

INSPECTION REPORT

SHERBORNE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sherborne, Dorset

LEA area: Dorset

Unique reference number: 113673

Headteacher: Mr. M.J. Sandy

Lead inspector: Mr. Tim Boyce

Dates of inspection: 19th – 22nd January 2004

Inspection number: 257457

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	319
School address:	Harbour Way Sherborne Dorset
Postcode:	DT9 4AJ
Telephone number:	01935 812619
Fax number:	01935 817943
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. Alistair Powell
Date of previous inspection:	01/06/1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Sherborne Primary School is a larger than average school in Sherborne, in the county of Dorset. The area around the school has a wide variety of different housing and the social and economic circumstances of the parents span the full range. A lower than average proportion of pupils claim free school meals, but since there are no hot meals available it is difficult to judge the true level of eligibility. There are 319 boys and girls on the roll. The proportion of the school's population with special educational needs is broadly average, as is the proportion with a statement of special educational need. The proportion of pupils with a mother tongue other than English (1.8 per cent) is slightly higher than average, but few of these are at an early stage of language acquisition. No pupils are in public care. There is some pupil mobility and in the past year 20 pupils have left the school and 21 have joined at times other than the start of statutory education. Attainment on entry spans the full range, but is broadly average. The school has moved into a new building since the last inspection in June 1996, but there has been limited staff movement in the intervening period and the headteacher and most of the senior staff are still at the school.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20932	Tim Boyce	Lead inspector	Mathematics Geography Physical Education Art and Design Design and technology
32768	Jane Manfield	Lay inspector	
27899	Georgina Beasley	Team inspector	Provision for the Foundation Stage, Science Music
21090	David Manuel	Team inspector	English English as an additional language History Information and communication technology Citizenship Special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

Altecq Education
102 Bath Road
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL53 7JX

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	9
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	12
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	17
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	19
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	34

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school with many very good features. With its very positive ethos, very good leadership and management, an imaginative and well-organised curriculum and good and often very good teaching, the school enables its pupils to achieve very high academic and personal standards and provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils' achievement is good overall in all subjects. It is very good and sometimes excellent in all subjects, in Year 2 and in the upper years of the school.
- The pupils develop into mature, dependable and confident young citizens as they move through the school.
- The standards in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, physical education, music and religious education are good by the end of Year 2 and very good by the end of Year 6. Standards in science and information and communication technology (ICT) are good by the end of Year 6.
- The very effective leadership and management provided by the head teacher, his deputy, the senior management team, the subject co-ordinators and the governing body, ensure that all staff work together very well as a team in their pursuit of even higher standards.
- Teaching is good overall throughout the school. It is often very good and sometimes excellent, particularly in Year 2 and the upper years of the school.
- The curriculum meets pupils' needs very effectively and is greatly enriched by a wide variety of extra-curricular activities. However, some improvements are needed to the planning of the curriculum for the foundation stage children.
- The very high quality care and support provided to all pupils by all staff.

The school has shown **very good** improvement since the last inspection. All of the key issues identified in the previous inspection have been fully resolved and there has been significant improvement in many other important areas including: the progress of older pupils; standards in ICT and most other subjects; the behaviour of pupils and their attitudes to work; the quality of the curriculum; the care and support provided by the school and the quality of the leadership and management.

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	D	C	A
Mathematics	B	C	C	A
Science	B	B	C	A

Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average

Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals

Pupils' achievement is good throughout the school. Whilst attainment on entry varies from year to year, most children start school with broadly average standards, although a significant proportion have limited skills in communication, language and literacy. Achievement in the reception classes is good overall. Children achieve well in communication, language and literacy and in their mathematical development and very well in their personal, social and emotional development.

Achievement in the development of children's knowledge and understanding of the world is satisfactory, as is their achievement in the physical and creative areas of learning. As a result, most children achieve the goals they are expected to reach and enter Year 1 with broadly average standards. Achievement is good overall in Years 1 and 2. It is often very good in the Year 2 class because of the very good teaching. Inspection evidence shows that standards in Year 2 are above average in writing and broadly average in reading and mathematics. This is a similar standard to that gained by the majority of pupils in the national assessments in 2003. By the end of Year 2 standards are in line with national expectations in science and ICT and are better than are usually found in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education. Standards in religious education exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.

All pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6. Achievement generally improves as pupils move through the key stage and levels of achievement in some classes towards the top of the school are sometimes excellent. The results gained by Year 6 pupils in the national tests for English, mathematics and science were broadly average in 2003 when compared to national standards but were high when compared to similar schools, showing that these pupils had made very good progress since they were in Year 2. Inspection evidence shows that standards in English and mathematics are broadly average whilst standards in science are above average. By the end of Year 6 standards are above the national expectation in ICT and are well above the national expectation for all other subjects. Standards in religious education significantly exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good overall, and often very good, as is the achievement of higher attaining pupils and the small number of pupils with English as an additional language.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good** overall and has a very positive impact on the pupils' **very good** personal development. Pupils have very positive attitudes and values, form very secure relationships with staff and their classmates and generally behave very well. Attendance is above average and punctuality is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**, and often very good. The quality of teaching and learning is **good** overall, often very good and sometimes excellent. The most effective teaching is seen in the Year 2 class and in most of the classes for the older pupils. The quality of support provided by special needs support staff and other teaching assistants is very good and makes a very positive impact on the achievement of all the pupils in their charge. Teaching in the reception classes is good overall. Inclusion is good and the school has worked hard to develop effective assessment procedures for all subjects. The data is used very effectively to inform planning and to plan work that is accurately matched to the individual needs of all pupils, ensuring that they all learn well. The school is aware of the need to develop simple recording procedures to further enhance target setting and reporting to parents.

The school provides a very good curriculum for pupils of all abilities that is effectively enriched by an extensive variety of extra-curricular activities, particularly for sport and the arts. These have a very positive impact on pupils' learning and on their personal development. The school has very well qualified teaching staff who are very effectively supported by a higher than average number of very well trained support staff. The accommodation is generally very good and there are very good resources to support teaching and learning. The school is aware of the need to use the outdoor area more effectively to support learning in the reception classes.

Procedures to provide a caring and safe environment for the pupils are very good, as are the procedures for the guidance and pastoral support of pupils. The school's partnership with parents is good. The school's partnership with other schools and the wider community is very good and makes a very positive contribution to pupils' achievements.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher brings experience, drive and enthusiasm to his position and, with the very effective support of the deputy, the committed senior management team, the hard working co-ordinators and dedicated governing body, he provides the school community with very effective leadership. The school is very well managed. The governance of the school is very good and all statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The majority of parents are very pleased with the work of the school. They are generally pleased with the way in which information about the progress of their children is communicated to them and appreciate the efforts that school is making to involve them in the education of their children. The views of pupils are sought and they are very pleased with the school. They like their teachers and most want to do their very best at all times. They greatly appreciate the help and support they receive from all staff and feel that any concerns or questions that they may have are dealt with quickly, fairly and effectively.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve aspects of curricular planning for the Foundation Stage and, as planned, develop the use of the outdoor area as a fully integrated teaching and learning resource;
- Develop and implement simple recording procedures for all subjects.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

The achievement of all pupils is **good** in Years 1 and 2, and **very good** in Years 3 to 6. Standards in English and mathematics are broadly **satisfactory** throughout the school. Standards in science and ICT are **satisfactory** by the end of Year 2 and **good** by the end of Year 6. Standards in all other subjects are **good** by the end of Year 2 and **very good** by the end of Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well in personal, social and emotional development, in their mathematical development and in communication, language and literacy.
- The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Higher attaining pupils are effectively challenged and achieve well.
- By the end of the Year 6 pupils achieve very high standards in religious education, art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education.

