

INSPECTION REPORT

ILFRACOMBE INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Ilfracombe

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113155

Headteacher: Mrs C Thompson

Lead inspector: David Westall

Dates of inspection: 13th - 15th September 2004

Inspection number: 267097

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Nursery
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	347
School address:	Marlborough Road Ilfracombe Devon
Postcode:	EX34 8JL
Telephone number:	(01271) 863 462
Fax number:	(01271) 863 462
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs I Watson
Date of previous inspection:	10 th May 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

There are 347 pupils on roll, aged between three and seven years, and they are taught in 14 classes. These include a nurture group, which caters for 13 pupils with special educational needs related to emotional or behavioural issues, and a nursery class. The school is the only infant school in Ilfracombe, and pupils are drawn from a fairly wide area. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. The percentage identified as having special educational needs is above average, and most of these pupils have general learning difficulties. Five pupils have statements of special educational need. Two pupils who speak English as an additional language are at an early stage of English language acquisition. The school serves an area of high social deprivation. Children's overall standards are below the level expected for their age on entry.

The school gained the Investors in People award in 2002, the School's Achievement award in 2002 and 2003, and the Healthy Schools award in 2004. It also has the Gold Award Travel Plan.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2414	David Westall	Lead inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Music
1333	Elizabeth Forster	Lay inspector	
3856	Sandy Wellsted	Team inspector	English Religious education Special educational needs English as an additional language
15263	Diana Wright	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History
19302	Christine Perrett	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Physical education
2420	Brian McCutcheon	Team inspector	Information and communication technology

The inspection contractor was:

Tribal PPI
Barley House
Oakfield Grove
Clifton
Bristol
BS8 2BN

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Ilfacombe Infant and Nursery School is a good school with a range of very good features. It benefits from very good leadership and management, and from good teaching which enables pupils to make good progress in their learning. Pupils' personal development is fostered very well, and the school is a caring community in which everyone matters. Relationships are very positive and pupils enjoy learning. Parents rightly hold the school in high regard. It provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve well, across the school, including in the Nursery and the Reception classes and in English, mathematics and science in Years 1 and 2.
- The quality of teaching is good and enables pupils to make good progress in their learning.
- The leadership and management are very good.
- Very good provision is made for pupils' personal development, and this is reflected in their very good attitudes, values and behaviour.
- The curriculum is broad and relevant, and pupils benefit from a very good range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors.
- Very good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs.
- A high priority is given to pupils' welfare.
- A very strong partnership is established with parents.
- Standards in art and design are above average in Year 2.
- Pupils' attendance rate is well below the national average.

The school has made good progress since its last inspection in 1999. Procedures for checking the quality of teaching are more rigorous and the amount of good teaching has increased. Pupils' work in information and communication technology (ICT) now supports their learning in other subjects more effectively, and learning resources and the Nursery accommodation have been improved. In contrast to the situation in 1999, pupils now benefit from a very good range of extra-curricular activities. However, the attendance rate was well below the national average when the school was last inspected, and this is still the case.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils achieve well and those presently in Year 2 are on course to reach overall standards which are broadly in line with national expectations by the end of the school year.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
reading	C	B	C	B
writing	C	B	C	A
mathematics	C	C	C	A

*Key: A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average.
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals.*

The table above shows that the end of Year 2, National Curriculum test results in 2003 were in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. These results were well above the average results of similar schools in writing and mathematics and above the results of similar schools in reading. The trend in the school's results, from 1999 to 2003, has been above the national trend.

Inspection findings reflect the results in 2003. They show that pupils achieve well, making good progress from mainly below average starting points on entry to the school. Consequently, although pupils' overall standards in English, mathematics and science are a little below average at the beginning of Year 2, they are on a rising trend and are on course to meet national expectations by the end of the academic year.

Standards are broadly in line with national expectations in Year 2 in ICT, geography and design and technology. Pupils' work in art and design is good, including in the youngest classes, and standards in Year 2 are above national expectations. Insufficient evidence was collected for inspectors to judge pupils' standards in other subjects.

Pupils with special educational needs achieve well across the school, and the most capable pupils also make good progress.

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good and the school makes very good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There are very positive relationships among pupils and between adults and pupils. Pupils enjoy school. However, the attendance rate is well below the national average, and this is unsatisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education for its pupils. The teaching is good across the school, and means that pupils make good progress in their learning. During the inspection, nine out of every ten lessons were at least good, with very good teaching and learning in three in every ten lessons. Unsatisfactory teaching and learning were very rare indeed. The curriculum is also good, and is enriched by a very wide range of extra-curricular opportunities. It is generally well planned. Provision for pupils with special educational needs, including for those in the nurture group, is very good. School accommodation is good and learning resources are very good. The care, guidance and support of pupils are very good and the school's partnership with parents is very strong. These factors contribute further to the effectiveness of pupils' learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good, overall**. The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher who provides a clear sense of direction and evaluates its performance rigorously. Her high expectations, energy and clear thinking contribute significantly to the school's success. The deputy headteacher fulfils her role very well, and the leadership and management contribution made by other key staff is very good. The governors are highly committed and well informed, and governance is good.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils have very positive views of the school. Parents find the staff easy to talk to and know that the school works hard to help their children to do well. However, a small minority of parents do not ensure that their children's attendance is good enough.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important thing the school should do to improve is:

- To raise the attendance rate of the pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils achieve well, making good progress from mainly below average starting points on entry to the school. Although pupils' overall standards in English, mathematics and science are a little below average at the beginning of Year 2, they are on a rising trend and are consequently on course to meet national expectations by the end of the academic year.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's achievement is good in the Nursery and Reception classes (The Foundation Stage).
- Pupils also achieve well in Years 1 and 2, including in the key subjects of English, mathematics and science.
- Pupils with special educational needs do well in relation to their prior attainment.
- Standards are above national expectations in art and design in Year 2.

Commentary

Standards on entry to the school

1. On entry to school, children's overall standards are below national expectations, and their communication, language and literacy skills are generally well below the level expected for their age.

The school's results in national tests

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.5 (16.5)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.1 (15.1)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.6 (16.8)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 134 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. The table above shows that the results of the national tests in Year 2 in 2003 were broadly in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. These results were well above the average results of similar schools in writing and mathematics and were above the results of similar schools in reading. In science, the results of the statutory teacher assessments in Year 2, in 2003, were above the national average and were well above the average results of similar schools. The trend in the school's results in Year 2, from 1999 to 2003, has been above the national trend.
3. At present, there are no national figures available for comparison with the school's Year 2 results in 2004. However, when the school's results in 2004 are compared with those reached in 2003, they show an improvement in reading and writing and are broadly similar in mathematics and a little lower in science. The most marked difference is the

improvement in writing which reflects the success of the school's very strong emphasis on the development of this key skill.

Standards at the time of the last inspection

4. When the school was last inspected, in 1999, standards were broadly in line with national expectations in all subjects of the National Curriculum, and were above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus in religious education. However, the results of the national tests in reading, writing and mathematics in 2004 are very significantly higher than those published in the last inspection report.

Inspection findings

The Foundation Stage

5. **Children's achievement is good** in the Nursery and in the Reception classes, reflecting the good teaching in the Foundation Stage. However, despite children's good progress, their low starting points on entry mean that most are not on course to meet the expected standards at the end of the Reception period in communication, language and literacy, in their mathematical development or in their knowledge and understanding of the world. The picture is more favourable in relation to children's personal, social and emotional development, and in their physical and creative development. In these areas of learning, children are on course to demonstrate standards that broadly match national expectations by the end of the Reception period. There is particular strength in the art element of children's creative development, which is clearly demonstrated in their skilful drawings and paintings.

Years 1 and 2

6. **Pupils' achievement is good** in these year groups and results from good teaching. At this very early stage of the Autumn term, the standards demonstrated by the current Year 2 pupils are a little below the level expected in English, mathematics and science. However, a careful examination of their work in the last academic year, together with school records, clearly shows that these pupils have made good progress in these key subjects in relation to their mainly low starting points on entry to Year 1. Moreover, the effective teaching observed during the inspection and the work completed so far this term demonstrate that the rising trend in their standards is set to continue. As a consequence, pupils are on course to reach overall standards in English, mathematics and science which are broadly in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2. These findings reflect the results of the national tests in reading, writing and mathematics in 2003, but are a little less favourable than the statutory teacher assessments in science in 2003.
7. Standards are in line with national expectations in Year 2 in information and communication technology (ICT), geography and design and technology. These standards represent good progress in relation to pupils' starting points in ICT and geography and sound progress in design and technology. In art and design, pupils build well on their good work in the Reception classes and reach standards which are above national expectations in Year 2. Insufficient evidence was collected during the inspection

to judge pupils' standards and achievements in other subjects, including in religious education.

