised absence | |
|----------------------|-----|
| School data | 0.1 |
| National data | 0.4 |

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Exclusions

There were no exclusions in the reporting year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education. It has made good improvements to its effectiveness since the last inspection. The quality of the curriculum is good, with many challenging tasks, and these are enriched by the very good opportunities for enrichment. The very good level of pupils' care and partnership with parents provide a strong base from which pupils work confidently.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is good so that pupils learn well and make good progress. Teachers use the good assessment procedures well for further planning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- English, mathematics and science are taught well so that pupils learn confidently.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge, which they use during explanations and discussion, and prompt pupils to explain their ideas.
- Teachers and other adults have very good relationships with the children, which encourage them to work hard.
- Teachers use a good range of effective strategies, which have a good impact on pupils' learning.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 30 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|------------|-------------|--------------|----------------|---------|-----------|
| 0(0 %) | 5 (16.7 %) | 19 (63.3 %) | 6 (20 %) | 0(0 %) | 0(0 %) | 0(0 %) |

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

14. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good overall because teachers engage the children in lively and thoughtful discussions that challenge them to think and explain their ideas. In the rest of the school, the teaching of English, mathematics and science is good overall because teachers have good subject knowledge and plan interesting tasks. In English, teachers have good questioning skills which extend pupils' speaking and listening skills. Lessons strike a good balance between direct teaching and reinforcement of pupils' written work. For example, in a lesson in Year 6 on persuasive writing, the teacher challenged all the pupils well and, as a result, they produced good quality written work. In mathematics, the teaching of numeracy is good where planning based on national guidance has made a significant contribution to the rise in standards. In most lessons teachers have a secure grasp

of the work and use this to challenge pupils. In science, the teachers' good emphasis on practical investigation has a good impact on pupils' learning. For example, in Year 1 pupils learnt well because they took on the task of testing wrapping materials very seriously. In Year 5 pupils understood the effects of using different numbers of batteries in a circuit because they built the circuits themselves and observed the results.

15. The good emphasis in all subjects on developing understanding through discussion and demonstration is a particular strength. For example, in a good lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2 the teacher dealt sensitively with the death of one of the animal characters in the story. This prompted valuable discussion, which encouraged pupils to express their own ideas and also underlined the strength of the relationship between the teacher and her pupils. Teachers often use imaginative ways to convey an idea. In a Year 6 science lesson, for example, the teacher squeezed a balloon in a simple but effective demonstration, which the pupils understood of how the heart pumps blood. The use of the ICT screen projector as a teaching and learning tool is developing and, for example, was used effectively to illustrate a graph of pupils' pulse rates.
16. In general, teachers expect high standards of behaviour of the pupils and use good behaviour strategies to maintain their attention. On a few occasions, however, when the pace slackens and the teacher's presentation does not fully engage the pupils, their concentration slips and learning is affected. During most lessons, pupils enjoy their activities and work hard, displaying good attitudes and behaviour, and learning is effective as a result. The school gives effective support to pupils with special educational needs, often through the sensitive and thoughtful support of the learning assistants.
17. The school has established good assessment procedures for English, mathematics and science, which are used well to track the progress of groups and individuals. Teachers keep good records of pupils' attainment in other subjects, which they use to inform further planning. However, there is less emphasis on setting targets for individual pupils and, as a result, they are not always sure about what they should concentrate on to improve their standards. Marking is up to date and some includes comment to help pupils understand what they need to do to improve their work, although this varies across the school.
18. The work of the subject leaders is having a positive influence on the quality of teaching, particularly on the approach to be used, although the monitoring role to check provision and standards is less developed. In mathematics, the deputy headteacher has provided strong leadership and, by analysing test results, has identified areas for improvement. Similar analyses have been made by other core subject leaders and, as a result, pupils are achieving better.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good, and meets all statutory requirements. A very good range of out-of-school activities enriches it. The accommodation is good and resources are satisfactory. This enables all subjects of the National Curriculum to be taught effectively.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A very good range of extra-curricular activities adds significantly to the educational experience of the pupils.
- Good inclusion procedures mean that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum.
- Good professional development of teaching assistants increases their effectiveness in working with pupils.
- There are many good links between subjects, which make the use of teaching time more effective.

- The outdoor learning area for Foundation Stage children is not covered, which limits its usefulness, and the curriculum tends to limit opportunities for children to make choices.

Commentary

19. The curriculum is planned to deliver all of the areas of learning for the Foundation Stage, although the management of the curriculum in the mixed Reception and Year 1 class tends to limit children's opportunities to make their own choice. The curriculum is broad, relevant and planned so that it meets statutory requirements. Linking work in different subjects helps to use available time effectively and develops pupils' awareness of the relationship between subject areas and this approach has a positive impact on standards. There is an effective programme of personal, social and health education. This helps pupils to make informed decisions about their personal lives. The school has very good links with the local secondary school, so that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their schooling. The curriculum is well organised to cater for pupils with special educational needs and learning support assistants play a large role in supporting these. Pupils who have special gifts or talents visit the local secondary school, which runs a programme of activities to meet their needs.
20. The very good extra-curricular activities and the many places of interest that pupils visit broaden and improve the curriculum. Pupils participate in a good range of out-of-school clubs. Members of staff are generous with the time that they give to these. There are good opportunities for pupils to play in teams against other schools. The school regularly takes part in the North Devon Schools' Proms. This, and regular productions in school, increase pupils' interest in the performing arts.
21. Members of staff have good qualifications and experience and the school is successful at recruiting and retaining teachers and support staff. There is a good programme for developing the skills of all staff through in-service training. This helps to create an effective team in which all understand their own roles and the roles of others. The accommodation of the school is attractive and is in good condition. The school has large well-used grounds, including many green spaces. However, the outdoor area for Foundation Stage children is less useful than it might be, as it is not roofed. The school is looking into ways of remedying this. However, there are difficulties as the building is in a conservation area and any development needs planning approval. In addition to the spacious hall, and a welcoming library, there are several areas suitable for teaching small groups. The school uses these effectively for support for reading, music lessons and small group teaching within the mixed age classes.