Commentary

1. Children in the reception classes make a generally good start to their learning and quickly settle into school routines. They achieve well in their personal, social and emotional development, their mathematical development and in the development of their communication, language and literacy skills. As a result they learn to behave very well, to form very positive relationships with adults and other children and to communicate clearly in words and numbers. Achievement is satisfactory for children's physical and creative development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. The provision in the two reception classes is good overall and results in good achievement. Most children achieve all of the early learning goals and enter Year 1 with broadly average standards.
2. When compared to national standards and the standards attained in similar schools (those with between 8 and 20 per cent of their pupils eligible for free school meals), the scores gained in national tests for seven year olds in 2003 were broadly average in reading and mathematics and very high in writing. Teacher assessments indicated that standards in science were broadly average. The scores gained in 2003 were much better than those from the three previous years, when standards in reading, writing and mathematics were usually either below or well below average.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.2	16.0
Writing	17.7	14.5
Mathematics	16.6	16.6

There were 45 pupils in the year group.

3. Inspection evidence shows that achievement is good overall in Years 1 and 2, but is very good in the Year 2 class because the teaching is consistently of a very high standard. It also shows that standards in the current Year 2 cohort are satisfactory in reading and mathematics and are above average in writing. Standards are satisfactory for science and ICT but are good in

religious education, art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education.

- Standards attained in the tests administered by the school at the end of Year 6 in 2003 were average for English, mathematics and science when compared to all schools nationally and when compared to schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. When compared to similar schools by prior attainment, standards were well above average in all three subjects, showing that pupils had made very good progress in Years 3 to 6.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.8	27.1
Mathematics	27.2	27.0
Science	29.1	28.7

There were 54 pupils in the year group.

- Inspection evidence shows that levels of achievement in Years 3 to 6 are very good overall, but that achievement generally improves as pupils move through the key stage. Levels of achievement in some lessons in Years 5 and 6 are sometimes excellent. Standards in the current Year 6 are broadly average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Standards in ICT are above average at the end of Year 6 whilst standards are well above expected levels in religious education, art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education.
- Most pupils with special educational needs attain standards that are below expected levels and a small minority attain the expected levels. They receive very good support from teachers and learning support assistants and this enables them to make very good progress towards their targets. In relation to their prior attainments they achieve just as well as other pupils. Their achievement is well supported by the school's arrangements for in-class support and in sessions when they are withdrawn for specific help. For example, in Year 6 they were seen working together successfully on tasks involving the use of persuasive writing. The achievement of higher attaining pupils is good overall but is very good in Years 3 to 6 where the teaching is consistently of a very good standard. The achievement of those pupils who have English as an additional language is good overall. Boys and girls achieve similarly high standards.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Provision for pupils' personal development is **very good**, with some excellent features. The behaviour of pupils is **very good** and they have **very positive** attitudes to their work. Attendance and punctuality are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are pleased with their progress and proud of their achievements.
- Pupils develop into extremely responsible young citizens by the time they leave the school.
- The excellent provision for spiritual development and very good relationships found in the school help pupils to become very self-confident.
- Pupils are encouraged to work hard and succeed because of the stimulating learning environment that is created for them by the teachers.
- All staff provide excellent role models and pupils learn to treat each other with great respect.

- Pupils learn effectively about their own culture, and other cultures, through the carefully planned opportunities provided in a range of subjects including art, music, dance and history.

Commentary

- The excellent provision for spiritual development ensures that by the time pupils leave the school they are very responsible in their attitudes and are very keen to do well. The school does everything in its power to make sure pupils are developing very high levels of self-esteem and self-confidence. For example, the support provided for pupils with special educational needs is given a very positive image through the use of names such as the 'Cool Club' and 'Fast Track Room'. As a result many pupils are loath to return to the class lessons when they are told they no longer require this additional support. Throughout the school, pupils are encouraged to think about and are thanked for the contribution they make individually and as a class.
- Staff and other pupils value the contribution of every pupil, however small that contribution may be, and this encourages everyone to have a go when they are faced with new challenges. Consequently all pupils rise to the very high expectations of behaviour and treat each other with high levels of respect. Whereas, for example, some pupils in Years 3 and 4 cannot resist the temptation to run in the corridors, pupils in Years 5 and 6 who have developed a more responsible attitude, routinely demonstrate high levels of self-control and discipline. The very high expectations, constant reinforcement and very strong relationships that exist in the school mean that by the time pupils reach Year 5, they do not want to disappoint their teachers. Behaviour is very good and there have been no exclusions during the school year prior to this inspection. All staff deal with any minor incidents involving pupils, that do occur in school quickly and effectively and pupils are very happy that they are safe and secure in school.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	267	0	0
White – any other White background	11	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	7	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	2	0	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

- Children in the reception classes respond very well to the very welcoming atmosphere in their classrooms and quickly get used to being in school all day. The levels of self-confidence and self-esteem they achieve are much higher than usual for children of this age. By the time they leave the reception year, all children exceed the goals they are expected to reach for this are of learning. Older pupils all have a job to do and they carry these out responsibly. Pupils in Year 2, for example, enjoy taking it in turns to operate the music centre at the beginning and end of their assemblies, while pupils in Year 6 make sure the youngest children are safe and happy during playtimes by helping them with any small difficulties and joining in with their games. The very good provision for social and moral development ensures that the school is a very positive community where everyone values and is valued. Pupils are taught very effectively to care for their environment and are encouraged to think about their role as world citizens by taking part

in well planned open discussions during lessons in various subjects and in Circle Time. As a result, pupils develop a very good knowledge and respect for their own and other cultures and a respect for different environments.

10. The staff work hard to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs enjoy the same very good relationships with adults as all other pupils. As a result, they have very positive attitudes to their work and are keen to do well. Pupils respect and care for each other and this encourages those who are less confident and raises their self-esteem. A very small minority of these pupils also has behaviour problems. However, skilful and sensitive handling by teachers and assistants minimises the impact on their own learning and that of their classmates.
11. Attendance is good and is above the national average. The school has good procedures to monitor attendance and punctuality. These ensure that any changes in pupils' attendance are quickly noted and that appropriate action is taken. Good support for pupils and parents encourages improved attendance.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.4	School data:	0.3
National data:	5.4	National data:	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

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

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is **good**. Teaching is **good** overall in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. Teaching is **very good** overall in the Year 2 class and in most of the classes for older pupils. The quality of assessment is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Pupils work very hard in class and in most lessons they get a lot done in the time available.
- Teachers ensure that pupils behave very well and concentrate hard and this has a positive effect on their achievement in most lessons.
- The quality of teachers' planning is generally good and is very good from Years 2 to 6, where subjects are often woven together skillfully into cross-curricular topics.
- Teachers make very good use of highly trained and very effective teaching assistants.
- Teachers make very good use of homework.
- Teachers make good use of assessment information to ensure that the lessons consistently meet the needs of all the pupils.
- Assessment information is not always recorded with sufficient accuracy to effectively inform the reporting for subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 49 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5 (10 %)	17 (35 %)	15 (31 %)	11 (22 %)	1 (2 %)	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.

