

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **RACKENFORD C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Tiverton

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113495

Headteacher: Mrs Caroline Buckley

Lead inspector: Mrs Jane Morris

Dates of inspection: 4 – 6 May 2004

Inspection number: 257263

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:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	56
School address:	Rackenford Tiverton Devon
Postcode:	EX16 8DU
Telephone number:	01884 881 354
Fax number:	01884 881 354
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Helen Morrison
Date of previous inspection:	30 March 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a small, very rural, Church of England primary school with 56 pupils on roll. Pupils come from the village of Rackenford as well as from nearby hamlets and farms. A small number of pupils come from further afield, including some who travel the eight miles from Tiverton in order to attend. Pupils' home backgrounds are diverse in socio-economic terms and are average overall. All pupils are of white British heritage and have English as their mother tongue. The number of pupils joining and leaving the school at times other than those expected is currently below average but has been considerably higher in the recent past. Attainment on entry to school varies significantly from year to year but it is average overall. Very few children have access to any pre-school education. Sixteen per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs. This is about average. Two pupils have a statement of special educational need. At over three and half per cent, this is well above average. Pupils' special needs are physical, emotional and learning related. The greater proportion of pupils with special educational needs is in Years 5 and 6.

Pupils are taught in two classes with reception and Years 1 and 2 being in Class 1 and Years 3 to 6 in Class 2. The headteacher is the only full-time member of staff. She teaches the older pupils for three days a week with an additional teacher taking the class for the remaining two. Two teachers share responsibility for the class of younger pupils.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18270	Mrs Jane Morris	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage English as an additional language English Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education
9769	Mrs Margaret Morrissey	Lay inspector	
8864	Mr Peter Clifton	Team inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Geography History

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**The effectiveness of this school is good.** It provides satisfactory value for money. Good teaching and learning are augmented by effective assistants. Average standards are improving as is the satisfactory achievement. Better performance is already evident in younger year groups. The headteacher has very good leadership qualities. Supported by her very committed team and effective governors, she has made certain that this school is in a strong position to continue to move forward.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Overall standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and in speaking and listening and reading at the end of Year 6.
- Provision in the Foundation Stage for reception children is very good.
- Standards in writing, problem solving in mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) are currently below average at the end of Year 6.
- The high quality school improvement plan is steering improvement effectively, although opportunities to monitor teaching and share good practice are not highlighted sufficiently.
- Governors know the school very well and are guided by a very capable chair.
- Curriculum enrichment and the ethos provided by the school are particularly strong.
- Pupils behave very well in a school that has very good links with parents and the community.

Improvement since the previous inspection is good. All key issues raised have been addressed well. Standards at the end of Year 2 have improved as they have in science and music throughout the school. The very good leadership of the headteacher has ensured that school self-evaluation and improvement planning procedures are rigorous, and consequently this area of the school's work has improved significantly. The role of the governors is much stronger. There is an improved curriculum on offer to pupils although there is still more work to be done to improve writing, aspects of mathematics and ICT. The school is now providing a higher quality of care. Links with parents are better. The school building has been refurbished to provide more teaching space for Class 2 and a separate teaching area is now available to reception children. These worthwhile projects have improved the learning environment.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	A*	B	C	E
mathematics	A	D	B	D
science	A	A	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.*

**NB** Caution is needed in interpreting data in a school such as this as each pupil represents a large percentage. As almost half of the Year 6 pupils joined after Year 2, the prior attainment grade does not relate to the same group of pupils.

**Pupils achieve satisfactorily.** All pupils in reception and Years 1 and 2 achieve well for their ability. Those in Years 3 and 4 are also doing well but some older Year 5 and 6 pupils are having difficulty in making sufficient progress, especially in relation to their writing and mathematical problem solving. Currently, although achievement is satisfactory, standards are below average in these two important areas. In reading, standards are above average and in science they are average. A significant number of pupils in Years 5 and 6 have special educational needs and this is having an impact on

standards at present. Last year, pupils' overall standards were better and in science they were reported as in the highest five per cent nationally, (A\*).

In 2003, standards at the end of Year 2 were well above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. Currently, Year 2 pupils' standards are above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. This group are achieving well and making good progress.

Children's attainment on entering the school varies considerably from year to year. Currently, standards are in line with those expected. Children are on target to reach, and some will exceed, the expected early learning goals on entry to Year 1. In their personal, social and emotional development children do very well and reach higher standards. They also develop their speaking and listening skills very well.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good.** Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Attendance is very good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good.**

**The quality of teaching and learning is good overall.** It is particularly effective for reception and Years 1 and 2 and this ensures all pupils achieve well. In Years 3 to 6 teachers strive to meet the diverse needs of four year groups of pupils in the one class. Literacy and numeracy teaching are satisfactory overall, but some aspects require further attention. Teachers know the needs of individuals and plan with effective teaching assistants to address these through good assessment strategies. Music and science are taught well throughout the school.

The quality of the curriculum is good. Very good extra-curricular provision enriches pupils' learning effectively and makes a significant contribution to their achievement especially in the arts. The very good care, guidance and support for pupils, partnerships with parents and affiliations with other schools, colleges and the community support pupils' achievements very effectively.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management of the school are good.** The leadership of the headteacher is very good. She has the skills, vision and determination to move the school forward. Governors, led by a very capable chair, are supportive but challenging. Governance is good. All statutory requirements are met. The leadership of other key staff and the management of the school are all good.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents have confidence in, and positive opinions of, the school. They like the welcoming atmosphere and the ethos that permeates throughout. Pupils enjoy life at Rackenford School. They are particularly impressed with the friendliness of their class-mates. Their views are sought and taken into consideration.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Follow closely and monitor rigorously the high quality school improvement plan that focuses correctly on promoting higher standards in writing, mathematical problem solving and ICT by the end of Year 6.
- Provide more opportunities for teachers to monitor lessons and share good practice, especially in relation to improving older pupils' learning in literacy and numeracy.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects**

Achievement is satisfactory and standards are average overall. Currently, standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is good. Standards are average and achievement is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Both standards and achievement are better in Years 3 and 4. Children of reception age achieve well. At the present time the majority of these youngest children are on course to reach standards that are at least in line with the expected goals as they enter Year 1.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in speaking and listening and reading are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Standards of writing in Years 5 and 6 are below average.
- There are weaknesses in problem solving in mathematics.
- Overall, standards and achievement have improved steadily through Years 1 to 4.
- Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are still catching up with their ICT skills and their standards are below average.
- Procedures for tracking pupils' progress in English and mathematics are good.
- Achievement in science and music is good.

