

INSPECTION REPORT

HEMYOCK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Hemyock, Cullompton

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113097

Headteacher: Mrs Gill Peters

Lead inspector: Helena McVeigh

Dates of inspection: 10 - 12 November 2003

Inspection number: 260910

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:	144
School address:	Parklands Hemyock Cullompton
Postcode:	EX15 3RY
Telephone number:	01823 680240
Fax number:	01823 680657
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Corinne Matthews
Date of previous inspection:	19 / 10 / 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Hemyock is a small village school. Most of its 144 pupils come from the nearby village of Hemyock and the surrounding rural area. There have been increasing numbers of children who joined the school at times other than in the Reception class 1 or Year 1— the proportion is above the national average. Nearly all the pupils are of White-British origin (99 per cent) and one per cent are of mixed ethnic origin. No pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is around one half of the national average. Around 12 per cent of the pupils have special needs, which is below average. There are no pupils with statements of special educational need, but several children who present quite challenging behaviour.

Pupils come from a variety of social backgrounds, with some being very advantaged, but, on the whole, they represent the national average picture in terms of socioeconomic indicators.

The attainment of pupils on entry to the school has changed since the last inspection, when it was judged above average. There are several very capable pupils and fewer than average with special educational needs, but, overall, the attainment of the intake is in line with the national average.

The school was awarded Investors in People in July 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
32056	Helena McVeigh	Lead inspector	Mathematics, science and the foundation stage
9744	Peter Brown	Lay inspector	
22790	Mary Clennett	Team inspector	Information and communication technology, art, music, physical education, design and technology
18346	Rod Bristow	Team inspector	English, history, geography, and religious education and provision for pupils with special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates

Demeter House
Station Road
Cambridge
CB1 2RS

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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	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	11
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	31

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Hemyock is a very successful school. Pupils are taught well; they make very good progress and attain high standards by the time they leave. The school's ethos of caring, respect and a desire to learn is promoted well by all staff, under the very good leadership of the headteacher and governing body. The school is an integral part of village life and the partnership with parents and links with the community are strong. It provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The very good progress made by pupils and the high standards they attain by Year 6 in most subjects
- Pupils' very positive attitudes, behaviour and willingness to take responsibility
- Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and adults, are a strength
- The very good start that pupils make in the Reception class
- The very good leadership of the headteacher and governing body
- The strong links and good communication with parents and the community
- The most capable Year 2 pupils are not currently achieving high enough standards in writing, mathematics and science
- There is not enough regular systematic monitoring of lessons or of pupils' work

Improvement has been very good since the last inspection. The key issues have been addressed effectively and standards, which were good at that time, have risen further.

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	A	A*	A
mathematics	B	B	A*	A
science	A	A	A	A

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

Pupils' achievement is very good overall. They make a good start in the Reception class where provision for all areas of learning is very good and the children are well on track to reach, or exceed in some cases, the expected goals for their age. Progress in personal and social development is particularly strong, from what is sometimes a very low starting point.

Progress in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory and standards are in line with what is expected by the time children start Year 3. However, the most capable pupils are not achieving as well as they could in writing, mathematics and science. Despite this, these able pupils make very good progress along with their peers during Years 3 to 6 and attain very high standards. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) are supported effectively and they make good progress.

Results in the National Curriculum tests for the end of Year 6 have generally been above or well above average and this year in English and mathematics they were in the top five per cent in the country. However, the number of pupils tested each year is fairly small and year-on-year fluctuations are inevitable. There is no significant difference between the achievement of girls and boys.

Pupils are making good progress in most subjects, including information and communication technology (ICT), music, history, physical education and religious education. Their speaking and listening skills are developed particularly well. Pupils listen attentively to each other and speak aloud with clarity and confidence, both in class and in front of the whole school during assemblies.

Pupils' attitudes towards school and their personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good. Relationships and the genuine concern that pupils show for each other are real strengths. Their good attendance and very good behaviour and punctuality contribute significantly to the standards achieved.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. The curriculum is broad and balanced and enriched by a good range of extra-curricular activities, including sports and clubs such as 'books and buns'. There is a strong focus on music in the school and an increasing emphasis on creativity. **Teaching is good** overall and often very good, particularly in the foundation stage (Reception class). The teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.

The school grounds have been used well to provide a stimulating environment for the children, who really appreciate them. The classrooms, though, are nearly all too small, which sometimes inhibits learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The headteacher has moved the school forward well and there is a very clear focus for where improvements are needed. The governing body is extremely supportive, knowledgeable and makes a significant contribution. Finances are managed well.

Subject co-ordinators are effective in most respects. Because of the size of the school, each teacher has several responsibilities, which is demanding, and little time to monitor what is going on. In general, there is not enough regular monitoring of lessons or of pupils' work.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

This is strength. Most parents are very positive about the school. Communication is good. The newly introduced 'to-and-fro' books are used to good effect. The parents, teachers and friends association (PTFA) makes a significant contribution, financially and in other ways to the life of the school.

Nearly all pupils enjoy coming to school — 'it is wicked' enthused one boy. They take responsibility eagerly, for example as buddies or on the school council.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The school is already very effective. In order to improve even further, the most important things the school should do are:

- Review the way that writing, mathematics and science are taught to Years 1 and 2 to ensure that the most capable pupils are enabled to achieve the highest standards.
- Establish a culture in which there are regular classroom observations by the headteacher and co-ordinators.
- To introduce the systematic and regular scrutiny of pupils' work.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils have a good start in the Reception class and all, including boys and girls and those with special needs, achieve very well by Year 6. Standards in most subjects are in line with those expected nationally by Year 2, apart from writing which is well below. By Year 6, standards are above, or well above, average in most subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Progress in the Reception class is good in all areas of learning.
- Standards are high in most subjects by Year 6.
- Writing standards are too low in Years 1 and 2, although they are above average by Year 6.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well.
- Pupils' speaking and listening skills are good.
- The most capable Year 2 pupils are not achieving as well as they could in mathematics and science.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.3 (17.0)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	12.7 (14.0)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.5 (16.7)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 22 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	30.4 (28.7)	26.8(27.0)
Mathematics	30.4 (27.9)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	30.9 (30.1)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 23 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. Pupils start school with a wide range of skills and experiences even though most have attended some form of pre-school. Their social skills are poorly developed in some cases. They make good progress in a short time and are well on their way to achieving or exceeding the goals for the end of the Reception year.
2. The very good, well planned provision in the Reception/ Year 1 class establishes good habits of reading, early writing and numeracy, as well as developing personal qualities, creative and physical skills. The children are very well prepared in the first two classes for their personal and social development. This good preparation reaps huge rewards as the children get older, where they make more obvious and significant progress in the academic subjects.