12. The quality of teaching is good overall and in the Year 2 class and most classes for pupils in Years 3 to 6 is often very good and even excellent. There is a much higher proportion of very good and excellent teaching than was found in 1998 and far less unsatisfactory teaching. The teaching seen during this inspection spanned the range from excellent to unsatisfactory, with most of the better teaching being seen in Years 2 to 6.
13. Teachers' planning makes good use of national guidance to ensure that pupils' learning develops systematically as they move through the school. Planning identifies very good links between subjects to make learning more meaningful for pupils. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are reinforced very well through planned links with other subjects. Particularly good examples were seen of planning which used literacy, numeracy and ICT to support and extend learning in other subjects. For example, pupils in the Year 6 class carried out very effective research and gathered information about the Spanish Armada to enable them to make well-considered written responses to challenges in their history lesson. All staff contribute effectively to the very good quality of learning opportunities through shared planning in teams. Carefully planned homework, linked to classroom activities in several subjects, is set regularly throughout the school. Because the pupils can see the relevance of the tasks, it is completed diligently and is generally returned at the scheduled time. The work is marked carefully and makes a significant and positive impact on the achievement of the pupils.
14. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support in classes and very good extra support from the special needs co-ordinator and her staff. This support helps them to improve their understanding, to complete the tasks set and to make good, and often very good progress. Teachers and assistants focus clearly on the particular needs of these pupils helping them to meet their individual targets. They are calm and patient and are clearly aware of pupils' emotional and physical needs while supporting them academically. The very good support provided by learning support assistants contributes significantly to the good, and often very good progress made by these pupils.
15. The quality of teaching in the reception classes is good overall. Teachers have good skills and provide the children with an interesting range of activities. Teaching is particularly good in the areas of learning dealing with the children's mathematical development, communication, language and literacy and with personal, social and emotional development. Learning is particularly good and skills are developed well when the children work alongside the adults and talk about what they are doing and why. However, sometimes the planning is too structured and teaching focuses too much on the formal learning of skills and opportunities are lost for the children to explore and guide their own learning at these times.
16. Teaching is good overall in Years 1 and 2. All of the teaching seen in these classes was at least satisfactory and teaching is often very good and occasionally excellent in the Year 2 class. All teachers insist on very high standards of behaviour and make very good use of the highly trained and effective teaching assistants to make sure that all pupils do their very best and achieve well. One of the major strengths of the teaching in the Year 2 class is the quality of the planning.

Example of outstanding practice

Staff have skilfully woven together the skills and concepts that underpin the different subjects and teach them in an integrated way that brings great relevance and excitement to pupils' learning.

In an excellent lesson for Year 2 pupils explaining the significance of the Great Fire of London, pupils were not only taught much about the history of the period, they were taught about the geography of the locality as well as the scientific and design aspects of the construction of the buildings. The teacher used rich and expressive language to describe the spread of the flames and to give the pupils a picture of events, and this led to an animated discussion about the morality of destroying homes to create fire breaks to stop the spread of the flames. The lesson contained many splendid opportunities for pupils to practice their numerical skills and led to a very good art and design activity, linked to the work being studied in mathematics, where pupils created symmetrical silhouettes of the London skyline against a background of tissue flames. Very good opportunities were also provided for pupils to use the class computers to conduct their own research about the period.

17. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is very good overall, with more than half of the lessons seen being either very good or excellent. Some of the very best lessons were seen in the top two classes where two very good practitioners present most lessons with exceptional confidence and skill. Consequently the achievement of pupils in these two classes is often excellent. Teachers throughout the department have very secure subject knowledge across a wide range of subjects and as a result pupils' achievement is very good in all areas. Teachers have forged very positive relationships with the pupils, based on trust and mutual respect and subsequently they are able to enthuse and encourage them to try their very hardest. Very good use is made of deadlines to motivate the pupils and to ensure that tasks are completed in the allotted time. As a result learning is very effective since pupils work very hard and make the very most of the time at their disposal. In the one unsatisfactory lesson observed the behaviour of a small group of boys in a physical education lesson was not managed effectively and this had a negative impact on the learning of the whole class.
18. Formal assessment arrangements in the school are good and very good use is generally made of the assessment information that is available to plan work that is well matched to the needs of all pupils. Regular assessments are completed in all subjects and whilst good quality records of pupils' achievements are kept in English, mathematics and science, the co-ordinator is aware of the need to expand this process to include all the other subjects. This will allow more accurate target setting and support more effective procedures for reporting achievement to pupils and their parents.

The curriculum

The breadth and balance of the curriculum is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a greatly enriched curriculum with a stimulating range of opportunities.
- The curriculum enables pupils of all capabilities to achieve well.
- Equality of access and opportunity for all pupils is promoted very well.
- Very good links exist to promote literacy, numeracy and ICT skills through other subjects.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Support for learning outside the school day is very good.
- The accommodation and resources are generally used very well to support pupils' learning.

Commentary

19. The school's provision is securely based on the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. It has been regularly reviewed and amended to bring excitement and relevance to pupils' learning. All statutory requirements are met. The very good

quality of the curriculum prepares pupils very effectively for the next stages in their education. These strengths have brought about very good improvement since the previous inspection.

20. The curriculum is reviewed regularly and the energetic leadership of the headteacher has ensured that all staff work hard to ensure that it is relevant to the needs of pupils. Often this leads to new strategies being implemented to meet changing circumstances or to improve provision. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy are used very well and are contributing very positively to the improvements in standards and to pupils' good levels of achievement, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Provision for personal, social, health education and citizenship, including sex education and drugs awareness, is very good. A major strength of the curriculum is the way that programmes of study from distinct subjects have been woven together to produce a curriculum that is both exciting and relevant to all the pupils.
21. Provision and planning for supporting pupils with special educational needs are very good and fully comply with the Code of Practice. Teachers and teaching assistants carefully adapt work to meet the specific needs of individuals, including their academic, personal, social and physical needs. This support enables pupils to access all subjects and improves their attitudes and responses to learning. Very good liaison by the special educational needs co-ordinator and her team, who work very closely with staff and pupils and provide very sensitive and effective support. This support follows the learning of their respective classes and enables them to achieve well in relation to their set targets and reach their full potential.
22. The school provides a very wide range of after school activities that are well attended by boys and girls. Educational visits are planned carefully to support and extend learning, as for example, in history and also include residential visit for pupils in Year 5 and Year 6. The curriculum is considerably enriched through these creative and physical activities that contribute strongly to pupils' personal development. The accommodation provided by the school is very good and there is a wide range of good quality resources to support teaching and learning in almost all areas. The school is aware of some minor deficiencies in the provision for outdoor education in the Foundation Stage and already has plans to make the required improvements. There are currently no wheeled toys and little other equipment for the children to use outside and this is unsatisfactory.

Care, guidance and support

Provision of care, guidance and support for pupils is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Arrangements for pupils' welfare, health and safety are very good.
- Pupils like staff and feel they are very supportive.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to discuss their views.
- Procedures for pupils joining and leaving the school are very good.

Commentary

23. Daily routines are well planned and children are well supervised at all times. The school buildings and grounds are maintained to a high standard and provide a safe and secure environment for all the pupils. All staff are aware of medical and child protection procedures and designated and appropriately trained staff are always on hand.
24. Very good relations exist between staff and pupils. Pupils feel that teachers are friendly and approachable and that they can go to them with any problems or concerns. Some parents raised concerns about bullying on the playground, particularly at lunchtime. However, the

inspection team found no evidence of this and can assure parents that the school has well established anti-bullying procedures.