#### **Commentary**

***The very small number of pupils in both Year 2 and Year 6 means that the tables of results for 2003 are omitted.***

1. The numbers of pupils in each year group are very small in comparison with other primary schools. Numbers typically range from five to 12 but are usually about eight. As a result, each year group's results reflect the individual abilities of each pupil and small changes in one pupil's attainment can significantly alter overall standards, as can the significant number of pupils who transfer to the school during their primary education. This has been a feature of the school in the recent past. In addition to these factors, there is a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in Years 5 and 6 and currently standards at the end of Year 6 are lower than usual. However, indications are that the school is on track to meet the overall targets it has set itself in English and mathematics for 2004.
2. There is significant variation in the standards on entry to the school and when children start Year 1. Overall, standards on entry to the school are average. However, about a fifth of children are likely to need additional support to develop their speaking and listening skills. The achievement of children in reception is good. This is as a result of the very good teaching and the pivotal support of the teaching assistant. Children make good progress in their learning because, as the majority of them have little or no experience of any pre-school education prior to starting school, the school quite rightly focuses on developing each child's personal, social and emotional skills. It is particularly successful in ensuring that each child's needs are met. All are encouraged and enabled to learn effectively.
3. At the time of the previous inspection standards in Year 2 were average. Over the last three years there has been a steady improvement in test results in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the standards in writing are still not as high as in the other two areas. At the present time, Year 2 pupils have above average standards in speaking and listening, reading and mathematics, and their standards in writing are at least average. Standards are above average in science and average in ICT. Good achievement is evident and comes as a result of consistently good teaching.



4. Overall, standards in Year 6 are average and achievement is satisfactory. Standards in speaking and listening and reading are above average, and standards in science are average. In writing and mathematics standards are below average. The impact of the good start given to pupils in reception, Year 1 and Year 2 can be seen in Years 3 and 4 where standards are also higher. The overall influence of good and improving provision has yet to reach Years 5 and 6. The school has rigorous systems in place to track the progress of individual pupils in English and mathematics and this has enabled intervention strategies to be targeted carefully. This has been particularly successful with developing reading skills. In writing, better strategies to teach writing skills have not been in place for a sufficient length of time to improve standards. In mathematics, investigative and problem solving skills are weaker than in other areas and this is affecting overall attainment. In science achievement is good and standards are average at the end of Year 6. This is because of effective teaching throughout the school.
5. The data available over the four year period from Year 3 to Year 6 indicates that, broadly, pupils of different levels of attainment make similar progress. This includes pupils with special educational needs. Progress in reading and science is good whilst progress in writing is not yet so well developed. Progress in mathematics is satisfactory. Overall, higher attaining pupils are achieving the expected levels although there are some missed opportunities to further challenge younger pupils in mathematics. There are no significant differences between the achievement of girls and boys.
6. Satisfactory provision and developments in ICT have not yet had time to improve standards significantly. Some of the more advanced skills are not in place and standards are below average in Year 6. Throughout the school, pupils' investigative skills in science are strong. Standards in music are above average and achievement is good. This subject has some particularly strong features. At the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, evidence of work, displays around the school and photographs indicate that standards are likely to be above average in art and design and design and technology.
7. There is a shared determination to raise standards in the school. Self-evaluation is being used very effectively to highlight particular strengths and weaknesses and tackle these systematically. The headteacher's very good leadership qualities have been critical in maintaining a focus on improvement and in developing the skills of staff.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils' attitudes are very good as is their behaviour. Personal development is good overall with social and moral values being very good and spiritual and cultural development both good. Attendance is very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The pupils have very good attitudes to their learning and to the school community.
- The school succeeds in promoting very good relationships.
- The behaviour of the vast majority of pupils is very good.
- There are very good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and foster their independence.
- Improved attendance is well above that recorded in most primary schools.

### **Commentary**

8. Pupils have very positive attitudes towards their school, and in lessons and in discussion they display an open enthusiasm for learning. They have a keen interest and involvement in activities. Pupils in all years make a significant contribution to class discussion, are able to sustain concentration and to persevere. By Year 4 they are beginning to organise their own work with growing independence.

9. Relationships are very good. There is a strong element of respect for teachers, other adults in school and for other pupils. Pupils respond very well to the good examples set by all staff and treat each other with sensitivity. Parents say there is a family atmosphere which promotes respect and understanding for each other. This creates a particularly strong ethos and understanding that supports the needs of both younger and older pupils. The personal, social and emotional development of reception-aged children is fostered very well so they exceed the early learning goals in this area.
10. The school is quietly industrious with a happy working atmosphere which promotes very good behaviour and this has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Pupils respond very well to rewards and sanctions and are pleased to be praised; this is confirmed by parents. Promoting harmony, including racial harmony, is a priority of the school. No incidents of bullying were seen during the inspection. Parents say there have been minor incidents but they are totally confident that any issues are dealt with swiftly. There have been no exclusions.
11. Pupils' personal development is good. Social development is very good. Pupils take responsibility for themselves and for others. Pupils are fully involved in helping and supporting others, particularly those less fortunate. There is a keen Year 6 group of pupils who organise charity fund-raising to help national and international charities. They are involved in making and upholding school rules and classroom rules. Moral development is also very good. All pupils understand right from wrong and show evidence of this in their daily actions around school; this confirms parents' views. Assemblies are used to promote strong moral messages about, for example, the way in which food resources are not evenly distributed throughout the world.
12. Provision for spiritual awareness is good. In lessons and in school assemblies, pupils are given time for reflection and discussion and they are developing questioning minds. Pupils are given opportunities to explore the intangible. For example, pupils in Class 1 question why a plant has white roots; one younger pupil suggests it is so that the small animals can see them in the dark. High quality teaching makes certain that pupils continue to question the scientific reason for this. Cultural development is good overall. Pupils are aware of their own culture and traditions and a range of activities ensures pupils' multicultural understanding is developing. Through personal, social and health education and religious education, pupils are given opportunities to build a multicultural awareness. This provision is further enhanced by the use of the Internet, plus a range of visits that not only take pupils the short distance to the village church but also, in stark contrast, to the beaches of Normandy. Visitors to the school promote a greater understanding of the diversity of cultures, ethnic minorities and the needs of different groups of people that pupils are likely to meet as and when they travel beyond their rural location.

