

INSPECTION REPORT

Hatherleigh Community Primary School

Hatherleigh

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113251

Headteacher: Mrs L Mitchell

Lead inspector: Mr J Palk

Dates of inspection: 1st – 3rd March 2004

Inspection number: 260533

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 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	159
School address:	South Street Hatherleigh Okehampton Devon
Postcode:	EX20 3JB
Telephone number:	01837 810248
Fax number:	01837 810091
Appropriate authority:	Local education authority
Name of chair of governors:	Ms I Dodd
Date of previous inspection:	20 th September 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Hatherleigh is a small community primary school. It draws its pupils from the small market town and several outlying farms and hamlets. The socio-economic circumstances of the area are broadly average, although few pupils are receiving free school meals. All the pupils are of white British origin. There are below average numbers of pupils with special educational needs, which range from moderate difficulties to physical needs. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs. There are no pupils in the school who are in care. Pupils are taught in single year groups with a mixed year 1 and 2 class. Children start school full time either in September or January before they are five years old. Their attainments on entry are average. The number of pupils leaving and joining the school other than at the usual times varies from year to year. Since the last inspection the size of the school has decreased by the equivalent of one class. During the inspection a class was being taught in the school assembly hall. The headteacher joined the school in January 2002.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23630	Mr J Palk	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education Special educational needs
11096	Ms M Davie	Lay inspector	
16971	Mr R Hardaker	Team inspector	English Geography History Music
22967	Ms M Griffiths	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Art and design Religious education

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This **effective** school is providing **good** value for money. Teaching is good throughout the school and pupils are learning well. Standards are above average overall. The leadership is very strong and all staff and governors play a full part in bringing about improvements. This is secured at costs that are below average.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Children learn well in the reception class where the teaching is very good.
- Standards are well above average in English and science by the end of year 6.
- Standards are below average in information and communication technology (ICT) in year 6.
- The headteacher provides a very clear vision for the school; one that has high expectations of the pupils and staff.
- The school is very good at monitoring its work and governors are fully involved in this process.
- Good use is made of information about pupils' progress to provide support in lessons and there is good support for pupils with special educational needs.
- The teaching is consistently good throughout the school and teaching assistants make a very valuable contribution in lessons.
- Pupils' personal and social development is well catered for and leads to very positive attitudes towards learning and very good behaviour.
- There is not enough planned time for weekly physical education lessons for older pupils.

Improvement since the last inspection has been very good. Areas that were strong have been strengthened. Standards are now higher in most subjects and the issues from the previous inspection have been tackled very well. Teaching is of better quality, there is greater challenge and there are higher expectations based on assessment information. Support staff are very well deployed to support pupils. The headteacher is very effective in identifying what the school needs to do to raise pupils' achievements, and in inspiring adults and pupils to achieve their best.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Achievement is **good** overall. The table above illustrates an improving performance in test results that is better than the national trend. Pupils' performances in the tests for seven-year-olds have also shown continual improvement. The inspection found that children make good progress in the reception class. They attain average standards in relation to the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception class in the areas of learning for literacy, mathematics and social skills. A few children exceed these. By year 2 all pupils achieve as well as they should and a significant number are above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. All pupils achieve well through years 3 to 6 and are reaching well above average standards in English and science and above average in mathematics. The emphasis on practical and investigative work alongside high expectations of presentation and the use of reading and writing skills in other subjects has helped to raise standards. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support and often exceed

the expectations of their individual plans. There are significant gaps in older pupils' ICT skills that affect standards in years 5 and 6, and not enough is yet in place to address this.

Pupils' personal qualities are **very good** and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**. Pupils with specific needs are confident and self-assured. Throughout the school there is plenty of opportunity for pupils to work together and by year 6 even those recently arrived show considerable maturity. Attendance levels are satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

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

Teaching is **good** overall. There is much that is very good throughout the school, and particularly in the reception class. Teachers make good use of assessment information both when planning their lessons for the half term but also as the week progresses. Literacy and numeracy lessons are taught well, and the arrangements for grouping pupils by ability work very effectively so that the specific needs of pupils are met. Marking is a strong feature of nearly all teachers' work and pupils are clear about what they need to do to get better. Pupils learn well because there are many very good opportunities in all lessons to share their ideas with each other and the teacher. Teaching assistants are very well organised to give support in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well.

The curriculum is satisfactory. The emphasis on raising standards in literacy and numeracy has reduced the time available to teach physical education. Resources for ICT are insufficient to enable its regular use in lessons, and this hampers pupils' progress.