3. In most respects pupils make satisfactory progress through Years 1 and 2. However, the work seen confirms the external test results which show that pupils' writing is well below what it could be, both in terms of presentation (handwriting) and content. The school has recognised this as a weakness. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to write 'at length'. Also, the most capable pupils (around three or four pupils) are not being presented with very challenging work in mathematics and science, which explains why there have been few level 3s in the national tests in these subjects. The way that the curriculum is organised in Year 1/ 2 is a contributory factor here (see paragraph 74). In contrast, pupils are given plenty of opportunities to talk aloud and at length, to which they respond well. Some excellent examples were seen during the Remembrance Day assembly when all pupils, including those with special needs, spoke with clarity and confidence about their relatives' experiences in the war.
4. During Years 3 to 6, pupils make very good progress and achieve very well in nearly all their subjects. By Year 6 standards are well above average in English, mathematics, science and above average in many other subjects such as religious education, ICT, music, physical education, history and art.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good. Pupils arrive punctually to school and their attendance is good. These features contribute in a significant way to the positive atmosphere in the school and the high standards that pupils achieve.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils display a very positive attitude to learning.
- Relationships between pupils, and with adults, are very good.
- Many opportunities exist for pupils to display initiative and take responsibility.
- Behaviour within lessons, and outside the classroom, is nearly always very good.
- Attendance and punctuality are good.

Commentary

5. Pupils display very positive attitudes to learning and clearly enjoy coming to school. Their response to the questionnaires was mainly very positive and they spoke enthusiastically to the inspection team about their school. They participate well in the school's wide range of extra-curricular activities, such as the gym, netball and football clubs. Pupils of all ages are attentive and concentrate well in lessons and whole-school gatherings. They relate very well to each other and to all teaching and support staff. They collaborate very well in lessons, as seen when pairs of Reception children worked together to identify and correct mistakes in a number sequence. Behaviour throughout the school is very good, because of the consistent way that staff implement the behaviour policy. Good use is made of rewards such as the stickers, certificates and of the sanctions through the 'red slips'. Exclusions are extremely rare and only used in extreme cases (see table below). Bullying and other forms of oppressive behaviour are virtually unknown, but the school has developed appropriate procedures to counter any problems that might arise.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
142	1	0
2	0	0

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

6. The school is very effective in encouraging pupils to take initiative and responsibility. Pupils of all ages participate in a democratically elected school council. Many pupils act as buddies, providing well-received pastoral support to other children, including those new to the school. Class monitors are given specific responsibilities for registers, etc., and older pupils take responsibility for the organisation of fund-raising activities.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2002/3 (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.9
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.1
National data	0.4

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

7. Attendance at the school has for the past few years been consistently better than the national average, although there was a slight drop last year. Pupils arrive punctually, which reflects their enthusiasm for school life. Parents and carers encourage regular attendance at the school, although a small minority disrupt their children's education by taking them on holidays during term time.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development has improved since the last inspection and is now very good.

- The personal, social and emotional development of pupils in the Reception/ Year 1 class is very good.
 - A good programme is planned for the development of pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development.
 - Religious education plays an important part in the development of pupils' spiritual development.
8. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is now very good. From an early age, pupils are encouraged to explore the beauty of the world around them and to share their feelings. For example, children in the Reception/ Year 1 class shrieked with delight as they blew bubbles. A child showed a genuine concern that one of his peers- a 'shopkeeper'- was not having many 'customers'. Children are encouraged to observe and delight in the natural world, for example, the birds feeding outside the classroom and nesting in the bird box. The ethos of the school creates a climate in which pupils' spirituality can flourish. Pupils respectfully and sincerely bow their heads in prayer during assemblies. There were some lovely examples of

respect and concern for matters beyond the here and now during the remembrance assembly, when pupils told stories about their relatives and how they survived the war years; for example, the story 'I am very proud of my Grandad'.

9. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. All adults in the school are good role models and help pupils to learn the difference between right and wrong. During lessons, pupils are reminded how their actions affect other people. Class and school rules are clearly displayed and known, even by the small number of pupils who find them hard to follow. Pupils care for each other, and help to resolve conflicts, as seen during the playtimes when buddies immediately responded to minor disagreements between pupils.
10. The very good provision for pupils' social development permeates the curriculum. Pupils work together well, sharing ideas and helping one another during lessons. The buddy system of playtime friends has been set up to enhance pupils' social and moral development. This strategy is very effective in developing pupils' sense of responsibility towards others and in helping all to feel included and safe. Residential visits and other activities, such as the Exmoor Challenge, also contribute well to older pupils' social development.
11. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. There is a wide range of visits and visitors. Pupils have a very good understanding of their own heritage and gain an appreciation of the arts, particularly music and dance. An awareness of other cultures has been managed sensitively to prepare pupils for their future in a diverse, multicultural society. Pupils develop a good knowledge of the beliefs and customs of Jews and Hindus in religious education lessons. In a Year 4 and 5 lesson on symbolism, pupils related the customs of Islam to their own experiences. Assemblies contribute well to pupils' cultural experiences whether celebrating Diwali, Easter or Christmas. The school has established a strong link with another in Africa and children in the Reception/ Year 1 class are introduced well to the different experiences of children from other cultures.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. Teaching is good and the curriculum offers good breadth and an increasing emphasis on creative subjects and ICT. The core subjects of English, mathematics and science are taught well. Music is a strong component of the curriculum and provision for all other subjects is at least satisfactory and often good.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is good overall. Teaching in the foundation stage (Reception class) was consistently very good. As a result of the good teaching and strong ethos, pupils are making positive gains in their knowledge, understanding and skills. They are being prepared well for the next stage of education. Assessment is generally good and used well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' subject knowledge is good.
- Pupils with SEN are taught well.
- Teachers plan well and there is very good involvement of the teaching assistants.
- Pupils work well in groups and on their own.
- Teachers sometimes spend too long talking to the whole class.
- Assessment is used well to influence teachers' planning, but marking of pupils' work is not of a consistently high quality.

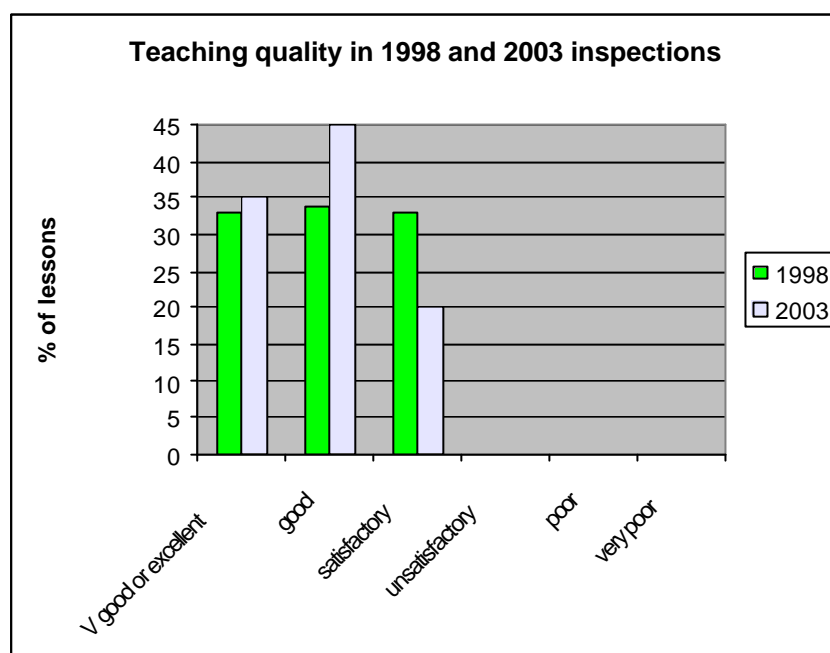
Commentary

12. Teaching has improved since the last inspection. This time, there was a higher proportion of good lessons than previously and less variation between classes. (See chart below). Every teacher was seen teaching a 'good lesson'.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 31 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	11 (35 %)	14 (45 %)	6 (19 %)	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.