## Attendance

### *Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)*

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	2.2	School data	0.2
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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

13. Attendance overall is very good: this is an improvement since the last inspection. Parents receive very clear information on attendance procedures and know that term-time absence is discouraged.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The quality of teaching is good and the commitment of the staff to improving the quality of education that the school provides is very good. The good curriculum is enhanced very well by additional learning opportunities. Pupils are supported well by all adults associated with the school. There are very good links with parents, the community and other local schools. The ethos for learning is particularly strong.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching is good overall and promotes effective learning. In Class 1, teaching is very good for children of reception age and for pupils in Years 1 and 2 it is consistently good with some very strong features. It is satisfactory with some significant strengths in Class 2. Assessment procedures are good overall and particularly thorough in English and mathematics.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Literacy and numeracy lessons in Years 1 and 2 are good and often very good and this is having a favourable impact on standards.
- The teaching of writing and problem solving in Years 3 to 6 is not as productive as in other elements of English and mathematics.
- Teaching assistants are well trained and effective although on some occasions their role during lesson introductions could be more profitable.
- The pace and organisation of some lessons keep pupils waiting too long to get started on their tasks.
- Teachers plan thoroughly for their mixed year group classes and are always very well prepared. However, meeting the diverse needs of four year groups in Class 2 is especially challenging.
- Procedures for tracking pupils' progress and setting targets for improvement are becoming more effective, especially in English and mathematics.
- The commitment of all staff, whether teaching or non-teaching, part-time or full-time, is very strong.

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 18 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	5	8	5	0	0	0

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.*

14. The overall good quality of teaching throughout the school reflects the generally positive views that pupils have about their lessons. The school, with the support of the local education authority, has monitored and sought to improve the quality of literacy teaching. This is having a beneficial impact on learning and achievement but as yet teaching of this area remains stronger in Years 1 and 2 than in Years 3 to 6 where meeting the diverse needs of the four year groups of pupils in the one class is especially challenging and places significant demands on teachers. Numeracy lessons reflect a similar picture. Teachers all have high expectations of behaviour and usually manage their classes very well. Some older pupils find it harder to adapt to the changes in style of class management when the headteacher has her administration time and this has some impact on their learning. It detracts from their achievement which, although satisfactory, could be more profitable. Teachers plan very thoroughly to meet the curriculum demands of their mixed year group classes. They make useful links between subjects to help pupils learn in a cohesive way. Opportunities to use ICT are usually taken whenever possible and appropriate, although the use of applications, such as e-mail, are underdeveloped.

15. The very good quality of teaching for reception children ensures that they are achieving well in all areas. The two teachers sharing responsibility for Class 1 have the support of a very effective assistant who is especially capable in developing children's personal, social and emotional skills. Children learn very well in this area and become accustomed to school routines quickly because their needs are understood. The planning for each small group of children of reception age is detailed, imaginative and makes certain that each child's learning requirements are met, ensuring they achieve well.
16. Year 1 and 2 pupils are always taught well and often very well because lessons have pace, challenge and very high expectations. The organisation of lessons ensures all pupils are productively engaged in stimulating activities throughout the very well planned sessions that take account of each and every pupil's needs. Teachers make certain that, because they know each pupil so well, individual needs are met. Parents who have any concerns about this aspect of the school's provision can be reassured. Every pupil is important to the teachers and they are included and supported appropriately. Pupils respond well to their teachers' commitment to ensuring they are aware of the features they need to develop in their work, such as the use of 'time connectives' in their writing. Learning is reviewed profitably at the end of lessons so pupils know where they are going to aim next.
17. In the older class, lessons are always at least satisfactory and many are good, particularly when the headteacher takes science and music. Both teachers who share responsibility for the class make certain that lesson introductions tell pupils what they are going to be taught and, at the end, they share a review of progress with them. This is proving to be of benefit to learning as pupils are able to go over their progress and are involved in planning where they need to aim next. There are, however, some occasions in this class when pace slackens and, although lessons are satisfactory, they are not as productive or as challenging as they could be. When pupils wait too long to get involved in tasks they become restless and do not remain as focused on their teacher as they might. This inhibits their learning and results in only satisfactory achievement particularly in their literacy and numeracy lessons.
18. Most pupils are aware of how well they are doing, as are their parents. Marking is usually thorough. However, in mathematics and science the pupils' understanding of what they need to do to improve their work is underdeveloped. As year groups of pupils are small and have different characteristics, teachers rightly measure each individual pupil's progress in detail. The headteacher has made certain that this has been a major feature of the school's work in order to improve achievement and standards. The impact of this focus on progress is being felt through reception to Year 4, as is the influence of the consistently good and often very good teaching in Class 1 that has developed over the past four years.
19. Inspection findings support parents' positive views about teaching. Parents are also very complimentary about the commitment of the staff, whether part-time or full-time, teaching or non-teaching, and inspection findings endorse the confidence they have in the staff. The successful deployment of effective teaching assistants ensures that pupils with special needs are supported and they achieve well. However, it was noted that there are some missed opportunities for teaching assistants to play an active role during introductions to lessons, particularly in Class 2. The training that teaching assistants have undertaken to support the 'Reading Recovery' programme is proving to be very successful. A visiting teacher supports this aspect of the school's work very profitably. Within the current small Year 5 and 6 groups, there are some pupils with identified and particular needs. Some of these older pupils also have significant gaps in their previous learning and teachers are striving to fill these. However, because literacy and numeracy lessons are predominantly satisfactory rather than good, improvements to standards are taking longer to manifest themselves.

## The curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum is good. It is very good for children in the Foundation Stage. The opportunities provided for enrichment of the curriculum through lunch-time clubs, visits and special events are very good. Accommodation and resources provided to support learning are satisfactory.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The commitment of staff, governors and other adults ensures the school provides a rich curriculum.
- Visitors to the school and excursions to places further away support the delivery of the curriculum and pupils' learning very well.
- The provision for special educational needs is good.
- Teaching assistants make an effective contribution to the good quality of education on offer.
- Improvements to accommodation are proving to be beneficial to pupils' learning opportunities.