Pupils are very well cared for and there are effective relationships with parents and the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good**. The headteacher has a very clear view of what she wants for the school and this is shared effectively with all those involved. The governors are active in helping the school achieve its aims and work very well with the headteacher and staff. Statutory requirements are fully met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are pleased. They feel their children are well looked after and the school plays a valuable part in supporting the local community. Pupils like their school very much. They like their teachers and the responsibilities they share to make the school even better.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve standards in ICT.
- Provide more lessons in physical education.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement is good throughout the school, regardless of gender, level of attainment or special educational needs. Overall standards are above average by the time pupils leave the school. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The achievements of children in the reception class are good.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
- Pupils are achieving well in most subjects; standards are well above average in English and science.
- The improvement in the school's average National Curriculum scores in tests for pupils in year 6 is above the national trend.
- Standards in ICT are below average and pupils in years 5 and 6 are not achieving as well as they should.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.5 (16.6)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.7 (15.0)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.2 (16.8)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 25 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. The 2003 results were above average overall in comparison with similar schools. Pupils performed well above average in writing. The underlying improvement is in line with the national trend, with the best gains, over time, being amongst boys. Teacher assessments in science were well above average.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.8 (26.8)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	29.2 (26.6)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.9 (27.0)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 28 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Overall performance in last year's tests was well above the national average and that of similar schools. Eleven-year-olds exceeded the challenging targets for their performance in tests and all pupils made very good gains on their previous attainment. Previous test results have been well below the average of similar schools with fluctuations between subjects in any one year. Test results are now consistent between subjects. Boys have made better gains than girls have. The more able pupils achieved particularly well in English and mathematics. The less able pupils made very good improvement in mathematics and science.

3. Inspection findings confirmed this improving trend throughout the school. Teachers have well placed expectations of pupils based on good knowledge of what they have learnt. Progress is regularly tracked and support is put into place to help pupils meet their targets. The school is successfully raising pupils' self-esteem through a number of strategies, including the regular celebration of achievements. This is having a positive effect on older pupils. The inspection found no clear reason why boys should be achieving at a faster rate than girls in the National Curriculum tests. Boys are very well motivated and serve as good role models for other pupils throughout the school. They respond very positively to working in groups and on problem-solving activities, and have risen to the high expectations the school has of them.
4. Most children start school with standards similar to those expected for their age and firmly consolidate and broaden their skills as they move through the reception class. This is because of the high quality of teaching. The lower attaining children learn well through well chosen games and play, combined with a strong emphasis on developing their vocabulary.
5. There is very good emphasis on developing spoken language in all classes and this helps pupils develop vocabulary that improves their reading and writing abilities. By year 6 pupils have developed very good speaking and listening skills. Reading and writing skills develop well throughout the school. There is more purpose for writing in a range of subjects and much of the writing is above average. Throughout the school, pupils use their reading skills widely and there is a systematic approach to teaching skills that includes sounds and small group reading lessons which focus on comprehension. Pupils in year 6 are likely to exceed the targets for English as well above average numbers are on course to achieve higher levels. They are on course to meet their targets in mathematics and standards are above average. There is a good foundation of reasoning skills and problem-solving in mathematics, established in years 1 and 2, that is built on as pupils move through the school. Pupils are quick to use a range of strategies and have very good mental arithmetic skills. A small but significant group of pupils have recently joined the school in year 6. They are not as secure in using strategies for solving problems and do not recall number facts as quickly as other pupils in the year group. Whilst their progress is good they are unlikely to reach above average standards. Standards in science are well above average; the result of very good teaching of practical and investigative skills.
6. The support for the less able and pupils with special educational needs is very well organised. The teaching assistants are skilled and have a clear idea of what pupils need to learn best. Pupils on the register of special educational needs are given precise targets and there is a high emphasis placed on their self-confidence. This is rewarded through some consistently good progress. The special educational needs co-ordinator, along with teachers, regularly reviews progress and support is very well managed in lessons to ensure that assistants have maximum impact. Pupils of average ability make good progress in years 3 to 6 because of the high expectations that they will achieve above average standards in all subjects. The higher attaining are consistently well challenged to achieve highly in many other subjects.
7. Pupils in years 1 to 4 are making satisfactory progress in ICT skills and are meeting the expectations for their age. Pupils in years 5 and 6 are below average in presentational skills, processing data and control and modelling. Progress is hampered by the lack of regular and easy access to computers and a lack of clarity about where computer skills should be taught alongside other subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and behave very well. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. Pupils other personal qualities are also very good because the school makes good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' very good attitudes to learning and behaviour in the classroom help them to achieve well.

- Pupils have very good relationships with each other; this is the result of the caring ethos, and very good examples set by staff.
- Pupils are confident and very keen to take responsibility because they are taught to value each other.
- Provision for spiritual development has improved since the previous inspection and pupils have a good awareness of each other.

Commentary

8. Pupils are happy, confident and eager to learn. Pupils learn well together in pairs and groups and co-operation is highly effective. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is consistently of a very high standard because of the high expectations. Pupils and parents are confident about the absence of bullying. There have been no exclusions in the last reporting year.
9. The importance that the school places on pupils' personal development is very strong. Teachers encourage pupils' ideas and value their responses in lessons. Older pupils help the younger ones and this contributes to the very good relationships between all in the school. The year 6 pupils are very proud of their responsibilities and carry them out conscientiously. Pupils play harmoniously together and work very well together in groups. Staff give a very positive lead in engendering good relationships, for example, by giving praise and encouragement at every opportunity.
10. Pupils are responsible school citizens and are self-disciplined, thoughtful and sensitive to the needs of others. Adults know the pupils well and the strong rapport is evident in the maturity with which pupils approach their work. Pupils take their responsibilities of living in a community seriously. They are eager to accept responsibility, including their enthusiastic membership of the school council.
11. The spiritual development in the school is good. The assemblies are used well to bring the school together for a period of reflection. There is a well-planned programme that contains a multi-cultural and multi-faith mix of stories and themes. Pupils learn to value each other and their achievements, regardless of gender and disability. There are good links with local Christian churches, whose clergy come into school to take assemblies. Pupils are aware of diversity of cultures through their studies in religious education and geography, and are adequately prepared for life in multi-cultural Britain.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.7%	School data	0.2%
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 is good. Good teaching enables all pupils to make good gains in their learning and achieve well.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good throughout years 1 to 6. The teaching in the reception class is very good. Teaching and learning are good in all subjects where judgements could be made with the exception of ICT where it is satisfactory. Assessment of pupils' work is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers manage their pupils very well and, as a result, pupils work very well both independently and collaboratively.
- Teaching assistants support teachers very well and contribute to the above average standards.
- Where it is available, teachers use assessment information well to adjust work and direct resources.
- Marking of pupils' work is a strong feature and pupils have a good idea of how to improve.
- Teachers plan well for the range of abilities in all their lessons.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 29 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	13	11	5	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.