25. Throughout the school there are effective systems to monitor and track pupils' achievements. In Year 6, all pupils benefit from individual mentoring with their teachers. From Year 1 through to Year 6 'Circle Time' is a weekly event, where children can air their views. Pupils are very happy that their thoughts and ideas are listened to and valued.
26. The headteacher and staff are very aware of the needs of individuals, and pupils with special educational needs therefore are identified early in their school lives. This is reflected in the good provision made for them in reception and ensures that they receive good levels of support throughout the school. Individual learning plans are of very good quality and are very detailed. They are reviewed and updated regularly and teachers and support staff keep a close eye on progress. Very good liaison takes place between teachers and the special educational needs co-ordinator. As a result, they know these pupils well and have a clear awareness of their strengths and weaknesses.
27. A very good induction programme supports children in the reception classes very effectively. This includes useful pre-school meetings with parents and information booklets for parents to complete before their child starts school. Staffs from the reception classes visit the children in local pre-school care providers prior to them visiting the school. This helps even the youngest children to feel secure and settle well into school. Older pupils are given very good opportunities to help the younger children and this not only contributes to their personal development, it contributes to providing a safe and caring environment.
28. Very good links throughout the school, with the local secondary school and with the community help to ensure smooth transition through and from the school. Parents feel that children are treated fairly and encouraged to become mature and independent. By the time they leave the school, pupils are confident and self-assured.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **good** links with parents, who are supportive and feel involved. There are **very good** links with other schools and the local community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good provision of information, which is valued by parents.
- Children benefit from the very good range of clubs and opportunities provided through links with other schools and the community.
- The school encourages and is pro-active in supporting extended care facilities.

Commentary

29. Parents' views, expressed through the pre-inspection questionnaire and the meeting were very positive and nearly all parents consider that the school is approachable and feel that their suggestions and concerns are considered and taken into account. Parents are supportive of the school in a number of ways, including helping out in class, volunteering for the swimming rota and by accompanying school outings. There is an active Parent Teacher Association that raises very considerable sums of money that are used to fund the purchase of additional teaching and learning resources. There are effective procedures to seek the views of pupils.
30. Parents are very satisfied with homework routines and the children's homework and reading diaries provide a good link between teachers, parents and pupils. Parents are very pleased with the information provided by the school, which outlines how to help their children at home.

The school maintains a very useful profile for each pupil that includes annual reports and targets, test results and work examples. The school holds regular, very well attended parents' evenings and other meetings about specific curriculum subjects or events.

31. The school maintains very effective links with local businesses and services and these benefit both the school and the community. The school runs a large number of clubs, using external tutors and venues, which are highly valued by pupils and parents and make a very positive contribution to the standards achieved in a number of subjects, including physical education, music and the arts. Pupils regularly participate in events at the local churches, the museum and the arts centre. The school accommodation is used regularly for a variety of reasons from yoga classes to adult education open days. The local nursery, housed in the old school building, is effectively supported through governor involvement. Governors also provide very good support to the before and after school care and holiday child-care schemes.
32. Links with other schools and colleges are very good. In particular, the school makes effective use of visits by specific staff from the nearby Gryphon School and is also involved in a physical education project with another local secondary school. These links make a very positive impact on the achievements of particular pupils and are developing further.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The headteacher provides **very good** leadership. Management is **very good**. Governors do a **very good** job and meet all their statutory requirements.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a very clear vision of how he wants the school to be and provides very clear and effective leadership.
- Senior staff and co-ordinators are committed and eager to continually improve the quality of education available for all pupils.
- Governors have very good oversight of the school's development and are fully involved in all aspects of the school's work.
- The school has a very clear understanding of its strengths and minor areas for improvement.

Commentary

33. The headteacher provides the school with very effective leadership and is very clear about the sort of school he wants to create and the way the staff will achieve this. His management of the curriculum is very good and his enthusiastic and determined approach to education and learning has led to the creation of a very rich and exciting curriculum that is having a very positive impact on the achievement of all pupils. He has created a very committed team of staff who work together extremely well to make sure they are always providing the best possible quality of education for all its pupils. The school was already aware the minor areas for improvement identified by the inspection team as part of their well-structured self-evaluation procedures.
34. Senior teachers drive through the identified improvements with a determined but caring attitude. They have high expectations that aspects identified as areas requiring improvement will be put into action in the classrooms. Subject leaders monitor their areas of responsibility carefully and make full use of available assessment information and continually seek ways to improve the achievement of all the pupils. The strategies employed include staff training, targeted support for pupils with special educational needs, special projects that provide greater challenge for higher attaining pupils and the provision of a very exciting curriculum. Because of the high levels of commitment from all staff to make sure pupils receive a very high quality

education, which is taught in a very systematic and objective fashion. The resulting atmosphere in the school is one of determination and purpose, but with a very human touch. As result, pupils develop an enthusiasm for learning from an early age and this results in very good achievement by the time they leave the school in most subjects. The leadership of subject co-ordinators has improved dramatically since the previous inspection and is now very good.

35. The management of the school's arrangements for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Provision has improved since the previous inspection. The special educational needs co-ordinator is an experienced teacher who has a very good view of the whole school picture and is committed to further improvement of the school's provision. This includes continuing to refine teachers' and teaching assistants' expertise.
36. Management systems make sure that the school's main aims and areas for improvements are supported very well. Financial planning is very structured to support areas of improvement identified through the work of the subject co-ordinators. Governors know the school well. Governors work alongside the school to note whether the decisions they have made are resulting in higher standards and achievement, and where the quality of teaching and learning, and the curriculum can be improved even further. They work closely with the school to identify the most important things that need to be done to ensure pupils achieve very well. Financial control is good and given the good achievement, the good and often very good provision, and the relatively low costs, the school provides very good value for money.

Financial information for the year 2002 to 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	689,323
Total expenditure	673,653
Expenditure per pupil	2,060

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	9,966
Balance carried forward to the next	25,636

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children are well cared for and achieve well from the minute they start school.
- Teachers use questions effectively when joining in with the children in activities.
- Teaching assistants make a very good contribution to children's learning.
- Resources are used effectively to engage the children's interest.
- The outdoor environment is not used often enough to support children's learning.

Commentary

37. There are very good links with the local play group and this means that staff know all children very well by the time they start school. This enables the provision to be relevant and work to be matched very well to individual needs, ensuring that achievement is good. Relationships are forged quickly and the children get along very well as a result. At the time of the inspection, the children had only been staying at school all day for three weeks. This was not immediately evident because they were all settled well to the routines and were joining in happily with all the activities.
38. The quality of teaching is good overall. At the beginning of every topic, the children help to plan what they will do in certain learning areas, including sand, water and role-play activities. This helps them to remember what they are expected to do in the activities they choose themselves, including sharing and taking turns with the toys and dressing up clothes. When adults play alongside the children in these areas, learning is improved because the children learn a range of new skills matched to their individual needs and are given good opportunities to talk about what they are doing and why. Sometimes teaching focuses too much on the children's learning skills formally and opportunities are lost for the children to explore and guide their own learning at these times.
39. The leadership and management of learning in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory overall. Whilst the curriculum is planned around subjects rather than areas of learning, the curriculum is still relevant in most areas of learning because teachers have good skills. However, this is not always the case and, for example, children do not get enough opportunities to learn and explore in the outdoor play area. This interesting learning space is equipped with suitable climbing and balancing equipment, but it is only used at playtime and lunchtime when it has to be shared with 45 others. There are no wheeled toys and insufficient other equipment for the children to use outside, and this is unsatisfactory.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children are developing very good social skills.
- Teaching is very good and effectively enables very good learning.
- The children take care of their own needs very well.