### Commentary

20. The quality and range of the curriculum is good and provides many additional opportunities to enrich learning and promote better achievement. The school meets all statutory requirements and satisfactorily implements the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Personal, social and health education is well planned. The need for a healthy lifestyle and aspects of drugs education feature strongly in the curriculum and within the valuable 'Fit to Succeed' project.
21. There is considerable enrichment of the curriculum which is made possible through the very strong commitment of all those involved with the school, including parents and governors. For example, the chair of governors gives her time so that every pupil has access to French lessons. Documentation shows that there are numerous visitors to the school and visits away from the school supplement pupils' learning opportunities and help them to achieve well. During the inspection, for example, a representative of the Salvation Army came into the school to support a religious education lesson.
22. After-school clubs cannot feature highly on the school's agenda because the majority of pupils live considerable distances away from the school and rely on a series of minibuses for transport. The school compensates for this in many ways. Additional activities at lunchtimes provide ample opportunities for learning to take place and enhance achievement, particularly in music and physical education. Residential visits to France for Years 5 and 6 take place every other year as do combined visits by Years 3 to 6 to an Outdoor Centre. These visits alongside, for example, those to Exmoor to walk the 16 mile challenge and cycling the 'Tarka Trail' do much to add to pupils' experiences and learning opportunities. They all have a beneficial impact on pupils' achievements, especially in their personal development. Pupils are well prepared for and able to draw on these as they encounter many diverse situations and challenges when they move on from their very small school environment into the next stages of their education. Parents are very complimentary about this aspect of their children's education.
23. The school meets the requirement specified on Statements of Special Educational Need and provides effective support in class. The school is actively identifying particular needs at an early stage in order to provide support. This is an effective strategy. Teaching assistants are effective because there are good lines of communication with teachers. A number have accessed high quality professional development such as training to support the 'Reading Recovery' programme which has had a significant impact on standards within the school. The good take up of training opportunities like these has led to improvements in their skills and

they are able to further develop pupils' learning both in class lessons and on an individual

basis. The support they offer is valuable although their role during lesson introductions is not always as productive as it could be.

24. Although accommodation is satisfactory overall and has improved significantly since the previous inspection, there are some strengths and weaknesses. Displays are very well presented and enhance the learning environment, giving pupils the chance to celebrate and reflect on their achievements. The newly refurbished accommodation for Class 2 has had a significant impact on developing the previously very small amount of teaching space available to the older pupils. However, this space does still have to act as a staffroom as well. The recent attention paid to providing the reception children with their own, small but well-resourced room is having a very positive effect on their learning, even though they have to go up stairs and a little way away from the classroom. The small hall means that, for health and safety reasons, PE lessons have to be taught in two half sessions. There is no grassed area within the school grounds for sports activities. This inhibits the overall provision for PE considerably although the school does well to recompense pupils for these shortcomings and parents can be reassured about any concerns they may have about sports provision. Resources are organised well. They are adequate and stored tidily and accessibly. The headteacher's involvement in seeking pupils' opinions about how their lessons could be more interesting resulted in the recent purchase of an interactive whiteboard. This resource is used well by the headteacher to stimulate pupils' interest.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The care, guidance and support provided for pupils are very good. Health and safety procedures are followed very well. Pupils are actively involved in the decision-making processes of the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are very good child protection procedures.
- There are very strong relationships between pupils and adults at the school.
- The overall effectiveness of support for pupils' personal development is very good.
- Assessment across the school is improving and is supporting individual progress effectively.

### **Commentary**

25. The procedures for pupils' safety and welfare are very good and well established. Daily awareness of health and safety issues is evident from the routines followed by staff and pupils around the school. It is supported well by the governing body's health, safety and premises committee. Risk assessment procedures are well established and reviews and checks ensure safe working procedures. There are very effective child protection procedures which meet statutory requirements and are well known to all staff. First aid provision is very good.
26. Pupils are confident to seek help and are well cared for. They are confident that they can seek help from all adults and readily identify the person they would share any worries with or seek help from in furthering their academic progress. Good working relationships with a range of agencies ensure their personal and medical needs are met very well.
27. The school has very good procedures for the educational and personal support of pupils. From reception onwards, pupils understand their learning objective in lessons and evaluate how well they have done at the end to see if they have achieved them. Their awareness of how well they are doing in relation to their own learning targets is a developing feature of the school's work. This aspect is not yet firmly established in all areas. Pupils like the school and the majority, when asked to suggest what they like most of all, replied their friends and teachers. Pupils are actively involved in the decision-making processes of the school. Their views are sought and they contribute very well to the development of the school.

28. Pupils with special needs have good support to meet the targets in their individual education plans. There are very good procedures for induction to the reception class. Support is also in place and effective for any pupil who joins the school during the term.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school has very good links with parents, the community and other schools and colleges. The quality of information on offer to parents is very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents have very positive views of the school and its support for their children.
- Very good links exist between the school and the local community.
- Parents are very confident about approaching the school should they need to.

### **Commentary**

29. The school's partnership with parents is very good and this was reflected in their comments to the inspection team. Very good parental support is beneficial to pupils' progress. Parents say pupils are happy and confident in the school and teachers know the children very well. This is confirmed by inspection findings. They feel it is a friendly school and children have a sense of belonging. Pupils are very well prepared for secondary education even though they are used to a small school.
30. The school is at the heart of the village and the village at the heart of the school; this has a very good impact on pupils' learning and promotes an environment of security for pupils and families. The school brings the community into the school, both to broaden pupils' learning and to raise their local and wider environmental awareness. The links with other schools, colleges, and universities are very good. There are good amounts of transfer information provided for pupils and parents say they feel the transfer procedure is excellent. The Parent, Teacher and Friends Association gives very good help to the school. Members raise considerable amounts of money which are well used across curriculum subjects; their efforts are very much appreciated and supported by the staff and valued by the headteacher.
31. Parents receive very good information from the school allowing them to support learning at home; their views are regularly sought to inform school decisions. Parental support in the classroom is welcomed by the school. A large number of parents provide invaluable support for the curriculum by helping with swimming or sports and providing transport for all school visits, trips and events. Parents are kept very well informed about pupils' progress and the school provides very good opportunities for parents to discuss pupils' progress with teachers. Parents are pleased with the comprehensive annual written reports. They are very confident about being able to approach the school should they have any queries.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are good overall. The governance of the school is good. The headteacher provides very good leadership and other staff good leadership. The school is well managed.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The governors, led by a very knowledgeable chair, know the strengths and weaknesses of the school very well.
- Self-evaluation is strongly embedded in the work of the school and is reflected within a very good school improvement plan.

- The headteacher has played a key role in developing effective teams and moving the school forward.
- There is a strong commitment to including all pupils in all aspects of school life.
- Monitoring procedures to continue to improve teaching need to be strengthened.