- Adults have a very clear grasp of the requirements of the Foundation Stage, they are well organised and use the classroom efficiently to create interesting and exciting areas in which pupils can learn. There is a good emphasis on practical activities and games, which make a valuable contribution to the success of children's learning.
- The high proportion of very good teaching is one reason for the school's success. Teachers develop and sustain very productive relationships with pupils; they encourage them, praise them and give them confidence in their abilities. Teachers are very skilful at making the learning enjoyable, whilst at the same time, making sure it is purposeful and rigorous. The lessons are always well balanced, incorporating the very successful approaches to literacy and numeracy teaching. Teaching assistants and support teachers make a big contribution in all lessons; they work closely with individuals and groups of pupils and have a sharp grasp of what pupils need to learn. Teachers base these groupings on assessments of pupils' work, individual targets and discussions with parents and adults. Teachers and teaching assistants have a very good understanding of how to teach English and mathematics effectively and are always seeking ways they can improve their effectiveness.
- Much of the teaching is good or very good because the teachers think carefully about the resources they are to use in lessons and the questions that will set pupils thinking. For example, in mathematics work they set real problems to solve. In English they vary the way the pupils present their work.
- Teachers manage the lessons very well and there are high expectations that pupils will work independently but also productively in groups. For example, in science lessons this leads to some very good learning at a level already well above expectations. In lessons pupils organise themselves quickly and teachers strike just the right balance between directing learning and allowing independence. A feature of the consistently very good teaching is the comments made to pupils during lessons. These are often in the form of additional challenges, emphasising the need to explain clearly using appropriate language to convey understanding. This is a strong feature of mathematics teaching and when combined with quick routines leads to some very effective learning. Some of the marking is very good. Emerging ideas are encouraged, correct vocabulary reinforced, and the teachers give sufficient prompts to help the pupils learn.
- Teachers have a clear idea of what they want to cover and use the time well. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils, are usually offered tasks that are well matched to their needs. In the small number of satisfactory lessons not all groups were given the necessary support to help them learn new skills.

The curriculum

The school ensures that all pupils have a satisfactory range of learning opportunities. It provides them with good opportunities to widen their experiences through extra-curricular activities and a variety of visitors to the school. Resources are adequate and the school is making the best use of limited accommodation space.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Literacy is well integrated into other subjects.
- Investigation and problem-solving activities support independent learning well.
- Older pupils do not use ICT regularly enough to support their learning.
- Not enough time is devoted to PE.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good so that they achieve well.
- Extra-curricular provision is good and an important means of extending pupils' interests and learning outside lessons.

Commentary

17. The school has maintained the strengths since the last inspection and the requirements of all National Curriculum subjects and religious education are met. The impact and coverage of the curriculum is monitored regularly by the headteacher and senior managers. Development is sensibly prioritised and the curriculum is innovative and enjoyable. The school's aim to make learning meaningful for all pupils is well reflected in lesson planning and teaching. Investigation and learning from first-hand experience feature strongly in English, mathematics and science. Enquiry and research are an integral part of history and geography, and all subjects provide good opportunities for speaking and listening, reading and writing. The development of writing skills in other subjects has been a priority of the school, and has been very successful in raising standards.
18. There is satisfactory equality of access and opportunity. The number of computers is close to average but these are not of a consistent quality and are not easily accessible to help pupils in their learning. The time spent in literacy and numeracy activities is above that typically found. In the short term this has benefited achievement through the school. This has meant less time available to teach all areas of physical education to older pupils.
19. The school considers carefully the needs of different groups of pupils who have not yet reached the nationally expected level in English and mathematics subjects and provides them with good additional support. Planning in the mixed age class is good and thorough assessment enables the teacher to plan work that is well matched to abilities. Teaching assistants understand the difficulties of those with special educational needs well and use different strategies and resources to help them in lessons. Higher attaining pupils are encouraged to develop their skills, often through homework. The focus on the individual pupil and their needs results in all being fully included in the life of the school.
20. The pupils benefit from a good range of clubs and activities and these are very well attended. Additional sporting activities are very much appreciated, giving pupils many chances to demonstrate and develop their talents. These opportunities make a good contribution to pupils' learning and personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Care for pupils is very good and ensures that pupils feel happy, safe and confident in school. The guidance they are given as a result of monitoring their work is very good and they are effectively involved in the work of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Health and safety and child protection procedures are effective.
- Pupils are confident that teachers will help them.
- Staff know pupils' needs very well and as a result give them very good guidance.
- There are very good procedures to help settle in children starting school for the first time.
- There are good systems to involve pupils by seeking and acting on their views.

