

# INSPECTION REPORT

**BICKLEIGH-ON-EXE C OF E VC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Bickleigh, Tiverton

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113421

Headteacher: Mr D Goode

Lead inspector: Mr P Howlett

Dates of inspection: 22<sup>nd</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> November 2004

Inspection number: 266420

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school: Middle deemed primary  
School category: Voluntary controlled  
Age range of pupils: 4 - 11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 143  
School address: Bell Meadow  
Bickleigh  
Tiverton  
Devon  
Postcode: EX16 8RE  
Telephone number: (01884) 855 357  
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Appropriate authority: The governing body  
Name of chair of Mr J Hird  
governors:  
Date of previous 17<sup>th</sup> May 1999  
inspection:

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

The school is smaller than the average primary school with 143 full-time pupils on roll aged four to 11. The school has an annual intake of 20 in each year group and is organised into five classes from Reception to Year 6. The school is located in the Devon village of Bickleigh, south of Tiverton and draws pupils from a large rural area, covering a number of small villages as well as from Tiverton. Nearly all the pupils are from white UK background and currently there are two pupils at an early stage of English language acquisition. Pupils come from a broad spread of family backgrounds and employment. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (six per cent) is below the national average. The attainment of pupils on entry is generally similar to that typically found nationally. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs (11 per cent) is below the national average. Three pupils have a statement of special educational needs.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23744	Peter Howlett	Lead inspector	Mathematics History Geography English as an additional language
8519	Sue Pritchard	Lay inspector	
18370	Kevin Johnson	Team inspector	Science Art and design Music Religious education Foundation Stage
19817	Judith Dowsett	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology (ICT) Design and technology Physical education Special educational needs

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a good school** with some very good features. Pupils thrive in a very positive and supportive ethos and achieve well because of good teaching. Standards are generally above those expected nationally. The key to the school's success lies in the high quality leadership of the headteacher, good teamwork, supportive governing body and strong links with parents. The school gives good value for money.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are above nationally expected levels in speaking, listening, reading, mathematics, science, religious education, music and art and design, but standards in writing across the school are not good enough.
- Pupils achieve well because teaching is good and the curriculum is rich and varied.
- The headteacher provides very strong leadership and gives very clear educational direction.
- Provision for young children starting school is very good and they are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- The school cultivates pupils' personal development very well. Relationships amongst pupils are excellent and pupils' attitudes, behaviour and attendance are very good.
- The school promotes very good links with parents and the community.
- There are shortcomings in how the school monitors pupils' progress in writing and ICT.
- Measures used to evaluate how well the school is doing and the success of its actions are not robust enough.

**Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.** The school has maintained the many positive features from the last inspection and the main points for action raised then have been dealt with effectively. In Year 6, national test results in mathematics and science have improved at a faster rate than those nationally since the last inspection. However, in English the school has not kept pace with the national trend of improvement because standards in writing have not improved sufficiently and as the results below indicate, pupils do not always make the progress expected in English given their results at the end of Year 2.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	C	B	B	D
mathematics	B	A*	A	A
science	A	A*	A	A

*Key: A\* - very high; 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 achieve well.** Children in Reception achieve well and all are on course to attain or exceed the early learning goals in all areas of learning by the end of the Reception Year.

Pupils achieve well in reading, speaking and listening and standards are above those expected nationally in Years 2 and 6. They are confident speakers and read well for their ages but their achievement in writing, although broadly satisfactory is not as good as it could be; standards are as expected nationally for most pupils, but too few reach above expected levels for their ages. Achievement is good in mathematics and science and standards are above those expected nationally in Years 2 and 6. Pupils' numeracy skills and skills in carrying out investigations are well developed. Achievement in ICT is satisfactory and standards are as expected nationally in Years 2 and 6. Achievement in religious education is good and standards are as expected in Year 2 and above expectations by Year 6. Pupils achieve well in art and design and music and standards are above those expected by Year 6. From the evidence seen in other subjects, standards are as expected in geography in Year 2 and in history in Year 6. In physical education, standards are above expected levels in swimming and in line in gymnastics by Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their prior attainment.

**Pupils' personal development is very good** as a result of the school's very good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are very good. Their relationships with one another are excellent. Attendance and punctuality are very good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The school provides a good education for its pupils. Teaching across the school is good.** Pupils' learning is greatly enhanced by an effective team of committed and experienced teachers and support staff. There are many strengths in teaching that contribute well to pupils' learning. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and what they can achieve and foster a positive ethos for learning. They plan lessons well and use a good range of teaching methods and resources, including new technologies to engage the interest and enthusiasm of the pupils. Pupils are well cared for and there is good support for pupils' personal and academic progress but the checking and monitoring of their progress in writing and ICT are not well developed. The school provides a good range of relevant and interesting curricular opportunities enhanced by a very good range of extra-curricular activities. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Children in the Reception Year flourish because of the very good provision in the Foundation Stage. The links with parents are very good and the school is very much part of the local community. The accommodation is good, although the hall is small and limits the achievement of older pupils in gymnastics and dance. Resources are satisfactory but very good in ICT.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management of the school are good.** The headteacher provides very good leadership and his high expectations are a significant factor in promoting the very positive ethos of the school. An effective governing body provides good support and challenge and ensures that all statutory requirements are met. The school development plan is a good tool for improvement but the school does not use sufficient effective measures to evaluate how well it is doing. The school's finances are managed well.

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

Parents and pupils view the school very positively. They appreciate the family atmosphere, the warm and harmonious relationships and Christian values that pervade all aspects of its life.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Improve standards in writing and raise pupils' awareness of what constitutes good quality writing.
- Improve the assessment of pupils' achievement in writing and ICT.
- Strengthen measures to evaluate the school's effectiveness.



## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

**Children achieve well** in the Reception class and continue to do so in Years 1 to 6. Standards are above the levels expected nationally in many subjects by Year 6.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above nationally expected levels in speaking, listening, reading, mathematics, science, religious education, music, art and design and swimming by Year 6.
- Pupils in Years 1 to 6 do not make as enough progress in writing.
- In mathematics and science, national test results at the end of Year 6 have risen at a quicker rate than those nationally, but in English, results have not kept pace with the national trend of improvement.
- Reception children achieve well and are on course to reach or exceed expected levels by the end of the Reception Year.

#### Commentary

##### *Starting school*

1. There is a wide spread of attainment when children join the Reception class which varies from year to year. In recent years standards have been broadly in line with those typically found nationally and are not as high as those at the time of the last inspection.

##### *School's results in national tests*

2. Care needs to be taken when considering national test results in any one year because of the small numbers of pupils involved. Results fluctuate from year to year, but overall trends since the last inspection are below the national trend of improvement in Year 2 and above in Year 6.
3. National tests results at the end of Year 2 indicate that standards in English are lower than those at the last inspection and that standards in mathematics have broadly been maintained. Results in reading have dipped since the last inspection to levels in line with national averages in 2003 and 2004. Results in writing have fluctuated and although the three-year average to 2004 is above the national average, they were average in 2004. In mathematics, results are generally above the national average as they were in 2004. When compared to schools with similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, the 2004 results were average in mathematics, but below in writing and well below in reading.

##### ***Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004***

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.6 (16.2)	15.8 (15.7)

writing	14.8 (16.1)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.0 (16.5)	16.2 (16.3)

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

4. Overall results in the national tests at the end of Year 6 have improved at a faster rate than those nationally. Although results in English have not kept pace with the national trend of improvement, the trend in mathematics and science is above the national trend. Results in 2004 tests and the three-year averages to 2004 were above the national average in English and were well above the national picture in mathematics and science. When compared to those of schools having similar prior attainment in Year 2, results in mathematics were well above average in 2003 and 2004 and results in science were above in 2004 and well above in 2003. However, in English, results were below average in comparison to similar schools in both years. In 2003 and 2004, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 in mathematics and science tests was above similar schools' averages, but in English it was lower than average.

***Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004***

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.7 (28.3)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	29.9 (30.4)	27.0 (26.8)
science	30.8 (31.7)	28.6 (28.6)

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

***Inspection findings***

5. Children in the Reception Year flourish because of the very good provision in the Foundation Stage. The six children in the current Reception/Year 1 class are achieving well. Overall, their attainment when they start school is average for their age and all of the current group are likely to achieve their early learning goals in all areas of learning and a few are set to exceed them.
6. The achievement of pupils in Years 1 to 6 is good, as it was at the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs achieve equally with their peers and sometimes better. Progress of pupils with special needs is good and sometimes very good in lessons. This is because teaching is good and pupils with a statement of special educational need receive very good support from their assistants. Most classes have the benefit of a learning support assistant to help less able pupils for English and mathematics. In English, work is generally matched to their ability and good support from assistants ensures their good progress. Grouping arrangements for mathematics ensure that these pupils make good progress and achieve well. More able pupils generally achieve satisfactorily; whilst they achieve well in reading, mathematics and science, work is not always well matched to their ability in writing. The small number of pupils from different backgrounds, including the few with English as an additional language, achieve as well as others of similar capabilities.
7. Overall standards in Years 2 are above those found nationally as they were at the last inspection. Overall standards in Year 6 are above those expected nationally but are not as high as those found at the time of the last inspection. This is due more to the differences in the respective cohorts rather than as a result of a dip in standards,

although standards in writing have not kept pace with the national picture of improvement.

8. Pupils achieve well in reading and speaking and listening and standards are above those expected nationally in Years 2 and 6. They are confident speakers and read well for their ages. However, pupils' achievement in writing although broadly satisfactory is not matching that in reading and speaking and listening, especially in the case of the more able pupils. Standards are as expected for most pupils but too few reach above expected levels for their ages. Achievement of all groups is good in mathematics and science and standards are above national expectations in Years 2 and 6. Pupils' numeracy skills and skills in carrying out scientific investigations are well developed.
9. Standards in ICT are as expected nationally in Years 2 and 6. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Although pupils make good progress in ICT lessons, higher achievement is held back by shortcomings in curriculum planning and assessment arrangements. Religious education is promoted well in the school and pupils' achievement is good. Standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by Year 2 and are above those expected by Year 6.
10. Pupils achieve well in art and design and music and standards are above those expected by Year 6. There was insufficient evidence to make judgements in full on standards and achievement in other subjects. Standards are as expected in geography in Year 2 and in history in Year 6. In physical education, standards are above expected levels in swimming and in line in gymnastics by Year 6.

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

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Pupils have excellent relationships with others and behave very well. Attendance is well above the national average and pupils are very punctual.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are very enthusiastic about school and work hard.
- The school encourages pupils' independence and provides good opportunities for pupils to show initiative and take on responsibilities.
- There is very good provision for developing pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

### **Commentary**

11. Pupils show very good attitudes to school life. They are happy to come to school and are eager to learn. Children start school with good attitudes to work and play and the school builds very successfully upon these. Older pupils speak very politely about their work and the enjoyment they get from lessons. As one pupil commented, "Teachers make lessons fun". The positive approach of teachers and support staff and the teaching strategies they use to encourage pupils, help create a very supportive environment for learning.
12. Pupils' attendance has improved since the last inspection and is now very good. Punctuality is equally as good. Both are helped by the fact that many of the pupils are bussed into school from the surrounding villages. Some are regular members of the

pre-school breakfast club, a facility much appreciated by working parents. These arrangements help give pupils a well organised and prompt start to their day. Accurate registration procedures quickly alert staff to the rare occurrence of a pupil failing to turn up for school for no apparent reason.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.7	School data	0.1
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

13. Behaviour throughout the school is very good. Pupils develop as responsible mature members of the school community. They show respect and concern for adults as well as their peers and know how to behave towards one another. Pupils play harmoniously in the playground. Their behaviour in the dining room and in assemblies is exemplary. There were no fixed term or permanent exclusions in the last school year.
14. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. Pupils respond very well to the opportunities they have to reflect on events and the impact they may have. For example, pupils consider the affects of world wars during Remembrance or the importance of communicating with others in order to resolve differences. Religious education lessons are used well to encourage reflection and help pupils think more deeply about others' lives and values. Pupils' writing shows examples of poetry and favourite verses from the scriptures, as well as personal prayers. Art and literature are also used very well to help pupils appreciate the creativity of the world around them.
15. The school promotes pupils' moral development very well. Pupils fully understand the differences between right and wrong. This is clearly reflected in their dealings with each other and the respect they have for things around them. At play, they take turns and look after equipment properly. Relationships between pupils and towards adults are outstanding. The school allows 'ownership' of the codes of practice by encouraging pupils to contribute their ideas. Consequently, behaviour and attitudes have become rooted in the ethos and values of the school.
16. The school provides very well for pupils' social development. It gives pupils many opportunities to contribute to the daily routines of the school and develop a sense of responsibility. Pupils take on the roles of tuck shop manager or librarian and distribute and collect playtime equipment. Older pupils help Reception and Year 1 children with their reading. Performances by the school choir and ensemble help to establish pupils' profile in the community. The school council helps raise pupils' awareness of a democratic system and gives all a voice in deciding upon relevant school developments and provision. Pupils exercise their responsibilities very well by initiating fund-raising events to buy new playground equipment and specialised equipment to help a child with specific physical needs.
17. The school promotes pupils' cultural development well. Pupils learn about their own cultural heritage by visiting local galleries, museums and other places of interest, such as the historic Bickleigh Mill. Links with the local church have a good impact on children's understanding of its place in the community. Through religious education, pupils learn to appreciate the faith practices and culture of other countries. This

appreciation is strengthened through links with a school in Holland and by maintaining links with a village in Bangladesh.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good education for its pupils because teaching is good and pupils experience a wide range of worthwhile learning experiences. Assessment arrangements are satisfactory with shortcomings in writing and ICT. Pupils are well cared for and links with parents are very good.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The procedures for checking and tracking pupils' progress over time are satisfactory, but there are shortcomings in the assessment arrangements especially in writing and ICT.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and assessment of reception children is very good.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and what they can achieve.
- Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils and foster a positive ethos for learning.
- Procedures for checking and tracking pupils' progress over time in writing and ICT are not well developed.
- Guidance to individuals does not always help them sufficiently to learn from their mistakes, particularly in writing.

### Commentary

18. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils' learning is greatly enhanced by an effective team of committed and experienced teachers and support staff. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen and eight in every ten lessons were at least good, including more than a quarter very good lessons. The proportion of good teaching is considerably higher than at the last inspection. The good teaching is spread across all classes and most subjects. Teaching is good in mathematics, science, religious education and ICT. The quality of teaching and learning for reception children is very good and there are many strengths in teaching in Years 1 to 6 that have a positive impact on pupils' learning.

#### ***Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 31 lessons***

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	9 (29%)	16 (52%)	6 (19%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

19. Reception children receive high quality teaching that helps them learn at a good rate. Lessons are very well planned with a good mixture of both adult and child initiated activities. Assessment in the Foundation Stage is very good. Staff know the children very well and they use this information very effectively to plan the next steps in learning for individuals.

20. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, foster a positive ethos for learning and achieve a productive working atmosphere in lessons. Pupils are managed well in class and, as a result, are able to apply themselves well to their tasks. Teachers' calm and supportive approach leads to very good relationships and is a very good model for pupils in their dealings with each other. Teachers are very positive with their pupils, recognising good work, effort and behaviour and encouraging pupils to work independently; this adds to pupils' high self-esteem and confidence. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and make these clear to pupils. As a result pupils of all capabilities know what is expected of them and try hard to achieve it.
21. Teachers' knowledge of the subjects they teach is good. Teachers prepare and plan lessons well. Lessons have clear objectives so that pupils are clear on what they are expected to learn. Good account is taken of the needs of different groups of pupils and teachers generally meet the individual learning needs of pupils well. They provide work well matched to pupils' prior levels of attainment to help pupils of all abilities make good progress. However, in some English lessons work is not sufficiently matched to their ability. Teaching assistants are used effectively. They are well trained and work closely with teachers to support pupils' learning, often working effectively with small groups in lessons. Teachers and their support assistants work well in partnership to provide good quality learning for pupils.
22. Pupils with special educational needs are taught as well as their peers. Teachers draw up an appropriate plan for each pupil on the special needs register with guidance from the co-ordinator. Teachers and learning support assistants liaise well overall, planning activities that are related to short-term targets in individual education plans. Pupils are effectively supported through these challenging activities by their assistants and make good progress through the tasks as set. Teachers make good use of the trained and committed assistants. Some assistants have become experts in their field to the benefit of pupils and other staff. Learning support assistants know the pupils well and give good personal and academic support during lessons and systems for communicating pupil progress are thorough.
23. Teachers use a good range of teaching methods, engaging the interest and enthusiasm of the pupils and promoting good learning. There is good engagement with pupils during lessons and teachers use questioning well to involve all pupils. Most lessons proceed at a brisk pace that keeps pupils interested. Teachers make good use of a wide range of resources to help pupils with their learning. Teachers are effective in making learning more visual and interesting by the use of interactive whiteboards. This is a recent innovation and staff have already become quite confident. Homework arrangements provide useful support to pupils' learning.
24. Teachers use appropriate strategies during lessons to assess pupils' grasp of the learning objectives. This information is used satisfactorily in planning the next steps in learning. However, guidance to individuals does not always help them learn from their mistakes. For example, pupils are not always shown what they need to do to achieve a higher standard in their writing. Although all work is marked regularly, sometimes the comments do not give pupils sufficient guidance as to what they need to do to

improve. This is also a shortcoming in the personal targets pupils are given, as often they are not specific enough to be helpful.

25. The procedures for checking and tracking pupils' progress over time are satisfactory. In English and mathematics, the school has sound systems for checking and recording pupils' performance, using national tests and staff observations. The headteacher in consultation with class teachers regularly monitors pupils' progress. However, these arrangements have not been effective in raising standards in writing because the monitoring of pupils' progress from year to year against National Curriculum benchmarks is not effective. In science and ICT, there are agreed procedures for monitoring and recording the performance of pupils with teachers undertaking regular assessments. However in ICT, teachers do not assess pupils' achievement against National Curriculum expectations so the school is unable to give a clear view of how well their pupils are doing compared with standards expected nationally. Assessment arrangements in other subjects are satisfactory.

## **THE CURRICULUM**

The school's curriculum is good. It provides a good range of relevant and interesting curricular opportunities, which meet statutory requirements. Opportunities for enrichment are very good. The quality and quantity of accommodation and resources are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children in the Foundation Stage benefit from very good learning opportunities and are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- A very good range of events and extra-curricular activities enhances the curriculum.
- Provision for personal, social and health education is very good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, but more able pupils are not always given work in writing that is sufficiently challenging.
- National guidance in ICT, history and geography has not been adapted sufficiently to ensure pupils' skills are fully built upon.
- Resources for ICT are very good.

### **Commentary**

26. The curriculum supports pupils' academic and personal development well. The school provides a good curriculum based on all subjects of the National Curriculum, together with personal, social and health education, religious education and the areas of learning in the Foundation Stage. Children in the Foundation Stage have very good range of learning opportunities across all areas of learning. They are very well prepared before they undertake the infant curriculum. Year 6 pupils are well equipped and prepared for the next stage of their education.
27. The curriculum is purposeful and relevant to pupils' learning needs. Learning opportunities are often rich and varied. Effective links between subjects help to make pupils' learning meaningful. The curriculum is underpinned by a planning framework, based on a two-year rolling programme and schemes of work, based mainly on national guidelines. Whilst this ensures appropriate coverage of the National Curriculum without repetition of the content in mixed-aged classes, there is

insufficient adaptation of national guidance in ICT, history and geography to ensure pupils' skills are fully built upon. However, the two-year rolling programme is adapted to meet the needs of the mixed Year 4/5 class, because assessment information is used effectively to identify challenging units of study.

28. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good. The range of responsibilities for all pupils, the high expectation of pupils' conduct and the School Council make a very positive contribution. The school provides very good personal support, ensuring very good access to the curriculum for all pupils, including those with physical and behavioural difficulties. The line dancing and massage sessions support the school's ethos, healthy living and social development programmes well. Proper attention is given to drugs and sex education and pupils' understanding of citizenship is developed well.
29. The school has a strong commitment to ensuring equally of access and opportunity for all pupils. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. All pupils on the special needs register have full access to the curriculum. Pupils with a statement of special educational needs are given the support required and make very good progress both academically and personally. Adaptations to equipment and teaching programmes are effective in meeting their varying needs. Provision for the few pupils with English as an additional language is good. The provision for gifted and talented pupils is satisfactory. Currently there are no specific additional activities in the school aimed at this group of pupils. However, the school takes advantage of local sporting and arts events to provide stimulating activities for talented pupils.
30. There is very good support for learning outside lessons. The school organises a very good range of interesting visits and events that motivate pupils. Residential visits for pupils in the juniors and the summer camp for Year 2 pupils support their personal and social development well. The very good range of extra-curricular clubs includes sport, music, music tuition, science and art. They are well attended and benefit all pupils. Participation in sport is very good and the school has enjoyed much success in local tournaments. Participation in the arts and other activities is also very good. Musical productions, dance, class assemblies, art exhibitions and singing festivals, together with events such as the Exmoor Challenge, all contribute to the very good enrichment of the curriculum.
31. Teaching staff are well qualified to support the curriculum. Specialist teaching currently supports games, art and design and technology. The well qualified and committed teacher assistants are deployed effectively to support less able pupils. Resources to support pupils' learning are satisfactory overall. There has been a big investment in computer facilities, resulting in very good resources and improved access. Resources for mathematics and physical education are good and for other subjects satisfactory.
32. The school provides good accommodation overall with some notable strengths as well as some drawbacks. The new well maintained buildings are clean, bright and enhanced by attractive displays, providing a secure learning environment in a very attractive setting. The separate, very well equipped computer suite is housed in an older temporary building. The suite is used effectively throughout the week for both ICT and music lessons. The small, satisfactorily stocked library is used for small group



work and for hearing readers. The outdoor area for the Foundation Stage children provides very well for their physical development. The hall is small and limits the achievement of older pupils in gymnastics and dance. There is no games field but effective use is made of a local recreational area for junior pupils.

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

The systems in place to ensure the welfare of pupils are good. Pupils receive good personal support for their individual needs. Good attention is given to health and safety matters. Procedures for child protection are satisfactory. Very good account is taken of pupils' views.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are confident they have a voice in the school.
- Not all staff are clear about the reporting procedure laid down in the child protection policy.
- Induction procedures for children starting school are very good.
- There are very good procedures for dealing with first aid and pupils with specific medical needs.
- Procedures for setting individual targets for pupils' achievement in English and mathematics are not well developed.