### **Commentary**

32. At that time of the last inspection, the governing body was not sufficiently involved in the strategic management of the school. Ably led by a very well-informed chair of governors, the governing body is very knowledgeable about the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The regular programme of governor visits has been well managed and key information is fed back at regular governors' meetings. These visits link well with priorities in the school improvement plan. The open communication between the headteacher and the governors has enabled a clear and agreed direction to be firmly established. Governors' knowledge of special educational needs in the school is very good. The success of support programmes and classroom support provided for pupils has been carefully monitored. Governors have developed a good balance between support and challenge of the headteacher to secure improvement. All the key issues identified in the last inspection report have been addressed. Therefore, since the last inspection, improvement in this aspect of the school's work has been good.
33. Information in the school is very well organised and accessible. Reports to the governing body are clear and informative, enabling a good level of debate and understanding about the key issues to be tackled. The new school improvement plan is a powerful developmental tool. It focuses on raising standards in key areas of writing, ICT and mathematical investigation, all of which have been confirmed as areas for development during the inspection. This shows that self-evaluation is well embedded in the school. Governors regularly monitor the progress made.
34. The headteacher has played a key role in developing effective teams. As well as providing good support to the governing body, she has built a 'tight-knit' team of staff who are highly committed to the school's success. The headteacher is the only full-time member of staff. Despite this, other staff take on subject responsibilities and manage them well. They are clear about their roles and responsibilities. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage is very effective. Despite being a small staff, there are plans for the development of each subject which link to themes within the main improvement plan. The staff as a whole have worked together to promote a very good climate for learning throughout the school.
35. There is a strong commitment to inclusion in the school. Staff value the views of pupils, and expect them to become involved in school life. Pupil take up of additional opportunities to develop skills is very high. For example, nearly all pupils play a musical instrument. Staff know the individual needs of pupils very well and this enables action to be taken quickly when lack of progress is identified. There are very detailed records of progress in English and mathematics for each pupil. However, tracking of progress in other subjects such as ICT and science is underdeveloped.
36. Although some monitoring of teaching has taken place, it has not yet been systematic enough to promote consistently good teaching throughout the school. As a result of this, teachers have not benefited from considering the best practice from colleagues within the school. There are some inconsistencies in expectation from the same class with different teachers and these are affecting the standards and pace of learning of pupils at the upper end of the school.



## Financial information

### *Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003*

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	185,425
Total expenditure	189,907
Expenditure per pupil	3,113

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	11,444
Balance carried forward to the next	6,962

37. Financial management of the school is good. The administrator is efficient and effective. The school runs a balanced budget. Governors have directed funding at employing teaching assistants and this has made a significant contribution to the overall quality of provision and particularly for pupils with special educational needs. The recent purchase of an interactive whiteboard is considerably improving the resources available in lessons and helping pupils to learn more effectively.

# **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS**

## **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

Provision for the Foundation Stage is very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The teaching assistant provides very effective support.
- Children's personal, social and emotional development is fostered very effectively.
- The development of speaking and listening skills is fostered very effectively.
- Joint planning and assessment, to which the two class teachers and the teaching assistant contribute, ensure that all children are offered appropriate and challenging tasks.

### **Commentary**

38. It was not possible to make comprehensive judgements about each individual area of learning during the inspection. However, the visits to different lessons at various times of the day always reflected the very good provision offered and good improvement since the last inspection. The following is a summary of what was seen and the judgements made.
39. Overall, the standards on entry to the school are broadly average. The attainment of each group of children does vary very considerably from year to year with individual children coming into school with very different levels of skills and understanding. This has a noticeable impact on the overall standards reached by the very small groups. A significant number of each group joining the school exhibits below average speaking and listening skills and this impacts on all their learning. However, all children achieve well and a number do very well. Indications are that a high proportion of them are likely to reach at least the average standards expected within the early learning goals in most areas and the majority will have done particularly well in their personal, social and emotional development and in the development of their speaking and listening skills as they enter Year 1.
40. Reception children share a class with Year 1 and 2 pupils but have the advantage of a small but very well-equipped additional room that caters extremely well for their learning. It provides a secure environment that enables them to quickly make the transition from home to school. This is a very important and necessary feature of the school's work as the vast majority of children do not have access to any pre-school provision due to the very rural location of the school. Children start school on a part-time basis at the beginning of the term following their fourth birthday. A very effective induction programme is provided. All children's needs are met very well as soon as they start school. Teachers are quick to identify any children who require additional support and do their utmost to meet their learning needs. Of the current nine reception children, the majority follow the Foundation Stage curriculum at all times. A small number of children who have been at the school for a longer period have made significant progress and the teachers' joint, very effective planning and assessment recognises this and takes account of the fact that their standards are well above those expected in these areas. This means they are already taking part in more formal literacy and numeracy sessions with older pupils to ensure their learning potential is fulfilled. They do, however, spend an appropriate amount of time with their peers in order to take part in the physical and more creative aspects of the curriculum. Outdoor space is allocated to the youngest children and has climbing equipment, ride-on toys, sand, water and role play opportunities available. It is used very well to promote effective physical development.
41. There is very good leadership for the Foundation Stage. Teaching is very good. It is especially effective and promotes very good learning in sessions where the teaching assistant engages the children in very purposeful discussion whilst they take part in stimulating activities.

Children's **personal, social and emotional development** is fostered very well because it helps children to settle into school routines by encouraging them to take part and develop longer attention spans. Small group activities enable children to take turns and to listen to one another without interrupting. Care is taken to cultivate children's self-confidence and encourage positive attitudes to learning through a balance of adult-led and child-initiated tasks. By the end of the reception year their standards exceed those expected. **Communication, language and literacy** are promoted particularly effectively, especially in relation to fostering speaking and listening skills through activities that interest and motivate the children. For example, the teaching assistant interacted with the children as they took part in a role play activity that encouraged them to pretend to book a holiday at a travel agency. These play scenes helped children to imagine what they would like to do on holiday and where they would like to go. This work also supported their creative development very well. Children recite well-known rhymes such as 'In and out the dusty bluebells', and were seen handling books and sharing text. They have numerous opportunities to 'have a go' at recognising letter sounds and words, reading and writing them in a very supportive and productive atmosphere. They achieve well and reach at least average standards. Good **mathematical development** takes place when children take part in counting games and learn to distinguish numbers and how to count in sequence. They take part in activities that develop their understanding of estimation and the value of numbers. They achieve well as they add two groups of objects together and talk about how many are left when one is taken away. They are likely to meet the expected goals by the end of reception.

