

INSPECTION REPORT

Parkham Primary School

Bideford

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113164

Headteacher: Mr Neil Crabtree-Livesey

Lead inspector: Mrs Joyce Cox

Dates of inspection: 10 – 12 January 2005

Inspection number: 267473

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 4 -11 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 59

School address: Parkham
Bideford
Devon

Postcode: EX39 5PL

Telephone number: 01237 451334

Fax number: 01237 451334

Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Philip Priest

Date of previous inspection: 04 March 2003

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Parkham is a community primary school, situated in a rural setting near Bideford in Devon. The school is much smaller than other schools nationally. It caters for 59 pupils aged between four and eleven years in three classes. Socio-economic circumstances are average, with pupils coming from privately owned and rented homes. The number of pupils entitled to free schools meals is below the national average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements, varies from year to year. There are currently an above average number of pupils with special educational needs and an average percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs. Almost all the pupils are from white, English-speaking families and there are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. An above average number of pupils join the school other than at the usual starting date as the school has developed a good reputation. The children's attainment on entry to the school is similar to that of other four-year-old children when compared to national expectations.

The school was last inspected in March 2003, when the school had an acting headteacher, and was judged to have serious weaknesses in leadership and management and unsatisfactory provision for children in the Foundation Stage. Prior to the last inspection the school had three acting headteachers before the permanent headteacher took up post in September 2003. One of Her Majesty's Inspectors visited the school in October 2003 and stated that 'The newly appointed headteacher has made a good start and has achieved much in a relatively short time.' The local education authority in a monitoring review in December 2004 felt that since taking up his post the

new headteacher has provided very good leadership and management and the school has maintained a rapid pace of improvement.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
25074	Joyce Cox	Lead inspector	English Science Religious education Geography History Physical education Personal, social and health education and citizenship
1329	Kevern Oliver	Lay inspector	
26945	Sylvia Gatehouse	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Music Provision for children in the Foundation Stage Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a **good** quality of education in a very warm, friendly ethos and succeeds in including every pupil in all aspects of school life. Pupils make good progress and reach above average standards in many subjects by the time they leave the school. Teaching is good overall and very good in the Years 5/6 class. The headteacher and the governing body provide very good leadership. Management is good. The school no longer has serious weaknesses and gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The commitment, energy and vision of the headteacher inspire the school community and considerable improvements have taken place in many areas since his appointment.
- Years 5/6 pupils' achievement is very good in many lessons because of the high quality of teaching in this class.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good and, as a result, pupils have very good attitudes, enjoy their lessons and behave very well.
- The provision for children in the Foundation Stage has improved and is now satisfactory but further developments are required to the classroom management and organisation and the accommodation, which is still unsatisfactory.
- Assessment is very good and used skilfully to track pupils' attainment and achievement.
- The school makes very good provision for children who experience learning difficulties.
- Governance is very good and the school has excellent links with its parents who are extremely happy with all that the school provides.
- Writing standards could be higher throughout the school and infant pupils have limited opportunities to use their literacy skills in other subjects.
- Pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills are much improved but there is scope for pupils to apply these skills more in some other subjects.

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection. The provision for the reception children has improved although their cramped accommodation restricts certain aspects of the curriculum. Very good improvement has been made to the leadership and management of the school.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			Similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	E	B	C	A
Mathematics	D	D	A	A*
Science	D	E	A	A

Key: A - very high; A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average*

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

Overall, pupils' achievement is **good**. The work seen during the inspection indicates that:

- Reception children are on course to meet the national standards (the early learning goals) in all areas of learning and their achievement is satisfactory.
- Year 2 pupils' achievement is satisfactory and they reach average standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Year 6 pupils attain above average standards in reading and ICT and well above average standards in mathematics and science. Standards in writing are average. Year 6 pupils' achievement is good in English and ICT and very good in mathematics and science.

The number of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils who take the tests is very small which makes national comparisons somewhat unreliable. After a period of considerable turbulence and underachievement, Year 2 pupils' attainment has improved and is now average for all subjects tested due to changes of leadership and staffing. Year 6 pupils' results in 2004 improved dramatically, particularly in mathematics and science, as there was a considerable improvement in the number of pupils attaining the higher Level 5. Years 5/6 pupils' attainment and achievement have improved considerably due to the consistently high quality of teaching in this class since September 2003.