### **Commentary**

33. Teachers take time to praise pupils about their personal achievements and in doing so inspire their confidence and gain their co-operation. Pupils turn very readily to the staff for support and have no hesitation whatsoever in asking for their help when they need it. The pupils' assessments of their own achievements are included in the annual reports given to their parents. Pupils appreciate the sense of accountability and fairness this promotes. In addition, the school council acts as a useful forum for seeking pupils' views on general matters. It is evident that its members hold the school in high regard and have found little about it that they would like to see improved.
34. Verbal feedback given by teachers to pupils during lessons is good and gives pupils a greater awareness of how well they are doing. Procedures for setting individual targets for pupils' academic achievement in English and mathematics are not well developed. Teachers' comments on pupils' work for example are not always sharp enough to help pupils understand what it is exactly that they need to do to improve their work.
35. Procedures to support children new to the school are very good. Parents and children are gradually and sensitively inducted through several pre-school integration sessions that help them understand what is expected of them and how to cope with different routines.
36. First aid procedures work very well. Pupils are reassured by the presence of well trained staff who deal calmly and professionally with any minor accidents. The school makes very good efforts through accurate record keeping to ensure that pupils with

specific medical needs receive as high a level of care as possible. Although the school has a good policy in place for dealing with child protection issues, not all staff and governors have been made aware of the procedures. This is a comparative weakness in the otherwise good practices in dealing with pupils' welfare.

37. The school works hard to strike the right balance between the need to protect pupils from harm and the need to allow them a degree of independence. Parents are rightly concerned that the balance stays even, as are staff and governors who are very aware of their responsibilities in this area. All activities undertaken by pupils are properly risk assessed. Liaison with outside agencies such as health and educational welfare services are purposeful and supportive. Pupils with a statement of special educational need receive their entitlement and very good attention has been given to making the school accessible to people with disabilities. The special educational needs co-ordinator ensures that pupils receive expert advice and support from a range of specialist agencies.

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

The very good partnership between the school, parents, other schools and the community impacts effectively on pupils' learning.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school gives and receives very good support in the local community.
- Parents have very good opportunities to get involved with their children's education.
- The standard and quality of information for parents is very good.

### **Commentary**

38. The school works very closely with parents and the local community, motivating a great deal of interest and enthusiasm for its work. Pupils are quickly immersed into this welcoming and supportive community and become just as keen as their parents to ensure all pupils have equal access to school facilities and resources. As an example, members of the school council have by their own initiative, raised funds to provide specialised ICT equipment for pupils with physical disabilities.
39. Parents agree that the good admission process helps pupils settle into school quickly. It also helps establish a supportive, ongoing dialogue between home and school where parents feel confident that their views will be heard and their concerns dealt with. Parents support their children's homework activities, they encourage regular reading and music practice, they help in lessons, come to assemblies, make sure their children attend school regularly and promote the value of extra-curricular activities, even where it necessitates another inconvenient journey from outlying districts.
40. The school capitalises on the parents' willingness to help with their children's education by providing a very good insight into its teaching methods and how and what pupils learn. The information given to parents when their children move on from the Reception class is particularly enlightening and a wonderful keepsake of the child's early years at school. The school has also done well to include a lot more than just

the required statutory information in the prospectus and in the governors' report. The two documents combine to answer most of the queries parents are likely to have about the school and how it is run. School productions, assemblies, church services, class and corridor displays are all open to parents and give good indications on the standards pupils attain. Parents appreciate the weekly newsletters and find that regular progress reports and consultation evenings update them sufficiently on how well their children are achieving.

41. The school is valued and respected by the local community. It continues to attract a number of willing volunteers who take time to engage with the pupils, read with them and talk about their lives and experiences. Links with local businesses and private benefactors have brought in valuable funds, helping the school improve its accommodation and facilities. The school is proud of its village heritage. Pupils' cultural and social development is furthered by their participation in local events such as harvest festival, apple days and the village pantomime. The school welcomes teachers from other schools eager to observe and learn from its high quality teaching in the Foundation Stage. The strong partnership with staff from local schools and colleges also helps pupils become more confident about moving to the next stage of their education. *"It doesn't feel so scary now"* pronounced a Year 6 pupil after a visiting group of Year 7 pupils and their teacher dispelled a few myths about secondary school life.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The school is well led and managed. Leadership by the headteacher is very good and governance of the school is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher provides very good leadership to the school community.
- A very positive and supportive ethos fosters effectively pupils' personal and academic progress.
- Teamwork is good with all staff working well together for the benefit of the pupils.
- The school focuses well on self-improvement, but does not consider sufficiently measures to demonstrate the effectiveness of its actions on pupils' achievement.
- The school's finances are managed well.
- The governing body makes a good contribution to the work of the school.

### **Commentary**

42. The headteacher has maintained his very good leadership of the school since the last inspection. He gives very clear educational direction and has high aspirations for pupils in terms of both their personal and academic development. He is a strong and very effective leader and his high expectations are a significant factor in promoting the very positive ethos of the school and pupils' good achievement. Parents and pupils appreciate the family atmosphere, the warm and harmonious relationships and Christian values and beliefs that pervade all aspects of the life of the school. He is well supported by an experienced deputy and committed staff.

43. Teamwork is a strong feature of the school. Teachers and support staff work well together for the benefit of the pupils and support the aims of the school, ensuring a fully inclusive school. All pupils are equally valued. The headteacher and staff know all the pupils individually and there is clear commitment to supporting and promoting the wellbeing of all. Teachers work effectively together and most subjects of the curriculum are well led. For example, of the subjects inspected in full, mathematics, science, ICT, religious education and physical education are well led.
44. The school has a clear agenda for improvement and the main points for action in the previous inspection have been addressed well. Development planning has some strong features and is comprehensive in scope. The school improvement plan summarises well the priorities to move the school forward. It is a good tool for improvement because actions are well thought out and make clear what has to be done.
45. The school is managed well. The headteacher and deputy headteacher work well together to ensure that the school is well organised and runs smoothly. Policies and procedures are clearly set out and communicated. Delegation of responsibilities and deployment of staff, including shared class teaching responsibilities are handled well. Support staff are managed well and make a valuable contribution to the work of the school. The Foundation Stage is very well managed and provision for pupils with special educational needs is well organised by the knowledgeable and committed co-ordinator. Most staff are experienced and have long-term employment at the school so mutual support and informal communication are an effective means of ensuring a shared vision for the school. However, because the school is small, most staff have multiple responsibilities as well as their class teacher roles. In addition, budget restraints provide limited opportunities for teachers to carry out monitoring responsibilities during the school day. Consequently, although there is some monitoring, there is insufficient evaluation of subject provision in order to identify areas for improvement.
46. The school has a number of monitoring procedures in place, but there are some gaps in the measures used to evaluate its effectiveness. Procedures to monitor the performance of teachers are good and the school uses performance management procedures well to help staff set professional targets and identify their training needs. There are sound procedures for analysing the school's performance in English and mathematics, but there are shortcomings in how the school demonstrates whether pupils have progressed sufficiently in writing and ICT. While the school has sound procedures to review progress on its improvement plan, there are insufficient attempts to link this to the impact on provision or standards. Progress on the school improvement plan priorities are reviewed regularly but there is no formal evaluation of the success or otherwise of action plans to help inform the next stage of development planning.
47. Finances are managed well. As the table below shows the school operates within very tight financial restraints. However, financial planning is prudent and carefully takes into account the school's educational priorities outlined in the school improvement plan. The governors' finance committee oversees budget monitoring appropriately and the budget is managed well. The governors make careful checks on finances and expenditure and financial planning takes good account of longer-term trends.

Financial decisions are taken after full consultation and are clearly targeted on improving provision for the benefit of the pupils. The school applies the principles of best value well and the quality of its financial management enables it to provide good value for money.