42. Children's **knowledge and understanding of the world** and their **creative development** receive appropriate and particularly effective coverage. Children learn well and reach at least average standards because very good teaching in these areas provides stimulating opportunities for learning. For example, children investigate the tastes of various common and unusual fruits that they bought during a visit to a supermarket some considerable distance from the school. Having read the story of 'Handa's Surprise' they dress up in African dress, practise carrying baskets of fruit on their heads and use 'small world' jungle animals to recreate the story in sequence. The teacher ensures children develop an awareness of the Christian faith and other beliefs. They build a variety of models using a range of materials. Children frequently use computers. They paint, cut out, glue, use musical instruments, dress up and use 'small world' toys to develop profitably their imagination and creativity. **Physical development** is supported by sessions in the school hall focused on raising spatial awareness. All children have the opportunity to go swimming, greatly enhancing their learning in this aspect. Children also climb, balance and use large equipment when they play outside in their playground. This consolidates the effective development of their physical co-ordination.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in speaking and listening skills and reading are above average.
- Standards in writing are below average at the end of Year 6.
- Teaching of literacy is particularly effective in Years 1 and 2.
- Leadership of the subject is good and is ensuring standards are monitored rigorously to inform further school improvement planning.
- Literacy skills are used effectively within, and to support many areas of, the curriculum.

## Commentary

43. In speaking and listening standards are above average throughout Years 1 to 6. The school makes certain that there are many good opportunities for discussion with the teacher, the teaching assistants and each other and this ensures above average standards. This was in evidence when younger pupils in Class 1 talked about their recent visit to a local 'Care Village'. Their lively and knowledgeable conversation enabled them to prepare for writing a recount of their impressions of the village and the people they met. They were also able to recall their feelings as they visited an old castle on their walk on the nature trail. In the junior class a great deal of attention is given to getting pupils to engage in worthwhile discussions. The level of debate was impressive when Year 6 pupils decided the most important features to include when constructing an argument for and against the wearing of bicycle helmets. This work also served to provide them with their own success criteria for assessing the quality of their written work and thus supported their learning effectively.
44. In 2003, reading standards at the end of Year 6 for pupils who had been at the school for all their primary education were high. Two-thirds reached standards beyond those expected. Reading standards are currently above average in both Year 2 and Year 6. Younger pupils in Class 1 make good progress and achieve well. Comments about what pupils need to do to improve are recorded systematically and comprehensively in reading diaries. Parents have access to and contribute to these records so they are kept well informed and they can and do help their children to make progress. Pupils in Class 2 are achieving satisfactorily. Teaching assistants enable pupils to read aloud and more frequently. This gives pupils additional opportunities to discuss the plots or events described in their books, thus supporting learning appropriately. The school has introduced a daily 'rotation' of activities in Class 2 that supports effectively the development of literacy skills including those that focus on reading.
45. Inspection evidence shows standards in writing in Year 2 to be average but in Year 6 they are below average. Pupils achieve well in the younger class and satisfactorily overall in the older one. Standards in writing seen in Years 5 and 6 during the inspection were below average. They have been influenced to some extent by the number of pupils who have joined the school during the course of their primary education and those who have special educational needs. Currently, in Class 2, standards in Years 3 and 4 are better than those in Years 5 and 6. This is partly because the number of pupils with special educational needs is higher in the two older year groups. It is also because the strategies for improving the teaching of writing, introduced by the headteacher upon her arrival at the school and supported by the local education authority, are taking longer to have an impact on standards, achievement and teaching in general. It is also noticeable that the influence of the good and often very good teaching in Years 1 and 2 has yet to filter through to the oldest year groups in the school. Literacy lessons in Years 3 to 6 are not always as productive as in Years 1 and 2 as teachers have to ensure the needs of four year groups of pupils in one class are met. Although planning is very thorough, the management of lessons means that some groups have to wait to get started on their work and this slows the pace of learning in some lessons.
46. Progress has been made in raising achievement but it is better in Years 1 to 4 than in Years 5 and 6. The specific areas of work associated with the National Literacy Strategy such as 'Progression in Phonics' and 'Grammar for Writing' are gradually gaining ground but some older pupils' spelling standards still show a definite lack of an established awareness of basic spelling patterns. Some pupils' use of spelling techniques and punctuation are still not sufficiently established in the older class.
47. Teaching is good and often very good for pupils in Years 1 and 2. It is satisfactory for those in Years 3 to 6. Teachers ensure all pupils know what they are going to learn in a lesson. Pupils practise a new skill and then reflect on the progress they have made during a profitable review at the end. Teaching assistants are usually effective although they could be more productively deployed during introductions to lessons in Class 2. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and this makes certain they achieve well. Teachers' marking is usually

detailed and helpful to pupils. This, alongside very helpful discussions with individual pupils, ensures that they know what to do to improve their work further. Their progress is tracked very carefully and teachers use the information they gather about each pupil's progress to make sure that the next steps in learning are identified and each and every pupil's needs are recognised and planned for. Satisfactory teaching and learning ensures higher attaining pupils achieve as expected.

48. Since her arrival at the school the headteacher has introduced systems and strategies to improve standards. Lessons have been monitored and points for development noted and acted upon. These are having a significant and positive impact. The school has developed the use of 'Progress Books'. These are completed once a term and show that standards in writing are rising. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

49. These areas are being promoted well in many curriculum areas. Work on display around the school and in portfolios illustrates especially productive links with ICT, religious education, design and technology, science, geography and history. The leaflets produced by Class 2 to promote a scheme to raise money for the blind are especially eye-catching and detailed and show a good standard and purpose for writing.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are above average and achievement is good in Year 2.
- Pupils' problem solving and reasoning skills are insufficiently developed throughout the school and result in below average standards in Year 6.
- Teaching has strengths in Years 1 and 2.
- Monitoring of teaching is not sufficiently robust.

### **Commentary**

50. Standards are above average in Year 2, and below average in Year 6. Over the past two years the results from tests in Year 2 have been very good. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well and make good progress as a result of consistently good teaching. Over the past four years the test results in Year 6 have shown considerable fluctuation, with very high standards being achieved in three out of the four years. Although these fluctuations are expected with such small numbers of pupils in each year, there are other reasons for the current below average standards. Years 5 and 6 have a very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and this is affecting overall but not individual standards of attainment. In addition to this, there are some specific weaknesses in using and applying mathematical knowledge and understanding which is preventing pupils reaching higher levels of attainment. Overall, pupils' achievement and progress are satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Standards in Years 3 and 4 are relatively much higher.
51. Basic skills in using number and in data handling are well established and there are some good examples of these being used in different subjects. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' skills in solving problems, particularly those which require a number of steps or the use of algebra, are underdeveloped. Pupils across this age range are hesitant in using mental skills to work out answers and quickly resort to written methods. Although teaching of mental skills in the first part of mathematics lessons is broadly satisfactory, higher attaining pupils' thinking is not always sufficiently well extended and this results in them using inefficient methods to calculate answers. In Years 1 and 2 there are some good examples of pupils using jottings to explore

a range of solutions to a given problem but these are not evident in Years 3 to 6. There is effective use of computers in classes to support the development of particular mathematical skills.