- Children play very well together.

Commentary

40. Due to the very good teaching in this area of learning achievement is very good and most children will exceed the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the reception year. There are well-established routines for the school day and this helps the children to settle quickly into school. The very positive approach by all adults who work in the reception classes has led to the children having high levels of self-confidence and self-esteem. As a result, all children are confident to have a go and to try hard to solve problems for themselves. This was demonstrated during an ICT session when one child used her knowledge of other programs to suggest a possible way to change the colour of the shapes on screen. She successfully solved the problem. Children learn to change quickly for physical education with little or no help and even when stuck with some item of clothing, they will happily have a try to sort things out for themselves. The children play well together, sharing and taking turns amicably. Some children sort minor issues out without the aid of adults. Resources are used effectively to grab the children's attention when listening to stories with difficult concepts and ideas. This helps the children remember significant facts in religious stories.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good focus on the children learning important literacy skills.
- Teaching is good and children achieve well.
- The curriculum prepares children well for learning in Year 1.

Commentary

41. Teaching is good and achievement is good because the school organises this area of learning as a literacy lesson that meets the needs of individual children well. During the inspection the focus of lessons was on the development of children writing and reading skills. The teaching provided children with good opportunities to work out words that they do not know both in their reading and spelling tasks, and helps to prepare them well for their learning in Year 1. However, there was little adult intervention in some of the activities organized by the children and some opportunities were missed to further develop speaking skills. The teaching of speaking and listening skills is good overall, and often very good, but teachers' planning contains few direct references to the development of speaking and listening skills in many lessons. Most children will reach the expected goals in speaking and listening and will exceed the goals they are expected to reach in reading and writing by the end of the reception year.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good balance between adult tasks and those that the children choose to do themselves.
- Activities are practical and children are all involved.

Commentary

42. Teaching is good and the children achieve well and learn new skills quickly because tasks are well matched to their individual needs and there is a range of suitable play activities through which they learn. For example, the children made furniture for the Three Bears, considering the sizes and matching them up to the correct sized bear afterwards. Laying the table and organising enough tableware and cutlery for a play picnic helped the children to understand the meaning of the quantity three and consolidated their understanding of this amount. The curriculum is planned so that the children learn in a meaningful way and as a result, they remember what they have already learnt in the next session. Due to the wide range of activities that are available to promote mathematical learning that are provided, most children are on track to exceed the goals they are expected to learn by the end of the reception year.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD, PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Only one lesson was observed in knowledge and understanding of the world, and physical development so there is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the quality of teaching in these areas of learning. Inspectors looked at planning and photographs and talked to staff and children. Provision in these areas of learning, and in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are given good opportunities to plan their own activities.
- A good range of activities is organised for children to explore and create with paint and other materials.
- The teaching is sometimes too formal and this limits opportunities to learn through play and exploration.

Commentary

43. The quality of teaching and learning in the lessons observed is satisfactory overall and sometimes good. A wide range of activities is organised so that the children are given regular opportunities to explore paint and other materials. This enables them to develop satisfactory skills in drawing, painting and cutting. The children achieve satisfactorily and most are on track to achieve the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the reception year in all of these areas of learning. In a few lessons, however, learning sometimes focuses too much on the teaching of subject specific skills and there are not always enough planned opportunities for the children to develop this new learning through experimentation and structured play activities.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Improved provision has led to good achievement by pupils.
- Consistently good teaching builds on good planning and the use of regular assessment.
- Improved teaching of literacy skills supports very good links with other curriculum subjects.
- Standards in writing are above expected levels.
- The subject co-ordinator provides very good leadership and management.

Commentary

44. By the end of Year 2, standards are at expected levels in reading, speaking and listening and are above expected levels in writing. By the end of Year 6, overall standards are at expected levels but standards in writing are above expected levels and sometimes well above. The achievement of all pupils is good except in Years 2, 5 and 6, where it is very good.
45. The school's procedures for implementing and adapting the National Literacy Strategy have been effective. Having identified the need to raise standards following the significant drop three years ago, the school introduced new planning and teaching strategies. Guided writing sessions are included in the main lesson and separate guided reading sessions have been initiated. These strategies have been successful in raising standards. In Years 1 and 2 the pupils explore the differences between written and spoken language and good links are made to all aspects of learning in language and communication. As a result, standards in national tests have risen from well below the national average, to average levels in reading, and well above average levels in writing.
46. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers plan a good range of stimulating and well-planned activities, regularly assess pupils' progress and adjust the pace of learning in relation to the rate of achievement by pupils. Lessons are well structured, often stimulating and have a clear sense of purpose. Relationships are very good and bring a happy and co-operative spirit to learning activities. All teachers use questions and prompts skillfully to promote further understanding of tasks and to stimulate different ways of thinking. As a result of these effective strategies, all pupils achieve well. Boys and girls attain similar standards due to the focus given to interesting texts and the effective direct teaching of small groups alongside worthwhile activities for the rest of the class.
47. Standards in writing are above expected levels. Teachers plan a wide range of opportunities to enable pupils to develop their writing skills. Pupils effectively demonstrate different styles of writing. A good example of character description was seen in Year 2 when pupils wrote with great sensitivity of how an ageing badger would be remembered by his friends. Year 6 pupils demonstrated very good skills in persuasive writing when responding to letters about proposed building development in the locality and the effects it would have on people and the environment.
48. Most pupils speak, listen and read confidently and make very thoughtful contributions to discussions, as demonstrated in the current focus in Years 1 and 2, of discussing and writing about characters in their story books. All pupils, including higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are suitably challenged at their different levels of capability to achieve their full potential. All pupils have good attitudes towards reading and enjoy small group

sessions, sharing the enjoyment of stories together. Guided reading sessions for younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 are used effectively to focus on key elements such as vocabulary, letter sounds and sentence structure. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 were observed reading to develop empathy with characters in their group reading books. They did this successfully and gained a better understanding of challenging text and ideas contained within it. The range of standards within these aspects of English is at expected levels and shows good improvement over time from their original assessments.

49. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership and management to the subject and has supported colleagues very well in maintaining the school's development of literacy. Assessment procedures are good and are used effectively to track pupils' progress and meet the needs of all pupils. Resources are of very good quantity and quality and are used very well to support pupils' learning. All pupils, including gifted pupils, pupils with special educational needs and the very small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language, achieve well as a result of the support provided and improvements made. These improvements include visits by authors and storytellers. To support the new focus on raising standards in reading, the school holds meetings with parents to encourage them to be more involved in helping with pupils' reading. Greater involvement by parents with homework encourages pupils, supports their learning and the school's efforts to raise standards still further. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection when standards in all areas were judged to be average and progress was satisfactory.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

50. The school's provision for language and literacy makes a very positive impact across the curriculum. Teachers plan interesting activities in subjects such as geography and history to consolidate and extend pupils' literacy skills. There are good links with ICT when lessons in the computer suite focus on reinforcing key skills in both subjects. Teachers encourage all pupils to share and discuss how they have used their knowledge and skills to complete written tasks successfully. Pupils respond well with imaginative answers and their interaction is very productive. These experiences later help pupils to contribute their own good quality views relating to the different subjects involved.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is very good in Year 2 and in Years 3 to 6.
- Teaching is good.
- Assessment procedures are very effective.
- The leadership and management of the subject are good.