13. The children in the foundation stage are very well taught. The teacher and teaching assistant work very closely to plan suitable activities for children in Reception and Year 1. They divide their time well so that children experience working in small groups and as a whole class. Expectations are very high and children quickly respond to this and are learning to become self-reliant and to know what they have to do.
14. Lessons in all other classes are also well planned. In mathematics and English, particularly, teachers plan a range of tasks to suit the learning styles and needs of the pupils. Teachers make good use of the 'three-part-lesson structure' in all subjects to recall ideas and introduce new ones. Sometimes, though, the introductions go on for too long and teachers do not spot that a few pupils are losing interest. Learning objectives are implicit in teachers' plans but are not always shared explicitly with pupils or written onto the board. In the Reception/ Year 1 class, though, the teacher makes excellent use of revisiting the learning objectives by asking pupils what they learned and recording responses on the 'learning journey' chart. This good practice could be replicated more consistently across the school.
15. Teachers are introducing an increasing variety of techniques to help children learn, drawing on different learning styles. For example, a teacher successfully reinforced pupils' understanding of equivalent fractions through good oral discussion, drawing on the board, writing number

sentences, and giving them cards to sort. Pupils also work well in pairs and small groups and are self-reliant, for example when undertaking tasks at the computer.

16. Teachers generally have a secure knowledge of the subjects they are teaching and this enables them to pose challenging questions to pupils and to encourage the use of the correct technical terms. Their success in this respect was evident when a Year 6 pupil remembered the term 'upthrust' that he had learned in a previous class. The teacher's very good knowledge was a strong contributory factor to the success of a lesson for Year 5/6 pupils on the history of the Bible.
17. There is a good atmosphere for learning in every classroom. Relationships are positive and teachers manage pupils' behaviour sensitively, unobtrusively and effectively. As a result, pupils are calm and alert, which are the prime conditions for good learning to take place.
18. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well: activities are carefully matched to their needs. Since the last inspection, teachers have developed a deeper understanding of pupils' special needs and they take cognisance of targets identified in individual education plans (IEPs). The teaching assistants work extremely effectively with small groups and individuals, enabling them to make good progress.
19. Assessment is generally good and the results from national tests are analysed carefully and the findings used to improve teaching and learning. This is undertaken extremely well for mathematics. Marking varies in quality, though appears regular and frequent. Some teachers write detailed helpful comments next to pupils' work and show them how to improve. The use of assessment criteria in Year 5/6 English books is a very good idea. All teachers are setting clear and specific targets for pupils, who often know what they need to do to improve. The practice in one class of displaying the targets on the walls is a good one.

The curriculum

The school provides an interesting and appropriately balanced curriculum for all pupils, offering a good range of learning opportunities. It is generally planned well. The school grounds are used well and provide a stimulating environment for learning. Resources are generally good and used well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides very good equality of access and opportunity for all pupils.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is now good.
- The breadth of curriculum opportunities for pupil in the foundation stage is very good.
- Extra-curricular provision is very good.
- There is no scheme of work for the teaching of personal, social and health education.
- The classrooms are small and this sometimes inhibits learning.

Commentary

20. The curriculum for the foundation stage is very good. It is broad, balanced and based securely on the goals for the end of the Reception year. The staff work extremely well together to plan the activities and to provide interesting learning areas for the children.
21. There are schemes of work for all curriculum subjects, which is an improvement since the last inspection, when there was not an effective scheme for physical education.
22. The school is very effective in ensuring that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. Teachers and support staff are mindful of individual and groups of pupils. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, and an improvement on the last inspection. Their individual education plans are clearly focused and include plans for weekly and daily

progress. Pupils with special needs are included in all activities and their talents are fully exploited. For example, a child with writing difficulties gained confidence and improved his reading skills by using the computer at which he excelled.

23. The school is developing its policy and approach to its able and talented pupils, and there are some examples where these pupils have been well provided for. For example, a gifted mathematician was encouraged to sit and attain the level 6 test paper. Pupils with aptitudes for sport and music are given opportunities to develop their skills in the after-school clubs.
24. Pupils' personal development is extremely well provided for in the school through the strong ethos and very good relationships. However, there is not yet a planned scheme of work to guide the teaching of personal, social and health education (PSHE), nor monitoring of pupils' progress. The school is aware of this deficiency and PSHE has been identified as an area for improvement in the school development plan.
25. Pupils eagerly take responsibility for their own learning and show independence of thought and work. Through fund-raising and other community projects, they are encouraged to think of others and understand their role and place as citizens in society. Pupils regularly raise money for Action Aid and support an Indian girl called Jasoda. A good example of a fund-raising activity was the highly successful school play that the pupils organised to raise money for Jasoda. The school also held an India Day to promote awareness of Indian culture. Pupils correspond with Jasoda and this provides a rich opportunity for them to learn about other cultures and to share their own experiences
26. The school offers a very good range of after-school activities, including football, netball, tag rugby, PE, books and buns club, music, choir and French.
27. The curriculum is enriched by regular educational visits. Pupils visit local museums, theatres, environmental centres and other places to support and enhance their learning. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn social conventions through contact with visitors; the local police, nurse, artists and the vicar regularly visit the school to talk about various aspects of their work. In Year 6 pupils enjoy residential visits to cities such as London, Bristol and Cardiff. Teachers ensure that these visits are rich in educational value by planning them carefully.
28. The school is committed to promoting creativity and enjoyment for all pupils. ICT and the environment are used imaginatively to enhance learning and stimulate creativity. Pupils have the opportunity to participate in a range of valuable learning experiences using the school grounds. Teachers share ideas for using ICT creatively during staff meetings.
29. Teachers use a good range of resources in their lessons; for example, in science. Resources are well maintained and used well. The school provides well-organised and well-maintained accommodation for pupils. Teachers and pupils take pride in their environment. The delightful school grounds provide a safe, secure and stimulating environment for pupils, who participate in a range of fun outdoor activities. This helps promote calm and trouble-free play and lunchtimes.
30. Teachers work hard to make the best use of the limited classroom space available. Classrooms are colourful and attractive, with displays that promote learning and independence. The rooms are, though, often too small for teaching practical subjects, such as science, art, and design and technology, and are cramped. There is not enough room for computers, which means that ICT is not used as much as it could be. The cramped space also presents problems for teachers trying to manage pupils with challenging behaviour—they do so extremely well. Plans are in place for a temporary classroom to be erected in the spring term to accommodate the new intake of Reception pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Pupils are provided with good care and support. Procedures for health and safety, including child protection, are fully effective. Pupils are very effectively involved in the life and work of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are provided with a very high standard of pastoral care.
- Monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress is good.
- Health and safety practices and procedures, including those related to child protection, are comprehensive and effective.
- Arrangements for seeking the views of pupils, and acting upon these, are very good.