## Financial information

### *Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004*

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	414,569	Balance from previous year	-6,886
Total expenditure	411,365	Balance carried forward to the next year	-3,682
Expenditure per pupil	2,762		

48. Governance of the school is good because the governing body works effectively to improve the school further. The governing body has good procedures for conducting its business efficiently and ensuring that statutory responsibilities are fully met. Some decision-making powers are delegated to appropriate committees but the major decisions are rightly made by the full governing body. It works closely with the headteacher in planning and making decisions about the future direction of the school. Governors provide good levels of support and show good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have clear procedures that keep them informed of the school's strengths and areas for development and systems to monitor the work of the school. For example, visits to the school, links with subject co-ordinators and with classes and clear and readable reports from the management help raise their awareness. Along with the headteacher, they review performance data and the progress of the school improvement plan and set targets. They use this information to challenge the management of the school but do not fully avail themselves of measures to assess pupils' achievement.

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

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

Provision in the Foundation Stage is very good. There have been significant improvements in provision since the previous inspection. The most notable improvement is the provision for physical development in the outside play area which now provides an exciting extension to the classroom. The quality of planning and assessment has improved and this has a very good impact on teaching quality and children's learning.

There are currently six children in their Reception Year, most of whom have had some pre-school experience. A second intake will begin in the spring term. Overall, the children's levels of attainment when they start school are as expected for their age, although there is a broad range in abilities. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently very good. Teachers' subject knowledge and understanding of how children learn is very good and consequently children achieve well. The use of assessment to plan appropriate activities that promote individual children's progress is very effective. All of the current group are likely to achieve their early learning goals in all areas of learning and a few are set to exceed them by the end of the Reception Year.

The shared leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are very good. The quality of teamwork is highly effective in promoting exciting and purposeful experiences for the children. The learning that takes place in the outside play area is a particularly strong feature of provision. Links with parents are outstanding. This ensures that children are welcomed and settled into school very quickly. Information provided about children's learning and their achievement is of the highest quality.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

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

- Staff have consistently high expectations and provide excellent role models.
- Children are encouraged to be independent and take responsibilities.
- There are very good opportunities for children to work with others.

#### **Commentary**

49. A high priority is given to this area of learning to ensure children settle quickly into school routines and pick up the pace of learning. Most children's skills are as expected when they start school, though some already show a higher degree of independence. All achieve well because teaching and learning are very good and are on course to

meet or exceed the standards expected by the end of their Reception Year. Teachers plan very good opportunities for children to develop social skills while engaging in group work, paired reading and purposeful role-play. Children behave well because it is expected of them and teachers constantly reinforce the need to respect one another and take care of equipment. As a result, children take turns properly, develop very good negotiating skills and work collaboratively inside and outside of the classroom. A delightful moment during the inspection was when a pupil who has specific learning difficulties joined in outside play activities for another class. This interaction was filled with mutual respect as a quiet moment was shared winding up a ball of string. Children take on responsibilities around the classroom, such as tidying up equipment or taking the register to the school office. They are well able to adjust their behaviour to different situations. They listen well while grouped on the carpet and respond reverently when taking part in whole school assemblies.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good.
- Planning and assessment are very good and promote good achievement.
- Children's achievement in spoken language is very good.

### Commentary

50. Teaching in this area is consistently very good because of the range of activities planned and the quality of teachers' intervention and involvement. Children make very good progress especially in the way they develop their spoken language. Although standards are broadly as expected when children start school, almost all are likely to exceed expectations for speaking and listening by the end of the Foundation Stage. The outside area is used very effectively to extend the ideas that are nurtured in the classroom. During one session, the teaching assistant continually helped children to sustain their ideas by entering into role-play with children. By doing so, she was able to extend vocabulary, help children to initiate new ideas and add resources to the play to stimulate imaginative talk. Enough time was allowed for children to explore different possibilities as they re-enacted a story about pirates and the sea. All children make good progress with early reading and writing skills. Children develop a good interest in books. They listen intently to stories told and read and enjoy paired reading with older children when they select their favourite book to share. A few already read simple texts confidently. Children understand that pictures and text carry meaning and are encouraged to link initial sounds of words and letters. Activities that persuade children to write their own books, produce better shapes or use the computer to draw and label are plentiful. Children use language for an increasing range of purposes because activities in all areas of learning are punctuated by teachers' questions which consolidate vocabulary and encourage children to think and explain.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan interesting and meaningful activities which are often linked to other areas of learning.

### Commentary

51. Very good teaching ensures that children achieve well in this area. All of the current group of children are likely to achieve their expected targets by the end of Reception. Teachers plan specifically for more able children who are likely to exceed these targets. Children show an interest in mathematical ideas. They count objects reliably up to ten and some carry out simple calculations such as adding "one more". They



show confidence when solving problems. This was demonstrated very well when children had to programme a toy to move between islands on a map and collect treasure. Children understood 'forward,' 'back' and 'turn' and could predict the distance the toy had to travel, resulting in a successful treasure hunt. Positional language had been taught previously in the outside area where children followed a string trail 'over' 'under' and 'round' different objects. Activities linked to the current theme, such as "make up a number pattern to show how pirates like to march" stimulate children's mathematical thinking. Teachers use a very good range of resources and methods to help children learn. For example, in one lesson there was a large sized number line for children to jump along while they counted. Very good use is made of 'talking partners' where children test out their number stories on each other. This has a good impact on their mathematical thinking and their speaking skills.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Planning is excellent and activities are purposefully linked to other areas of learning.
- Teaching is very good.

### **Commentary**

52. Children's general knowledge of the world around them is typical of that found nationally when they start school. Very good teaching and a rich and varied range of practical activities ensure that they achieve well and become interested and curious learners. All who currently attend Reception class are set to achieve their expected goals. Teachers plan activities that enable children to explore a theme. During the inspection these were focused on 'The Sea' and 'Pirates'. This promoted most stimulating exploration of the imaginary world of story characters, fishing, boat building and treasure. Scientific curiosity was developed very well when children painted pictures of rainbow trout, having first stroked them to see what they felt like. They observe growing plants by planting bulbs in soil and glass jars so they can see the roots. Some children excitedly noticed that daffodil shoots were appearing in the tub in the play area and ran to tell their teacher. Children approach computers confidently and show good independent skills when using 'paint' tools to create pictures. They use a wide selection of construction kits to build and adapt their models for play. From stories and pictures, children find out about the festivals and celebrations of other cultures, such as Diwali. Children's knowledge is broadened by visits to the beach, farms and local walks.

## **PHYSICAL AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Insufficient evidence was gathered to make a judgement on all aspects of provision in these two areas of learning.

53. Children make good progress and achieve well in **physical development**. During physical education lessons they run and jump without inhibition. They show good awareness of others playing around them. There are ample opportunities for children

to climb, swing and build with large construction pieces in the outside area. Finer skills are developed well. There are well planned activities where children learn to manipulate small tools and implements such as scissors. They hold pencils and brushes correctly. In a painting activity, children were encouraged to use broad and fine brushes to make different marks. In **creative development**, children work with a good range of materials, enabling them to explore colour and texture. They use different media, such as clay and collage materials. Teachers provide stimulating resources to interest children. A popular display for example was the coloured beads and strings of pearls laid out on a black velvet cloth where children could play imaginatively and create designs with the 'pirates' treasure'. Pupils learn a good repertoire of songs and have the chance to explore the sounds of musical instruments. Role-play is very well resourced. Children dress up and share equipment very well in imaginative play. A small group spent considerable time around the stove, for example, cooking 'fish and chips' for the pirates. Play is always very well supported by adults who ensure children gain as much as possible from the activity.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

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

- Pupils achieve well in reading, speaking and listening and standards in the current Year 2 and Year 6 are above those expected nationally.
- Teaching and learning in the infant classes is good.
- There are weaknesses in pupils' writing across the school so that their achievement is not as good as it could be.
- More able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged.
- Assessment in writing is not sufficiently linked to National Curriculum levels.
- Teachers do not sufficiently raise pupils' awareness of what constitutes good writing and how they might improve.