Care, guidance and support

The pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are very good throughout the school. The school provides them with good support, advice and guidance and involves them well in its work and development. There has been good improvement in this aspect since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a caring, family ethos.
- Members of staff know the pupils very well: relationships between staff and pupils are very good.
- Adults working in the school are very good role models for pupils.
- Pupils are involved in decision making through regular class discussions.

Commentary

22. The school is inclusive with many very good features in the way pupils' well-being, general care and safety are promoted in the school. Pupils are well supported by the ethos of the school and the very caring approaches of the staff. The school provides very good support and guidance for all its pupils and there is a caring environment, which creates positive attitudes towards learning. Members of staff know the pupils very well and teachers and

support staff are accessible and responsive to their needs. Relationships in the classroom and in the playground are generally secure and pupils feel confident to approach staff with any problems or concerns. Personal and academic standards are effectively monitored.

23. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make satisfactory progress. Individual Education Plans help pupils to meet their targets and parents are involved in annual reviews. All pupils are involved in decision making throughout the school as issues are discussed in class.
24. The liaison with the local playgroup is particularly good and there is an effective induction programme for new pupils, who are given the opportunity to come into school before they start in Reception. This allows them to become familiar with the school and introduces them to classroom activities. There is a useful 'Starting School' brochure which is given to the parents of potential entrants.
25. Procedures for monitoring discipline and promoting good behaviour are very good. The discipline and behaviour policy is effective and pupils understand and appreciate the standard of behaviour expected from them. Bullying is not perceived to be an issue by parents, pupils or staff and any incident is dealt with promptly and effectively. Procedures are in place for notification of absence and parents are aware of their responsibilities in this area and usually comply.
26. The school follows county guidelines on child protection. Procedures for child protection and health and safety checks are very good. The deputy headteacher is the named person with the responsibility for child protection and is well trained and informed. Clear guidance exists for all members of staff, who are aware of their responsibilities in this area.
27. The school promotes the health of pupils by supervised aerobic exercises before school starts each morning, individual water bottles for all pupils in the classrooms and an insistence on nutritious break-time snacks. The school provides a safe environment for all its pupils. A termly inspection is carried out by the health and safety committee of the governing body and any issues identified are recorded and monitored by the governing body. The building itself is maintained particularly well due to the vigilance of the caretaker. Risk assessments are carried out for all visits.
28. Procedures for dealing with accidents are well known to staff and pupils and all staff are qualified first aiders. Carefully written records of the administration of medicine are held and medicine and inhalers are labelled and kept safely in the school office. Good quality after school care is provided twice weekly in the After School Club.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school works in partnership with parents, other schools and the community very well. Communications between parents and the school are good and parents think highly of the school. The school has good links with the local community. There are very positive links with the local secondary school ensuring a smooth transition when pupils transfer. The high quality provision in this aspect has been maintained since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are given good encouragement to be involved with the school.
- The sporting links with other primary schools are good.
- The school has established good academic links with partner secondary schools.
- There are strong links with the local Church and community.
- The Parent-Teacher Association is flourishing.

- Procedures to ensure satisfaction and deal with complaints or concerns are very good.

Commentary

29. Parents are enthusiastic about being involved in their children's education. They are welcomed into school and a significant number of parents help in lessons. Homework notebooks are a helpful means of communication between parents and teacher.
30. Parents receive very good quality information on the school through regular newsletters, the annual report to parents and the prospectus. Pupils' annual reports give detailed information on progress and attainment and targets are clearly set for improvement. Parents also receive information on topics to be covered in the classroom and open evenings and curriculum evenings take place. There is one formal consultation evening each year and an opportunity to discuss pupils' annual reports is offered at the end of the summer term. Members of staff encourage parents to raise issues and concerns informally at any time. This ensures that parents of pupils from any group, such as those with special educational needs, feel confident that the school supports their child. Any issue is dealt with quickly and effectively. There is a weekly 'drop-in' after school for parents to look at their children's work and talk informally to the teachers.
31. There is a strong Parent and Teacher Association, which organises regular social and fund-raising activities. Money raised has been used to help in the refurbishment of the school library, to give support for the Expressive Arts initiative and to provide other items of equipment which have greatly enhanced the educational facilities of the school. Pupils are encouraged to think of those less fortunate than themselves; charity collections have been donated to the British Heart Foundation, Leprosy Mission, Tearfund, Comic Relief, Send a Cow and the Poppy Appeal and the school sends used postage stamps to charity. The pupils themselves organise the sale of raw carrots at break-time during Lent, for which pupils pay 5p. The proceeds are sent to the Leprosy Mission and last year's gift totalled over £50.
32. The school has useful links with various secondary schools, particularly Chulmleigh Community College, to which most pupils transfer. Selected pupils are invited to Chulmleigh for 'Gifted and Talented' days to work alongside similar students. The school is part of the Academic Council of primary schools in the area and there are many joint events held with the other nine schools in the cluster, especially sporting fixtures.
33. The school maintains its links with the local community by playing the hand bells at church events and holding the carol service and other special events in the local church. The pupils sing carols to residents of the nearby residential home and the school is used for meetings and other activities regularly by the local community. The school has developed good community links which enable a greater understanding of society and promote good citizenship. The community is invited to all major events organised by both the Parent and Teacher Association and the school. Pupils entertain the elderly by playing board games with them and with hand bell ringing at Christmas.
34. Business links are fostered by the Citizenship programme and the Mini-Enterprise scheme. For the latter, the older pupils devise a product to sell, seek help from local business and finance experts, hold a budget to purchase the raw materials and at the end of the term in which this all takes place, hold a big sale of the products in the school hall.
35. The school organises several out-of-school clubs. The pupils are very enthusiastic and the clubs range from netball and football to the school band. The range of clubs available is a tribute to the commitment of the staff in such a small school.
36. The school is very much an integral part of the local community and, in addition to being used by local organisations, offers a photocopying service for local residents. This is a useful facility and much appreciated by local people.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the quality of education for the children and a determination to succeed.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher and staff have given positive and successful leadership to improve the school's effectiveness since the last inspection.
- The leadership of special educational needs is good.
- The school is managed well to provide the pupils with good opportunities for learning.