Commentary

21. Pupils' welfare is taken very seriously. Systems to ensure their care have been strengthened since the time of the last inspection. All policies and procedures are regularly reviewed to make sure they are still suitable. Regular site surveys ensure that everything is in good working order and safe for pupils to use. All staff are aware of child protection procedures.
22. Parents are particularly pleased with the way staff create a friendly atmosphere and strong sense of community. They say that as a result their children love school. Pupils are very well known and this ensures that their personal and academic needs are met very well, for example by giving them extra adult support, more challenging work or adapting resources to their physical needs. Pupils' achievements are tracked to ensure they are doing as well as they should and learning targets are used to help them understand how they can improve their work. This encourages them all to do their best. However, the good tracking systems have not yet been fully implemented in relation to the work of pupils identified as being either gifted or talented.
23. Children settle quickly when they start in the reception class because of very good links with the pre-school and very good induction arrangements. These allow staff to get to know them well and meet their individual needs.
24. Pupils of all ages are overwhelmingly confident that their teachers will help them. Pupils' opinions about the work of the school are regularly sought. They get good opportunities to make their views known through the school council and are pleased that their ideas are taken into account to improve the school. For example, their concerns about the quality of school meals were addressed by involving them in the setting up of the new dinner arrangements, with which they are very pleased.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's partnership with parents is good and contributes significantly to pupils' good achievements. Links with the community and other local schools are very good and provide strong support for pupils' development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The communication with parents is very good and keeps them fully informed.
- The pupils' annual progress reports are very good.
- The very good links between the school, the local community and other local schools benefit pupils' learning.

Commentary

25. A particular strength of the partnership with parents is the very good communication between the school and home. This includes high quality weekly newsletters, governors' newsletters, a school web site, monthly opportunities for parent consultations, regular curriculum information and willingness on the part of all staff to see parents informally to sort out any concerns or worries. The school's prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents are very informative and contain all of the required information. Annual written reports give parents very good information about how well their children are doing and what they have to work on to improve. Just occasionally the learning targets that are shared in the annual reports are not specific enough to guide parents when they are helping their children.
26. Parents are very positive about the school and are particularly pleased that their children are expected to work hard, given regular homework and access to a wide range of extra curricular activities. They are pleased with how dedicated the staff are to the academic and social needs of their children and feel this helps them to make good progress. Parents are very well involved when their children first start school and this forges strong links. There is a high level of parental support for the school through the friends' association, which is very active in organising many social and fundraising activities.
27. Very good links with the local community and particularly the churches, contribute positively to pupils' personal development. Parents are encouraged to take part in the local 'Learning Together' workshops, and this is helping them to gain confidence in supporting their child's learning. Expertise and experience is shared very well amongst local schools and benefits pupils' achievements, for example by providing able mathematicians with work that really challenges their abilities, and opportunities for team competition in various sports.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Governance of the school is very good. The leadership of the school by the headteacher is very good. Leadership of other key staff is good. The effectiveness of the management of the school is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher and the governing body have a very clear vision for the school that is central to the whole school's effectiveness and improvement.
- The school plans very well for future developments.
- The monitoring of teaching and standards is rigorous and leads to improvement.
- Morale amongst staff is high.
- The school operates very smoothly; financial control and administrative procedures are effective.

Commentary

28. Leadership is committed to balancing the personal and social needs of pupils in a rural community with a good quality primary curriculum that focuses on high achievements and high standards. There is a very clear vision that embraces a range of teaching styles, along with high expectations of pupils. The headteacher is well supported by the deputy headteacher and all adults involved in the school are continually striving to improve it; this is reflected in the rapid improvement in standards. As a result the school has made very good improvement since the last inspection and the low aspirations of some pupils are being overcome.
29. The governing body does its job very well. It is very well led by a chair of governors who keeps a good focus on essential issues. Governors are supportive of the school whilst being objectively critical. Their determination that the school will succeed is a major strength of school leadership.

Governors are well informed through regular visits to the school and they share their findings openly with parents through high quality termly newsletters. Governors play a full part in the strategic management of the school and they have responded well to the findings of the previous inspection.

30. The school improvement plan is a very helpful document and it informs all staff clearly of their role in raising standards. The effective consultation with staff and the depth of thinking given to issues by the governors all combine to enhance the high quality of improvement planning. Subject co-ordinators monitor performance in their subjects well and swiftly address any areas for development. The deputy headteacher fulfils his responsibilities effectively, working in partnership with the headteacher. The successful management of English and mathematics are leading to improvements in lesson planning, marking of pupils' work and the quality of assessment.
31. Very effective monitoring systems are in place and in particular the school is making very good use of assessment information to track pupils' progress. Importantly, the school is using the information about how well pupils are doing to identify those who may need more support. This information is also being used to set realistic targets for all pupils and this is having an impact on how well pupils learn.
32. The school reviews its performance regularly and has very good systems in place for evaluation. Performance management systems for staff are fully in place and the headteacher ensures this directly relates to improvements in the quality of teaching. Attendance on a good range of courses leads to the effective continuing professional development of all staff, which is helping to improve teachers' expertise.
33. The headteacher is very aware of pressures on staff and she supports them very well, for example by allocating them time to carry out management tasks. All adults work well as a team and the school has few areas of weakness. The commitment that all staff show to the inclusion of all pupils, regardless of background or level of attainment, contributes strongly to the very good ethos. There is effective liaison between the school and key outside agencies to make sure there is a co-ordinated approach to helping children with special educational needs.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	399,019
Total expenditure	376,272
Expenditure per pupil	2,323