#### **Commentary**

54. Standards by Year 6 are above those found nationally, but are not as high as those found at the last inspection. This is due mainly to standards in writing not matching the national trend of improvement. Results of the 2004 national tests in Year 6 were above the national average, as was the three-year average in test results to 2004. However, when compared to schools having similar prior attainment in Year 2, results were below average in the last two years. Pupils do very well in reading tests, but not in writing tests. The proportion of pupils who achieved the higher Level 5 in the 2004 tests was well above the national average in reading, but below in writing.
55. Standards by Year 2 are above those found nationally and are similar to those at the last inspection. Results of the 2004 national tests at the end of Year 2 showed pupils reached levels of attainment in line with the national average in both reading and writing tests.
56. Pupils of all capabilities achieve well in speaking and listening. Pupils have good opportunities to develop these skills in many lessons, including drama and personal, social and health education. Good questioning by teachers provides ample opportunities for pupils to discuss and explain reasons, opinions and methods. Teachers use various grouping arrangements to stimulate discussion and lesson plans often identify a focus on listening. For example, Year 4/5 pupils listened to a report from Roman Britain to deepen their understanding of opinion and fact. Pupils become confident speakers able to express themselves well, using an increasingly wide vocabulary. Standards are above those expected in the current Years 2 and 6.
57. Pupils of all capabilities achieve well in reading. They achieve well because teachers provide a good range of reading opportunities. Paired reading sessions between older and younger pupils provide good opportunities for discussion. All pupils are encouraged to read at home and a good dialogue on progress is kept between home and school. Junior pupils use the Internet to conduct research in support of other subjects. Pupils read well throughout the school with increasing accuracy, fluency and

expression. Year 2 pupils use a good range of strategies to help them know and use key words and to develop methods of tackling unfamiliar words. The same strategies are used by less able pupils in the juniors. They confidently read a poem involving two characters, taking turns to read each part with good expression. By Year 6 most pupils are confident readers. They show understanding of a range of different texts, including poetry, by identifying key features and the use of inference and deduction. They demonstrate good reference skills and use dictionaries effectively.

58. Achievement in writing is satisfactory and standards are as expected nationally by Years 2 and 6. However, achievement is not as high as it could be and consequently there are some weaknesses in standards. In Year 2, most pupils make satisfactory progress in sequencing their sentences, spell common words correctly and use capital letters and simple punctuation accurately. However, this is not sustained in longer pieces of writing. More able pupils are beginning to use appropriate words to combine sentences and use some imaginative vocabulary in their poems but their use of interesting vocabulary is somewhat limited.
59. Aspects of writing improve satisfactorily as pupils move through the school as they write for a variety of purposes, including lists, poetry, reports, play scripts, letters and imaginative stories. However, spelling and handwriting skills do not improve sufficiently. By Year 6 pupils can plan their work, taking account of different readers. Whilst their vocabulary is sound, their use of increasingly complex sentences is limited. Many pupils continue to misspell common words and they do not consistently use a joined script. Less able pupils use incorrect tenses for verbs but more able pupils demonstrate accurate spelling, joined handwriting and the good use of imaginative vocabulary. However, strategies to systematically teach spelling throughout the school are limited and the application of handwriting skills, despite handwriting practice lessons, is not a consistent expectation. Indeed, teachers do not always use a joined script themselves to provide a good example. Some more-able pupils underachieve when planned activities are insufficiently challenging or they are not shown how to improve their work. Opportunities for pupils to improve their written work by redrafting and to write independently and at length are insufficient.
60. Teaching in the infant classes is good and in the junior classes satisfactory. All teachers manage pupils well and establish good relationships. They make good use of new technologies and other resources to motivate and engage pupils. Learning support assistants are used well to support less able pupils. Teachers identify the learning objectives of lessons clearly and use an appropriate range of teaching methods. However, in some lessons, the work planned is not matched well enough to the needs of all pupils, which limits their progress.
61. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. Teachers question pupils well during lessons to clarify their understanding. A variety of materials are used to test pupils and these are used to set class targets and individual targets for each year. However, there is no systematic tracking of pupil progress from year to year in writing against National Curriculum benchmarks and teachers do not always identify appropriate targets for improving writing. For example, pupils who demonstrated difficulties with spelling and grammar were set a target to improve their use of paragraphs. The best practice in marking identifies what pupils have achieved well and also identifies appropriate ways to improve their work. However, teachers' marking is inconsistent and teachers do not

sufficiently raise pupils' awareness of what constitutes good writing and make it explicit how they can improve.

62. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The co-ordinator supports colleagues well through advice and resources. She undertakes some monitoring of teaching and pupils' work but there are shortcomings in the evaluation of provision. Whilst writing has been identified as an area for improvement, actions taken so far have not resulted in higher standards. Resources are satisfactory. The school has a satisfactory range of good quality fiction and reading scheme books and the small library area is stocked with a satisfactory range of good quality books.

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

63. This is satisfactory. There are some opportunities in other subjects to make a contribution to the development of pupils' writing skills, but opportunities to produce extended pieces of writing are limited. Class discussions in other subjects offer a good contribution to the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills. Pupils make good use of their computer skills to present written work.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' achievement is good and standards are above those normally found nationally.
- The school does consistently well in the national tests at Years 2 and 6.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Teachers make good use of new technologies to support pupils' learning.
- Leadership by the co-ordinator is good, but ways of evaluating the work of the school are not sharp enough.

### **Commentary**

64. Standards by Year 6 are above those found nationally but are not as high as those found at the time of the last inspection. This is due more to the differences in the respective cohorts rather than as a result of a fall in standards. National test results for 2004 were well above the national average as was the three-year average in results to 2004. When compared to those of schools having similar prior attainment in Year 2, results in 2004 were well above average. Pupils have good numeracy skills. By Year 6 pupils have a good grasp of operations with decimals, percentages and fractions and can complete written calculations accurately. They can use a variety of mental and written strategies to solve problems and use appropriate mathematical language to explain their methods. Pupils' mental arithmetic skills are good.
65. Standards in Year 2 are above those found nationally. This is a similar judgement to the last inspection. In the 2004 tests, results were above the national average and the proportion of pupils achieving above the expected level was high. Nearly all the pupils in Year 2 are working at least within the expected range for their ages. Most are developing a sound understanding of place value and are becoming confident with numbers to 100. Many are developing a sound understanding of multiplication. A

good proportion of the year group are on course to exceed the expected level by the end of the year.