Commentary

37. The school has made good improvement in effectiveness since the last inspection because the headteacher has given very clear leadership, supported well by the governors and all staff. All the issues for improvement identified then have been addressed well. Provision for ICT has improved, teaching is more effective and standards have improved as a result. Arrangements for homework have been reviewed and shared with parents. The school has provided a safe enclosed area for children in the Foundation Stage, although it is not yet an attractive area for them. In addition, the school has taken several initiatives to make further improvements and to help raise standards. For example, there is a strong partnership with local schools through which relevant training and guidance is provided. The school has also built a beautifully designed library to house books for junior aged pupils, which acts as a strong attraction for them. The school has a very good climate for learning that includes all pupils very well and ensures that all groups of pupils are treated equally with consideration and high expectations for their development.
38. The headteacher has established good and comprehensive monitoring procedures, reflecting her good management skills. The subject leaders check lesson planning and carry out an analysis of pupils' work, although there are few opportunities for them to observe lessons. Performance management is fully established and includes lesson observations by the headteacher and deputy, with helpful feedback on strengths and areas to improve. The management of the recruitment and retention of staff is good, and encourages strong relationships and support amongst them. Members of the governing body also make regular focused visits which provide valuable information to support their decisions. The headteacher has established good assessment procedures that are used effectively in planning and teaching. She uses the information to track pupils' progress closely and to agree challenging school performance targets. A marking policy has been approved and is helping pupils to present their work better, although the quality of comment varies in its effectiveness in helping pupils to understand how to improve.
39. The co-ordinator for special educational needs provides good leadership and management. He carries out a careful analysis of pupils' learning difficulties and has a good insight into their needs. The support assistants are managed well and their support is targeted carefully to children's identified needs. Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs receive very perceptive support so that they make good progress. There is a good relationship with external agencies.
40. Members of the governing body are very committed to the successful running of the school. They give good strategic direction that is well informed through formal visits as well as a wide variety of other contacts. For example, the Chairman takes a school assembly regularly and other governors and parents help in school. Their visits help to inform the school's forward planning, which are encompassed in the well-designed school improvement plan. The governors take good account of the principles of obtaining best value in their financial decisions. The governors and headteacher work closely together to monitor the effects of their

financial decisions, having improved provision and standards in mind. The carry-forward figure is bigger than usual because the school was holding funds in reserve to pay for committed expenditure. The school office runs smoothly and all routines are carried out efficiently.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003.

| Income and expenditure (£) | |
|----------------------------|---------|
| Total income | 354 254 |
| Total expenditure | 322 884 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2 503 |

| Balances (£) | |
|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Balance from previous year | 36 344 |
| Balance carried forward to the next | 31 370 |

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

41. Provision for the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall, indicating that the position at the time of the last inspection is maintained. The quality of teaching is good overall, however, because teachers have lively and thoughtful discussions with the children that challenge them to think and respond. Children are admitted to Reception in the September or January when they are to be five years old. There is quite a wide range of attainment amongst the children as they first enter school, some having more limited communication and language skills or knowledge of the world. A few children are on course to exceed the goals children are expected to reach by the end of Reception, but overall their attainment is broadly average. The children achieve satisfactorily, whereas the previous inspection reported that progress was good. There are good assessment procedures which help to track the children's progress and to inform further planning and activities.
42. Children are helped to settle quickly into the mixed Reception and Year 1 class by the warm and welcoming relationships with the class teachers. The good working relationships between all adults and with the children support their learning well. The quality of teaching is good, with lively presentations and discussions that encourage the children to contribute. They give good attention to the children's personal development by providing carefully structured activities and including all children well. The provision forms a good basis for further learning as children begin to address the more formal curriculum experienced in Year 1. Provision for children with special educational needs is good. The leadership of the Foundation Stage is good. The management is satisfactory because the overall management of the day is currently giving more emphasis to the curriculum for the Year 1 pupils in literacy and numeracy, which has the effect of limiting choice for the Reception aged children. There is an adequate safe outside play area for the children, but this is not very welcoming and the children's access to it tends to be limited to certain times of the day.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and other adults have warm and responsive relationships with the children that encourage them to become confident.
- Teachers encourage the older children to work and play with younger ones at appropriate times so that good relationships are formed.
- Children take a good interest in activities.