Commentary

31. The school has established appropriate health and safety policies that are fully understood by adults and pupils alike. A governor has been designated with specific responsibilities for health and safety and undertakes periodic safety audits of the whole school. Teachers are fully aware of health and safety issues within the classroom. For example, a teacher carefully emphasised the essential safety precautions when pupils used hand knives in a Year 3/4 design and technology lesson.
32. Child protection procedures are good and all staff, including those in a non-teaching role, are fully conversant with the school's systems.
33. The school's approach to the pastoral care of its pupils is very good. It is based on a close understanding and knowledge of individual pupils. The very good relationships between pupils and adults make it possible for concerns to be addressed by staff sensitively and swiftly. The provision of "worry boxes" is useful as it offers confidentiality where needed. Pupils are also very effective in supporting each other, through the buddy system and the strong network of personal friendships that exist throughout the school.
34. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and all statutory requirements are met. Individual needs are identified early and teaching and non-teaching support is managed and organised effectively. 'To-and-fro' books are used well to share targets for improvement with parents and carers and to record significant gains in pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Outside agencies are used very well. Half-yearly reviews are undertaken to assess pupils' progress and to modify their individual programmes. Pupils are present at their reviews and their views are encouraged, which is a very positive development.
35. Procedures for monitoring and tracking pupils' progress are good. The progress and achievements of individual pupils are meticulously recorded, which provides a firm foundation on which future planning can be based.
36. The school seeks and acts upon the views of pupils in a number of useful ways. Opinions are regularly sought within lessons and a more formal structure exists through the school council on which all classes are represented. This strong culture of consultation allows pupils to feel fully valued and involved in the development of the school; this opinion was strongly expressed at a lunchtime meeting attended by representatives from each class.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has forged very effective links with parents, the local community, and with other schools. These partnerships make a significant contribution to the quality of learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents hold the school in very high regard.
- The school keeps parents very well informed concerning both current developments and their children's progress.
- Very good links have been established with the local community.
- Very strong and effective liaison has been established with local schools.

Commentary

37. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school, believing it to be well led and managed, teaching to be good, and pupils to make good progress. The school is believed to provide a safe and secure environment within which pupils thrive.
38. Communication with parents is very good. Newsletters are issued weekly and are both informative and lively. The school prospectus and governing body's annual report provide detailed and relevant information concerning policies, procedures, and the many activities undertaken within the school. The annual written reports for parents on their children's progress are reader-friendly, pertinent and comprehensive. They provide clear and meaningful targets to which pupils can aspire, and valuable information about pupils' personal development. Written information is very effectively complemented by day-to-day informal discussions between parents and teachers. There are also parent evenings, which provide feedback on pupils' progress and curriculum developments. A good ongoing dialogue is maintained through the recently introduced "to-and-fro" books. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are very well informed about their children through half-yearly reviews.
39. Parents make a very positive contribution to the life of the school. Considerable financial help is provided through the PTFA, which also acts as focus for social activity. Many parents also assist with school clubs and help with the supervision of external visits.
40. The school is at the heart of the community. Pupils are actively involved in numerous community activities. At Christmas time, for example, Year 6 pupils visit community members at the Over 60's Club and host an afternoon tea. The community regularly uses the school as a venue to run clubs, such as yoga and Brownies. The school participates in the annual Junior Exmoor Challenge event and also hosts a Sports Challenge day. The swimming pool is available for community members to use after school and during the summer holidays.
41. Links with the local community are very strong and significantly enhance learning. Close ties have been established with local churches, the Young Farmers Club and Exeter City Football Club. The provision of a bird box and camera linked to the ICT suite, provided by a local businessman, exemplifies the strong links which exist between the school and its local community. The school itself supports the community through its choir performing in local churches and for the 'Acorns', Over 60's Club.
42. There are strong links with other primary schools, the local secondary school and with the main pre-school in the village. The arrangements for transfer to secondary school are very good. Year 6 teachers work in close partnership with teachers from Uffculme School to which most pupils transfer. The headteacher and deputy from Uffculme visit the school and work with pupils in the classroom and assemblies. Hemyock pupils from Years 5 and 6 also visit the secondary school and spend time becoming familiar with their new environment and timetable. This programme is a great success and ensures a seamless transition in what can be a daunting process for pupils when they move onto the next stage in their education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is very well led and managed. Governors provide strong and supportive leadership and make an important contribution to the school's success. There is a clear focus on what needs to improve and finances are managed well. There is, though, no systematic approach to monitoring lessons or pupils' work. The school has the capacity to maintain its level of success and overcome the small number of weaknesses identified by the inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the headteacher and governing body is very good.
- The school is well managed.
- There is little systematic observation of teacher's lessons or pupils' work by the headteacher or co-ordinators.
- Financial management and link to the school development plan are good.

Commentary

43. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. She has a clear vision for how the school should improve and has created an environment in which staff and pupils feel valued and respected. The school's plans are focused firmly on raising standards, whilst recognising the importance of work-life balance and the need to reduce stress on staff. The school is reflective and constantly aiming to improve. The headteacher has played a key role in helping the school become a well-established and respected part of the community. Her self-evaluation for the inspection was rigorous, backed up by evidence and coincided almost exactly with the team's findings.
44. Given the size of the school, inevitably all teachers have many subject and other responsibilities and little time to fulfil them. Teachers undertake their roles conscientiously by ensuring that other staff are supported with teaching tips and ideas, a scheme of work and a range of accessible resources. Co-ordinators of English, mathematics and science carry out a thorough analysis of pupils' responses to test questions; the findings influence how the subjects are subsequently taught. The co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs maintains the register of pupils efficiently. She is very knowledgeable and plays an effective role in raising everyone's awareness of issues to do with special needs.
45. The school is managed well and it operates very smoothly and efficiently. Communication was reported as good in the Investors in People report of March 2003. There is a clear commitment to professional development and all staff, including non-teaching, are involved in performance management. There has been some training in behaviour management for support staff, arising from a need that they identified. However, there is little observation by the headteacher of lessons or systematic evaluation of pupils' work. Teachers rarely get to see and learn from each other's teaching. Reasons for this include a lack of time as the headteacher has a relatively heavy teaching commitment and other staff have little non-contact time. However, there is also a reluctance to be observed in some cases which needs to be overcome. Regular lesson observations are not part of the performance management process; they are not compulsory in this school, but are considered good practice.
46. The governing body plays a significant role in the leadership and management of the school. Governors have a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have a very good relationship with the staff. They are involved in shaping the direction of the school through close involvement in the preparation and monitoring of the school development plan and in target-setting. They undertake their areas of responsibility well. For example, an enthusiastic governor monitors the provision for pupils with special educational needs. The governing body is well informed and carries out its statutory duties very effectively. They recognise the need to provide co-ordinators with more non-contact time.