52. The school has responded to the unusually high distribution of pupils with special educational needs by ensuring that extra support is provided through teaching assistants. This support is mostly effective as it results in pupils receiving additional attention and support. However, sometimes progress is hindered because pupils have to wait for each other before moving onto the next task. Overall, pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.
53. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. In Years 1 and 2 it is good where there is particularly effective support from teaching assistants who are skilled in extending the understanding of the pupils. Throughout the school there is a secure learning environment in which the pupils are confident to contribute. Pupils have good attitudes and work hard. The recent introduction of the interactive whiteboard into Class 2 is a powerful support to learning. For example, when looking at different capacities the teacher was able to explore change of scale and proportions of different quantities very efficiently with pupils.
54. Teaching in both classes is shared between more than one teacher and this works particularly well in Years 1 and 2 as the teachers have a very good understanding of the needs of individual pupils and plan well. In Years 3 to 6 this link not as strong and there are sometimes different expectations of what pupils can achieve, such as the lack of challenge in the first part of lessons. Therefore, whilst there is a good understanding about the strengths and weaknesses of pupils and detailed records of their progress made, the established monitoring of teaching is not sufficiently robust. Leadership of the subject is firm and clear. The school improvement plan identifies, with great clarity, the areas needing to be improved and is a very useful development tool. Pupils have some understanding about how well they are doing but on a day-to-day basis they are not clear about what they need to do to improve. Overall, improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

55. The basic use of number across the curriculum is good. There are good opportunities for measuring and recording results in tables in science. ICT is used well to support the drawing of graphs.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Progress and achievement is good across the school.
- Teaching is consistently good.
- Investigative science is well planned throughout the curriculum.
- The good leadership of the subject makes certain that plans for further improvement are clearly identified.
- Pupils' understanding of their own progress and achievement is underdeveloped.

### **Commentary**

56. Standards are above average in Year 2 and average in Year 6. Pupils make good progress and achieve well across the school as a result of consistently good teaching. Overall, but not individual, standards are affected by the very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in Years 5 and 6. Over the past three years, the results from tests in Year 6 have been very high and for the past two years, better than those in English and mathematics. A strong

feature of the teaching which is helping pupils to achieve these high standards is the very good approach to investigative science. This has captured the interest of the pupils and laid a solid base from which they can develop their understanding.

57. Pupils are given many good opportunities to plan, carry out and evaluate the results from investigations. There is a good range of these. Pupils are asked to predict what they think might happen and explain why. Year 3 to 6 pupils collect data to find out how pulse rates are affected by exercise. They draw graphs showing how long it takes for the pulse rates to return to their original values. Older pupils use what they know to explain patterns in data. For example, pupils in Years 4 to 6 could link energy expended during exercise to increases in heart rate and the size of different muscles used. Younger pupils share their ideas with the support of the teacher about why roots need to be big or small.
58. The questioning approach of teachers has developed pupils who are very confident and eager to explain what they know. In Class 1 there is very good use of discussion to develop pupils' ideas about the purpose of roots in plants. Prompted by some very skilful questioning by the teacher, pupils make very good progress in developing ideas about the size and function of roots. Teaching assistants are deployed well and help pupils make careful observations. Pupils show a growing awareness of conservation and the need to look after the environment. New vocabulary is carefully introduced and used well. In Class 2, pupils plan together confidently and independently. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support from teaching assistants. They are achieving well as are higher attaining pupils. Teaching is well planned and the interactive whiteboard used effectively to display results gained from investigations.
59. Overall, leadership and management of the subject are good. Analysis of tests in Year 6 is comprehensive. The use of ICT is profitable; there are several examples where pupils have used data handling programmes to present their work. There is an effective plan for further improvement, principally focusing on the further use of ICT. The subject is well supported by visiting speakers and visits. The school has maintained a strong focus on developing pupils' investigative skills consistently as they move through the school and this has helped to promote the high standards.
60. The school keeps data which maps progress from Year 2 to Year 6 and this shows that pupils of differing abilities are making good progress and achieving well. More helpful information which can be used to track progress and analyse how individuals can improve is not yet in place. Although the pupils are clear about what they are expected to learn in lessons, their understanding of what they need to do next to improve is underdeveloped. Therefore, their involvement in their own learning is sometimes superficial. Progress since the previous inspection is good and has resulted in higher standards at the end of Year 2.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are average through Years 1 to 4 but higher level skills have not had time to develop through to the oldest pupils and standards at the end of Year 6 are below average.
- Planning for further development is very good.
- The use of information and communication technology across all curriculum areas is developing well.

## Commentary

61. Standards in ICT are average in Year 2 and below average in Year 6. Pupils have appropriate basic skills. Some aspects of the subject are underdeveloped and this is particularly evident in Years 5 and 6. This is partly because recent improvements in the provision have not yet had time to work through to these older years but also because the teaching of higher level skills in the school is not yet secure. E-mail is underused and pupils' understanding of the use of spreadsheets is limited. Higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress. Both boys and girls have positive attitudes to the subject.
62. From looking at samples of pupils' work, talking with pupils and watching them use ICT in various lessons, it can be seen that, overall, teaching and pupils' achievement are satisfactory. During the inspection, in the one lesson of ICT that was observed, pupils took turns at programming a 'Roamer' to move about the room. The pupils recalled previous learning well and confidently predicted how far the 'Roamer' would travel. They showed good understanding of how to enter instructions and contributed enthusiastically to class discussion. The teaching assistant supported a small group of younger pupils well.
63. Good management has ensured that funding available to develop the subject has been well spent. Since the previous inspection, hardware and software have been upgraded and the addition of an interactive whiteboard has significantly improved resources to support whole-class teaching. The school improvement plan correctly identifies ICT as an area for further development and highlights the specific actions required to raise standards at the end of Year 6. The objectives and strategies to be used in the plan are clear. There has been satisfactory development since the previous inspection.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

64. Discussion with the pupils and work samples indicate that the use of different programmes is well established to support learning in many areas of the curriculum. For example, good use was seen of data handling in science, different colour and brush techniques in art, and 2D rotation and reflection in mathematics. In teaching, the interactive whiteboard is used well to support pupils' understanding of scale.