Commentary

43. The teachers are very encouraging and responsive to the children, which helps them to learn within a lively and busy environment. There are many helpful routines where children are helped to take turns and to learn to share. While playing musical instruments in the hall, for example, the children waited patiently to receive theirs and took some delight as they all moved round together to have to new one. The children mostly play constructively together, with the car track or in making a puppet theatre, for example.
44. Children know that sitting quietly is expected during registration. Most children answer audibly to their name. They are familiar with several helpful routines, such as putting a peg on the number line for the number in the class that day or following the line of children's photographs to see who is the day's helper. They like to talk about the weather and date that day. Most

children have learnt to cooperate with others during activities, although a few are self-centred in their behaviour and find co-operation difficult. Children with learning difficulties are given sensitive support so that they take a full part in activities. The children are beginning to understand the need to clear materials away tidily.

45. During many activities, good teaching and support are matched well to the children's learning needs, such as in enabling the children to make their own puppet. During the more formal sessions of literacy and numeracy, however, the youngest children are expected to be seated for too long. There are also limited opportunities for them to make choices as to what they would like to do, including access to the outside. This aspect of the organisation tends to limit the way children can begin to take some responsibility for their learning and interests. Most children are likely to meet the expectation for this aspect and standards are average. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall for this area, although the teachers and other adults make good provision for the children's care and welfare.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **good overall**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teachers provide good opportunities for children to develop their communication and language skills through sharing books.
- There are many occasions through the day when adults emphasise good language.
- The formal class literacy sessions are not fully suited to the needs of the youngest children.

Commentary

46. The teachers give a good emphasis to developing a love of books and stories. During one literacy session, for example, the teacher brought out the rhyming nature of many words and phrases. While the older children read along with the teacher as she modelled reading the book with good expression, Reception children followed, recognising a few words and letters. In this way, the children are brought to understand how print conveys meaning and how to handle books.
47. The older Reception children recognise and know the sounds for most of the letters of the alphabet, while children in the recent intake recognise a few. Teachers and other adults provide good encouragement, praising success and reinforcing the sounds of letters where children are less confident. The teachers promote learning well with good attention to early phonics and letter formation, as well as enjoyment of poems and stories so that children achieve well during focused activities. The teachers use questions well to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills.
48. The teachers generally provide shorter tasks, with a clear learning focus, for the Reception children alongside those in Year 1. These allow for their shorter concentration spans, after which children may choose from a suitable selection of other activities. Children have good opportunities to develop their writing, although a free-choice writing area is not generally provided. Special educational needs support is good and meets their learning needs. At present, the teachers find managing the varied activities difficult because of the perceived requirements for the older children in Year 1 and because they require longer with a quiet atmosphere to complete their language tasks.
49. Teachers give a good emphasis to language during activities throughout the day so that children generally have good learning experience. This was noted, for example, in the discussion about what materials may be suitable for wrapping a parcel. Children have opportunities for imaginative play, such as buying goods at an electrical store, and at these times language is encouraged well and children talk freely together. Children have regular

access to a computer, where many early language skills are emphasised. They take a good interest in books and have good attitudes towards reading and stories. Children choose to read a book together at times, and handle the books carefully with developing understanding of print. Most children are likely to meet the expectation for this aspect and standards are average. A few higher attaining children are on course to exceed the expectation. The quality of teaching is good overall for this area, providing a good emphasis and range to language throughout the day. However, the class management for the formal sessions tends to be focused more on the stages of learning of the Year 1 pupils, so that Reception children are sometimes seated too long on the carpet for introductory sessions and choice is limited.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good overall**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good emphasis on building skills and understanding through active learning.
- Many activities through the day contribute well to the development of children's mathematical ideas.
- Some of the formal numeracy sessions for the whole class are rather long for the youngest Reception children.

Commentary

50. The teachers bring out many interesting and relevant mathematical ideas within activities throughout the day. They have warm and encouraging relationships with the children so that they are keen to take part and share ideas. The early morning routines give a good emphasis to counting and number recognition during registration and sorting out choices for dinners. In this way, children are helped to become familiar with the days of the week and a few know which day follows Monday, for example. Planned activities such as testing materials for properties such as whether they are waterproof give pupils the opportunity to put objects in order and to make comparisons. Children's spatial as well as imaginative ideas were required when making puppets and a puppet theatre so that the proportions were right. Free choice activities, such as buying electrical cable in the shop or making a car track, involve children naturally in everyday interactions and the use of number and space. The children demonstrate satisfactory skills in counting numbers to ten and in fitting construction materials together to a suitable shape. They have good experience of quantity and capacity through sand and water play, filling large vessels with small scoops of sand to build the idea of informal units of measure.
51. During the more formal mathematics sessions the teachers provide carefully structured activities such as counting one more or one less. Most children count correctly to five or six, and know one more or one less than a number, such as 5 or 8, although they are less confident in counting back. Most children have the understanding to put a sequence of pictures into order, such as the steps in cutting up a melon. The opportunity for the Reception children to take part in discussion aimed at the Year 1 children provides some stimulation to their counting and other skills, helping them to become familiar with numbers to 25, for example, when other children count on and back. However, while the Reception children enjoy taking part in the activities, the introductory sessions are generally too long to have all the children together. A suitable range of activities is planned following these sessions which provide reinforcement as well as some free choice. The quality of teaching is good overall and most children are on course to reach the expectation. However, the management of the introductory sessions requires review to ensure there is always a suitable balance of time for the Reception children.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Activities are chosen well to extend children's knowledge of materials and how things work.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.