There is **very good** provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and pupils have very good attitudes and behaviour. Attendance is in line with the national average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a **good** quality of education. Teaching and learning are good overall and very good in the Years 5/6 class where pupils learn very effectively. There is very good lesson planning, with interesting activities to capture pupils' interest. Assessment is very good and pupils' progress can be clearly and effectively tracked from year to year. The curriculum is good. Pupils have good opportunities to become involved in extra-curricular activities. The school takes good care of its pupils and has excellent links with parents, very good links with the local community and good links with other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**. The headteacher is a very good leader. Since his appointment the school has moved forward rapidly and highly effective structures are now in place to ensure continuous improvement. Management is good. Subject co-ordinators' roles have improved. Their management is now satisfactory. School funds are targeted where they are most needed and are monitored carefully. Governance is very good and governors have provided very good support to the school in its troubled past, investing considerable time and effort in school improvement.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parental support for the school is excellent. They are extremely positive about their children's progress and the many recent improvements. Parents say that they admire and trust the new headteacher and feel they can now play a full part in their children's education. Pupils love their school and like and respect their teachers. They correctly say that Parkham is a very friendly school where everyone has 'good manners and cares about each other'.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Further improve the Foundation Stage curriculum and accommodation.
- Continue to raise standards in writing and ensure infant pupils use their literacy skills to record their work in other subjects.
- Give pupils more opportunities to apply their developing ICT skills in other subjects.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievement is **good**. It is satisfactory in the infants and **good** in the juniors. Pupils attain **average** standards in all subjects at the end of Year 2 and **above average** standards overall at the end of Year 6. Year 6 pupils attain **well above average** standards in mathematics and science at the end of Year 6. Standards in English are **average** at the end of Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Year 6 pupils' achievement in mathematics and science is very good.
- Standards in ICT are above expectations in Year 6 and have improved since the last inspection.
- Infant pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to practise their literacy skills in other subjects.
- More use could be made of all pupils' improved ICT skills in some other subjects.

Commentary

1. Since 2003 when the school was found to have serious weaknesses, it has been through considerable upheaval and, until September 2003, has experienced difficulty in recruiting and retaining a permanent headteacher. A new teacher was appointed in the reception/Years 1/2 class in April 2004 as the headteacher, the local education authority and Her Majesty's Inspectors felt that insufficient progress had been made in improving the weakness in the provision for children in the Foundation Stage.
2. The attainment of the current reception children on entry to school is similar to that of other four-year-old children nationally. Children's achievement is satisfactory overall and the majority of the children are on course to attain the expected early learning goals in all the areas of learning on entry to Year 1. Improved planning and teaching have led to improved attainment and achievement since April 2004. However, children's personal and social development is restricted by the cramped accommodation, as they are unable to easily select their own activities and resources.

Key Stage 1

3. The number of pupils who take the national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is very small, which makes national comparisons unreliable. In 2003, there was a decline in Year 2 pupils' performance in all subjects in the national tests. The national test results for 2004 indicate that this decline has been halted because of considerably improved leadership and staff changes. The 2004 Year 2 test results improved dramatically in writing and mathematics, particularly in the proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 3 compared with the previous year. Boys performed better than girls in reading, writing and mathematics but only seven pupils took these tests and no evidence of a difference in pupils' performance was found during the inspection.
4. After a period of considerable turbulence and underachievement when the trend in the school's results was below the national trend, the current Year 2 pupils attain average

standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science and their achievement is satisfactory. Year 2 pupils' achievement in writing is restricted as they have insufficient opportunities to practise their literacy skills in subjects such as science, history and religious education. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on standards in ICT. Pupils' attainment in religious education meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	14.7 (15.0)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	15.0 (12.1)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	15.9 (13.3)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 7 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Key Stage 2