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	10,000
Balance carried forward to the next	22,747

34. The school's finances are managed securely and there is a clear overview of the strategic use of financial and other resources to secure improvement. The governors take good care to see that they get good value within the constraints of a tight budget. The above average carry over has been necessary to maintain staffing levels this academic year during a period of declining pupil numbers; a balanced budget has been set for the current financial year.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

35. The overall provision for children in the reception class is very good. It has improved because the well-planned curriculum now provides a wide range of challenging and stimulating activities that are well matched to children's needs. The careful tracking of children's development is now a regular feature of the adults' routines. Children join the reception class with attainment that is broadly average and they achieve well because teaching is very good. The very good links with the playgroup means that the transition to school is smooth. Parents are provided with clear information about starting school. The leadership is strong and the shared responsibility for teaching the class, by two teachers, is very well managed. The reception class is temporarily based in a smaller classroom whilst a new extension is built. Although it is cramped, this accommodation is satisfactory and does not diminish the provision.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths

- The daily routines offer security and lead children towards increasing independence.
- There is very good support provided for all children.

Commentary

36. All children are well cared for and supported. They are well used to class routines and put up hands to answer questions. They are beginning to concentrate on their various activities and quickly learn the correct way to behave. When necessary, adults correct the children firmly but gently, supporting their confidence. They expect the children to be responsible and take every opportunity to encourage this. For example, children take the registers to the school office and understand that they have to take turns to do this. Staff form good relationships with the children, ensuring they are happy and relaxed and so benefit fully from activities. The high expectations of all adults and the opportunities given to the children through very good teaching enable them to make good progress in this area. Many children are expected to exceed the early learning goals in this area of learning by the end of the school year.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Every opportunity is used to develop the children's language skills, and teaching is very good overall.
- Strong emphasis is placed on the teaching of sounds, forming letters correctly and starting to read.

Commentary

37. The majority of children are on course to attain the early learning goals by the end of reception year, with a small but significant number exceeding this. Children develop speaking and listening skills well through many opportunities in the daily class routines. They enjoy sharing their

weekend news and listen carefully to one another's news. The adults give many good opportunities for them to ask each other questions during activities.

38. Very good attention is given to the development of writing skills. The very good teaching is characterised by knowledgeable adults and well-organised and enjoyable activities. Teachers are good role models as they write for the children and there are opportunities for children to practise correct letter formation, for example writing in wet sand, using play dough to make letters or by using an appropriate program on the computer. Higher attaining children are beginning to write independently and enjoy these activities, such as when they write about what they have been doing at the weekend.
39. The development of reading skills also has a high priority. Teaching sounds is regular and very effectively reinforced through songs, stories and movements. For example, children learning the letter 'j' enjoyed the song 'Jelly in the Bowl' and tried hard to think of other words that began with the same sound. All children are encouraged to take books home to share with their parents. Careful records are kept of each child's development so that valuable help can be given to move children forward. There are many opportunities for children to listen to stories and to enjoy looking at books.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good quality teaching emphasises the correct use of mathematical vocabulary.
- Adults question children very well and use a wide variety of activities to support learning.

Commentary

40. Achievement is good and by the end of reception most children will be at the expected level in this area. Adults take every opportunity to develop the children's mathematical skills; always trying to draw out and encourage mathematical understanding. For example, they help them to count the words in the title of the book that they are reading or to count dinner tickets at the beginning of the day. The mathematical language of number and shape is clearly displayed in many areas of the classroom and its use is a regular part of adults' conversations with children.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a wide range of activities, which are imaginative and enjoyable.
- Children are encouraged to find out about and reflect upon the world around them.

Commentary

41. Good planning and teaching successfully gives children valuable experience of finding out about and appreciating the world around them. A visit to a large town park was used well to develop children's appreciation of sights and sounds. Children confidently use the computers in the classroom and know how to control the mouse to write letters when using the program called 'Alphabet Soup'. During the inspection, children made jelly when learning the letter 'j' and were given good opportunities to consider where would be the best place for the jelly to set. A range of activities encourage the children to use all their senses, and opportunities are used well to remind the children about healthy foods such as when they are having their morning snacks.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

42. It was not possible to make a judgement about provision in this area of learning because there were not enough observations made. There is a wide range of planned opportunities both outdoor and indoor. No outdoor play was seen during the inspection but the provision for this is good, with a secure outdoor play area and a variety of activities available.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

43. It was not possible to make a judgement about provision in this area of learning because there were not enough observations made. The good range of activities provides children with good opportunities for developing their creative skills. Children's artwork is attractively displayed and they have recently enjoyed making winter pictures using a computer program. Children enjoy singing and join in enthusiastically and tunefully.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and consequently achievement is good – standards are above average by the end of year 2 and well above average in year 6.
- Teachers develop the pupils' speaking and listening skills with challenging questions.
- The use of reading and writing skills across the curriculum is very good.
- Leadership is very good and encourages effective teaching and learning.
- The marking of pupils' work helps children to understand how they can improve.