Commentary

52. Children enter Reception with great variation in their previous experiences related to their knowledge and understanding of the world. The good provision provides a good balance between carefully planned activities and opportunities for children to explore their own ideas. In preparation for a good practical activity, the class teacher led a discussion about what would be helpful about a material to be used for wrapping a parcel, or making an umbrella. She brought out well how the use of the material determined what it should be like. As a result, pupils demonstrated a good early understanding of the need to use properties such as how it cuts or may be folded, for example. Pupils demonstrated an early understanding of making comparisons and testing the materials by cutting, folding and drawing on four chosen pieces. There was more enthusiasm than controlled experimentation, but most pupils explained their own reasoning as to why one material folded more easily than another. They demonstrated satisfactory recording skills by sticking samples of material in their chosen order.
53. The teachers' good choices of activities that are planned over the week give a generally rich and varied range of relevant experiences. Pupils enjoy access to computers which have a developing range of suitable programs so that they understand how to enter commands and respond to visual instructions. There are construction materials and opportunities to explore the properties of sand and water so that pupils know that dry sand behaves differently to wet sand, and that materials may be joined in a variety of ways. There is a very good emphasis on developing children's imaginative and creative faculties, with many worthwhile opportunities to make their own models and creations. In this way, most pupils demonstrate an understanding that is likely to match the expectations for this area of experience by the end of Reception. The planning is good, with full attention to young children's learning needs, and results in a good quality of teaching and learning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are many good opportunities indoors for children to learn how to control their handling of equipment.
- The arrangements for children to have easy access to the outside play area are limited.

Commentary

54. The teachers plan for a good range of activities indoors that promote children's physical development. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and pupils are on course to reach the expectation in this area. Sand play enables children to learn how to control scooping, pouring and shaping the sand. A reasonable range of construction equipment provides children with opportunities to fit ready-shaped pieces in a variety of ways. Musical activities give very good opportunities for children to learn to control how they make a pleasant sound, and several children learnt to bounce their stick lightly on a chime bar, for example. Children persevered

well in cutting material to shape and in joining pieces during their creative work. Overall the children demonstrate satisfactory skill and control, adapting their handling of soft, flexible or shaped materials accordingly.

55. The school grounds are extensive and provide good opportunities during planned activities for children to develop their physical skills, such as running, jumping and skipping. There is a trim trail where children may develop the specific skills of balance and co-ordination required. There is a large grassed field for children to experience activity on different surfaces. Children's access to the outside during the normal course of the day is limited, however, partly because the school is still in negotiation for approval to erect a covered canopy that is acceptable for the design of the listed building and partly through the way teacher-led activities are planned. There is an adequate outside play area with a few items of large equipment and wheeled toys. There is evidence that these are fully available during the warmer months and that teachers make the outside area more attractive then, but this is an area to review.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers provide a wide range of varied activities, with good purpose.
- Children take part enthusiastically during activities, showing many good, creative ideas.

Commentary

56. Teachers make good provision for children's creative development with many interesting and worthwhile activities to extend their experiences. As a result, children make good progress and they are on course to exceed the expectation for this area. In a well-planned and imaginative activity children had good opportunities to weave strips of various materials into a simple frame. With experience most children produced a design with some flair, using the effects of contrasting materials well. In a further good activity, children cut material out to make puppets while others used everyday materials to make attractive puppet theatres. Examples of children's previous work include prints using a variety of shapes to form designs and paintings. The quality of teaching is good for this area and children achieve well because there is good purpose for the activities so that children are motivated. Planning indicates a good range of activities for this aspect and teachers give it a high priority for children's development.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Identification of writing as an area for development is raising standards.
- Pupils' work in literacy makes a good contribution to their spiritual and social development.
- The improved library provision has encouraged pupils to read more frequently.
- Pupils need more consistent guidance about how to improve their standards by comments in marking and individual target setting.

Commentary

57. There has been some fluctuation in results over recent years and the small numbers in the year groups mean that apparent trends have to be treated with caution. During the inspection the standards seen in Years 2 and 6 matched the national expectation. This means that the current Year 6 have achieved well since they were in Year 2 when their standards were below average. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.
58. It is evident from both lessons and written work that teaching is good. Pupils concentrate well and work hard in most lessons. Teachers use questions well to develop pupils' skills in speaking and lessons have a good balance between direct teaching and pupils practising what they have learned through written work. There are attractive displays to celebrate pupils' work in classrooms and other areas of the school. Many of these are word-processed and information and communication technology is regularly used in the subject. The school gives effective support to pupils with special educational needs. A good lesson for a Year 1 and 2 class made a very good contribution to the spiritual development of pupils in the sensitive way the teacher dealt with the death of one of the animal characters in the story. The discussion that followed made good use of dramatic techniques to encourage pupils to express themselves orally. As a result of the good development of speaking and listening skills, pupils talk confidently to visitors and can explain their work in other subjects clearly. Similarly, in a good lesson in Year 6 on persuasive writing, the teacher maintained a lively pace and insisted on high standards in all areas, including presentation. All pupils - including the higher achievers- were suitably challenged. Pupils worked productively, and turned out work that they were proud of. Some teachers give useful advice in their marking that helps pupils improve their work, and pupils are given individual targets to guide their progress. However, this good practice is not consistent.
59. Teachers encourage pupils to read both fiction and non-fiction and this helps them to develop an interest in reading. Teachers are aware that not all pupils find it easy to work out what might happen next in a story, so they are spending time in lessons developing this skill. Most younger pupils use their knowledge of letter combinations and recognition of simple words to help them read. They have a reading diary that makes a good link with home. Pupils in Year 6 read competently, although less fluently than pupils in similar schools. Their attainment in reading is at the national average. Pupils are developing preferences for the work of different authors. Dick King Smith, Jacqueline Wilson and Roald Dahl are firm favourites. The school teaches library skills effectively and pupils know how to find books and information by using alphabetical order. The library is centrally situated and is an attractive and welcoming room. There are plenty of books and they are well suited to the needs of the pupils. The use of information and communication technology has also improved since the last inspection and pupils regularly use the Internet and CD-ROMs to find information. Leadership and management are satisfactory, although the subject leader needs more involvement in on-going assessments.
60. The written work covers all the areas required by the National Curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to be imaginative in their use of language and pupils in Year 4 produced some striking images in their poems, for example 'the rabbit in the summery breeze with its brown fluffy hair'. In the 'Witches' Spells', written after a Year 6 visit to the theatre at Barnstaple to see a production of Macbeth there were imaginative phrases such as 'Pupil of the eye of sheep, Leg of frog to make sparks leap', Much of the work in this display was word-processed.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