The achievement of different groups

8. Pupils with special educational needs, including those in the nurture group, achieve well and make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. The school meets the needs of all pupils effectively, so that the most capable and the few who are learning English as an additional language also achieve well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, values and behaviour are **very good**, and the school provides very well for their personal development. However, pupils' attendance rate is too low.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school sets high standards for pupils' conduct, and their behaviour is very good.
- Relationships are very good at all levels.
- The school stimulates in pupils a desire to learn.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- The attendance rate is well below the national average.

Commentary

Attitudes and behaviour

9. Pupils of all ages confirm that they enjoy school. They like their teachers and the other adults who work in the school, and enjoy being with their friends. Older pupils talk enthusiastically about a wide range of subjects they like, and also about the clubs and other activities that enrich their experience of school. All pupils greatly appreciate the playground games and equipment they have access to at lunchtimes. Such very positive attitudes to school life are reflected in the pupils' very good behaviour and in their attitudes to work. In classrooms, in assemblies, at lunch and in the playground, pupils move around in a calm and very orderly way. They relate very well to their peers – so much so that there is no evidence of bullying or other forms of harassment, and there have been no recent exclusions. Year 2 pupils in the nurture group manage their own behaviour very well, so that there, as elsewhere, learning takes place in a calm and purposeful atmosphere.
10. In lessons throughout the school, pupils work hard and take great pride in their achievements. Helped to develop independence as learners, they make constructive use of the resources they are given to help them and all try hard to apply what they have been taught. When invited to take responsibility, pupils do so with pride. Members of the school council have contributed good ideas for changes to playtime facilities and have considered the kinds of behaviour they would like to see in school and in the wider world. In addition, members of the Eco working-party have placed posters strategically around the school to promote environmental issues such as conservation and recycling.
11. Like their peers, pupils with special educational needs approach learning with very positive attitudes. In spite of learning difficulties, some of which are quite complex and challenging, they show a remarkable determination to succeed and respond very well to

the help and encouragement they are given. The few pupils who are learning English as an additional language are bold in their endeavours to master their 'new' language and make every effort to communicate with their peers and with staff.

Attendance

12. Attendance is well below the national average and this is unsatisfactory. The school, together with the education welfare officer, works closely with families where levels of attendance give cause for serious concern and this has some positive results. However, the school does not do all that it can to emphasise the importance of regular attendance to all parents, and also to target the instances of pupils missing school for reasons not related to illness or unavoidable holidays in term time. The level of unauthorised absence is broadly in line with the national average and nearly all pupils arrive in good time at the beginning of the day.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.1	School data	0.1
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

13. Through assemblies and religious education lessons, through personal, social and health education and through times set apart for discussion, the school gives pupils opportunities to see the best in others, to understand the many spiritual and moral messages conveyed through stories in the Bible, and to begin to develop their own spiritual and moral values. In addition, pupils' attention is drawn to the wonder and beauty of the world, and this is particularly evident in their artwork. When learning about major world faiths, pupils are made aware not only of the differences that distinguish one faith from another, but also of commonly held religious values such as caring and loving. All members of staff have the highest expectations for pupils' behaviour. They apply the code of conduct consistently so that pupils understand what is expected of them and, should they break the rules, what the consequences will be. At the same time, they are taught to understand the consequences of their actions on others with teachers acting as 'mediators' on the few occasions when disputes or other misdemeanours occur. Pupils are respected and valued by the adults in the school, and taught to show respect to others.
14. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Even the youngest children in the school are expected to take responsibility for some aspects of their lives. For example, after only two weeks in school, the children in the Nursery know how to tidy up their clothes when they change for physical education. In Years 1 and 2, pupils carry out routine duties such as taking the register to the office, handing out books and tidying things away at the end of lessons. Children from each Reception class and pupils from each class in Years 1 and 2 serve on the school council and on the Eco working-party where they contribute ideas for school improvement and for ways of caring for the world in a wider sense. During lessons, pupils are encouraged to discuss ideas with partners and to work on shared tasks in small groups. Various clubs and activities encourage pupils to mix with pupils of different ages and from different classes and, in all social settings and

circumstances, caring adults are present to model essential social skills such as good manners and politeness.

15. Provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. Work in geography, exposure to stories from different cultures and the study of aspects of Judaism, Hinduism and Islam all serve to expand pupils' understanding of traditions and cultures besides their own. Links with a former pupil in Leicester and with a multi-ethnic school in Bristol also enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding of the wider world. Lunch-time and after-school clubs, visits to places of historical and geographical interest within the local area, and a wide range of visitors including artists, musicians, authors and drama groups all enrich pupils' learning and make very good contributions to pupils' cultural development.

<i>Ethnic background of pupils</i>	<i>Exclusions in the last school year</i>		
Categories used in the Annual School Census	Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	284	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	62	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education for its pupils. The teaching is good, and results in pupils making good progress in their learning. The curriculum is also good, and is enriched by a very good range of extra-curricular opportunities. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good, including for the Year 2 pupils in the nurture group. The care, guidance and support of pupils are very good, and the school's partnership with parents is very strong.

Teaching and learning

The teaching is good and pupils make good progress in their learning, across the school. Assessment procedures are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning are good in the Nursery and in the Reception classes.
- Teaching and learning are good in Years 1 and 2 in English, mathematics, science, ICT and geography, and pupils also make good progress in their learning in art and design.
- The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good in mainstream classes and is very good in the nurture group in Year 2.
- Assessment procedures are very good, and are used very effectively to respond to pupils' individual needs.
- Teaching assistants work in close co-operation with teachers and make a very valuable contribution to pupils' learning.
- On rare occasions, the teaching does not focus clearly on the development of specific subject skills and knowledge.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 54 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	15 (28%)	33 (61%)	5 (9%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

16. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was good or better in nine out of every ten lessons. When the school was last inspected, the overall quality of the teaching was also good but only six out of every ten lessons were good or better. The last inspection identified the need to spread good practice more widely, and this has clearly been achieved.
17. Across the school, teaching is characterised by very good relationships between teachers and pupils. Pupils like and respect their teachers and it is obvious that these feelings are reciprocated. Teachers' planning is thorough and, in almost all cases, they know exactly what they expect pupils to learn. All teachers have high expectations for pupils' behaviour and potential academic achievement, and pupils respond well by demonstrating positive attitudes and concentrating on their tasks. Teachers' knowledge about the subjects they teach is good, and many are particularly well informed in relation to the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. In all classes, teachers work in close partnership with teaching assistants and help them to use their considerable expertise to benefit pupils' learning.
18. In the most effective lessons, teachers know just when to intervene with very well-judged questions or comments to ensure that pupils are both supported and challenged, and are working at the edge of their capabilities. In the small proportion of lessons which were satisfactory rather than better, teachers' questions sometimes needed to be more focused in order to probe pupils' understanding, and pupils' learning could have moved at a faster pace. In the only lesson seen in which teaching and learning were unsatisfactory, the teaching did not focus with sufficient precision on the scientific skills and knowledge which pupils needed to develop, and pupils were consequently unsure about what they were expected to learn. Indeed, this science lesson had more potential to develop pupils' geographical understanding than their scientific knowledge and skills.
19. In the Nursery and Reception classes, the teachers have a good understanding of the needs of young children and their thorough planning means that all of the required areas of learning for these children are promoted well. All staff take considerable care to develop children's personal, social and emotional development, and this has a positive impact on all elements of children's learning, including their academic progress. The teachers ensure that children have ample opportunities to learn through practical activities, and are alert to every chance to help children to develop their vocabulary and to use language for thinking.
20. In Years 1 and 2, the teaching is good in English, mathematics, science, ICT and geography and results in pupils making good progress in their learning in these subjects. In English and mathematics, a significant minority of lessons observed during the inspection demonstrated very good teaching. In ICT, teachers have enhanced their knowledge and expertise since the last inspection and are using the school's improved resources well. Although no lessons were seen in art and design, a careful analysis of

pupils' completed work provides secure evidence that the teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the subject.