47. The school's finances are managed carefully and effectively. Financial systems and controls are good and the governing body receives regular budget statements. The budget is tight, although expenditure per pupil is above the national average. Serious decisions are being taken about how best to utilise the limited finances to enable the headteacher and other staff to have time to monitor lessons. The governing body is fully involved in these decisions.
48. Given the staff's and governors' commitment to the school and desire to learn and improve, the inspection team has every confidence that the school will continue to flourish and improve in the few areas identified in this report. The biggest obstacles to further improvement are: the size of the classrooms, which sometimes impedes learning; and time, for staff to manage fully their areas of responsibility. Both are challenges for a school of this size.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	359,150
Total expenditure	345,408
Expenditure per pupil	2,334

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	9,576
Balance carried forward to the next	13,743*

** This money is accounted for in the school's plans*

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 very good— as was found at the last inspection. The area is very well led and managed. Children make good progress and they are prepared extremely well for work in Year 1 and beyond.

Children start school in September or January, according to the date of their fifth birthday, and, after a few weeks of part-time education, they stay for the whole day. At the time of the inspection, the 10 children in the Reception class had only been in school for 10 weeks. They are taught alongside the younger Year 1 children. The school plans to provide an extra classroom from January 2004 to cope with the extra intake and to enable the Reception children to be taught separately.

The current arrangement in the Reception/ Year 1 class works extremely well because the teacher is so well organised and her planning is excellent. There are clear objectives for each activity and all areas of learning are catered for extremely effectively. In general, the Reception children are taught as a separate group so that they can experience the foundation stage curriculum. The class teacher receives very good support from a teaching assistant who, though, unfortunately can only spend 50 per cent of her time with the Reception/ Year 1 class.

The majority of children have attended the local pre-school, with which there are good links. Procedures for induction into the class are very good: the teacher undertakes home visits and, together with parents and the child, prepares a very useful baseline assessment. There is clear guidance for parents as to how to support their child in each of the areas of learning. The teaching is very good and based on a thorough and detailed knowledge of each child's needs. The staff work very well together and monitor children's progress. They know the children well. The staff make the most of the small cramped classroom and adjoining area. There are lively displays are stimulating areas for imaginative and creative play. The outside environment is excellent. Children have access during the day and in playtimes to an adventure trail, wheeled vehicles and a variety of games. However, access during lessons is sometimes restricted when the teacher is in sole charge of the class.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well because of the very good teaching and the high expectations set by staff
- The ethos in the classroom is excellent and makes children feel secure and happy
- Children are well on their way to reaching, and in many cases exceeding, the expected goals by the end of the year

Commentary

49. A few of the children have poor social skills when they start school; a situation which has become more evident in the past few years. Because of the high quality teaching they make very good progress. The teacher, ably supported by the teaching assistant, has established an environment where expectations are clear and there is a strong emphasis on cooperating and caring for others. The presence of the older children is also a positive influence on the new Reception intake. Children are encouraged to be polite and respectful, for example when responding to the register they all say 'Yes, Mrs..'. They enjoy being given responsibility such as returning the register to the office. The chosen child can then select another to accompany

him/ her, watched by the rest of the class who call out with genuine affection 'That's nice!'. They behave well, know the routines and generally settle without fuss.

50. The children are given a lot of opportunities to work with others and to select activities and resources on their own. They help each other, for example, showing how to move onto the next computer screen. A good example of cooperation was also seen when three boys played as 'fire-fighters', working together to 'put out the fire'. Children's confidence is growing but a few of the girls are over-reliant on adult help.
51. Children are helped to learn respect for others, by listening attentively and being polite. They are also learning about other cultures and beliefs; for example, through the links with a school in Africa. The excellent relationships with staff, supported by their good use of humour, contribute significantly to children's desire to learn.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's language skills are developing well because of the very good teaching.

Commentary

52. Children are on course to meet the expected goals in this area of learning. They are given a wide range of opportunities to listen to stories and to see the printed word. They are beginning to write their own names and making good progress in the legibility of their letters. They enjoy 'reading' stories and recounting them. They are given a lot of good opportunities to speak out loud to others, for example, when asked at the end of a session what they have learned, which the teacher records on the 'learning journey'. They are gaining in confidence and beginning to show an awareness of who is listening, generally using 'please' and 'thank you'.
53. The teaching is very good, with clear objectives for the 'literacy' activities. Teachers model reading well and encourage older children to help younger ones when necessary. Print is evident in the classroom and children are encouraged to 'read' books, for example when waiting for registration every child was looking at or reading a book with interest. Staff take every opportunity to develop the children's vocabulary through probing and well targeted questioning. The very good relationships give children the confidence to talk, and all adults are genuinely interested in what the children have to say.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff use an imaginative range of strategies, including computers, to teach skills
- Every opportunity is taken to promote children's mathematical development

Commentary

54. Teaching and learning are very good. An interesting range of activities is used and every opportunity taken to promote mathematical understanding. As a result pupils are achieving well and most should reach or exceed the expected goals.

55. Many children can count to ten already and recognise some of the numerals. Some can add and subtract familiar numbers by one. Again, children benefit from learning alongside the Year 1 pupils who are working on more demanding addition (counting the total number in the class and learning that 'one less than 28 is...'). Staff make good use of rhymes, stories and everyday activities to teach numbers and concepts such as 'more', 'less', addition and subtraction. For example, children are given number cards and have to identify a number which comes before or after theirs. They then have to appreciate the sequence of numbers by finding where their number occurs in a line before they move onto the next room.
56. Children are being taught how to write numerals and are making good progress, despite the poor pencil control they started with in some cases. Learning is made fun for pupils, for example, by the teacher using a glove puppet to count. The children also enjoyed taking turns to be 'shoppers' and 'shop keepers', buying or selling and counting out money and change. The teacher matches the tasks well to children's stage of learning and the more capable children are given more challenging tasks. For example, they were working on numbers six, seven and eight at the computer whilst others were learning to recognise and count to four and five.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A range of interesting activities is planned to promote learning in this area.

Commentary

57. Only one direct teaching session was observed in this area— using a computer program to help learning in mathematics. However, on the basis of the planning and work seen in the classroom, a wide range of opportunities is provided for children. There are artefacts and interest areas in the classroom, which stimulate curiosity and encourage children to find out about the world around them. Children regularly use computers and are gaining confidence and skill in using the mouse, dragging and dropping. They use headphones with confidence. They explore the grounds outside with staff and observe the blue-tits nesting in the bird box on the monitor in the ICT room. Staff use questioning very effectively to enhance the children's knowledge and understanding of the world about them.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of the hall and outside area.
- Children receive regular structured lessons which are very well planned.