66. Pupils' achievement is good because of the good teaching. Teaching is well planned and helps pupils to make good progress, particularly in number work. Teachers provide activities that give sufficient challenge for higher-attaining pupils. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good because they are well supported. Boys and girls make similar progress. The few pupils with English as an additional language make similar progress as others with similar levels of prior attainment.
67. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils and promote a positive ethos for learning so pupils learn well. Pupils are keen and enthusiastic and respond well to their teachers' high expectations. Lessons are well planned and there is a clear focus to all lessons so that pupils are clear on what they are expected to learn. Teachers use a range of effective teaching methods to help pupils learn. Pupils feel confident in their learning because subject language is specifically taught. Visual information through games, objects and pictures helps younger pupils' understanding. Teachers make good use of new technologies, for example in their use of interactive whiteboards to aid whole-class demonstrations and in using ICT effectively to support pupils' learning. Particularly effective are the regular opportunities in the ICT suite for all pupils to use a well structured programme that allows pupils to progress at their own rate in reinforcing their numeracy skills and mathematical understanding. Pupils apply themselves very well during these sessions. Homework is used effectively to support pupils' learning.
68. Assessment is satisfactory overall. It is good in lessons. For example, teachers' questioning skills are good and they use mini-whiteboards effectively to check on pupils' prior knowledge or gains during the lessons. Teachers' mark work conscientiously but do not indicate sufficiently to pupils how they might improve further. The school has a sound system for monitoring pupils' achievements over the longer term, enabling it to track the performance of pupils in relation to National Curriculum levels satisfactorily.
69. The subject is well led and soundly managed. The co-ordinator has a very good understanding of how pupils learn. She ensures that the subject is well planned and as a result the school provides a well-balanced curriculum. In her own teaching she provides a very good role model for colleagues. Although the school uses the information on pupils' attainment satisfactorily when looking at the school's overall performance and the co-ordinator does some monitoring, the evaluation of current provision is not sharp enough to inform effectively further development planning for the subject.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

70. This is satisfactory. There are sound opportunities for reinforcing and using mathematics in different subjects, but such opportunities are not always sufficiently well planned. Links between mathematics and ICT are good.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well and standards are above expected levels by Year 6.
- The school does consistently well in the national tests at the end of Year 6.
- Teaching and learning are good with a strong focus on developing pupils' skills in carrying out investigations.
- The use of assessment information to inform individual progress and targets is not well established.

### **Commentary**

71. Standards in the current Year 6 are above those typically found nationally, but are not as high as those in previous years. National test results at the end of Year 6 have been consistently well above average since the last inspection. Results in 2004 indicate that standards were well above those found nationally, reflecting the judgement made in the previous report. A very high proportion of pupils achieved the higher Level 5. Standards in Year 2 are above those found nationally. This is a similar judgement to the last inspection.
72. Pupils' achievement is good across the school. This can be accounted for by strong teaching, particularly of enquiry skills, which help pupils develop a good understanding of science. Teachers take good account of the different abilities of pupils and work is prepared to match their particular learning needs. Strategies such as modified planning sheets or extra adult support ensure that all pupils achieve as well as expected. Girls and boys achieved equally well.
73. Pupils in Year 2 gain a great deal from their investigation of different parts of the school grounds to see where plants grow best. They compare the 'cultivated' area of the field with the uncultivated environmental area. They show excitement at the discovery of various plants and mini-beasts, as well as a sprouting hazel tree still attached to the nut. This prompted some discussion as to how the nut got there, extending their thinking and understanding of seed dispersal. Nearly all pupils in Year 2 are on course to reach the standard expected and many are likely to achieve a higher level by the end of the year.
74. There is a particularly good focus on the teaching of enquiry skills in the junior classes. This makes lessons interesting for pupils. Pupils are taught to plan their investigation and carry it out independently. For example, in one lesson pupils generated their own ideas about 'how to keep things warm'. They thought about different materials as thermal insulators and planned how to make their tests fair. Having wrapped ice cubes in different materials they checked and recorded regularly to see which materials were most effective. Pupils in Year 6 can plan and carry out investigations and research and record their findings to a good standard. They have a secure understanding of the principles of fair testing.
75. The good quality of teaching has been maintained since the previous inspection. Teachers' subject knowledge is good, so they plan lessons very well. This ensures that

there is a good pace to learning because pupils are engaged well in science activities. Teachers use resources well, particularly interactive whiteboards which help pupils focus and keep them engaged in their learning. Occasionally pupils are given a little too much direction for their investigations. This reduces their independence and stifles the excitement of finding out for themselves. Good learning is underpinned by the very good relationships established. Pupils know that their contributions to lessons are valued. Their confidence and enthusiasm for learning results in very good and at times exemplary, behaviour. The quality of presentation in pupils' books has improved. The absence of worksheets means that pupils develop good reading skills, which promote literacy well. Diagrams, tables and written work are clear and well organised.

76. Assessment is satisfactory. Marking of pupils' work is good because teachers' comments challenge pupils' ideas and often make them think about how they can improve their work. Assessment procedures are constructive, but the information gained is not used as effectively as it might be to track pupils' progress and set targets for future achievement.
77. Leadership of the subject is good. Science maintains a high profile in the school because of initiatives such as 'Science Day' when pupils enjoy showing their scientific discoveries with other classes. There is also an after-school science club which is attended enthusiastically. The curriculum is based on National Curriculum guidance and is planned thoughtfully with a different enquiry focus for each term so that pupils build up skills systematically. Management is sound. There has been some monitoring of teaching and pupils' work but they are not vigorously evaluated in order to identify areas for improvement.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good overall and pupils achieve well in lessons.
- Teachers make effective use of ICT to support pupils' learning in other subjects.
- The co-ordinator provides good leadership and support to colleagues.
- Assessment procedures are satisfactory, but there is insufficient linking of pupil achievement to National Curriculum expectations.
- The scheme of work ensures a broad curriculum but the sequencing of units does not always ensure that pupils' skills are progressively built upon.
- Resources for ICT are very good.

### **Commentary**

78. It was not possible to observe any Year 6 lessons and examples of saved work are limited. However, from the evidence available, standards in the current Year 6 are in line with national expectations, but there is evidence of above expected standards in other junior year groups, for example in Years 4 and 5.



79. Year 6 pupils use word processing skills extensively to present their work attractively, often adding pictures from files or the Internet. They have produced simulations of mazes, using repeat instructions to duplicate shapes, add rules and characters. However, younger pupils in Years 4 and 5 learning the same skills during the inspection achieve equivalent standards. Year 3 demonstrate expected standards when navigating a specific website to research their topic of teeth and healthy eating.
80. Standards in Year 2 are as expected nationally as they were at the last inspection. Year 2 pupils demonstrate secure mouse control and can drag and drop images on the screen to create real and imaginary creatures. They can save and print their work with confidence.
81. In the lessons seen, teaching and learning were good. Clear routines to access the computers in the ICT suite are set up for all classes. During lessons in the suite, pupils show good levels of concentration, work sensibly on their own or in pairs and willingly help each other if they have difficulties. Pupils with special educational needs are supported satisfactorily both by adults and by their peers. Teachers generally identify clear learning objectives for ICT within objectives for other subjects. Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards to demonstrate tasks, but the use by pupils of this resource to demonstrate their understanding is an area to develop.
82. Achievement is good in lessons because all groups make good progress. However, overall achievement is satisfactory. Whilst the school's planning framework ensures that all aspects of the curriculum are covered, the sequencing of the units does not sufficiently take account of the mixed-age classes. In addition, although teachers assess pupils' progress against end of unit objectives, there are insufficient links between standards achieved and National Curriculum levels. These factors hold back higher achievement in the acquisition of skills.
83. Leadership is good and management is satisfactory. The subject has been a major focus for the school and there has been substantial investment in resources and training. As a result most teachers are now confident using the software and hardware provided. Resources are now very good, with an interactive whiteboard and computers in each class, as well as the very well equipped computer suite. Often pupils enjoy 1:1 access to computers when working in the suite. The suite is timetabled effectively throughout the week to maximize its use. The co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and supports colleagues well. The co-ordinator keeps an overview of uses of ICT but there is insufficient evaluation of the impact of action taken on standards and achievement.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

84. This is good. Teachers make effective use of ICT to support pupils' learning in other subjects. Teachers ensure that work is linked well to other subjects and has a realistic context. There are examples of the use of technology in most subjects, especially science, history, religious education, art and design and English. Pupils make regular use of a mathematics program which has had a positive impact on standards. The use of ICT in the Foundation Stage to help work in mathematics and literacy is good.