61. The school has focused on pupils developing their literacy skills in all subjects. This has resulted in pupils writing extended pieces in history and religious education, instructions in design and technology and science and note taking in geography. They recognise that there are other areas that can be developed and are building on the success that they have already achieved.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved since the last inspection.
- Pupils achieve well because of the good teaching and learning.
- There is a strong focus placed on developing pupils' numeracy skills.
- The problem solving skills of the pupils are being developed well.
- Marking does not always give pointers for improvement.

Commentary

62. In 2003 national tests pupils in Year 2 attained standards below the national average. Pupils in Year 6 on the other hand reached standards well above this, showing good improvement since the last inspection. With small and fluctuating numbers in these year groups, statistics must be treated with caution. During the inspection standards seen in Year 2 were in line with those expected nationally and in Year 6 were above these. Pupils with special educational needs, well supported by teachers and support staff, achieve as well as their classmates. Pupils achieve well in mathematics as a result of good teaching and well-planned activities.
63. Since the last inspection the school has worked hard to raise standards in mathematics. Most pupils enter the school with average mathematical understanding and by Year 2 are working within the expected range for their age, developing a knowledge and understanding of place value and recalling addition and number facts to at least 10. They are taught to recognise number patterns and use different strategies to solve number problems. As pupils move up the school the speed and range of mental calculations increases. Year 4 pupils name regular 2D shapes and recognise their symmetrical properties. In Year 6, pupils are secure in their knowledge of metric and imperial units of length, use a variety of measuring devices, and convert confidently from one system to the other. Pupils often use information and communication technology as part of their work in numeracy, for example for spreadsheets and graphs.
64. In all the lessons seen during the inspection teaching was good and in two lessons was very good. Overall, the teaching of numeracy is good. Adoption of the National Numeracy Strategy as the basis for planning in the subject has made a significant contribution to the rise in standards. In the better lessons, the pace is brisk, teachers are secure in their grasp of the work, and all pupils are presented with appropriate challenge. Some marking contains comments that help pupils understand what they need to do to improve their work, but this is not always the case. Resources are sufficient for current needs. The deputy headteacher's strong leadership as subject co-ordinator has played a key part in subject improvement. He has analysed the results of national and other tests and identified problem solving as an area where pupils did less well. As a result of a focus on this, pupils have made better progress in this part of the syllabus. There is a good system of assessment, which charts the progress of groups and individuals. However, at the moment the system of setting targets for individual pupils is not fully developed. As a result, pupils are not always sure about what they should concentrate on to improve their standards.

Mathematics across the curriculum

65. Pupils often use mathematics as part of their work in other subjects and consequently develop an appreciation of the practical uses of these skills. For example, they use graphs and tables to record data in geography and science or measure materials in design and technology. However, opportunities tend to occur coincidentally rather than as part of systematic planning.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement in science is good.
- Standards by Year 6 are above average.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- There is a strong emphasis on first-hand practical investigation.

Commentary

66. Standards by Year 6 and provision show good improvement since the last inspection. Children enter Reception with average attainment in their knowledge and understanding of the world around them, although several children show they have limited experience. The good experiences in Reception prepare them well to look closely at properties of materials and to set up simple experiments. Well planned lessons through the school provide a good context for pupils' investigations. In Year 1, for example, the teacher provided good motivation for an experiment by posing the problem of choosing the best material to wrap a parcel. Pupils tested four sheets of material by cutting, folding and testing for waterproof properties, showing average skill. The teacher gave quality time to each group in turn, so that they tested and observed how the properties varied and might be useful and pupils achieved well as a result. This work was extended for pupils in Year 2 where pupils demonstrated a developing knowledge of properties and how they may be useful. The teacher encouraged pupils to explain their observations, and they took considerable care and interest in making appropriate comparisons. There is a good emphasis on helping pupils to record their observations and to draw conclusions so that pupils are challenged to reason. Standards overall are broadly average by the end of Year 2 and their preparation for carrying out experiments is good.
67. Within Years 3 - 6 pupils also have good practical experience. In a lesson in Years 4 and 5, pupils made electrical circuits with varying numbers of batteries and bulbs. They demonstrated satisfactory understanding and skill in explaining the causes of different brightnesses of the bulbs. In a very well prepared and resourced lesson in Year 6, work on the circulatory system built well on earlier work on nutrition. The teacher's good subject knowledge and very good use of resources had a strong impact on pupils' learning and, as a result, their achievement was good. The opportunity to observe and draw real lambs' hearts had a strong impression on their learning. The higher-attaining pupils demonstrate good knowledge of the vessels of the heart and how the circulatory system works. There is some good use of ICT, for example in setting up the results of pupils' pulse rates on a graph with a suitable scale. Standards by the end of Year 6 are above average, demonstrating good achievement through the school.
68. Teaching and learning are good overall because the teachers provide good practical investigations. They have a skilled questioning style, based on their good subject knowledge, that prompts pupils to observe and reason. As a result, pupils achieve well. Most pupils enjoy science and work hard, displaying good attitudes and behaviour. A few pupils are inclined to be off task but usually the teachers' good behaviour strategies manage this well. The subject meets statutory requirements. The subject leader has implemented a good and effective assessment system, which is used to track pupils' progress. There are good monitoring