21. Various groupings and teaching arrangements ensure that pupils with special educational needs are given the help they need to make good progress. Teachers match work well to pupils' individual needs. When taught in mainstream classes, the pupils are supported well by class teachers or by very able and well-trained teaching assistants who achieve just the right balance between help and challenge. A number of pupils are withdrawn from mainstream lessons at times to consolidate basic literacy skills. Some of these pupils work in small groups led by the leading and senior teaching assistants and are supported very effectively. The teaching of pupils in the nurture group in Year 2 is very good. The special educational needs co-ordinator who teaches this special class is highly skilled and works in close partnership with her teaching assistant to meet pupils' learning requirements very well. The two pupils who are currently at an early stage of learning the English language are benefiting from good teaching which takes careful account of their needs.

Assessing pupils' progress

22. Assessment procedures are very good, and have a beneficial impact on pupils' achievement. The headteacher maintains a rigorous system for tracking pupils' progress using the results of regular tests in reading, writing and mathematics. Assessment information is used very well to identify pupils needing additional help or specific programmes to assist their learning. Pupils' progress diaries provide an effective way of recording the progress of individual pupils as they move through the school and of sharing achievements and next targets with pupils and their parents. The assessment of pupils with special educational needs is very good.
23. Almost all lessons are well matched to pupils' needs and provide suitable challenge for all abilities. In the Foundation Stage, teachers use the steps that lead to the early learning goals very well to judge children's attainment. Assessment is consistent in Years 1 and 2 because teachers have worked together to agree a common understanding of National Curriculum expectations in all subjects. Teaching assistants play an important role in helping teachers to assess pupils, for example by noting the responses of particular pupils in their planning and recording notebook. At the end of each unit of work, teachers make a judgement about each pupil's attainment, which is recorded on the half-termly report to parents. This provides a good record of pupils' achievement over time.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good, and is enriched by a very good range of extra-curricular opportunities. The accommodation is good and resources are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is well planned and meets pupils' needs effectively.
- Provision is enriched by a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
- Very good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs, including those in the nurture group.
- Pupils' personal, social and health education is promoted very well.

- Very occasionally, planning which links a range of subjects together means that teachers do not target pupils' skills and knowledge in specific subjects with enough precision.

Commentary

24. The curriculum is broad, relevant and well planned. All of the areas of learning for Nursery and Reception children are covered thoroughly, and the curriculum fully meets statutory requirements in Years 1 and 2. A good range of worthwhile learning opportunities are provided, and these help pupils to achieve well.
25. The curriculum for children in the Nursery and Reception classes provides a well-judged balance between teacher-directed and child-initiated activities, and ensures that children have many opportunities to learn through practical tasks. The transition from the Foundation Stage curriculum to the National Curriculum is handled well, and the youngest and less advanced learners in Year 1 rightly continue to benefit from the Foundation Stage Curriculum. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy are implemented effectively and the school ensures that there is a very strong emphasis on the development of pupils' basic skills.
26. The headteacher and senior management team regularly review curriculum provision with the teachers. As a result, very useful links have been made between learning in different subjects which benefit the development of pupils' understanding in the subjects. Very occasionally, however, planning which encompasses a range of subjects means that teachers do not target the development of pupils' skills and knowledge in specific subjects with enough precision, for example in science and religious education. The quality and breadth of pupils' learning opportunities in ICT have improved since the last inspection because of better resources and the effectiveness of staff training. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good, reflecting the school's very strong concern for pupils' personal development and welfare. Well-judged policies for sex and relationships education and drugs education are implemented.
27. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The staff and outside specialists combine their skills and expertise very effectively to ensure that each pupil's needs are met. The pupils in the nurture group benefit from a curriculum of the same breadth and quality as other pupils, and from tasks which match their needs very well. Indeed, the school ensures that all pupils are given equal access to the curriculum.
28. The curriculum is enriched by many additional learning opportunities. Pupils benefit from regular educational visits and from learning from many visitors to the school. The last inspection found that no opportunities were provided for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities. The school has rectified this weakness very effectively, so that pupils now have access to a wide range of lunchtime and after-school activities.
29. Accommodation is good and provides an attractive and stimulating learning environment. The Nursery, which is separate from the main school, has been considerably improved since the last inspection, when it was found to be barely adequate. It now provides ample space for the children and benefits from its own attractive and useful outside environment which gives good support to children's learning. There is a good ratio of adults to pupils and the teachers have the expertise and experience to cover the age and ability range of the pupils and the requirements of the curriculum. There is a generous number of classroom assistants and they are trained and deployed very well. These staff make a

very positive contribution to pupils' learning. Learning resources are very good, and are well organised and accessible, giving very strong support to the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

The care, guidance and support for pupils are very good. Pupils benefit from a consistent and comprehensive approach to their care and welfare, based on a detailed knowledge of their needs. Health and safety procedures are well established and rigorously followed. Pupils have good opportunities to put forward their views about school and to suggest what might be improved.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers know pupils' pastoral and academic needs very well and provide very good guidance.
- Teaching and lunchtime assistants give very good support.
- Health and safety matters are very well monitored.
- Child protection awareness and arrangements for 'looked after' pupils are very good.
- Pupils' views are listened to and valued.

Commentary

30. All adults in the school have a strong belief in the importance of ensuring that pupils feel safe, secure and valued and that this is an essential basis for effective learning. Pupils know that all adults are there to help them, and their sensitive support means that pupils seek help when needed, both in lessons and at playtimes. Comprehensive assessment procedures enable academic and personal support to be very well targeted by teachers and teaching assistants. The school is very perceptive about aspects of school life that some pupils might find more difficult to cope with, such as moving on to new teachers, playtimes or staying to lunch. For example, pupils meet their new teacher well before the end of the summer term so that they do not worry about the change over the holiday. The lunchtime break is seen as an opportunity for pupils to use a wide variety of play equipment in a very well-managed way, enabling them to continue to learn through play. Many lunchtime supervisors have trained as playleaders, so sessions are very well organised and led. As a result of this very good lunchtime provision, it is not surprising that pupils enjoy the experiences which are provided and that their behaviour is very good. Accident records suggest that the purposeful playtimes lead to significantly fewer incidents than might otherwise be expected.
31. Governors play a crucial role in ensuring that high standards of health and safety are maintained. Rigorous risk assessments are carried out and procedures strictly followed to enable a range of visits to be made to the beach and other local sites, and for pupils to enjoy swimming in the school's own pool. The grounds and buildings are well maintained and there are appropriate plans to separate incoming traffic from people walking to school.
32. Child protection issues are very well handled. All adults have awareness training and guidelines on procedures, and these are put into practice effectively. The needs of 'looked after' pupils are monitored very well. The breakfast and after-school clubs provide good care for pupils whose parents have working commitments.
33. The school council, run by the chair of governors, gives pupils regular opportunities to talk about aspects of school life and to suggest things which might be improved. For example, against a background of healthy eating, discussions were held with the school

cook about how nutritionally balanced meals could be made more attractive for pupils. Pupils are also asked to evaluate their own progress in some lessons and to judge their performance. These opportunities increase pupils' confidence and sense of responsibility.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has built up a very effective partnership with parents. Community links are very strong and there are good links with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents find the staff easy to talk to, and are kept well informed about their children's achievements.
- Parents hold the school in high regard.
- Very good use is made of the community expertise and the local environment to enrich the curriculum.

Commentary

34. The importance of establishing an effective partnership with parents is seen by all staff as crucial in encouraging their involvement in their children's education. As a consequence, the school works very hard to establish strong links with parents. From their earliest contact with the Nursery or school, parents are provided with a good range of information about what their child will experience, and about how they can support learning at home. Meetings with the headteacher and class teachers before children start school mean that any questions or concerns can be discussed. This open approach continues, with daily opportunities for parents to have informal contact before or after school with the class teacher or the teaching assistants. Parents are very complimentary about how easy it is for them to talk to staff and how well they are kept informed of any minor problems or incidents that their children might experience. The results are that parents have a high level of trust and confidence that the school always has the child's best interests at heart, and are willing to tell staff about changes in their own circumstances which might affect their child's well-being.
35. Parents receive very clear reports each half-term about children's attainment and progress, based on the teachers' assessments across all subjects. This is very good practice. Many parents take the opportunity to discuss these reports with teachers and to see their children's work at Open Days. Parents are invited to join a parents' interest group which is designed to talk about any aspects of school life that could be improved. The school is receptive to parents' suggestions and acts on them wherever possible, which further strengthens the partnership. The headteacher, together with a teaching assistant, has run worthwhile courses on mathematics and literacy where parents have learned with their children. These have not only given pupils a wide range of additional activities to supplement their learning, but also have increased the confidence of the parents in supporting their children's learning.
36. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept fully informed when their child's needs are identified and at each stage of the Code of Practice. Almost all parents support the school in its endeavours to help their children, and attend meetings to discuss their children's progress.