5. In national tests in 2004, pupils' results in mathematics and science improved significantly when compared to previous years. Almost all the pupils attained the expected Level 4 in English, mathematics and science. Of greater significance is the proportion of the pupils who attained the higher Level 5 in all three subjects, with more than half of the pupils attaining that level in mathematics and science, and just under one third in English. Pupils attained average results in English and well above average results in mathematics and science. Pupils' overall achievement is very good in all subjects when compared to their Year 2 test results in 2001.
6. The attainment of the current Year 6 is above average in reading, average in writing and well above average in mathematics and science and pupils' achievement is very good. Standards are above average in ICT, and Years 5/6 pupils have many very good opportunities to use their ICT skills in subjects such as mathematics and science. However, work scrutiny indicates that this is not always the case in the infants and in the Years 3/4 class. Year 6 pupils' attainment in religious education meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The school has correctly identified pupils' attainment and achievement in writing as requiring further improvement. Having said that, Years 5/6 pupils' achievement is very good in literacy lessons because of the high quality of teaching they now receive. There was no noticeable difference between the attainment and achievement of boys and girls.
7. Pupils with special educational needs reach average standards and their achievement is satisfactory in reception and Years 1 and 2. Between Years 3 and 6, pupils with special educational needs reach standards that are at least average in many subjects. Pupils in the junior classes with learning difficulties achieve well and make good progress.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.1. (28.7)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	30.3. (27.0)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	30.8. (27.9)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 11 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Overall judgement

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, punctuality and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are **very good**. Their attendance is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has excellent provision to ensure that all pupils are free from all forms of bullying, racism and other forms of harassment.
- Pupils are very well behaved and willingly contribute to their own and wider communities.
- The arrangements for ensuring that pupils attend school and are punctual are very good.
- There are very good opportunities for pupils to reflect and share their experiences, thoughts and feelings with others. They have a strong sense of right and wrong.
- There are very good opportunities for pupils to learn about their own and other cultures.

Commentary

8. Parkham's pupils like coming to their school. They appreciate the fact that they are being given every opportunity to learn, play and grow up. They trust and respect each other and all the adults who work with them. Cheery smiles and polite offers of help make visitors feel really welcome. Pupils are keen to learn. They work hard and respond very positively to their teachers' encouragement and challenges to solve problems for themselves and 'get on with things'. This kind of attitude to lessons is excellent in the Years 5/6 class where pupils, whatever their abilities, have impressively mature approaches to learning. They quietly listen, question and discuss ideas with their teacher and each other as they search for new knowledge and fresh experiences.
9. Behaviour in and around the school is very good. Lessons are very rarely interrupted by unacceptable behaviour and playtimes, including wet ones, are well organised, happy times as boys and girls play with each other. Pupils are well mannered and tolerant of each other. They make sure that those with disabilities are cared for and included in school life. Pupils with special educational needs have good attitudes and behave extremely well in lessons. Their behaviour and attitudes are particularly good, even excellent on occasions, in Years 5 and 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection. During the inspection no bad behaviour or bullying were seen or reported to the inspection team. The school has excellent strategies in place to ensure that all pupils are free from bullying, racism and other forms of harassment. This finding is confirmed by pupils' and parents' feedback to the inspection team. There have been no exclusions in the school's recent history.
10. Everyone in Parkham contributes to school life. Pupils voluntarily help to keep the school clean and tidy and work with teachers to prepare classrooms for lessons. Older pupils care for younger ones by, for example, distributing fruit at playtime. The elected school council takes its role and responsibilities very seriously. Members are proud that they are contributing to the smooth running and improvement of the school.
11. Pupils' spiritual development has improved since the previous inspection. It is now very good. Assemblies, personal, social and health education and religious education lessons provide regular, high quality opportunities for pupils to consider their own and others' ideas, needs and feelings. Pupils have a very good sense of right and wrong and willingly contribute to their mutually supportive community. Their wish, for example, to do something to relieve the suffering of orphans and families following the tsunami disaster is most impressive. Although Parkham is very much a single culture community, pupils are very aware of cultures other than their own. African and Indian life and beliefs, for example, have recently been explored and the recent 'One World Week' celebrated different races' similarities and differences.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.5%	School data	0.1%
National data	5.1%	National data	0.4%