Commentary

51. Achievement is satisfactory in Year 1 and generally good in Year 2. As a result of this good overall achievement, pupils move through the average band and the majority achieve higher, but still broadly average standards by the end of Year 2. Achievement at Key Stage 2 is very good and pupils make considerable gains in their knowledge and understanding of the subject because of the very good teaching they receive. However, because the performance of the current Year 6 cohort was well below average when they were tested at the end of Year 2, their very good achievement has only lifted them to the point where they are now attaining broadly average standards. Standards of numeracy throughout the school are satisfactory. All pupils, including gifted pupils, pupils with special educational needs and the very small number of

pupils who speak English as an additional language, achieve well as a result of the support provided.

52. The quality of teaching is good overall in Years 1 and 2, and although achievement is generally good, there is an over reliance, in some classes, on the completion of work sheets and pages in workbooks rather than providing activities that excite and motivate the pupils. As a result achievement in these lessons is satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning in the Year 2 class is good overall and often very good. The teacher has very good subject knowledge and the planning is very clear and includes an interesting range of extension activities. These high standards of teaching and learning are maintained and built upon throughout Years 3 to 6 where the teaching is very good overall and sometimes excellent. This very good teaching effectively enables the pupils to make very good improvement. The pace of the lesson is brisk and very good use is made of the learning support assistant to prepare activities and to help with the learning of the lower attaining pupils. Tight deadlines are set for the completion of activities and, as a result, pupils are highly motivated and levels of productivity are high. Teachers make very good use of homework to supplement the work done in class. This has a very positive impact on the standards achieved by most pupils.
53. The school makes very effective use of booster classes to raise the performance of pupils who may otherwise miss out on gaining a higher grade in the national tests. In some classes, however, insufficient emphasis is given to developing quick and accurate mental recall when pupils complete mental arithmetic exercises at the start of lessons. This is having a negative impact on pupils' learning, as some of them take too long to calculate number bonds mentally and multiplication tables that should have been learned.
54. The leadership and management of the subject are very good and the co-ordinator has a good awareness of the strengths and areas for improvement that exist in the school's provision. Assessment procedures are good and are used effectively to track pupils' progress and to ensure that the work set is appropriate to the needs of all pupils. Resources are of very good quantity and quality and are used very well to support pupils' learning. Standards are not as high as those reported in the previous inspection, but this must be attributable to differences in the cohorts, since it is clear that there have been significant improvements in the quality of provision since that time.

Mathematics across the curriculum

55. The provision for mathematics across the curriculum is highly effective. Teachers plan numerous interesting activities in other curriculum subjects such as science, design and technology and geography to effectively consolidate and extend pupils' numeracy skills. There are good links with ICT when lessons in the computer suite focus on reinforcing key skills in both subjects. Many teachers set little mathematical problems when completing routine tasks and encourage all pupils to share and discuss the strategies they have used to work something out. This has a positive impact on the standards achieved.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good overall** and very good in Years 5 and 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is much better and standards have improved since the last inspection.
- Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is consistently very good.
- The curriculum is practical and encourages very effective learning.
- Assessment information is used very effectively to identify what the school needs to do next to make provision better.

Commentary

56. Achievement throughout the school is good. Standards seen during the inspection confirm the above average test results at the end of Year 6 and very good achievement of this year group since they started in Year 3. While standards at the end of Year 2 are average overall, there is a higher proportion of pupils than expected getting to the average Level 2.
57. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teaching and learning are consistently very good in Years 5 and 6. Teachers in these year groups have very good subject expertise and this means they ask probing questions, which make pupils think about why things happen, as well as what is happening, in their investigations. Planning is very good and identifies a range of practical investigations, which build on previous knowledge and understanding. For example, during the inspection older pupils were finding out how electrical circuits work. They rose to the challenges set not only to find out how to make bulbs light up in a circuit but whether they could find a way to make the light brighter and duller. Pupils followed their teachers' lead and used the correct scientific language to explain what was happening and why.
58. Lessons throughout the school are practical and fun and this keeps pupils interested and motivated to find out more. Pupils are used to planning their own investigations from a young age, so by the time they reach Year 5, many make sure their investigations are fair instinctively. The effective support from teaching assistants means pupils carry out their own group investigations and this makes learning more meaningful and helps to develop important scientific enquiry skills. Recorded work in some classes in Years 1 and 2 does not always reflect the higher than average standards which many pupils reach. While teachers use questions effectively to assess whether pupils understand what they have learnt and help them to record this in simple sentences, this does not always reflect the higher than average learning many have reached in the earlier part of lessons.
59. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The very well structured development plan for the subject has led to higher achievement in recent years and there are indications that this continues to improve. Assessment information is used very effectively to identify strengths and weaknesses in the subject and subsequent foci for monitoring activities. Lessons are observed regularly and individual feedback to teachers has led to well-focused training and more exciting activities, which immediately grab the interests of pupils. The school is currently looking at ways to include relevant use of ICT more often to support learning in the subject. There has been very good improvement in the quality of provision since the previous inspection. As a result, pupils are attaining higher standards and are achieving well.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning of ICT skills throughout the school is good.
- All pupils achieve well and standards are above expected levels.
- The very good resources are used well and very good links are made with other subjects.

Commentary

60. All pupils achieve well and by the end of Year 6, the range of attainment is above expected levels. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection when standards were judged to be below average due to the unsatisfactory provision and inadequate resources.

61. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. Since the previous inspection, the school has moved to a new site with a separate computer suite. Teachers have successfully developed their own technical skills and confidence. They plan lessons well and make very good use of technology, such as interactive whiteboards, to demonstrate and reinforce skills. As a result, the activities are imaginative and exciting and are set at the right level of challenge for pupils of different capabilities. Pupils learn very effectively when using computers and this is clearly reflected in their enthusiasm, their very good relationships and their willingness to share ideas and to support their partners when working together. Teachers and teaching assistants encourage more confident pupils to explore new techniques, whilst supporting those who are less skilled or have learning difficulties.
62. Standards are above expected levels by the end of Year 6. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are keen and confident when working at a computer. They carefully follow instructions from their teachers to access selected programs and are often quite imaginative in how they make things happen together. Pupils are effectively taught control skills as, for example, when creating sequences of commands to control a floor robot, including 'repeat' commands. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 build effectively on their skills when responding to challenging tasks and learn how technology can help them investigate more complex areas of learning. In all year groups, pupils carry out research in a range of school sites and on the Internet to prepare good examples of work, using text and graphics that enhance their own work and displays around the school. Multi-media presentations are also created and presented. Good examples of these were seen in history about Tutankhamun and life in Tudor times.
63. The new subject co-ordinator has continued the very positive learning atmosphere within the subject that supports and enhances learning in other subjects very well. This positive approach has enabled computers and other forms of technology to become an integral part of day-to-day learning. The quantity and quality of resources are very good. National funding has been used effectively to improve resources and increase the competence and confidence of staff to the benefit of all pupils. The co-ordinator has identified important aspects for improvement including more effective assessment procedures and an extension of the computer suite to enable better access to the school's library books that currently share the space in the suite. The technician provides very good support for the subject, working very closely with teachers and pupils. She has also developed a very good resource in the school website which is accessed by pupils for work in school time and from home.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

64. The use of ICT across the curriculum was identified as a major weakness in the last inspection, but pupils now get many very good opportunities to develop their skills in a range of subjects. This support is demonstrated most effectively in literacy, when pupils create text and graphics to enhance their presentations in a wide range of subjects. Regular links are also made through the use of data-handling in mathematics and in the use of art programs. Pupils also make good use of digital cameras, sensors, various reference sources and tape recorders to enhance their work in other subjects such as science, art and geography.