37. Parents hold the school in high regard and are supportive of its aims. Many parents play a very full part in the school community, for example helping in classes or accompanying visits. Their contribution to the school travel plan helped the school achieve a gold award for encouraging safe walking to school. However, there are a few parents who, on occasions, do not make the effort to ensure that their children attend regularly and, in this respect, do not do enough to support their children's learning and progress.
38. The school is at the heart of the community and makes very good use of a variety of opportunities to enrich pupils' experiences. Pupils make a range of visits to the town, shops and the beach to link their learning across the curriculum to first-hand experiences. Pupils participate in special town events such as the Victorian week and make their own contribution to the community by singing at the local hospital and homes for older residents as well as participating in activities to raise money for charities. Very close links have been made with the family centre on site, which provides additional support and counselling for children and their parents. Links with other schools are good and staff are asked to share their many examples of good practice with others, both locally and countywide.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher has very good leadership and management skills and other key staff are fulfilling their roles very well. School governance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides a clear sense of direction and evaluates the school's performance rigorously.
- The deputy headteacher is very effective, and year-group and subject co-ordinators fulfil their roles well.
- The leadership and management of provision for pupils with special educational needs are very good.
- The governors are highly conscientious and make a valuable contribution to the leadership and management of the school.

Commentary

Leadership

39. The leadership is very good, as it was when the school was last inspected. The headteacher is a key strength in the school and her commitment, energy and clear thinking contribute very significantly to its success. She has high expectations of pupils' academic and personal development and communicates these very effectively so that the school has a clear sense of direction. The headteacher is firmly committed to running a school in which every individual matters, and this is demonstrated by the care which is taken to support staff and pupils. Her role in the development of effective teaching and learning is highly evident, and she teaches demonstration lessons and regularly works in classes. She knows the teachers well and is quick to recognise and celebrate their achievements. As a result, staff morale and expectations are high; all are aware of their valuable contribution to the life of the school and know that they are an integral part of a

vibrant learning community. The staff, pupils and parents rightly hold the headteacher in very high regard.

40. While maintaining a firm steer to the school's work, the headteacher delegates responsibility wisely to key members of staff. This contributes well to the breadth of quality in the leadership and to the unity of purpose which characterises the school's work. The deputy headteacher fulfils her role very well, working in close partnership with the headteacher to guide the school's direction and providing very good advice and support for the staff. Year-group leaders meet their teams regularly, ensure that there is consistency in the planned implementation of the curriculum and provide an effective forum for teachers to share their ideas. In addition, subject co-ordinators provide well-focused leadership for their colleagues and implement well-focused and pertinent action plans. The leadership provided by the co-ordinators for English, mathematics, ICT and art and design is particularly effective.
41. The headteacher has worked closely with staff and governors to formulate a school improvement plan which reflects and promotes the school's ambitions and goals. The plan is very thorough, and individual initiatives are planned in detail so that all staff and governors know what is to be done, when and by whom. The plan is having a beneficial impact on school improvement. This is evident in relation to the sustained work on the development of pupils' writing skills which has led to improved results in the national tests in Year 2.

Management

42. The management of the school is very good, as it was when the school was last inspected. The headteacher keeps her finger firmly on the pulse of the school through a range of rigorous monitoring procedures. She analyses the results of statutory and non-statutory testing very carefully in order to track pupils' academic progress, and ensures that staff are made aware of areas for improvement as well as good achievement. Teachers' planning is frequently checked, and the headteacher also regularly observes lessons and checks pupils' work. The headteacher monitors the development of pupils' writing skills with very great care, meeting with class teachers twice termly to assess pupils' achievements and to discuss strategies to raise standards further. From the broad range of her monitoring procedures, the headteacher makes astute evaluations of the school's performance. As a result, she provides staff with particularly well-judged feedback which has a beneficial effect on their professional development and on the quality of school provision.
43. The deputy headteacher makes a major contribution to the quality of school evaluation by often working alongside the headteacher to check pupils' work, and by observing lessons. Year-group leaders fulfil their roles well by monitoring planning, teaching demonstration lessons for their colleagues and ensuring that assessment practices are consistent. When the school was last inspected, the monitoring roles of subject co-ordinators were generally underdeveloped. This is no longer the case. They now use a range of strategies, including analysis of planning, scrutiny of pupils' work and lesson observations, and are well informed about provision in their subjects.
44. The headteacher, special needs governor and the special needs co-ordinator (SENCO) together provide very effective leadership and management of special needs provision. The SENCO, who is also the teacher in charge of the nurture unit, works closely with the

headteacher and manages day-to-day operations in special needs work efficiently. No effort is spared to secure the best possible provision for each pupil and to make sure that, wherever possible, pupils make sufficient progress to return full-time to mainstream education. Taking their inspiration from the headteacher and the SENCO, all those involved in special needs work, including well-trained teaching assistants, have very high aspirations for pupils' welfare and success and share the same determination to succeed.

45. The school's policy for performance management is being implemented very well, and teachers' targets properly reflect both whole-school and individual needs. The professional development of staff is managed very effectively by the conscientious deputy headteacher, and all staff, including non-teaching staff, have ample opportunities to benefit from training courses. The school's procedures for the induction of new staff are outstanding, and are again managed by the deputy headteacher. She mentors all new staff and ensures that they benefit from a broad range of support, including from senior staff and subject co-ordinators. This practice reflects the caring and supportive ethos of the school and its strong teamwork.
46. Financial planning is good. The school improvement plan is properly costed, the annual budget is debated rigorously at governors' meetings and attention is given to whether the school provides the best value for its pupils and parents. All financial procedures are carried out efficiently, and benefit from the good expertise of the school finance officers and the effective support provided by the finance committee of the governors. Overall, the school makes good use of its resources and provides good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,020,923	Balance from previous year	52,580
Total expenditure	984,663	Balance carried forward to the next year	36,269
Expenditure per pupil	2,506		

Governance

47. The governance of the school is good. The governors are highly committed and make a valuable contribution to the leadership and management of the school. The results of statutory testing are debated thoroughly, and governors help to guide the school's work through strategic planning which takes careful account of its policies and aims. The governors with particular responsibility for literacy, numeracy and special educational needs are well informed. Individual governors are linked with other subjects of the curriculum and also visit to discuss provision with the co-ordinators and sometimes to observe practice. The chair of governors visits regularly, works effectively with the headteacher and her fellow governors, and ensures that she keeps abreast with pupils' views by organising and attending their school council meetings. The committee structure works well, and statutory requirements are fully met. The governors are astute, have a good understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for development and are consequently able to ask the headteacher informed, and sometimes challenging, questions. As a result, while being highly supportive, they act as effective 'critical friends' to the school.

THE NURTURE GROUP

Provision for pupils in the nurture group is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils benefit from very good teaching.
- The leadership and management of provision are very good.

Commentary

48. A nurture group, funded by the local authority, operates within the school. This was established two years ago to support pupils with emotional and/or behavioural problems. Currently, there are 13 Year 2 pupils on roll. In the past, the group has also catered for pupils in Year 1 but differences in the make-up of the current Year 1 and 2 classes has led the school to focus on the older pupils during this academic year.
49. Pupils are admitted to the nurture group following detailed assessments of their learning needs and consultations with school staff, agencies and parents. Close links are maintained with the four Year 2 classes from which pupils are drawn, and the appropriate aim of all concerned is to gradually integrate pupils back into the school's Year 2 classes, alongside the other pupils. There is a wide range of abilities within the group, but all pupils are appropriately challenged. As a consequence of the very good support they receive, pupils achieve well in relation to the often considerable problems which inhibit their learning. Although current standards are understandably below the national expectation, evidence of proven effectiveness in the teaching of key skills suggests that most pupils will achieve standards which are close to those expected nationally in literacy and numeracy by the end of Year 2.
50. Equally important for the pupils in the group is the good progress they make in their personal development, and this element of their learning is very well promoted. Pupils feel secure in the caring environment in which they work, and begin to develop confidence and self esteem. Every opportunity is taken to enhance their learning, for example during the well-organised morning 'snack time' during which pupils enjoy a drink and some toast. This daily routine provides a pleasant and relaxed occasion during which staff establish skills such as taking turns, listening to others and understanding the differences between right and wrong.
51. The quality of teaching and learning are very good, including in literacy and numeracy. The teacher and her assistant are well qualified to work with pupils with special educational needs and both have attended specific training for nurture group teaching. They work effectively as a team and know their pupils' needs very well. The adults have a firm but sensitive approach to their teaching and develop very good relationships with the pupils. Pupils have good attitudes to work, behave very well and generally work hard throughout the sessions. In a very good literacy lesson, for example, pupils carefully followed and enjoyed the 'Big Book' story of 'Mog and the Vet'. They then responded willingly to the teacher's skilful questioning about the story and the use made of full stops to delineate sentences. They were appropriately reminded to use the strategy of 'think' and 'say' before writing and this provided a helpful structure for their work. Most pupils were then able to write short sequenced sentences about a dream they remembered, using full stops at the end of each.