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

12. Attendance rates for last year were badly affected by illness in the autumn term. The school and parents work very well together to ensure that children come to school regularly and on time. Records for the current year suggest that Parkham is on target for attendance levels in 2004/5, which are above national data for schools of this size and type.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **good** quality of education. Teaching and learning are **good**. The curriculum is **satisfactory** in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 and **good** in the juniors. There is a **good** number of extra-curricular activities. The school takes **good** care of its pupils and has **excellent** links with parents, **good** links with other schools and **very good** links with the local community.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good** overall. Assessment is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is of a very high calibre in the Years 5/6 class and older pupils' achievement is very good in many lessons.
- Teachers' very good relationships and high expectations of pupils' behaviour result in calm, purposeful atmospheres for learning.
- There are excellent opportunities for all pupils to be fully involved in all lessons.
- Insufficient use is made of infant pupils' literacy skills in other subjects.
- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to practise their ICT skills in some subjects.

Commentary

13. The teacher in the reception/Years 1 and 2 class has only been in post for two terms. She has the difficult task of planning and managing two key stages within the same class. The cramped classroom accommodation leads to problems with organising practical activities. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory in all six areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum, with strengths in planning and relationships. This is a good improvement since the last inspection. Teaching assistants are keen and hard working but tend to rely on the teacher for guidance. For example, during the inspection limited examples were observed of teaching assistants spontaneously engaging children in meaningful conversation to stimulate interest, extend vocabulary and promote children's personal and social development, nor were they seen engaging in role-play. Satisfactory assessment procedures have been established to track the children's progress in all the areas of learning, which clearly show that all

children's achievement is satisfactory. There is satisfactory teaching of Years 1 and 2 pupils whose achievement is satisfactory in English, mathematics and science due to effective planning. However, a scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that infant pupils have very limited chances to record their work in their own words in subjects such as science, history and geography as they are frequently provided with a worksheet on which they record one or two words.

14. Teaching and learning are good in the Years 3/4 class and very good in the Years 5/6 class. The two full-time teachers have quickly developed into a highly effective workforce, which is very committed to raising standards and accelerating pupils' achievement. In a short space of time they have established very good relationships. Pupils' behaviour and their enthusiasm for learning have improved considerably since the arrival of the headteacher who teaches the Years 5/6 class. These very good relationships between teachers and pupils have a positive impact on pupils' learning. There is an ethos where teachers expect pupils to get down to work quickly and this means that no time is wasted and pupils get a good deal of work done. Pupils know exactly what is expected of them because teachers make clear the learning intention of the lesson and how long they have to complete their work. Pupils concentrate well during lesson introductions so the teacher can introduce new ideas quickly and assess whether or not pupils understand.
15. Teachers' planning is very detailed and clearly indicates what all pupils will be learning. Work is skilfully matched to pupils' various ages and ability levels, which ensures good achievement. For instance, in a very good Years 5/6 literacy lesson, lower attaining pupils are provided with useful prompts to help them identify the main features of a piece of 'Flashback' writing, whilst higher attaining pupils are expected to have remembered the main features from previous learning. Teachers in the juniors expect their pupils to be successful so their comments about work or behaviour concentrate on the positive aspects rather than any negatives. This raises pupils' confidence and self-esteem, helps to get the most out of them and makes them better learners. Teachers trust pupils to work well together so that when opportunities arise for investigative or collaborative work they can allow them important time to discuss their ideas with others. This is particularly evident in science and mathematics lessons.
16. All the parents at the parents' meeting and those who returned their questionnaires quite rightly consider that teaching is good. They particularly appreciate the detailed termly reports which clearly show their children's' attainments and achievements in relation to National Curriculum levels. Teaching assistants provide valuable support to pupils with special educational needs. Teachers take into account the requirements of pupils with special educational needs and plan their lessons accordingly. Teachers in the juniors deploy their assistants very effectively to support pupils both with their work and with their response and behaviour. For instance, in whole-class discussions pupils are drawn into the activity and encouraged to make a contribution. Pupils make a valuable contribution to their own individual education plans, assessing how well they have done towards reaching their targets.
17. The most significant areas for improvement are the ways in which teachers use pupils' improved ICT skills in lessons. The Years 5/6 teacher who has considerable ICT experience and enthusiasm makes very good use of ICT in science and mathematics lessons, ensuring that pupils use sensory thermometers and data loggers with precision and confidence. However, this is not yet consistent practice throughout the school.