HUMANITIES

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The weekly assembly for older pupils provides an excellent stimulus for learning.
- The curriculum ensures lessons are interesting and result in effective learning.

- Teaching is consistently very good in the juniors.
- The wide range of relevant resources is used effectively to support learning across the school.
- The subject leader has very good subject knowledge and supports teachers very well.

Commentary

65. Achievement is good throughout the school and pupils achieve good standards by the end of Year 2 and very good standards by the end of Year 6. This is because lessons are extremely well planned and are matched very closely to the ability and maturity of pupils. Care is taken to plan exactly how learning will take place and not just what will be learned. Consequently, the curriculum is rich and varied. All pupils play a full part in lessons and achievement is very good. Very well structured and relevant debates about social and moral issues, and different religious practices, and well-focused recorded work means that links to the development of literacy skills are very well established. The weekly assembly is of a very high quality and acts as a stimulus for all religious education lessons each week for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Individual teachers plan relevant and interesting activities to follow this up and this makes sure learning is relevant and matched very well to the individual learning needs of the pupils in their classes. As a result of very good teaching, pupils have high levels of respect for the values and beliefs of others.
66. The very effective use of resources by the teachers makes learning relevant for everyone, but in particular younger pupils. For example, the purpose and meaning of the Jewish Seder meal was more meaningful when the children were invited to partake themselves. Visits and visitors add more interest and allow pupils to ask people directly about their religions. The main emphasis in the infants is on learning about Christianity and Judaism and important stories are told in lessons and assemblies every week. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good knowledge base on which to build in the junior classes. Standards are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and achievement is good.
67. There has been very good improvement since the previous inspection in the quality of leadership and management of the subject, which are very good overall. The subject leader uses her very secure knowledge of the subject to very good effect to ensure that the information given to pupils in lessons is factually correct. Lessons are observed and work is checked regularly to make sure learning activities are relevant and matched to pupils' needs, and that the necessary resources are available to support learning. Teachers assess pupils' work carefully and the information that is gathered is used effectively to plan subsequent lessons. However, the information is not yet recorded formally and therefore there is too much reliance on teachers' memories to recall information for reports, an area already identified for improvement on the subject action plan.

Geography

Provision in geography is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is very good and standards have improved since the previous inspection.
- Pupils have very good understanding of key geographical concepts.
- Teaching is good overall and often very good.
- The formal recording of individual achievement is weak.
- Cross-curricular links are very well developed.

Commentary

68. By the end of Year 2 standards are above expected levels and by the end of Year 6 they are well above expected levels. This is mainly because of the very good teaching and the very good curriculum that covers all the required areas in an interesting and challenging way and which encourages pupils to develop a love of the subject. Achievement is very good and all pupils develop a very good knowledge and understanding of place and have highly developed skills of geographical enquiry.
69. Pupils in Year 2 have a good understanding of places in the local area and can compare and contrast them with other places that they have visited. Most pupils have a good appreciation of the importance of environmental issues and can identify features in the local environment that they like and dislike, making sensible suggestions as to how the latter group might be improved. Pupils in Year 6 have a very good general understanding of the subject and have developed very good skills of geographical enquiry. They use four figure co-ordinates confidently, use keys accurately and can explain how quite complex climatic conditions have been created. A group of higher attaining Year 6 pupils was able, with very little prompting, to explain the conditions that led to the formation of the coastal desert on the western side of the Andes whilst high rainfall and lush vegetation exist on the eastern side of these mountains.
70. The teaching is very good with staff having very secure subject knowledge and confidence. They plan interesting and exciting lessons that proceed at a good pace and which bring work alive, creating a genuine enthusiasm for learning. As a result pupils enjoy their work and get a lot done in the allotted time, taking care to do their very best work. The skills and concepts central to the subject are often interwoven with those from other studies, particularly history, to create very well considered integrated projects that bring real relevance to learning and help the pupils to understand the importance of the study.
71. The leadership and management of the subject are very effective. The subject is well led and managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator and there are several other subject specialists on the staff. Carefully planned field trips and visits effectively enhance and develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. Regular assessments are completed but there are no agreed procedures for recording the achievements of individual pupils and to inform target setting and reporting to parents. There has been a significant improvement in standards since the previous inspection when they were judged to be at expected levels at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6.

History

Provision in history is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good levels of historical knowledge and understanding.
- Standards have improved since the previous inspection.
- Teaching is very good.
- The formal recording of individual achievement is weak.
- Cross-curricular links are very well developed.

Commentary

72. By the end of Year 2 standards in history are above expected levels and by the end of Year 6 are well above expected levels. The curriculum has been developed effectively and by Year 6 pupils achieve very well and have developed very good levels of subject knowledge and skills

of historical enquiry. This is because of the range of challenging and interesting tasks they are set, both in lessons and for research topics.

73. By Year 2, all pupils achieve well and develop a good sense of the past. They develop a good sense of historical enquiry and analyse why events such as The Great Fire of London happened and what the consequences were. Very good teaching encourages and challenges pupils to become good 'historians', for instance in looking at events, characters, differences in life styles, the changes that took place and what can be learned from them. These skills are further developed most strongly in Years 3 to 6. Close links with geography, are used effectively by teachers to make the subject very interesting and meaningful. These qualities were seen to good effect when pupils' knowledge and understanding of Tudor times were very evident when they discussed reasons for the invading Spanish Armada. The local area is rich in history and learning is very effectively linked to this. Pupils show high levels of enthusiasm and interest resulting in very good achievement and learning. Very good links with literacy and ICT are made when writing articles about events based on local and other historical evidence. By the end of Year 6 standards are well above expected levels.
74. The subject is well led and managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator. Well organised visits to museums and historical buildings enhance and develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. One area for further improvement is the need for agreed procedures to provide information to parents and pupils about their progress. There has been a significant improvement in standards since the previous inspection when they were judged to be at expected levels at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art & Design

Provision in Art & Design is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is very good and standards have improved since the last inspection.
- The teaching is very good.
- The curriculum is rich and exciting.
- The leadership and management of the subject are very good.

Commentary

75. By the end of Year 2 standards are above expected levels and by the end of Year 6 they are well above expected levels. This is mainly because of the very good teaching. Achievement is very good and pupils develop very good skills and a very good knowledge and appreciation of a wide variety of techniques. They develop a good technical vocabulary and by the time they reach the end of Year 6 they have studied the work of a wide range of artists, to very good effect.
76. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have been taught to develop a good understanding of colour. They have good cutting and sticking skills and are subsequently able to produce pieces of work with high quality finish. They work confidently with a wide variety of different media and study the work of a range of famous artists, to good effect. When working with clay, and other similar materials they produce creditable models to demonstrate how materials can be twisted, stretched and squashed. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 refine their skills further in a wide variety of activities. The resultant work is of a very high quality and shows that pupils have developed

well above average skills. Drawing skills are very well developed and most pupils can produce very accurate representations using a variety of media.