52. The leadership and management of the nurture group are very good. The teacher, who is the school's special educational needs co-ordinator, has a clear overview of special educational needs provision across the school. She is well qualified and experienced in working with pupils with specific learning difficulties and skilled at dealing with challenging behaviour. She liaises effectively with staff and outside agencies, and also works with the adjacent junior school to ensure that pupils are well supported at the time of transfer.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The children enter the Nursery in the term after their third birthday, and transfer to Reception in the September or January shortly before they are five. At the time of the inspection, the Reception classes were small since the children were attending part-time as part of the staggered induction arrangements. The vast majority of children have experienced some pre-school provision before they enter Reception, either at the school's Nursery, or elsewhere. All staff work very well as a cohesive team, monitoring all children's progress so that they have a very clear picture of each child's standards and next steps in learning. The non-teaching staff are well trained and make very valuable contributions to children's learning. Good use is made of the classroom space and outside areas to promote children's learning. The Nursery accommodation has improved since the last inspection, and the outside environment has been developed to give the Nursery children a range of good learning opportunities.

On entry to the school, in the Nursery or in Reception, children's overall standards are mainly below those expected for their ages, and their communication, language and literacy skills are often well below the expected level. Although children's achievement is good as a result of good teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes, most are not on course to reach the nationally-expected early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year in communication, language, literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. A similar situation existed when the school was last inspected.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well because of the high expectations set by staff, the excellent role models they provide, and their continuous reinforcement of simple rules.
- Every opportunity is taken to enhance children's development, and children are on course to reach the expected goals by the end of the year.
- Excellent and supportive relationships between adults and children ensure that children feel confident and happy.

Commentary

53. All adults set excellent role models for the children and manage them well. Teaching is very good and attention is given to personal, social and emotional development across all areas of learning, enabling children to achieve very well. Children enter the Nursery with below average personal and social skills, and some children still find it hard to consider the needs of others. However, the clear boundaries and the consistent role models set by the adults ensure that the children know what is expected of them, so they quickly learn the correct way to behave. Children know the routines well, settle to tasks with a minimum of fuss, and the vast majority behave sensibly. Children are encouraged to be independent by registering themselves when they come into Nursery at the beginning of their session, and are expected to clear up after themselves, which they do

without much prompting. They move quietly and sensibly around the Nursery as they choose their activities.

54. Even at this early stage of the term, the children in the Reception classes know the rules and routines of the class, concentrate on their tasks, even when not directly supervised, and are eager to learn. Children are continually encouraged to feel confident about what they can achieve and are reminded of the high standards expected by the adults, who have a calm but rigorous teaching approach. Children are encouraged to share, to take turns amicably, and to put up their hands when answering a question, although some still find this hard to do. When children do not conform, they are dealt with firmly but fairly so that they learn how to appreciate the needs of others within the group. The supportive relationships help the children to feel secure and to ask for help when they need it.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and support staff take every opportunity to develop the children's language skills.
- Teaching is consistently good, with some very good features. As a result, children make good progress, often from very low starting points on entry to the school.

Commentary

55. Children enter Nursery with underdeveloped communication skills, but make good progress as a result of the many opportunities they are given to talk and listen. Staff take every opportunity to develop the children's vocabulary, through questioning, and consistent insistence that children listen to others. Children develop the confidence to talk, and all adults are genuinely interested in what the children have to say. Role-play opportunities such as using the 'Three Bears' Cottage' enhance children's communicating skills. In one session observed, the teaching assistant supported learning well by interacting with the children as they dressed up and re-enacted the story. Children enjoy books, and most listen attentively when a story is read to them. They are encouraged to make marks on paper, paving the way well for future writing.
56. In the Reception classes, teachers plan a wide range of exciting activities to promote language development. Very good use is made of 'Big Books' as stimuli for language work. Teachers are enthusiastic and read with expression, engendering a real sense of wonder when stories are read. Children begin to develop their knowledge of letter sounds through interesting activities. For example, emphasis was placed on the initial sound of words beginning with 'b' when children used ready-mixed icing to make 'blue blankets for their babies in a biscuit bed'. By the end of the lesson, children were able to identify objects around the class beginning with that letter, demonstrating good learning. All adults take care to enhance spoken language and extend children's vocabulary, and non-teaching staff make a very valuable contribution to children's learning. Children are encouraged to talk and adults listen carefully and encourage children to develop their thoughts by using probing questions. Early writing skills are promoted well by the teachers. However, despite the good progress children are making, most are not on course to meet national expectations by the end of the Reception period.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good.
- Children are able to learn through practical activities and to achieve well.

Commentary

57. As a result of good teaching, children's mathematical progress is good. The teachers plan a range of interesting activities to promote mathematical understanding. Children in the Nursery are developing their awareness of numbers to ten, with the most capable being able to order and match numbers accurately. Activities are appropriately practical, so that children learn through direct experience. For example, Nursery children sort and count bears, whilst in Reception, they order ribbons from the longest to the shortest. Good use is made of role-play when children ensure that shoes are paired correctly. During these sessions, there are also good opportunities for development of children's personal skills, as they learn to consider others while they take turns. These practical activities prepare the way well for future learning, ensuring that children sustain interest and develop their mathematical understanding effectively. Children achieve well as a result of good provision. However, their low starting points mean that most will not reach the expected standards at the end of their time in the Reception classes.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for the development of children's knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of opportunities is provided, and the teaching is good.

Commentary

58. Good teaching means that children's knowledge and understanding of the world develop well, from a low base. Most children enter Nursery with limited experiences and poor general knowledge, so every opportunity is used by the staff to enhance children's knowledge and understanding of their world. Children experience wet and dry sand, and investigate properties of a range of objects. They develop their mouse skills through frequent use of the computer, and cook gingerbread men, learning how to use appropriate utensils and appreciating the different textures of the ingredients.

59. An examination of children's work in Reception in the last academic year shows that they experienced a wide range of activities to extend their knowledge, including topics on 'minibeasts' and 'ourselves'. During the inspection, children were investigating colour, and a real sense of wonder was created when children used and made kaleidoscopes. Good use is made of the local environment when children visit the beach and go on a boat trip. Religious education at an appropriate level is planned, and children learn about

Christian festivals and they visit the local church. Reception children have regular access to computers and are making good progress in developing their early skills. Although children are achieving well, most are not course to meet the nationally expected standards by the end of the Reception period in this area of learning. This results from their low starting points on entry to the school.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching is good and a wide range of learning opportunities is provided to promote children's physical development.

Commentary

60. Teaching and learning are good, and a wide range of interesting activities is planned to challenge the children. Children in the Nursery use the school hall and make good progress in developing their social as well as their physical skills when working together. There are plenty of opportunities for children's physical activity outside, including using wheeled toys; and their dexterity is promoted well during activities that involve cutting, sticking, painting and handling a range of small tools.
61. During physical education lessons in the hall, where they learn to move with increasing control, Reception children become aware of the space around them. They explore different ways of travelling across the floor, and become aware of the effect exercise has on their bodies. Adults take an active part in lessons, setting good role models for performance. Lessons enhance children's personal development alongside their physical skills, as they learn to take turns, obey commands promptly and become aware of the needs of others. Good use is made of the outside area, where an exciting range of activities and equipment is available to develop children's physical development. There are also many opportunities for children to manipulate a range of tools, including brushes, pencils and glue sticks, which they do with increasing dexterity. The majority of children are on course to reach the expected goals in this area of learning by the end of the Reception period.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for children's creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are making good progress in their creative development.
- Their painting and drawing are often expressive and demonstrate good skills.