18. The quality of assessment is very good. The headteacher has worked hard to devise a highly effective tracking system to follow pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science throughout the school. It clearly identifies any pupil who has not made the expected progress so that swift intervention strategies can be put into place. This tracking information is shared with pupils and parents each term so that everyone is fully aware of pupils' attainments and achievements. Marking of pupils' work is very thorough, with very detailed comments about how pupils can improve their work which makes tracking pupils' achievement much easier. The assessment information also ensures accuracy in setting targets for pupils to achieve each term.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 16 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2	6	1	7	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.

The curriculum

The school's provision for the curriculum is **good**. The school provides a **good** range of extra-curricular activities. Resources and accommodation are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum has improved substantially since the last inspection and all pupils have excellent access to all aspects of the curriculum.
- The new headteacher has successfully led a rigorous evaluation of the curriculum and its planning has been thoroughly reviewed.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is now very good.
- ICT and infant pupils' writing skills are not yet used enough in some other subjects.
- Some aspects of the accommodation require further improvement.

Commentary

19. At the time of the last inspection the curriculum was judged to be unsatisfactory. All issues have been successfully addressed, and there has been good improvement in recent months. For instance, provision for ICT and design and technology has improved. One area requiring further development is the use of infant pupils' writing skills in subjects such as science, history and geography.
20. The curriculum encompasses all subjects of the National Curriculum and sufficient time is allocated to each. All statutory requirements are fully met. Policies and planning are regularly monitored, and governors are linked to subjects and staff, which ensures that all subjects are monitored regularly. This good practice enables them to keep fully abreast of progress in fulfilling the school's action plans for further curriculum development. The curriculum is very well planned for all pupils including those with special educational needs. Pupils have curriculum targets that they know and understand and all pupils have excellent access to all areas of the curriculum.
21. The school makes good use of its lovely locality to successfully enrich its curriculum, especially in science, history and geography. For example, all pupils have good opportunities to conduct first-hand studies of the features of a stream that runs close to the village. Visitors extend pupils' understanding of subjects such as religious education and bring lessons vividly to life. The school takes part in sporting and musical events in the community, and its annual Christmas production is a popular village fixture attracting virtually everyone in the school and local community.
22. Provision for ICT has been substantially improved and is now good, with an up-to-date computer suite and interactive whiteboard. Although pupils' skills in this subject are

rapidly improving, they are not yet implemented frequently enough in other areas of the curriculum such as history, geography and religious education.

23. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. They are completely integrated into the life of the whole school, in line with the school's excellent stance on educational inclusion and equal opportunities. For instance, a pupil with special needs runs his own 'shop' that all pupils and teachers are invited to patronise as 'customers'. The governor with a particular interest in special educational needs is conscientious and keeps the governing body well briefed. Improvement since the last inspection is very good. The new Code of Practice is thoroughly embedded and the school's prospectus contains very clear information for parents.
24. The governors and headteacher have successfully managed the staffing in the school to make very good use of teachers' particular strengths and subject expertise, for instance in music and ICT. The level of staffing and quality of resources are satisfactory. The storage of resources is particularly well organised and they are well maintained. The accommodation is extremely clean and inviting, having been considerably improved in recent months. Good use is made of a central room for whole-school gatherings such as assemblies, but it is not suitable for use as a classroom because it has poor ventilation, no natural light and too many doors. The accommodation for the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 is too cramped in spite of having been improved. Although there is no playing field for outdoor games, or hall large enough for gymnastics, the school makes very good use of the adjacent village hall and local recreation ground.

Care, guidance and support

The school has **good** arrangements for looking after pupils' care, welfare and health and safety. Its monitoring of pupils' achievements and personal development is **very good**. There are **very good** arrangements for involving pupils through seeking, valuing and acting upon their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a safe and healthy environment for all its pupils.
- The school is very good at seeking out and acting upon pupils' views and ideas about how to make the school a better place in which they can learn, play and grow up.
- Pupils trust and like the adults who work with them.
- Teachers rigorously monitor and support the learning and personal development of every pupil.