## HUMANITIES

65. **Religious education** was inspected separately by the Section 23 inspector and history and geography were sampled. Few examples of geographical work were seen during the inspection. There is a brief action plan for **geography** which aims to develop the use of ICT and ways of recording. A review of the scheme of work is also planned. The French trip every other year provides good opportunities for pupils' understanding of different places to be developed.
66. In **history**, evidence shows that there is a wide range of work. Year 2 pupils compare the Victorian schoolroom with that of today. They identify and sequence the major events in the life of Florence Nightingale. Role play is used to develop the pupils' awareness of different types of clothing worn by a variety of people during their everyday life. Older pupils use ICT to write about the Ancient Greeks. There are some good examples of extended writing for different purposes. The archaeological workshop enables pupils to learn directly from studying artefacts and pupils present findings in tables and graphs. The school trip to France included a visit to Normandy. This provides an effective and powerful link to the study of World War 2.



## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

67. Music is reported fully but as no lessons were seen in art and design, design and technology or physical education it is not possible to report on overall provision in any of these areas. Planning, evidence around the school and talking with pupils suggests appropriate coverage of the curriculum.
68. In **art and design**, displays illustrate a range of techniques and use of different media including clay and a range of fabrics, paints, crayons and pastels. For example, pupils in Class 2 produced good quality pencil drawings using shade and tone after having studied the work of Picasso. In Class 1 a display of pupils' observational drawings and paintings of flowers and plants suggest above average standards. The display in the school hall to illustrate the Easter story and the parable of the Good Samaritan shows work of a good standard; pupils are able to use 'wash' techniques and pay very close attention to detail in their illustrations whilst linking their art work with religious education. Pupils benefit from studying the work of people such as the Cornish artist, Tony Hudson, and his drawings of African scenes. Pupils studied these when they learnt about the 'Tear Fund'. They gained further awareness of different cultures as they examined drawings of women collecting water from wells and gathering food.
69. In **design and technology**, pupils study a range of materials and work on projects using textiles, materials and food. Photographs and evidence around the school suggest a satisfactory coverage of the curriculum that enables pupils to learn well and achieve standards that are at least in line with national expectations. Examples of masks on display indicate standards to be often above those expected. Pupils have additional opportunities to work with specialists to produce willow sculptures and puppets that are of a very high quality. A project on designing a colourful and tasty 'fruit kebab' showed pupils following the whole design process and evaluating the outcomes of their work at the end. Links with literacy are clearly seen and are good when pupils produce moving pictures to illustrate the stories they have written.
70. In **physical education**, pupils are given appropriate experiences that ensure they are well supported in their learning and they cover all areas of the curriculum at least satisfactorily. In spite of the restricted size of the hall and the lack of a grassed area on the school site, teachers put a great deal of effort into ensuring pupils are given many additional sporting opportunities, even though some of these have to take place away from the school itself. All pupils, including the reception children, attend swimming lessons. Links with the local High School and commitment to the 'Fit to Succeed' project have a beneficial impact on pupils' learning and their achievement. Parents lend their support to give pupils additional opportunities by running clubs such as netball, hockey and 'tag-rugby'. The regular events such as the outdoor residential visit and the Exmoor challenge extend and enhance pupils' learning in this area very well. Dance provision is supported effectively by visits from, for example, an Indian Dance company.

### Music

Provision in music is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good with some very strong features ensuring that pupils are enthusiastic about their learning.
- Pupils display good musical capability on a very wide variety of instruments.
- The knowledge, enthusiasm and commitment of the very good subject leader are developing this area particularly effectively.
- The music curriculum is supported and enhanced very well by an impressive range of additional opportunities.

## Commentary

71. Evidence gathered from lessons, school documentation and talking with pupils shows that this area is of significant importance to the school. Standards are above expectations at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 and there have been significant improvements since the previous inspection. All pupils achieve well.
72. Teaching is good with some very strong features because teachers have thorough subject knowledge and make sure pupils learn skills in a purposeful and progressive way. Lessons are pitched appropriately with a considerable amount of challenge and take account of prior learning thus ensuring good progress. The emphasis on this area of the curriculum means that all pupils are given the opportunity to play an instrument and almost all respond to the invitation positively. Pupils are acquiring new skills and further developing others as they play, for instance, keyboards in class lessons and guitars with a visiting tutor. They have all been taught to play the recorder and their developing passion for music was illustrated to an inspector when a group of four Year 6 pupils explained enthusiastically that one played the flute, another the guitar, a third the baritone and the fourth the piano, guitar and the clarinet.
73. There is a wide selection of good quality instruments available to pupils. In assemblies and class lessons pupils sing tunefully. Older pupils can follow a musical score as they sing and discern the difference between a tone and a semi-tone. They are given the opportunity to listen to and comment upon a range of styles of music. Younger pupils play instruments and take part in singing games and rhymes so they learn about pitch and rhythm appropriately. Their good knowledge of music was illustrated by an impressive recall of 'Peter and the Wolf' and the identification of the different instruments in the orchestra portraying the story and their role. They could also distinguish pitch as they experimented with different types of elastic bands stretched over boxes with holes in them. During this session all pupils progressed well.
74. The subject co-ordinator is committed to her subject. She has established thorough and effective planning for the school with the support of a newly introduced published resource. She ensures that pupils are given many opportunities to enjoy music. For instance, they select and play their own choice of music on CDs. This was seen as they cleared up the hall after lunch.
75. Pupils take part in a variety of musical events when they perform to an audience. Concerts and whole-school productions, such as of 'Yanamamo', are a particularly strong feature of the school's work and give pupils the opportunity to celebrate their good achievements and learn even more about musical composition and performance. The school ensures that additional tuition is available to pupils. It also encourages and broadens pupils' experiences by inviting musicians to school, as when an Indian Dance group visited, and they are taken to listen to live orchestras.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

76. Lessons were not seen in this area of the school's work, therefore no judgements can be made about overall provision. However, the school sees this aspect of its work as an extremely important area of the curriculum. It is delivered in specifically allocated time slots and through other subjects. The overall programme for **personal, social and health education** is very good and includes work on keeping safe, medicines and drugs and sex education. Healthy living and the effects of drugs are covered well. The school is part of the 'Fit to Succeed' project and pupils' enthusiasm for healthy food was seen during break times when they happily chose raw carrot, fruit and bread sticks as their mid-morning snacks.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
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	4
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	4
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
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	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
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).*