Commentary

62. The quality of teaching and learning is good and children achieve well as a result. Children make good progress when experimenting with paint, and learn to mix colours

effectively from an early age. They experiment with a variety of media to create different textures. Teachers encourage children to observe closely and draw what they see. For example, in Reception, children use mirrors very well to get the correct positioning of facial features. Teachers use display well to create a stimulating environment, and children's work is mounted with care, often demonstrating painting and drawing skills which are good for their ages. Children learn a range of songs which they thoroughly enjoy singing, and children in Reception are beginning to use percussion instruments correctly. Many opportunities are provided for role-play, and children co-operate with their classmates, taking on appropriate roles in the classroom shops and café. The vast majority of children are on course to achieve overall standards in creative development which match national expectations at the end of Year 2, with many children demonstrating above average skills in drawing and painting.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

The quality of provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well from low starting points on entry to Year 1, as a result of good teaching.
- The leadership and management of the subject are very good.
- Teaching assistants play an important role and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.
- The development and use of language across the curriculum are good.
- Assessment is used very well to inform the teaching.
- Resources are very good.

Commentary

63. At present, at the beginning of the Autumn Term, the overall standards of Year 2 pupils are a little below average. However, it is clear that these pupils have achieved well in relation to their starting points on entry to Year 1, and proven strategies are in place to maintain or accelerate their current progress. As a consequence, overall standards in Year 2 are on course to broadly match national expectations in all aspects of English by the end of the academic year. All pupils achieve well in the subject, including those with special educational needs and the few who are learning to speak English as an additional language. No significant differences are evident between the standards reached by boys and girls. When the school was last inspected, standards were also in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2.
64. The school's results in the national tests of reading and writing in Year 2 have been at or above the national average since 2001. In 2003, the results were in line with the national averages in both reading and writing, and reflect current inspection findings. These results were above the average results of similar schools in reading, and well above the results of similar schools in writing. As yet, there are no national or similar school averages against which to measure the school's successes in the national tests in 2004. However, school figures show an improvement in its results compared with those

achieved in 2003. The most notable increase is in the writing results, reflecting the school's very strong emphasis on the promotion of this key skill.

65. From the outset in Year 1, pupils listen well and are well motivated to learn. Most are also ready to speak up in lessons, although some still lack the necessary confidence at this stage. Very few pupils have an extensive vocabulary, and many struggle to make their meaning clear. By Year 2, pupils show the benefit of regular practice and communicate both more readily and with greater fluency. Most pupils in Year 2 read simple texts aloud accurately and use a variety of strategies to work out unknown words. Higher-attaining pupils read confidently and fluently, with expression and with understanding. Almost all pupils in Year 2 form their letters accurately and produce consistently neat writing. Most are able to produce pieces of writing independently to record their ideas in different subjects, although much of this writing is very brief. Most are beginning to use capital letters and full stops appropriately to demarcate sentences. Higher-attaining pupils write interesting and well-structured stories with convincing characters, lively vocabulary and descriptive detail. Their handwriting is often cursive and well formed, and they use a range of punctuation marks accurately, aware of their 'messages' for the reader. These pupils have a good understanding of the characteristic features of different kinds of writing, and they are able to adapt the style and form of their work to suit its purpose and audience.
66. The overall quality of teaching is good, and some lessons include very good teaching. Lessons are well planned, well organised and conducted at an appropriate pace. All teachers are aware of their pupils' differing needs and of the 'next steps' required for each pupil to improve their performance. There is a constant emphasis on recall, repetition, consolidation, extension and practice which ensures that, over time, what is taught is learned. Pupils of all abilities are nurtured and challenged. All teaching and support staff have established very good relationships with the pupils. As a consequence, pupils feel secure and are willing to take risks. With no fear of failure and with every expectation of support should they need it, even the pupils with lowest attainment move forward steadily, with increasing confidence, in their learning. The teaching ensures that all pupils are given a secure foundation in basic literacy. Rigorous well-informed assessments of pupils' performance are used to very good effect to identify those pupils who will benefit from additional support and to track the progress of individual pupils. Teaching assistants make a very valuable contribution to the progress and attainment of the pupils. The school is also fortunate to benefit from the help of many parents and other adults, including governors, who hear children read.
67. Resources for English are very good. Library resources, including non-fiction books, have improved significantly since the time of the last inspection and are used effectively. A home-school reading partnership works well. Parents are kept well informed about what their children are reading and learning and this means that they are able to help in an informed way. Computer programs and software are used appropriately to develop pupils' language skills, for example to draft, edit and publish their writing, and to improve spelling.
68. The subject is very ably led and managed. Teaching, learning, progress and standards are all monitored rigorously, and appropriate action is taken where necessary to improve pupils' performance.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

69. Pupils' language skills are promoted effectively in work across the curriculum. Relevant cross-curricular links between subjects are identified in medium-term planning and teachers make sure that pupils are given suitable opportunities to talk, read and write for a wide range of purposes across the curriculum. Pupils are introduced to many different kinds of information texts in the course of their various studies, and these serve as useful models for their own writing.

MATHEMATICS

The quality of provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching enables all pupils to achieve well.
- Very good assessment procedures are used effectively to raise standards.
- Teaching assistants are skilled and well deployed.
- The co-ordinator provides very good leadership and manages the subject very well.

Commentary

70. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2, making good progress from their starting points on entry to Year 1. Although pupils' overall mathematical standards are currently a little below average at this early point in Year 2, they are on a rising trend and are set to be broadly in line with national expectations at the end of the school year. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve equally well and there is no significant difference in the standards reached by boys and girls. When the school was last inspected, standards were in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2.
71. Inspection findings are consistent with the results of the national tests in Year 2 in mathematics in 2001, 2002 and 2003. In each of these years, the results were in line with the national averages and were well above the average results of similar schools. At present, no national averages are available for comparison with the school's results in 2004, but the figures strongly suggest that the established pattern will be maintained.
72. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good, and in some lessons is very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons well, using practical and stimulating teaching approaches so that pupils are interested in their work. For example, a group of low-attaining Year 1 pupils displayed great excitement when they successfully programmed Roamer, a programmable toy, to simulate the delivery of letters to the correct houses. Activities often involve the pupils themselves, such as lining up in the correct order holding number cards one to 20 or using their arm spans and feet to measure length. Teachers use mathematical vocabulary consistently and encourage pupils to explain their answers. Very good questions helped Year 2 children to improve their understanding of the properties of shapes. Paired work is often used to develop pupils' mathematical language and understanding. For example, in Year 1, pupils worked very well together to put three number cards in order. Teaching assistants make a very good contribution to pupils' learning. They work closely with class teachers and make detailed notes on individual pupils in their planning and recording books. They support pupils with special educational needs very well, use effective questioning to help them

complete independent and group tasks, and encourage them to contribute to class discussions.

73. Teachers make the purpose of the lesson clear to pupils at the outset and ensure that they know what is expected from them in order to do well. This helps pupils to understand the tasks more effectively. In oral sessions, teachers target questions at different pupils to assess whether or not they have understood, and teaching assistants often record what individual pupils say when the teacher is questioning the class. Some very effective lessons finished with the teachers asking pupils how confident they felt about what they had learned, and whether they needed further practice or guidance. Information from these good assessment strategies is used well to plan future work.
74. The leadership and management of mathematics are very good. The co-ordinator works closely with the headteacher and year-group leaders to ensure that planning is consistent across classes in each year group. Tests are analysed carefully to identify areas of particular strength or weakness and pupils' individual progress is tracked and pertinent targets are set. The mathematics co-ordinator gives detailed feedback to each teacher about the learning of pupils in their class and suggests useful strategies to address any shortcomings. In addition, lessons are observed in mathematics and teachers benefit from informed feedback which benefits their practice. The co-ordinator works closely with the co-ordinator of ICT to help teachers make more effective use of ICT in their teaching. The use of ICT to support learning in mathematics has improved since the last inspection. It is now sound overall, and is sometimes making a good contribution.

Mathematics across the curriculum

75. Sound use is made of mathematics to support work across the curriculum. For example, pupils applied their knowledge of two-dimensional shapes to describe local buildings on a geography field trip and used their skills of weighing and measuring to make apple pies in a design and technology lesson.