Commentary

25. Parkham's pupils come first. The governors and all the staff ensure that pupils spend their school days in a clean, healthy and safe environment. There are regular and rigorous safety reviews of the whole site and, from time to time, the school brings in experts to advise on best practice. There is a trained first aider on site. Child protection arrangements, which are being updated to include recent changes in requirements, are good. These good strategies make a significant contribution to raising pupils' achievement and attainment.
26. Pupils' views and ideas count. The headteacher and the rest of the staff firmly believe that all pupils, whatever their age and ability, should have their say about how to make Parkham an even better place in which to learn and grow up. The staff provide excellent role models on how to behave and interact with other people. Pupils know that there is always someone they can go to if they are worried or upset. Everyone

respects and listens to pupils' views, whether they come from casual chats or more structured occasions such as religious education and personal, social, health and citizenship sessions. Assemblies become consultative events, for instance when the headteacher explored with pupils the ways in which they could provide practical help to those who were suffering the after effects of the tsunami disaster. The class councils and the elected school council have a very positive impact on the general quality of school life. They help to create and maintain the calm atmosphere in which everyone in Parkham is able to play and work together in a happy and very harmonious ethos.

27. Pupils' progress matters. The staff know all the pupils extremely well and use meticulous assessment and tracking systems to check how well pupils are getting on. The results of the tracking, which covers not only learning in English, mathematics and science but also personal development, are used very effectively to plan lessons, support groups and individuals and provide regular, up-to-date information for parents. The school provides very good support and guidance for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils are well cared for, and there are good procedures to ensure that they work and play in a healthy and safe environment. There is very good liaison between schools so that pupils with special educational needs transfer as smoothly as possible. For example, a teaching assistant consistently and successfully uses the same reward system for good effort and behaviour that a pupil will experience in the future at another school.
28. The school looks after new pupils well. Everyone welcomes them in to the Parkham family and makes sure that they settle quickly and happily into the daily routine of school life. Children and parents from the local pre-schools have a series of taster and briefing visits as part of their preparation for transfer. Pupils of any ages and those who arrive at other times in the school year are well looked after.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents are **excellent**. Its links with the community are **very good and good** with other schools and colleges.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very confident that the school is doing an excellent job of educating their children.
- The information which the school provides, about what pupils are learning and how they are getting on is excellent.
- The school actively seeks out parents' ideas and opinions because it wants them to be closely involved in the pupils' education.
- The school's very good links with the local community has a beneficial effect on pupils' learning and development.

Commentary

29. All of Parkham's parents are staunch supporters of the school. They are very pleased that, after a difficult period of instability and declining standards, the school is now providing their children with a very good education. They admire and respect the new headteacher and are delighted with the ways in which he has brought stability and renewed confidence to the whole school community. They justifiably feel that Parkham is 'on the up' and 'going places'.

30. The range and quality of information that the school provides are excellent. Official documents such as the prospectus and the governors' annual report contain a wealth of really relevant facts, figures and procedures. Two formal consultation meetings and innovative, personalised reports at the end of each term keep parents closely in touch with their children's academic progress and personal development. Weekly newsletters, curriculum information and advice on, for example, how to help children with their homework are not only sent home but also appear on Parkham's excellent website. The 'Parkham Post' produced by the Years 5/6 pupils and the headteacher provides another valuable source of information to parents.
31. Consultation with parents is the norm. Day-to-day contact through the school's 'open door' and high-profile parent governors allows straightforward and informal communication. An extensive annual survey of parents' views and ideas provides valuable feedback which, when appropriate, is acted upon. Major changes, such as the way that attendance is managed and the variety and timing of information provided, are as a direct result of meetings between the headteacher, governors and parents. The school is in close contact with all parents of pupils with special educational needs, both formally and informally. Parents are involved as soon as any concerns arise, and they are kept fully informed about their children's progress and achievement, which ensures that parents can play a highly effective role in their children's learning. A large number of parents provide voluntary help in school and provide transport for local educational trips and visits, which considerably enhances pupils' education. The Friends of Parkham provide ongoing, valuable support and major events are always well supported.
32. The school uses the village hall and local fields and has its own popular slot in the village newsletter. The village, in turn, is welcomed into school for assemblies and major events. Current plans to improve these already very good links include community access to the ICT suite and involvement with the local business community. Pupils' education benefits from the ways in which Parkham's staff, through the local academic council, shares ideas and experiences with colleagues in other schools in the area. Close links with Torrington Secondary Sports College help not only to ensure the smooth transfer of Year 6 pupils but also the development of Parkham's physical education and sports curriculum, which raises pupils' attainment and achievement.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**. The leadership of the headteacher and the governing body is **very good**. The management of the school is **good**. Leadership of other key staff is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The new headteacher has worked tirelessly and very effectively to bring about many very good improvements.
- He has an exceptionally clear vision for the school's future development.
- The governors make a major contribution to the leadership of the school.
- Subject co-ordinators' roles have improved and are now satisfactory as they are beginning to get to grips with their new responsibilities.