Commentary

44. Standards are much higher than at the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of good classroom support and carefully planned additional tuition. Pupils' progress is monitored well as a result of teachers using good assessment procedures. Where and when progress gives cause for concern pupils receive good additional teaching to support them to get back on track.
45. All pupils are encouraged to discuss in groups their responses to teachers' questions and this enhances their speaking and listening skills. Pupils are also regularly encouraged to discuss their ideas in pairs before being invited to share these with the whole class. This technique is used in many other subject areas and it is effectively helping to build children's confidence with the result that most are at ease in expressing opinions clearly to a wider audience.
46. Throughout the school pupils are effectively taught to write for a range of purposes. As a result boys' writing skills have developed well. They are given many opportunities to write in most other subject areas. For example, in mathematics pupils in years 5 and 6 are encouraged to write down written explanations of the strategies they use to work out answers to mathematical problems. Pupils write at length in geography and history. For example, when studying the rain forests they use a wide range of sources to gather information and when it comes to recording this they present their findings in their own words. Pupils throughout the school spell and present their work well; teachers have high expectations and teach handwriting and spelling skills effectively.
47. A very strong focus on teaching pupils to understand the significance of and the correspondence between letters and sounds is contributing to the good progress they make learning to read and

spell unfamiliar words. They also achieve well in their reading because teachers promote skills methodically. They take books home regularly and are given adequate times to read to adults in school. Recent improvements in the organisation of teaching reading in small groups, the careful selection of texts and careful preparation of questions has significantly improved achievement in reading skills.

48. Teachers bring good subject knowledge to their teaching. The very positive attitudes of all pupils towards learning means teachers have confidence in using new skills and sharing ideas with each other. The national literacy strategy has been appropriately adapted to support effective learning. Teachers use assessment well to check pupils' reading, writing and spelling skills and this is another factor leading to good achievement. Their assessments are recorded and used to set the targets pupils are expected to achieve by the end of each year. Older children in particular take these targets very seriously and feel they are helping them to do better.
49. English is very well managed with the result that the subject has improved well since the last inspection. The co-ordinator gives helpful comments following her lesson observations or following analysis of test papers. A strong feature of the leadership has been the successful development of marking. Often of high quality, marking indicates clearly to pupils how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve further. This has a positive impact on children's achievement.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

50. Literacy has been well developed through pupils using their writing skills to support work in other subjects. Pupils are successfully encouraged to express their thoughts and ideas in writing in a range of different curriculum subjects, such as religious education, history and geography. There are frequent opportunities for them to participate in group or class discussions. These give them valuable practice in expressing their views clearly and concisely and provide good preparation for them to transfer their opinions and thoughts to their writing.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The improvement since the last inspection has been good.
- Teaching is good and all pupils are achieving well; there is a very strong emphasis on problem-solving and the speedy recall of facts.
- Standards are above average throughout the school.
- There is not enough use of ICT skills in the older classes to extend graph work.

Commentary

51. There are several reasons why standards have improved rapidly since the previous inspection. The co-ordinator gives good leadership and has closely monitored standards in partnership with the headteacher. Any areas of potential weakness have been swiftly addressed. For example, the school has looked at teaching methods to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met. The teaching staff work effectively as a team and know their pupils very well. This means that all pupils are offered tasks that are well matched to their level of attainment. The good quality of the teaching and learning is another positive feature and a good improvement on the previous inspection.
52. A strong feature of the lessons seen was the way that pupils were encouraged to explain their strategies. For example, in a very good lesson in year 4, pupils used whiteboards to record multiplication facts in response to quick-fire questions. The teacher frequently asked individuals

to explain how they reached the answer. Consequently, other pupils learned new strategies. In a year 5 lesson, pupils used multiplication to check division sums, again explaining their strategies. A very successful initiative where the pupils have a *friend* means that each pupil can ask their *friend* for help and agree an answer. Work in books shows that different tasks are set for groups of pupils of different abilities. More able pupils are set challenging work. Marking is good and sometimes very good. It is frequent and is an effective method for the teacher to monitor progress and to make pupils aware of their own learning. Pupils have their own specific small targets that they refer to in lessons, and the comments in marking refer to these.

53. A major factor in the successful learning is the ability of the teachers to communicate their enthusiasm to the pupils, to stimulate them and make the lessons fun. The pupils enjoy what they do and, in consequence, work hard for their teachers. For example, in a year 6 lesson, pupils first worked quickly on a range of problems using imperial coinage before creating conversion charts built around one piece of information. Careful lesson planning reinforces this successful approach, identifying those pupils who need additional practical experiences and giving them additional adult or teacher support to ensure this is successful. There are high expectations and the challenge, support and questioning all contribute to the very good achievement shown by the pupils. All lessons have a good pace and resources are used effectively to move them along. Teaching assistants are used very well to help individuals whilst the teacher gives undivided attention to another group.
54. Assessment is used well by teachers and they react quickly to address any uncertainties. For example, in an exercise designed to provide practice in multiplying decimals the teacher recognised that the pupils were having problems and through a good level of discussion, in which the process was reviewed practically, developed their understanding.
55. An experienced co-ordinator encourages staff to reflect on practice and she provides good leadership particularly in her emphasis on practical work and problem-solving.