## **HUMANITIES**

It is not possible to report in detail on all subjects within this curriculum area. A total of four lessons were seen, three in religious education, one in history and none in geography. Religious education was inspected in full and is reported on below. History and geography were sampled.

85. The school plans a suitable programme of work in **geography** and **history** that helps pupils extend their knowledge and understanding over a satisfactory range of topics. An analysis of their recorded work indicates that standards are broadly as expected for their ages. Standards in **geography** are as expected by Year 2. Standards in **history** are as expected by Year 6.
86. The school offers a satisfactory and adequately planned curriculum in both subjects. Topics are based on national guidance and are planned on a two-year cycle to ensure that pupils in the mixed-aged classes do not repeat work. The work seen in displays and in their books shows that pupils cover an appropriate range of topics. However, planned activities do not always ensure that pupils' skills are sufficiently built upon in ways that get progressively harder. Consequently pupils in mixed-aged classes often do the same work, so for example, there is little difference in the standards of work of pupils in Years 5 and 6. The curriculum has been adapted to make good use of the local environment and a good range of visits and visitors help make these subjects relevant and interesting to pupils. There are some effective links with other subjects but there are missed opportunities for the development of pupils' literacy skills. Assessment procedures provide teachers with satisfactory information on pupils' progress and attainment. Resources are generally good. The school makes good use of the resources of local museums and the National Trust. However, there is a lack of globes and maps on display in classrooms. The co-ordinators for both subjects are enthusiastic and keen to develop their subjects but future plans are not sufficiently informed by effective evaluation of current provision.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Provision in religious education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well and they develop good insights and understanding of religious themes for their ages.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- The subject is well led and managed.

### **Commentary**

87. By Year 2 standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and by Year 6 standards are above those expected. Good teaching, a broad curriculum and the Christian ethos of the school all help to promote pupils' good achievement. By Year 6 pupils have built well on their earlier knowledge of world religions. They are thoughtful in their discussions and show understanding and insights that are generally above expectations for their age.

88. Teaching seen during the inspection is consistently good or very good. All lessons are planned thoughtfully, with sufficient support for pupils of different abilities. In the most effective lessons pupils are strongly challenged by teachers to provide deeper interpretation of biblical events. For example, Year 6 pupils' discussion on parables was stimulated by a set of pictures in which the artist linked themes from the stories told by Jesus. Pupils worked collaboratively to search the New Testament and give explanations for the artist's interpretation. Pupils worked with determination, showing a great deal of independence and maturity beyond their years when sharing their thoughts. In another effective lesson, the teacher used a range of resources to present information, including audiotape, video, interactive whiteboard and printed material to provide pupils with a sample of the views that people hold about the value of the Bible.
89. Although no teaching was seen in Years 1 and 2, it is evident from pupils' work that religious education is taught to sufficient depth and pupils gain a good understanding of world faiths and celebrations. Displays showing a Jewish Sukkat and Diwali celebrations capture well pupils' interest in those topics.
90. The subject is led and managed effectively by the headteacher, who maintains a good overview of the work in the school. A revised locally agreed scheme has been established and resources to match are in place, though more artefacts for some faiths are desirable. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal development. Assessment systems are satisfactory.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

Physical education was inspected in full and is reported on below. Art and design, music and design and technology were sampled. A total of five lessons were observed, three in physical education, one in art and design, one in music and none in design and technology.

91. In **art and design**, displays and other evidence of pupils' work in school indicate that pupils' achievement is good and that pupils have maintained the above expected standards since the previous inspection. In their most recent visit to the local secondary school to take part in art projects, Year 6 pupils studied the work of Russian artist Alexie Jawlensky. Their subsequent work captured well the vibrant colour and geometric design which typify some of the artist's work. There are good examples of work stimulated by local artists and sculptors. Art is often linked well to other subjects. A good example is the sculpture work done by pupils in Years 1 and 2. Ideas were generated in a physical education lesson when children used balances to create 'body sculptures'. The idea of three-dimensional work was extended to the use of pumpkins, resulting in a giant caterpillar sculpture in the grounds. The decomposition of the sculpture now provides a source of scientific interest. Since national subject guidance has been adapted, pupils gain a good range of experiences, working with different media and their skills are well developed. Techniques such as batik, printing and weaving add interest for pupils and promote very positive attitudes. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the art club and the variety of work they do.
92. In **design and technology**, all teachers plan one series of design and technology lessons each term, using a scheme of work based on national guidelines. In the samples of work seen, standards are in line with national expectations with some

evidence of higher standards at the design stage. In Year 2 finger puppets show appropriate cutting and joining skills. Standards of finish are variable and this is an area to develop. However, photographic evidence of healthy sandwiches made by Years 3 and 4 showed very attractive and inviting snacks, with a range of trimmings and toppings. Year 6 pupils describe confidently how they have taken apart slippers in preparation for making their own designs. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Although design and technology has not been a major focus for the school and the useful portfolio of assessed work has not been kept up to date, assessment is satisfactory and based on key objectives for each unit. Resources are satisfactory overall.

93. In **music**, the good standards reported in the previous inspection have been maintained, so that pupils achieve well to attain standards above those normally found nationally by Year 6. The quality of singing in lessons and assemblies in particular is good. The school does much to promote music. For example, approximately half the pupils in Years 3 to 6 learn musical instruments in addition to their regular music lessons in school. There is a well planned music curriculum to ensure all pupils have many opportunities to create, perform and appreciate music. Pupils are often encouraged to bring instruments from home in order to contribute to the performance during lessons. There is a school ensemble which rehearses weekly to prepare for performances in school and at some community events. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal development.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Provision in physical education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in swimming are above those found nationally.
- Teaching is good, although the size of the hall limits the achievement of older pupils in gymnastics.
- After school sports clubs make a very positive contribution to pupils' development.
- Resources for physical education are good.

### **Commentary**

94. During the inspection it was not possible to see lessons in all aspects of physical education. Lessons in gymnastics and dance were observed. However, from documentary evidence it is possible to make a judgement on many aspects of the curriculum.
95. Standards were above national expectations in dance in Year 1. Pupils show good control when running, stretching, bending and swaying in their work on waves and the sea. Standards in gymnastics are as expected nationally in Year 6. Pupils demonstrate good fluency and poise when moving from one balance to the next. However, they had to take turns because of lack of space, hence limiting their achievement. There is a strong emphasis on promoting swimming and over the last

few years, all Year 6 pupils have been able swim at least 25 metres, with many achieving other swimming awards.

96. The co-ordinator has provided an appropriate scheme of work, good resources and training to improve the quality of teaching. Teaching was good or better in the lessons seen. Pupils enjoy their physical education lessons. Assessment arrangements are satisfactory with pupil progress checked against key objectives for each teaching unit.
97. The school provides a broad curriculum and the subject makes a good contribution to pupils personal development. Whilst the school does not have its own playing field, it makes good use of the hall, playgrounds, a local grassed area and swimming pool. In addition, the school grounds and local open areas are used well for orienteering and cross-country pursuits. A very good range of well-attended clubs including football, netball, tag rugby and 'kwik' cricket enhance the curriculum and the school enjoys considerable success in competitive sports. Daily line dancing makes a positive contribution to pupils' physical education. Leadership is good but the co-ordinator's monitoring of standards is informal.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

This area was sampled and only one lesson was observed.

Pupils are respectful of others, enjoy excellent relationships with each other and adults and have a very good understanding of the difference between right and wrong. The school's high expectations of pupils' conduct and the very good promotion of racial harmony support these strengths. The school council and day-to-day responsibilities offered to all pupils make a positive contribution to pupils' personal development and awareness of the principles of citizenship. All teachers devote time to personal, social and health education and teach the themes identified in the curriculum planning framework, using a variety of materials.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### *Grade*

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	3

<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
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

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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