procedures in place. The subject leader provides good leadership and management by promoting a good investigational approach through the school and managing the subject well.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved by Year 6 since the last inspection.
- The subject leader provides good direction and manages improvements well.
- Teaching and learning are good so that pupils achieve well in lessons.

Commentary

69. Standards are average by Year 6, indicating good improvement since the last inspection. It was not possible to form a judgement on standards by Year 2, although from the limited evidence available it is likely that pupils will reach the expected standard. During a short introductory session for pupils in Year 2 on drawing pictures using a paint program, the teacher demonstrated good subject knowledge, kept easy control, explained the steps in a lively way and encouraged pupils to explain what they had learnt already.
70. In Years 3 and 4 pupils completed one questionnaire then wrote their own as suitable preparation for understanding a branching database. Prompted by careful questioning by the class teacher, most pupils understood the need to pose unambiguous questions. Some pupils entered a new item into an existing database on the computer and understood how to enter information to distinguish it from another with similar properties. In Years 4 and 5, the class teacher brought out well how patterns may repeat by showing examples of wrapping papers. The Year 5 pupils demonstrated an early understanding of how to make a search command when analysing data, such as '10 years'; or 'boys and 10 years'. Good teaching led to good achievement as pupils understood the advantages of computer sorting over the use of a set of card records. In Year 6 pupils demonstrated satisfactory skills in using ICT to search for information through the Internet. The teacher provided good motivation and challenge for the task by relating the search to literacy: to identify bias in text using reports about Guantanamo Bay. High-attaining pupils responded with high levels of interest. They have good understanding and skill, entering key words quickly and identifying likely sources. A few lower-attaining pupils took time to recognise where relevant information might be found and were uncertain about how to enter commands. Standards overall were broadly average. Achievement is satisfactory over time but is good in lessons because teachers challenge pupils well.
71. Standards and provision have improved since the last inspection. Teaching and learning are good overall. Pupils take a good interest in the activities and usually have good behaviour. Teachers are knowledgeable, provide worthwhile tasks and relate the use of ICT to other subjects so that pupils achieve well in lessons. The planned curriculum covers all the required topics, and pupils' previous work shows they have worked on aspects of control. Assessment procedures are satisfactory with a good arrangement to comment on pupils' ICT tasks in their Progress books. The subject leader provides good direction for development in the subject, for example by giving a lead in the use of the screen projector to enhance pupils' learning. The level of resources is satisfactory and teachers generally make good use of them, with a good impact on learning.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

72. Teachers demonstrate a growing use of ICT to support learning in other subjects, although the potential is not yet fully exploited. The screen projector is used well for specific lessons to illustrate ideas or, as in a Year 6 science lesson, to demonstrate the pattern of pupils' pulse rates. Pupils search the Internet for historical information or sources of text as evidence of bias in writing. Other forms of ICT are used at times, such as videos and the overhead projector, and these make an effective contribution.

HUMANITIES

73. During the inspection no history and only two geography lessons were seen. It is therefore not possible to form an overall judgement about provision in these subjects. Discussing work with pupils and looking at their books and displays indicate that the standards attained in Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly in line with those expected nationally. However, in history older pupils are rather muddled about the chronology of historical periods. In geography there is also some uncertainty about terms such as 'continent'. Pupils enjoy both subjects. The teaching of each subject covers the requirements of the National Curriculum effectively. The use of the local area enables pupils to become familiar with their environment through visits to habitats such as the river. Pupils often go into the local village to use it as a resource for work in history and geography. All classes go on visits outside the local area. These also enhance their knowledge of these subjects. There is a strong geographical focus in the residential trips for Years 5 and 6 that take place annually. The school uses national guidance. The co-ordinators manage their respective subjects effectively and have developed a straightforward system of assessment that enables teachers to see how well pupils have grasped each unit of the scheme of work. The use of the Internet and CD-ROMs for research has improved the information and communication technology skills of pupils. Pupils' written work in both subjects effectively develops their literacy skills.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Music

The provision for music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good development of singing for all age groups and standards by Year 6 are above average.
- The co-ordinator and several teachers have musical expertise which enhances the experience of pupils.
- There is a good range of opportunities for pupils to take part in musical activities.
- There is no scheme of work to support teachers who have little or no musical knowledge.