Mathematics across the curriculum

56. The cross-curricular use of mathematics is satisfactory. Pupils are given the opportunity to develop their skills in science and geography. There are some good experiences that extend pupils' writing, but ICT skills are under used.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average by the end of year 2 and year 6 and pupils achieve well because the quality of teaching is very good.
- The pupils have many opportunities to investigate for themselves and this contributes to the high standards.
- The subject is very well led and the co-ordinator provides staff with very good guidance.

Commentary

57. Pupils achieve well in the subject and very well in investigative science because teachers have high expectations for pupils' achievement. Teachers know exactly what they need to teach because they have detailed assessments of pupils' progress. This has served to reduce the underachievement of boys and more able pupils, whilst improving the support in lessons for less able pupils.

58. The experimental work in science excites pupils and because it is very well taught means that all pupils develop a good understanding of scientific investigation. In a year 4 lesson, pupils were engrossed in planning a fair test to find out about friction. Their teacher had introduced the subject very well by talking about what shoes would be suitable for sprinting and this made a good link for the pupils with science in everyday life. Boys and girls work together sensibly to collect evidence and record measurements. Their scientific knowledge improves because they are consistently taught to use correct vocabulary. Consequently pupils develop confidence in their own use of scientific terms to explain their findings. For example, pupils in year 6 are very good at synthesising their ideas and relating these to regularly occurring events. In lessons, the clear explanations by teachers enable pupils to have a good understanding of what they are learning.
59. The provision and the standards in science have improved substantially since the last inspection and this represents very good improvement. Investigative science is now central to science teaching and a key factor in why standards have risen. Pupils make satisfactory use of computers to search for information and to present findings as graphs or databases. Older pupils have little experience of using computers to measure and monitor information and to predict events. This diminishes what they can achieve. The co-ordinator provides strong leadership, monitoring the quality of planning, teaching and learning. Her specialist knowledge and enthusiasm means that she plays a key role in developing teachers' confidence in teaching science.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average; they are improving in years 1 to 4 because pupils regularly use their ICT skills in other subjects.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils in years 5 and 6 to extend and develop their skills.
- The development plan is not sufficiently robust to drive standards forwards.

Commentary

60. Standards are beginning to rise in years 1 to 4 but are below average in year 6. Older pupils have not had enough experience of each element of the ICT programme and have too much to catch up, with insufficient hardware to meet their needs. There are regular opportunities in years 1 and 2 for pupils to use the full range of ICT equipment and standards are in line with expectations. Pupils in years 3 and 4 are achieving satisfactorily and meeting expectations for their age. The teaching seen was satisfactory overall. Skills are being taught methodically and integrated into other subjects. Teaching assistants make a good contribution, being knowledgeable and also keen to learn how the skills can be applied.
61. Pupils in years 3 and 4 are generally competent in a range of skills including the use of the Internet. Pupils in years 5 and 6 have regular access to the computer suite but these opportunities are largely used to strengthen rather than extend their skills. The pupils have very little opportunity to consolidate newly acquired skills. The computers in their classrooms are unreliable or cannot run the same programs as those they have learnt on. Planning and guidelines are in place, however they do not take into account adequately the wide range of competencies and skills of the older pupils. Year 6 pupils competently use the Internet for research and are developing their presentational skills adequately through their use of word processors. ICT in this way is being used effectively to support English, geography and history. They have had some experience of spreadsheets, although could not recall how they had set up the procedures.

62. At the last inspection standards and teaching were judged satisfactory overall. Resources have improved and the creation of a suite has done much to improve access and teaching. A positive start was made in providing appropriate training with the new computers, but this has not kept abreast of recent developments in the software available for older pupils and standards have declined. Satisfactory systems are in place for monitoring standards and pupils' progress, but these are not yet being evaluated. There is generally a lack of co-ordination about taking the subject forward. The development plan provides indications of what the co-ordinator is seeking to improve but does not set out clearly the action to be taken to bring this about. There is little knowledge of any teacher's shortfall in skills, and plans for improving expertise are insecure.
63. Evidence indicates that statutory requirements for ICT are being met, but that the weaknesses in resources and leadership are impeding progress. The governors are aware of the situation with ICT. There is an assigned governor to monitor the use of ICT within the school, who works regularly with pupils in year 6. Four years ago the governors invested appropriately in resources and ICT training but ongoing investment and development have not been maintained.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

64. Provision is improving but is unsatisfactory for older pupils. The co-ordinator is working hard to build up a library of software that will support the use of ICT across the curriculum. Teachers exercise flexibility in their planning to incorporate ICT skills but this is not systematic. In displays in classes and around the school, and in pupils' work stored on disc, there is little evidence to show that ICT is being used effectively to support learning in art, mathematics and science.