SCIENCE

The quality of provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching enables pupils to achieve well.
- Assessment procedures are good and benefit pupils' learning.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- Very occasionally, the cross-curricular themes which are used to link teachers' planning across subjects lead to the lack of a clear focus on pupils' scientific learning.

Commentary

76. At this very early stage of the new academic year, the standards demonstrated by the current Year 2 pupils are a little below the level expected. However, these pupils have made good progress in relation to their attainment on entry to Year 1. The effective teaching observed during the inspection confirms that the rising trend in their standards is set to continue. As a consequence, pupils are on course to reach overall standards which are broadly in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2. All pupils are doing

well in the subject, including the most capable and those with special educational needs. Boys and girls achieve equally well. When the school was last inspected, standards were in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2.

77. The good achievement of pupils currently in Years 1 and 2 is consistent with the results of statutory teacher assessment in recent years. Indeed, in 2003, the science results were above the national average and were well above the average results of similar schools. At present, no national figures are available for comparison with the school's results in 2004, which were only a little lower than those reached in 2003.
78. Many Year 1 pupils have limited observation skills and find it difficult to select the words to describe the characteristics of common materials. For example, quite a few are unable to choose the most suitable of a small range of materials to use on the roof of their house for the 'Three Little Pigs'. However, the teaching is well focused on their learning needs, and the pupils are given the good support they required to develop their skills and understanding. In Year 2, pupils' overall standards are notably higher and reflect their improvement since the beginning of Year 1. Most Year 2 pupils make sensible predictions about the results of simple experiments, and demonstrate scientific enquiry skills and knowledge which are close to the standard expected of pupils at this age.
79. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The teachers generally plan their lessons well, ensure that scientific vocabulary is introduced and reinforced effectively, and make good use of the time available. They capture pupils' interest strongly, demonstrate good organisation skills and manage pupils' behaviour very well. Teaching assistants are thoroughly briefed by teachers and make a highly beneficial contribution, especially to the scientific learning of pupils with special educational needs. In a very good lesson seen, the teacher used skilful questions to probe pupils' understanding and knew just when to provide support and when to stand back and let pupils find things out for themselves. In this lesson, the practical activities provided were a perfect match for the learning needs of the youngest Year 1 class. One unsatisfactory lesson was observed when the teaching in Year 2 did not target pupils' scientific learning with enough precision and meant that pupils were unsure about what they were expected to learn. The lesson, which was planned within the theme of 'the weather', tended to focus more on the development of elements of pupils' geographical, rather than scientific, understanding.
80. Procedures for assessing pupils' standards and progress are good and are consistently implemented across the school. This contributes well to pupils' achievement since weaknesses are quickly identified and addressed. Teachers ensure that pupils' numeracy and ICT skills are promoted soundly through science, and are particularly effective in fostering pupils' language skills through discussions.
81. Science is well led and managed due to the effective teamwork between the headteacher, the senior management team and the science co-ordinator. Teachers' planning and pupils' achievements are carefully checked and science lessons are regularly observed. Teachers receive useful feedback from monitoring and have also benefited for observing demonstration lessons taught by a science specialist from the local education authority.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

The quality of provision for information and communication technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in ICT as a result of good teaching.
- ICT is well planned so that pupils have regular access to computers and develop their skills systematically.
- The leadership and management of the subject are very good.

Commentary

82. Overall, pupils achieve well and make good progress in relation to their starting points. This is confirmed by lesson observations, from the school's very good tracking systems and from pupils' completed work. As a consequence, pupils' standards are mainly on course to match those expected nationally at the end of Year 2. Furthermore, quite a few pupils will exceed this standard. Since the last inspection, resources have been greatly improved through the creation of a spacious ICT suite with sufficient networked computers to support whole-class teaching. All pupils now have regular ICT lessons in the suite in order to learn and practise their skills in a systematic way. They also have access to classroom computers and small computer workstations around the school, which are also networked. When the school was last inspected, standards were judged to be average.
83. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers and their assistants have benefited from well-organised training and are confident in the subject. They make good use of up-to-date equipment such as 'smart boards' and, in some classrooms, interactive whiteboards to provide clear demonstrations and to enhance pupils' learning. Early skills such as logging on and off and accessing programs are taught effectively, and plenty of opportunities are provided for pupils to use word banks and develop word-processing skills. By Year 2, most pupils can write a sentence using the keyboard for the majority of the text, add a picture from 'clipart' to their writing, create a simple poster, use the Internet to find information and save and retrieve information from a disk. More able pupils create their own word banks, make changes to imported images, use search engines to locate information and edit and add to saved work. All pupils have very positive attitudes and are keen to learn. This is reflected in the popularity of an after-school computer club organised and supervised by teaching assistants.
84. The subject co-ordinator is well informed and enthusiastically promotes the use of ICT in the school. She monitors teaching and learning through lesson observations and the regular scrutiny of pupils' work, and provides effective training for staff. The co-ordinator sets a very good example through her own teaching, and her work contributes significantly to the ongoing improvement of ICT provision in the school. A sound scheme of work, based on guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, provides the structure for effective planning in the subject.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

85. When the school was last inspected, there were few examples of pupils' work in other subjects using or being supported by ICT. The school has successfully addressed this deficiency. Overall, sound use is now made of ICT across the curriculum and, during the inspection, some good examples were seen in literacy, numeracy, art and design, geography and religious education. Evidence suggests that the recent purchase of an

Internet program to support cross-curricular work across the school will further promote the use of ICT in other subjects.

HUMANITIES

Geography

The quality of provision in geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching is good and pupils make good progress.
- Pupils' geographical language and investigative skills are developed well.
- Practical tasks and fieldwork support effective learning.
- The co-ordinator provides good leadership and manages the subject well.

Commentary

86. Pupils' standards in geography at this early point in the school year are in line to match those expected nationally by the end of Year 2. Pupils in Year 2 competently draw a map of their walk from the school to the harbour, devise symbols for significant landmarks and construct a key to explain their own symbols. They successfully describe places in their local environment and explain why the sea wall is curved and why a local footpath had been closed following a landslide. They also explain how tourism affects their town and how it changes with the different seasons. All of these examples demonstrate pupils' sound standards for their ages. Pupils' standards were also in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 when the school was last inspected.
87. The quality of teaching and learning are good, overall. This enables all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make good progress and to achieve well in relation to their low starting points on entry to Year 1. Teachers use practical tasks well to develop geographical language and understanding. For example, following a visit to the seafront, a group of lower ability Year 2 pupils arranged drinking straws and bricks on the floor to make a map of their walk from the school to the harbour. Activities and teaching approaches are well chosen to interest the pupils and to develop geographical skills. For example, Year 1 pupils learned to use grid references and symbols to locate straw, sticks and bricks on a map of the fictional village where the three little pigs lived. In a Year 2 class, good use of a drama 'hot-seating' technique enabled the class to ask questions of pupils who took the role of a tourist and the corner-shop keeper.
88. The co-ordinator is well-qualified and provides good leadership. She has used her extensive knowledge of the local environment to improve the use made of visits to develop pupils' geographical investigation skills. The range of geographical source materials, such as photographs and maps is good, and has improved since the last inspection. The co-ordinator has observed lessons and provided teachers with useful feedback, including in relation to the use of geographical vocabulary and learning resources.

History

Insufficient evidence was collected to make secure judgements about provision in history. At the very early stage of the Autumn Term when the inspection took place, there was very little evidence in the form of written work produced by pupils, and too few lessons were observed to judge pupils' achievement or the quality of teaching and learning.

Religious education

There is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about the overall quality of provision. The judgements that follow are based primarily on evidence from the small number of lessons seen, from planning, and from discussions with the subject co-ordinator. At the very early stage of the Autumn Term when the inspection took place, there was very little evidence in the form of written work produced by pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Religious education themes are strongly reinforced in assemblies and in personal, social and health education.
- Teachers need clearer guidance about planning for the subject.
- Resources for religious education are very good.