Commentary

74. In music, three lessons were seen, although all year groups were heard singing in assemblies. Standards in Year 2 are in line with those seen nationally. Pupils achieve well in Key Stage 2 and by Year 6 they have attained higher than average standards, especially in singing, indicating satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Pupils learn about music from different cultures and record their own compositions with simple notation. Both older and younger pupils sing with a clear shape of the melody and obviously enjoy singing. There are opportunities for pupils to play in assemblies and this enhances their feeling of self-worth. Many pupils take part in the various school music clubs. There is a band, as well as hand bell and recorder groups. These enrich the musical life of the school. Visiting music teachers

provide instrumental lessons and a worthwhile number of pupils learn stringed and wind instruments. Concerts and performances – such as the North Devon Schools' Prom- also contribute to the overall musical experience of pupils. There is a good range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments available, and there are sufficient instruments for all pupils in any class to have one to play. Many lessons take place in the hall, which is very suitable for music lessons.

75. During the inspection, some very good teaching was seen and overall the standard of teaching is good. The co-ordinator has musical expertise, as do several other teachers, and provides good subject leadership. Teachers assess pupils' work in music and this helps them to see how well groups and individuals have understood the work. However, there is no formal scheme of work at present, and the school is planning to adopt one that would help teachers with little or no musical knowledge to teach more confidently. The use of information and communication technology in the subject is being developed, but as yet computers are not used in music lessons.

Art and design and design and technology

76. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the quality of the provision. During the inspection only one lesson was seen for each subject. However, examination of display work, pupils' books and discussions with pupils show that the standards of attainment in art and design and in design and technology by the end of Years 2 and 6 are likely to be in line with the national expectation. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have designed and created puppets. These were finished to an appropriate standard and pupils evaluated their work in simple terms. They have also made bold prints using triangular or square shapes, for example. Pupils have made weaving patterns using strips of material, paper and wool, creating attractive patterns. In Year 6 pupils evaluated shelters and tested various materials to see what would be most effective in various climatic conditions. Pupils have positive attitudes to the subjects and enjoy lessons. There is an assessment system, which enables teachers to judge the progress made by groups and individuals. In a Year 1 and 2 lesson, a significant feature was the way children worked together, discussing their work and helping each other so that the product was improved.
77. The planned programme for art and design provides a good basis for pupils to develop a suitably wide range of skills through the school. The school held an Arts Year throughout last year which offered many good, challenging experiences for pupils. The subject leader provides good, enthusiastic leadership and management for art and design. She needs to look at the scheme of work for design and technology to ensure that pupils develop the skills of working with a wider range of tools and materials. At present the opportunities for them to experience different techniques of cutting and joining are too limited.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in physical education exceed the expectation by the end of Year 6.
- Leadership and management are very good.

Commentary

78. The subject leader gives enthusiastic and effective leadership that has a strong impact on the quality of pupils' experience and learning. In a very good lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2, the children were managed well to ensure individual pupils achieved their best, reflecting the teacher's good subject knowledge and high aspirations. She provided clear and precise instructions, with a good level of challenge to encourage pupils to improve the gymnastic

performance. Praise and good humour were used to good effect so that pupils enjoyed the lesson and tried hard to do their best. All pupils were given equal opportunities to succeed. In a well planned and organised lesson for pupils in Year 6, the teacher provided good opportunities for pupils to develop their games skills. Most pupils worked well to improve their skills, following the good pace to the lesson, although time for pupils to practise their skills under game conditions was rather limited.

79. The quality of teaching is good and provides good opportunities for pupils to gain new skills and to improve. Standards exceed the expectation by the end of Years 2 and 6 because good teaching and tasks challenge pupils to improve. This indicates good improvement since the last inspection. The school is closely involved in a focused year for physical education, demonstrating a clear determination to broaden pupils' experience, and the subject leader is taking a very good regional role in the organisation. As a result, pupils are experiencing a very wide range of physical activities and their achievement is good, indicating good improvement since the last inspection. The school has a good sized grassed field for field sports and a good school hall but the hard surfaced area is small for games such as netball.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

80. The school's PSHE programme is integral to the whole curriculum, providing a background of consideration and reflection about wider issues. In Year 6, the teacher's good choice of material for literacy based on accounts about Guantanamo Bay prompted pupils to reflect on issues of justice and the conditions for prisoners there. The school assembly for Ash Wednesday emphasised well how to act towards others so that we might be better people, making clear references to life in the school. There is a very good emphasis on encouraging pupils to collaborate in their learning by placing pupils in pairs or groups. Support for pupils with special educational needs is sensitive and directed well towards their difficulties. The school has a comprehensive scheme that is adapted from county guidelines and is designed to fit in with special events. A residential week is planned to enhance pupils' PSHE development: both parents and teachers describe the benefits for the children as good.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

| <i>Inspection judgement</i> | <i>Grade</i> |
|--|--------------|
| The overall effectiveness of the school | 3 |
| How inclusive the school is | 2 |
| How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection | 3 |
| Value for money provided by the school | 3 |
| Overall standards achieved | 3 |
| Pupils' achievement | 3 |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities | 2 |
| Attendance | 3 |
| Attitudes | 3 |
| Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions | 3 |
| Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |
| The quality of education provided by the school | 3 |
| The quality of teaching | 3 |
| How well pupils learn | 3 |
| The quality of assessment | 3 |
| How well the curriculum meets pupils needs | 3 |
| Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities | 2 |
| Accommodation and resources | 3 |
| Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety | 2 |
| Support, advice and guidance for pupils | 3 |
| How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the school's links with parents | 3 |
| The quality of the school's links with the community | 3 |
| The school's links with other schools and colleges | 2 |
| The leadership and management of the school | 3 |
| The governance of the school | 3 |
| The leadership of the headteacher | 2 |
| The leadership of other key staff | 3 |
| The effectiveness of management | 3 |

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).