Commentary

58. Children are given very good opportunities for physical development. There are three planned physical education lessons per week as well as opportunities for children to elect to play outdoors at other times. Activities are carefully planned to enable children to work towards the expected goals in this area. Every opportunity is also taken to develop pupils' personal and social skills. For example, the teacher used an egg timer to encourage children to change quickly into their PE kit for a session in the hall. Children who finished first sat quietly on the carpet waiting for the others. In the dance lesson, children showed a good awareness of

space and exercised control and imagination when moving as different animals. The teacher's good questioning helped children to learn the language of movement as well as to evaluate what they liked; 'I liked it when she was moving up and down'. The teacher used the session to assess children's achievements, as well as helping them to make good progress.

59. Children have very good opportunities to use small and large apparatus outside, both during break times and when they can during lessons. The climbing frame and adventure trail are stimulating and provide excellent opportunities for children to travel around, over and under and to use their imagination. Children make good use of the wheeled toys, hoops and balls. They are making very good progress in this area and should achieve the expected goals.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good opportunities are provided for role play and for other creative activities including music.

Commentary

60. Children are given many opportunities to use their imagination and role play, for example in numeracy session when they are 'shoppers', during 'planning time', when they play outdoors, and during dance sessions. There are planned sessions for art and music, although these were not seen during the inspection.
61. Music has an important role in the school and the Reception children are introduced to it from the start. Staff make good use of rhymes and music during the day, for example the African music as part of the dance lesson. They are learning simple songs and gaining a good sense of rhythm. The Reception class also attends assemblies for the whole school where they join in with the singing along with their older peers. Children made bubble pictures and the quality of some of their artwork is very good for their age; for example seaside collages.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well overall, and by Years 5 and 6 standards are high.
- Teaching is good and sometimes very good.
- Pupils' literacy skills are used very well to enhance learning in other subjects.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Standards in writing are not high enough for the more capable pupils in Year 2.
- Presentation of work varies considerably and is not always good enough.

Commentary

62. Pupils achieve very well in English overall. Results in the Year 2 National Curriculum tests have been in line with the national average for the past few years, but few pupils have gained level 3¹. By Year 6, results are much better. Last year, nearly all pupils gained level 4 and just under a half, level 5².
63. The test results were confirmed by the inspection evidence where pupils' achievements in writing, although satisfactory in Year 2, were not good enough for the most able pupils. After a good start in the Reception, pupils are introduced to a wide range of writing styles, including stories, reports, letters and instructions. Pupils in Year 1 write their own story books based on a 'Bear' story they have shared with their teacher, and show that they are capable of extended writing. They are not given enough opportunities to write at length. Pupils' writing improves significantly as they progress through Years 3 and 4 and is very good by Years 5 and 6. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are taught to write in paragraphs and more attention is being given to the teaching of common words and spelling patterns. Older pupils enjoy using increasingly more complex sentences and use more exciting vocabulary such as 'the leaves conquer the unguarded ground'.
64. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are very good. They are encouraged to ask and answer questions. They thrive when their contributions are respected by other pupils and valued by their teachers. Opportunities are given for pupils to express their thoughts and ideas in 'circle time' and in discussions within lessons. Their skills and confidence were exemplified during the Remembrance Day assembly, where Year 4/ 5 pupils spoke aloud, with some excellent recounting of their own stories as well as poems by poets such as Siegfried Sassoon.
65. Reading is particularly strong in Years 3 to 6 and pupils share their teachers' enthusiasm for literature. The oldest pupils are very good at writing book reviews. Pupils take pleasure in reading, for example in guided reading sessions, and enjoy the progress they are making.
66. The teaching of English is good and sometimes very good. The National Literacy Strategy is now embedded in the school's work and systems for planning and assessment have been established. There is more direct teaching of skills in Years 3 to 6, where the teachers' very effective assessment strategies are used to help pupils improve.
67. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and has introduced effective strategies to raise standards. By analysing national testing she identifies areas for improvement and the skills required for pupils to improve. Progress is then assessed and pupils are challenged to

¹ Level 2 is the expected standard for the end of Year 2, and level 3 is above expectation.

² Level 4 is the expected standard for the end of Year 6, and level 5 is above expectation.

improve further. At present, time does not allow her to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in other classes. She is aware that the presentation of pupils' work is not always good enough.

68. Improvement has been good since the last inspection. All pupils now have targets and there is an impressive system for sharing them with pupils and parents. Of particular note is the improvement in the planning and provision for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils are included in the full range of activities; their progress is good, and their self-esteem is high.

Literacy across the curriculum

69. Literacy skills are increasingly well used in other subjects and older pupils have very good research and study skills for extracting information from text or the Internet. Pupils are taught how to apply these skills. They use non-chronological writing in history, geography and religious education; record concisely in science, often using bullet-points; and write lists and instructions in design technology. They report concisely and write descriptively, expressively and persuasively. Pupils' communication skills are very good and they use computer technology when writing scripts, poems and reports. Year 5 and 6 pupils were impressive in their skills at researching aspects of the Victorian workhouse.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make very good progress and standards are very high by Year 6
- Teaching is good overall and often very good
- The most capable pupils are not achieving high enough standards during Years 1 and 2
- The co-ordinator undertakes a very good analysis of pupils' performance in the tests
- There is no systematic monitoring of lessons or of pupils' work

Commentary

70. Pupils are given a good start to mathematics in the Reception and Year 1 class, where they make good progress. During Years 1 and 2, they make satisfactory progress and by Year 2, standards are in line with the national average. The test results at the end of Year 2 have fluctuated over the years, mainly due to the small cohorts. Results improved in 2003 with every child reaching level 2, although very few pupils attained level 3. This suggests, and the inspection confirmed, that some of the most capable pupils could be achieving more in Year 1/2. By Year 6 however, pupils achieve very well indeed. The Year 6 results last year were an improvement on the already high results of previous years- they were in the top five per cent nationally. Over half the pupils reached level 5.
71. There is no significant disparity between the attainment of boys and girls in mathematics and their results are closer than schools nationally. In lessons, boys and girls were seen to take part with equal enthusiasm and success. Pupils with SEN make good progress. In lessons, pupils are generally given work that is well matched to their capabilities.
72. Teaching is good overall and sometimes very good. Teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic. Their planning is good and reflects a good understanding and, where necessary, adaptation of the National Numeracy Strategy. Objectives are not always shared explicitly enough with pupils, for example by being written on the board. In general, though pupils know what is expected and can articulate what they have learned. Pupils engage with varying interest and involvement in the oral mental introductions to lessons, which sometimes go on too long. In a very good lesson, the teacher skilfully employed various ways of helping Year 4

and 5 pupils to think about fractions, their equivalents and how to add them to reach 'one'. She used a variety of oral, visual and concrete methods to get across the concept, for example by asking children to join up cut-out segments in various ways to make a whole. All pupils gained a great deal from this, delighting in their discoveries. The most capable pupils quickly recognised how to reduce fractions such as $6/12$ to their simplest form.

73. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are taught well on the whole. The introductions to the numeracy sessions are very effective. The teacher uses a good range of resources such as fans, cubes and the whiteboard to involve the children in the oral and mental work. Questions are targeted well at individual children's stage of learning. Pupils recalled number sequences to 100 and some showed a good understanding of place value. When the teacher or teaching assistant works closely with a group they make good progress. However, the most capable are not achieving as well as they could. The main reason that the inspection team could identify was in the way the curriculum is organised. After the introduction to the whole class, groups rotate around different subject activities during the day. They do not, therefore, always have an immediate opportunity to reflect on and try out what has been initiated during the opening session. They are left too much to their own devices and do not always get enough direct mathematics input from the teacher; when they do, it is very effective. Their personal development is, though, greatly enhanced by this way of working and they become very self-reliant and independent learners.
74. The subject is well led and managed by a very well qualified co-ordinator, though there is not enough regular monitoring of lessons or pupils' work. The staff are very reflective about how they teach and have amended their planning several times in order to bring about improvements in children's learning. Teachers assess pupils' work well and set appropriate specific targets for improvement. In one class the targets were usefully displayed on the wall. The pupils know what is expected of them and what they need to do to improve. The co-ordinator undertakes a very thorough analysis of the pupils' performance in each of the National Curriculum test questions for Year 2 and 6. Areas that pupils found difficult are clearly identified and this information is fed into teachers' plans. Mathematics is included as an area for improvement in the school development plan and most activities have been instigated, apart from monitoring of lessons and work. Overall, improvement since the last inspection has been good- the school has sustained many of the good features last time and standards have risen further.

Mathematics across the curriculum

75. Pupils use their numeracy skills well in other subjects, particularly in science. Numbers are visible in every classroom and around the school, including the hall. Teachers take advantage of every opportunity to reinforce pupils' numeracy skills, for example when taking the register. Pupils used calculators effectively in a Year 5/ 6 science lesson, where they chose the most appropriate force meter. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 also used force meters to measure the effect of friction and they interpreted the scales extremely well. Pupils are given opportunities to draw bar charts and graphs, for example in ICT, although few line graphs were evident in their exercise books.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make very good progress and achieve high standards by Year 6.
- There is a good emphasis on practical and investigative work.
- The teaching is good.
- The co-ordinator undertakes a thorough analysis of pupils' performance in tests.

- The most capable pupils in Years 1 and 2 could be achieving higher standards.
- There is not enough monitoring of teaching and pupils' work.

Commentary

76. The results in the National Curriculum tests for Year 6 have been above or well above average for the past few years, which represents a good achievement for pupils. The teachers' own assessments, confirmed by work seen during the inspection, judge standards in Year 2 to be average.
77. No science lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2 and only three were observed in Years 3 to 6. The work seen shows that pupils in all years experience a varied science curriculum that includes an appropriate amount of practical work, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2, though the most capable pupils could attain higher standards. They are not given enough opportunities to attain the higher levels, particularly in relation to investigations. Progress accelerates in Years 3 to 6 as a result of the challenging teaching and standards seen were well-above average. Year 3, pupils could say what magnets are made of and where they can be found. They really enjoyed 'experiencing' the forces of attraction and repulsion between two magnets. Year 5 pupils knew that friction is a force that opposes motion and they could describe everyday examples of its impact. The oldest pupils were making sensible predictions based on their prior knowledge and undertaking experiments to test them, recording their readings accurately in tables. A few of the most capable pupils recalled the term 'upthrust' and used it to correctly to explain why things weigh less in water than they do in air.
78. Teaching is good overall. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and help pupils through a maze of difficult concepts such as the difference between weight and mass, how magnets can be demagnetised and how forces act on objects. They plan well and are clear about what they want to achieve. Their questioning is challenging and encourages pupils to think and explore scientific ideas. However, sometimes the question/ answer sessions are too long and do not involve all of the class. Pupils' enthusiasm is rekindled as soon as they start experimenting for themselves. Resources are of very good quality— for example the range of easy-to-read force meters and different sorts of magnets. Most teachers mark pupils' work regularly and thoroughly, giving helpful questions that challenge pupils
79. The subject is well led, though the co-ordinator does not observe other teachers' lessons or systematically monitor pupils' work. She undertakes a very thorough analysis of test results and this information is fed into teachers' planning. Improvement since the last inspection has been good as the high standards and generally good quality of teaching have been maintained.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There have been recent improvements in resources and staff expertise.
- Direct teaching of ICT is good.
- Pupils make good progress in ICT lessons.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in ICT lesson are good.
- The ICT governor and members of the community support the use of ICT in school.
- Procedures for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning are not established.

Commentary

80. By the end Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' standards are above national expectations. This represents good progress since the last inspection, when standards in Year 6 were judged to be below national expectations.
81. Pupils make good progress in ICT throughout the school. Teachers select appropriate activities to help develop pupils' ICT skills, knowledge and understanding. Overall, the dedicated ICT lessons are appropriately challenging, purposeful and motivating. In a Year 6 lesson, the teacher produced useful sheets with criteria that pupils used to find information from a database about a Victorian workhouse in Wellington, linked to pupils' studies in history. Pupils quickly acquired the skills to use complex searches to find information on a database.
82. Pupils are encouraged to share and exchange ideas and to present, explain and evaluate their ICT-based work. In Year 4, pupils make use the skills they have learned to create interesting designs for Christmas cards using an art software program.
83. Pupils use ICT to extend their understanding of different cultures. A vivid display of Aboriginal artwork created by pupils in Year 4/5 was enhanced by useful information found on the Internet. Pupils used this information to write about Aboriginal art, using a word-processing package. Many pupils use computers at home to look for information that is linked to their school work.
84. ICT makes an important contribution to pupils' social development because it provides opportunities for them to work collaboratively and comment constructively on one another's work. Most teachers exploit this opportunity well to extend pupils' language skills. Pupils enjoy the lessons in the ICT room and have positive attitudes to learning. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress throughout the school and their range of skills steadily improves as their confidence grows.
85. Teaching is good overall. It was good in two lessons observed during the inspection week. Teachers' planning for dedicated ICT sessions is good. Teachers have become increasingly confident, following national training, in their ability to teach pupils basic ICT skills and programs in the computer suite. In some lessons, learning intentions are well defined and shared with pupils who know what they need to do to improve. Teachers' skilled questioning helps develop pupils' understanding and use of technical language. Teachers assess pupils' work, but not against National Curriculum levels.
86. The subject is well led and managed by a coordinator who is committed to improving the use of ICT across the school. All aspects of ICT have improved since the last inspection. The ICT scheme of work has been updated to reflect national initiatives and new developments in the subject. The subject has been identified as an area for development in the school improvement plan. The range and quality of resources available for teaching have improved. Hardware provision is satisfactory and the range of software programs available to support learning is good. The school has plans to purchase laptops and an interactive whiteboard for teachers to use in the classrooms.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

87. ICT is generally used well across the curriculum. Its use is, though, restricted by the lack of computers in classrooms, because of the limited space. Where possible, the work covered in the ICT lessons is well linked to what is being taught covered in other subjects. For example, Year 1/2 pupils use a digital camera to take photographs of their friends and then create self-portrait collages in art. Reception and Year 1 pupils are using programs that help with their development of mathematics as well as their ICT skills. Pupils access information from the Internet to support their studies in science and history, for example.
88. A wonderfully rich learning experience was provided for the pupils when a generous member of the community donated a video camera to the school. The camera has been secured inside a bird box so that the pupils can watch the nesting habits of blue-tits and other birds. Very good

use of the footage has been made to stimulate discussion with children and to develop work in several subjects.