Commentary

89. Two religious education lessons were seen, one in a mainstream Year 2 class, the second in the nurture group which currently consists of 13 Year 2 pupils who have emotional or behavioural difficulties. In these lessons, pupils recalled a visit to a local church where they had learned about various artefacts and features of the building and their significance to Christians. All pupils showed an appropriate awareness of the church as a 'special place'. They described, for example, how being there made them feel 'important' or 'special'. Pupils in the mainstream class and in the nurture group were able to recall, without much difficulty, the names of features such as pews, the altar, the font, the pulpit and the lectern, and can explain how and why they are used. Overall, pupils' standards in the lessons observed were broadly in line with those expected for pupils of their ages.
90. Evidence from planning shows that the school bases its work appropriately on the Devon, Plymouth and Torbay Agreed Syllabus. However, the co-ordinator is not always clear about how to link religious education work to planning which encompasses a range of subjects, and how to ensure that religious education retains its own identity alongside personal, social and health education.
91. Teaching and learning were good in the lesson in the nurture group and satisfactory in the mainstream Year 2 class. However, too few lessons were observed to make secure judgements about the quality of teaching and learning. Learning resources for religious education are very good, and the school is also fortunate in being able to draw on the skills and knowledge of a number of clergy from different churches in the local area, who come in to talk to the pupils and to lead assemblies. In their turn, pupils are welcomed into the various churches for special events such as Harvest Festival and, in one recent case, for a 'mock' christening. Religious education themes are strongly reinforced through assemblies, and also through personal, social and health education. In addition to Christianity, pupils appropriately learn about a number of other major world faiths,

including Judaism and Hinduism. Where possible, the school draws on its own community and on members of the local community to enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding of the different faiths.

92. Leadership and management of the subject are broadly satisfactory. The co-ordinator has monitored teachers' planning and resources, and has begun to collect a portfolio of pupils' work demonstrating different levels of attainment. However, teachers do not have sufficiently clear guidance about planning to ensure a consistent approach across the school.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design

The quality of provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and the standard of their work is above the level expected in Year 2.
- Teachers have high expectations of the standards pupils are capable of attaining, and provide a good range of learning opportunities.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Commentary

93. Pupils do well in art and design, and their standards have improved since the last inspection when they were in line with national expectations. Work already completed by pupils this term, together with extensive evidence of work from the last academic year, clearly shows that art and design is a strength in the school, and that pupils will demonstrate standards which are above national expectations at the end of Year 2.
94. In Year 1, pupils create vibrant interpretations of shells, using crayons and paint. They achieve well when making simple sculptures from wire and polystyrene and are able to use pastels confidently to make bold representations of tigers. During their final term in Year 1, the current Year 2 pupils have created particularly impressive pictures of Ilfracombe, demonstrating their confident and effective use of bold blocks of colour, using pastels. In Year 2, pupils' pencil drawings show their skilful use of shading techniques, whilst their paintings of local coastal scenes reflect their good colour mixing skills. Year 2 pupils benefit from discussing the work of Henri Rousseau, Vincent Van Gogh and William Morris and have created their own pictures and designs which reflect elements of the work of these artists.
95. No art and design lessons were observed during the inspection, so it is not possible to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching. However, a careful analysis of pupils' completed work shows that the teaching enables all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make good progress in the subject. Teachers have high expectations and ensure that pupils have good opportunities to explore the use of a range of materials and to develop their understanding about art and design. Coherent assessment procedures are in place which ensure that teachers identify strengths in pupils' achievements and target areas for improvement accurately.

96. The subject is well led and managed by the well-informed co-ordinator. She has formulated a useful scheme of work which is being consistently implemented, and looks carefully at examples of pupils' completed work in order to judge pupils' standards. The enthusiastic co-ordinator provides valuable support and advice for her colleagues and plays a key role in the organisation of an annual arts week and regular visits by artists who tutor groups of pupils from across the school.

Design and technology

The quality of provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils often evaluate their finished products well, identifying strengths and things they would like to improve.

Commentary

97. Evidence from the very limited amount of design and technology work undertaken this term, together with an analysis of examples of completed work in the last academic year, shows that pupils' standards are in line to match national expectations at the end of Year 2. These standards represent satisfactory achievement and match those found when the school was last inspected.
98. In Year 1, pupils have designed model playgrounds, after visiting an adventure playground in the locality, and have successfully evaluated the playground models they have made. Whilst no examples of the finished models were available for examination during the inspection, pupils' designs demonstrate satisfactory standards for their ages. Their evaluations are often good, showing they have reflected carefully about the quality of the products. Year 1 pupils have also made sound designs for glove puppets and their finished puppets show that they are able to join materials with reasonable precision. In Year 2, pupils made fruit pies during the inspection, having first tasted and evaluated a range of commercially-made pies. They are aware of the need for hygiene when handling food and demonstrate sound standards when using basic tools and combining the ingredients to create appetising pies. Work completed last term by Year 2 pupils shows that they achieved standards which were mainly at the level expected for their ages when designing, making and evaluating stick puppets. In common with the situation in Year 1, the work includes well-focused evaluations.
99. Only a brief part of one design and technology lesson was observed during the inspection, so insufficient evidence was gathered to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching in the subject. However, a careful examination of pupils' completed work shows that the teaching is enabling pupils to make sound progress in their learning. Teachers' planning is thorough and ensures that key skills are introduced and reinforced.
100. The leadership and management of the subject are sound. Whilst the current co-ordinator is new and is consequently just beginning to develop her role, the previous co-ordinator has observed lessons in design and technology, provided useful feedback to her colleagues, and formulated a sound scheme of work.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND MUSIC

Insufficient evidence was collected during the inspection to make secure judgements about provision in physical education and music.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION (PSHE)

The school makes **very good** provision for pupils' personal, social and health education.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are being very well prepared to be responsible, caring citizens.
- All adults in the school lead by example and are very good role models for the pupils.

Commentary

101. The school's very good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) both promotes and reflects the school's aims and ethos. PSHE lessons represent only part of the planned provision which is evident in every aspect of the school's life and work.
102. Only two mainstream lessons devoted to PSHE were seen. Further evidence for the judgements made is derived from PSHE sessions within the nurture group, discussions with pupils and teachers, including the co-ordinator, displays and documentation in classrooms and around the school and, not least, from the attitudes and behaviour of the pupils themselves. When account is taken of their starting-points on entry to the school, pupils achieve well. They respond very positively to the provision made and, by Year 2, are well on the way to developing into caring, thoughtful and responsible future citizens.
103. In class discussions about issues that concern them, in PSHE lessons and through the school council, pupils are encouraged to see themselves as in a position to make a difference, whether to life and work in the classroom, the school as a whole, the playground or the wider community. Recent school council initiatives, for example, have seen the introduction of playground games and equipment at lunch-times, and of a 'healthy eating' campaign which includes, amongst other things, 'fruit time'. The campaign to promote healthy eating is only one of many strands of provision designed to make pupils aware of health and safety issues. For example, a recent initiative to introduce a 'walking bus' from pupils' homes to school is inspired by aspirations for pupils' physical fitness as well as by issues related to safety.
104. Pupils are made aware of local and global issues. For example, a recent initiative on 'eco-awareness' has brought home to pupils the need to care for their environment and to think of ways in which they can contribute to the protection of the Earth. Posters designed by pupils adorn all areas of the school, with timely reminders to place apple-cores in the compost or to recycle paper, glass and plastics. Positive behaviour management, consistently implemented by all staff, ensures that pupils know about school rules. The direct consequences of breaking rules and of behaving inappropriately are made clear to pupils from the outset. The behaviour of adults in the school, and the very good relationships they forge with all their pupils, serve as powerful models for pupils' own behaviour. In PSHE lessons, assemblies and class discussions, pupils are taught to respect the rights and the feelings of others.

105. The school's strong links with the local community create a meaningful context for pupils to learn about the similarities and differences between people, and about other people's lives. Parents, governors, members of the local clergy and representatives from various public services such as the ambulance, fire and police services all visit the school to talk to pupils. During the inspection, for example, a parent governor entranced pupils with a description of his work as a paramedic, stressing the need to care for others, a theme which was also reinforced during assemblies, with relevant links to the example set by Jesus. Links with communities further afield are actively sought and exploited. For example, the school is currently developing live communication links between its own pupils and pupils in a multi-ethnic school in Bristol, and there is already well-established communication with a former pupil, now living in Leicester. In geography, pupils learn about the lives of people in more distant places such as Africa and Mexico and, during the inspection, the headteacher captured pupils' interest strongly when talking about her recent visit to India.
106. The deputy headteacher has assumed responsibility for the co-ordination of PSHE only this term. She has a very good understanding of the nature and intention of the many strands of provision and is in a strong position to lead further developments.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

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

Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	5
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	2
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	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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