77. Teaching and learning are very good because teachers have very high levels of subject confidence and expertise. They are subsequently prepared to tackle exciting projects that motivate the pupils and result in very effective learning. Planning is very detailed and great care is taken to provide activities that systematically develop skills as pupils move through the school. Much of this work is recorded in the good quality sketchbooks. Work is often closely linked to studies in other subjects including history, science, religious education and personal, social and health education (PSHE). Pupils are given many very good opportunities to work with computers and they are given access to a carefully graded series of graphics packages as they move through the school.
78. The subject is very well led and managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator. She maintains an excellent portfolio of completed pieces from all classes and organizes a wide range of exciting events for the pupils. There are regular art weeks and opportunities to work with artists in residence. The art club is very active and well supported and notably produced the impressive garden sculpture in conjunction with artists from Yeovil College. Art produced by the pupils is regularly showcased in exhibitions at Sherborne House and at the local hospital. Regular assessments are completed but there are no agreed procedures for recording the achievements of individual pupils and to inform target setting and reporting to parents. There has been a significant improvement in standards since the previous inspection, when they were judged to be at expected levels at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6.

Design and Technology

Provision in design and technology is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is very good and standards have improved since the last inspection.
- The teaching is very good.
- The curriculum is rich and exciting.
- The leadership and management of the subject are very good.

Commentary

79. By the end of Year 2 standards are above expected levels and by the end of Year 6 they are well above expected levels. This is mainly because of the very good teaching that pupils receive throughout the school and the quality of the curriculum which presents them with numerous interesting projects. Achievement is very good and pupils develop very good skills and a very good knowledge and appreciation of a wide variety of design techniques. As a result their work is carefully planned, well made and often beautifully finished and presented. All phases of the design process are present and very good emphasis is given to the evaluation of completed models and the building of prototypes. This has a very significant impact on the quality of finished products.
80. Teaching is very good and staff have high levels of subject expertise and confidence. The subject is given appropriate emphasis within the timetable and as a result pupils are given many good opportunities to develop their skills and to apply them in a range of imaginative situations as they move through the school. Planned work is often linked to studies in other subjects and this motivates pupils by giving their work added relevance. Examples of this can be found in Years 5 and 6, where pupils have designed and made witch masks to illustrate their English and drama work on Macbeth. Pupils in Year 6 have also produced superb litters for King Montezuma II as part of their studies in history.

81. The subject is very well led and managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who has compiled an excellent portfolio of completed pieces from all classes. Regular assessments are completed but there are no agreed procedures for recording the achievements of individual pupils and to inform target setting and reporting to parents. There has been a significant improvement in standards since the previous inspection, when they were judged to be at expected levels at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6.

Music

Provision in music is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is an extremely wide range of extra curricular activities, which enrich pupils' learning.
- The teaching is very good.
- Teachers have good subject expertise so activities in lessons are challenging and relevant.
- Subject leadership is very good.

Commentary

82. Achievement throughout the school is very good and standards are above the expected level by the end of Year 2 and well above by the end of Year 6. The extensive range of opportunities for pupils to perform at different events makes an excellent contribution to pupils' learning and consequent very good achievement by all pupils. Over 100 pupils are involved in various extra-curricular musical activities, either singing or playing a musical instrument. These clubs provide excellent opportunities for pupils to practice their skills and apply what they have learned in their lessons.
83. The consistently very good teaching, linked to very good learning through the extensive range of extra musical activities, contributes to pupils' overall very good achievement. Lessons are fun. All teachers have taken part in training opportunities to extend their personal musical expertise. This means they are confident of their ability to teach difficult skills and musical ideas. Consequently, activities in lessons are challenging and extend the learning needs of all pupils. Pupils who are learning to play a musical instrument have good skills. This was demonstrated in band practice when one pupil, who was absent the week before, played a previously unknown tune accurately from sight. The tune was written in a quite difficult rhythm but the pupil was not to be put off, reflecting the high levels of confidence pupils develop by the end of Year 6.
84. One reason why the school has such a strong musical tradition is down to the enthusiasm and very good leadership of the subject co-ordinator. Further extensive range of opportunities for pupils to perform to a range of audiences, both in school and in the local community, continues to be sought. Standards, achievement and the quality of the curriculum are checked regularly and further opportunities identified to make further improvements to provision. This includes the formal recording of assessment information and use of ICT to support learning and make it even more exciting. There has been a significant improvement in standards since the previous inspection, when they were judged to be at expected levels at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is very good and standards are much higher than are usually found.
- Teaching is very good because many staff have specific subject expertise.
- There is an excellent range of extra curricular activities, which greatly enrich pupils' learning.
- Subject leadership is very good.

Commentary

85. Achievement is very good for all pupils because the teaching is consistently of a high quality and the curriculum, which is greatly enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities, provides numerous exciting opportunities for pupils to develop their physical abilities in numerous different contexts. As a result standards are above the national expectation by the end of Year 2, and well above that expectation by the end of Year 6.
86. Skills in dance are developing well and pupils in Year 2 have good spacial awareness and are light on their feet as they move around the hall. Pupils develop good gymnastic skill as they move through the school and by Years 3 and 4 many of the pupils can perform well-defined technical movements, including cartwheels, with good levels of control. Games skills are very well developed and pupils are very adept at a variety of invasion games, including football, rugby, hockey and netball. Pupils also do very well at swimming and athletics and are given good opportunities to take part in outdoor and adventurous activities. The general provision is greatly enhanced by an impressive array of extra curricular sporting activities that has a very positive impact on the standards achieved by those pupils who take part.
87. The quality of teaching is generally very good and a number of staff have particular expertise in particular sporting activities. In addition to very experienced coaches for football, rugby, hockey and netball, the school staff boasts a gifted dancer and a former international athlete. As a result sporting teams from the school compete in a wide range of sporting activities with considerable success, whilst several individuals have continued to county level in a number of sports. Teachers generally have good subject knowledge, have very high expectations of performance and behaviour and plan well-structured lessons that proceed at a lively pace. Subsequently pupils are kept busy and motivated and thoroughly enjoy the lessons. In the one unsatisfactory lesson observed there was insufficient activity and the teacher failed to maintain sufficient control when faced with challenging behaviour from a small group of boys.
88. The subject is very well led and managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who has compiled an excellent portfolio that shows the wide range of sporting activities that is available to the pupils. Regular assessments are completed but there are no agreed procedures for recording the achievements of individual pupils and to inform target setting and reporting to parents. There has been some improvement in standards since the previous inspection, when they were judged to be above expected levels at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for personal, social and health education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development.
- All adults provide very good role models.
- Pupils have great interest in school life and enjoy taking responsibility.

Commentary

89. The school attaches great importance to pupils' personal development. Teachers deal very effectively and sensitively with issues such as feelings and emotions, diet, health, sex, drugs and personal safety. Many of these are dealt with effectively in specific sessions set aside for this purpose and also in subjects such as science and religious education. Well-planned sessions have a significant impact on pupils' moral and social development as well as their learning. Many issues that affect all pupils are also dealt with sensitively in assemblies. All adults consistently implement the school's policy and approach, which include the establishing of Golden Rules, rewards and sanctions.
90. All of these qualities help to promote the very caring and supportive atmosphere and mutual respect throughout the school. A whole-school programme provides teachers with clear guidance and builds on pupils' learning as they move through the school. From an early stage, young pupils are given good opportunities to gain self-confidence and develop socially and morally responsible behaviour both in the classroom and beyond it. All pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 carry out agreed and specific duties in their areas of responsibility. They provide very good help in classrooms, the playground, in assemblies, in the Foundation Stage and in the ICT suite and this help contributes to the smooth running of the school and the very good relationships. Within the good programme for developing citizenship, pupils consider relationships with friends, families and the community in terms of justice, rights and responsibilities and racism. Pupils are encouraged, to very good effect, to learn what it means to be helpful, considerate and mature within their school community and what it means to be a good citizen in the wider and more diverse world.

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	2
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
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	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
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	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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