89. A positive development is the inclusion of ICT as an agenda item at every staff meeting, where teachers discuss creative ways in which they can use it in their classrooms. They evaluate the success of their teaching with ICT and its impact on learning. This has helped to improve their teaching of ICT.

HUMANITIES

90. In humanities, work was sampled in history and geography, with only one lesson seen in each subject. Therefore, it is difficult to make a secure judgement on standards. However, a scrutiny of teachers' plans, an analysis of pupils' work and discussions with them indicate that standards are at least in line with what is expected nationally in geography and are probably above average in history. Planning indicates good coverage of National Curriculum requirements and that skills and knowledge are developed well each year.
91. In the one geography lesson seen in Years 4 and 5, pupils' mapping skills were good. All pupils used four-figure grid references and interpreted keys to identify human and physical characteristics of villages in the county. They were enthusiastic when exploring in groups and used their good speaking skills to clarify their findings.
92. Pupils' historical enquiry skills are good. Those in years 4, 5 and 6 are developing good research and study skills; the outcomes of this were seen during the remembrance celebrations and assembly. Pupils enthused when sharing their good understanding of the periods of history studied. They had secure knowledge of various legacies such as the Olympic Games and democracy from ancient Greece, and how invaders have influenced our heritage by affecting roads and settlements. In the one lesson seen in Year 1, pupils explored Victorian life and were beginning to appreciate chronology. They showed good observation skills when describing the Victorian artefacts provided. An able pupil observed that photographs were different from those available now, as they were either brown or black and white.
93. Higher order research and study skills were used very well in Years 5 and 6 to investigate the Victorian workhouse. The Internet is being used increasingly well by pupils to acquire new knowledge and pupils in Years 4 and 5 contributed to a PowerPoint presentation about village and city life in India. In both history and geography, a good range of visits and visitors plays an important part in making the work interesting and relevant.

Religious education

Provision in the subject is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved since the last inspection.
- Religious education contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- There is no monitoring of teaching and learning.
- Pupils' work is not assessed.

Commentary

94. Standards have improved since the last inspection and are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by Year 6.

95. In the two lessons observed in Years 3 to 6 and in the pupils' work, there was evidence that teaching is good and pupils are developing a good understanding of the customs and traditions of Christianity, Hinduism and Judaism. Pupils visit the local churches and visitors from other countries contribute to a deeper understanding of the traditions of other faiths.

Teachers have a good subject knowledge and match learning to the needs of all pupils including those with special educational needs. They build effectively on the experiences of pupils and teachers who have made extended visits to India and Africa.

96. Pupils enjoy their activities and have very good attitudes to learning. Teachers of younger pupils take every opportunity to promote spiritual, moral and cultural understanding with the family unit given the highest priority. In the Year 4/ 5 lesson on 'symbolism' there was clear evidence that pupils value and respect the views of others. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 are aware of how religion affects people's lives, for example, through exploring the importance of Holy Scriptures. Older pupils explore the origins of the Old and New Testaments and are given good opportunities to reflect on the significance and meaning of events.
97. The subject is well led. The curriculum is planned well, on a two-year cycle to accommodate the mixed-age classes, and the co-ordinator has adapted planning to maintain depth and relevance. There are also currently no assessment procedures to record what pupils know understand and can do.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

98. Only one lesson was seen in **design and technology** and **no art lessons** were observed during the inspection. It is therefore not possible to make a judgement about provision in these subjects. Lessons were also observed in physical education and music.
99. It is evident from discussions with pupils and staff and by looking at the good quality displays of pupils' work around the school that provision for art is at least good. Pupils have an opportunity to use a range of media, such as pencils, paints, pastels and clay to create interesting artwork. Pupils in Year 5/6 explore the different elements of art and comment on how the tone, line, texture and colour of various pictures enhance the images and create different effects. In the Year 3/4 classroom, vibrant batik prints created by the pupils were attractively displayed.
100. Pupils' skills in design and technology develop well as they move through the school. This was evident from discussions with pupils and from looking at their work. In Year 3/ 4, pupils are introduced systematically to different stages in the design process. They draw and label appropriate diagrams, list relevant tools and some pupils develop step-by-step detailed plans of their design and how to make it.
101. Three lessons were seen in **music** and **physical education**. Overall, standards in physical education are above average and pupils achieve well. In the lesson seen in Reception/Year 1 pupils linked moves together and danced confidently to dynamic African music. Pupils were given the opportunity to observe the performance of others and to provide constructive comments to help their friends improve. The teacher's very effective questioning encouraged pupils to evaluate others' dance movements. As a result, pupils spoke confidently about the work of others and their attention was drawn to new and more effective ways of improving their own performance.
102. The quality of teaching in **physical education** is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and this enables them to help all pupils develop skills, knowledge and techniques effectively. Teachers use video and digital cameras to record pupils' achievements.
103. The school teaches all elements of the physical education curriculum, as well as providing a very good range of extra-curricular activities for pupils, ranging from competitive sport to fun

team games. The school makes good use of its own swimming pool. Every year almost all pupils achieve the national expectation of swimming 25 metres unaided and many exceed this.

104. Provision for **music** is good. It was evident by talking to pupils and teachers and by observing lessons and listening to pupils singing, that music is strong feature of the school. Pupils sing tunefully in assemblies and have the opportunity to receive specialist music tuition. There is a school choir and recorder club. Many pupils who opt to take part in these activities achieve well as a result of this good extra provision.
105. Many teachers have a keen interest in music and have good subject knowledge; expertise that helps pupils to make good progress. In Year 5/6, the teacher's very clear explanation and correct use of musical terms enabled pupils to improve their diction by refining their breathing techniques when singing in harmony and unison. Pupils know the meaning of a range of technical vocabulary, including 'dynamics', 'pitch', 'pulse' and 'tempo'. Pupils in Year 1/2 enjoy exploring different rhythmical patterns and most pupils accurately sustain the rhythm of a chant.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

106. No lessons were seen in this area of the school's work and so no judgements are made about provision. The school has an outline plan for pupils' personal, social and health education, but no detailed guidance for teachers. Pupils have numerous opportunities to become caring and responsible citizens, through work linked to other subjects and their active role in community events; for example, distributing food to the elderly at harvest festival. They also participate in numerous fundraising events. Pupils in Year 4, 5 and 6 come together and express their views on current events, school life and relationships. Pupils learn about diet, health and sex education through the science curriculum. There is a school council where pupils learn to make decisions that affect their peers.
107. The school has not yet developed a planned programme for citizenship and there is no routine monitoring of PSHE and citizenship. There are, though, detailed plans to improve this area of the curriculum.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
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	2
Pupils' achievement	2
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	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
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	3

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