HUMANITIES

65. There was no opportunity to see **geography** being taught during the inspection. As a result it is not possible to make a judgement on provision in this subject. A sample of work from pupils in years 1 to 6 was seen. Standards at the end of year 2 and year 6 are at least satisfactory and sometimes better. Pupils learn from a good range of experiences and achieve well. For example, year 6 write at length when exploring rain forests, producing high quality work. The subject is managed well. Outings to places with special geographical interest and residential visits add depth to the curriculum.

Religious Education

Provision in religious education (RE) is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of years 2 and 6 because of effective teaching and a good curriculum.
- Leadership of the subject is good.

Commentary

66. A key factor in the improved standards is the emphasis placed on studying world religions and comparing these with Christianity. Looking at pupils' work and talking with them shows that they have good knowledge of some of the main religions of the world, and make good links between the religious ideas of different faiths. For example, pupils in year 2 know that worship is a feature of all religions that they have studied and that religions have their own 'holy books' such as the Bible for Christians, the Qur'an for Moslems and the Torah for those of the Jewish faith.
67. Older pupils show good understanding of Christianity and talk about what worship and religious festivals mean to Christians. They have used the Internet to research the lives of St. James and St. Bernadette, which has provided good opportunities for independent study. Year 4 pupils were

keenly interested as they watched images of the Muslims' annual pilgrimage to Makkah and this enthusiasm enhanced their learning.

68. The lessons observed during the inspection and looking at pupils' work across the school show that teaching is good. Teachers have a sensitive approach that gives pupils the confidence to share views and ideas. The teachers place good emphasis on valuing others and helping pupils to recognise the importance of family and friends in their studies. Teachers' good subject knowledge, well-led discussions and suitably targeted questions extend pupils' speaking and listening skills alongside their knowledge and understanding of RE.
69. The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership and has put together a portfolio of pupils' work that provides a useful resource for teachers. She has also given good guidance on assessment, which is now firmly in place and shows the progress each pupil is making. This is a further improvement since the previous inspection.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' good use of resources, including visits and visitors, makes lessons interesting and helps engage pupils' interest.
- Pupils are encouraged to use their writing skills and this enhances their achievement.

Commentary

70. Pupils achieve appropriately, reaching average standards in year 2 and year 6. The quality of their work is enhanced by the effective application of their good literacy skills. For example, pupils in year 2 use reading and writing well when adding to a time line their own accounts of significant events that occurred during the time Florence Nightingale was working in the Crimea. In year 6 pupils drafted thoughtful questions to ask visiting speakers about their experiences of time spent in Hatherleigh during the Second World War. The pupils took appropriate notes that they used later to write imaginatively about living during the war.
71. The teaching is good. Teachers use resources effectively and these help capture the interest of the pupils and contribute significantly to their good learning. For example, in a very good year 6 lesson the teacher gathered exact amounts of rationed food such as sugar, butter and sweets to give pupils a graphic understanding of the hardships of rationing on the population during the Second World War.
72. The topics are well supplemented by visitors to school and visits by pupils to places of interest away from school. The subject is well led and satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

73. Art and design, design and technology (DT), music, and physical education (PE) were sampled. Insufficient work was seen to make secure judgements about standards and achievement in art and design and DT.
74. Standards in the year 6 lesson for **DT** were average. The **art and design** work seen suggests that pupils receive an adequate curriculum. Pupils have good opportunities to experience fabrics, weaving, painting, observational drawing, printing and sculpture work. They use sketchbooks to collect and explore ideas. These help teachers monitor the improvement in each pupil's work.

75. One **music** lesson was observed along with collective worship, two hymn practices and a choir practice. Overall standards in singing are at least satisfactory throughout the school. Good teaching resulted in enthusiastic and accurate singing and an improvement in overall performance by the choir of mixed year 3, 4, 5 and 6 pupils. In a very good lesson, pupils in year 4 increased their skills at reading music whilst playing descant recorders.
76. One **physical education** lesson was observed. This was a well taught lesson to year 3 and 6 pupils who were not in the choir. It made a good contribution to pupils' social and moral development, providing plenty of good quality opportunities for older pupils to teach younger pupils. Year 6 pupils' netball skills were consolidated but working with younger pupils restricted their attack and defence strategies. The school has adequate plans and guidelines for all areas of physical education. Pupils in years 1 and 2 have one and a half hours a week which is just sufficient to cover what is expected. A scrutiny of the weekly timetables for pupils in years 3 to 6 shows considerable variation between classes in the amount of time given to PE. Older pupils do not experience enough regular PE lessons and some pupils in year 6 miss PE lessons entirely because of their musical commitments. Whilst there are inter-school team games and extra-curricular sport, the provision is not uniform for older pupils. The pupils observed at play were healthy and fitness levels appear good generally but the lack of regular teaching diminishes the overall quality of the curriculum the school offers its pupils.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

77. The caring school ethos supports pupils' personal development. Teachers provide good opportunities to share feelings and to discuss different topics. These sessions help pupils to build confidence and to have respect for themselves and each other. An established school council gives pupils from all classes opportunities to help improve the school. The council is influential in encouraging awareness of environmental matters and helping staff manage play times. These experiences serve as a good introduction to citizenship skills. As pupils get older, teachers give them increasing responsibility, preparing them very well for the next stage of their education.

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	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
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	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	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	3
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).