Commentary

33. The headteacher is dedicated to establishing the highest standards and achievement in everything that the school does. In addition, he is an outstanding classroom practitioner who motivates and inspires his Years 5/6 class to attain high standards of work and behaviour.
34. The quality of his leadership has excellent aspects, including an unwavering sense of purpose, high aspirations and a remarkable clarity of vision. He has successfully shared and communicated these qualities with all staff and governors, so that all involved with the school have a clear understanding of what needs doing, and why. These aspirations are embedded in a comprehensive school improvement plan that includes clear priorities for further action.
35. The governors are very astute and have an unusually thorough understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They celebrate the former and tackle the latter with sensitivity but determination, saying: 'We welcome criticism – it will help us move forward. Much has been done, but there is still much to do. Our work is only just beginning now.' They are actively involved in all aspects of the school's work, including strategic planning, focused visits to classes, and discussions with staff and pupils. Their lively interest and whole-hearted commitment cement the partnership between them and the school, enabling them to be frank and respected but critical friends. For example, the governors have contributed support and energy to the recent improvements in the school's accommodation. However, the lack of progress that they experience with regard to the completion of a new classroom is a constant disappointment, as is their anxiety while the number on roll is rising.
36. There is an air of quiet efficiency in the school. Its ethos is very purposeful but warm and friendly. The day-to-day management of the school is smooth, calm and effective. The staff work together very well as a team, assuming responsibilities for subjects and willingly sharing their expertise such as in ICT and music. Co-ordinators' roles have been developed and improved and they have drawn up action plans for their subjects that contribute to the school's overall improvement plan. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides very good leadership and management. The school's overall strategic planning, its stance on educational inclusion and ethos are excellent. The documentation relating to special educational needs is extremely clear and thorough. Reviews of pupils' progress are securely in place, and all staff involved attend so that parents get as full a picture as possible. The governing body receives regular reports about special educational needs, and there is a link governor who takes a lively and well-informed interest in this aspect of school life.
37. Parents say they are very happy with the new improvements that are in place. 'The head works his socks off', says a parent, and pupils report that it is a happy school to be in. 'There are no bullies. Everyone is so polite and kind now,' says a pupil who has attended the school for nearly six years.
38. Financial systems are very secure and managed efficiently. The deficit is constantly under review by the governors and the budget conscientiously scrutinised at all governors' meetings. They are fully aware of the principles of best value and these are applied rigorously as required.
39. The main aids to raising achievement are the very good leadership and excellent teaching provided by the headteacher and the commitment and determination shared

between the leadership, staff, parents and governors of the school, and their capacity to succeed. The main barriers to raising achievement lie in the heavy teaching load carried by the headteacher, many curriculum responsibilities for staff, a reduced budget, rising numbers and the uncertainty of the school's future development with regard to the completion of the new classroom. The latter is beyond the school's direct control.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	220,231	Balance from previous year	7,618
Total expenditure	223,339	Balance carried forward to the next	- 3,108
Expenditure per pupil	4,379		

NB. There was a reduction in pupil numbers following the last inspection and this resulted in a large reduction in funding. This triggered a redundancy situation in April 2003. It was then projected that the budget would balance in 2005 - 06. The school states that it should balance this year due to an increase in pupil numbers and prudent financial management.

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

Provision for children in the reception classes is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides very good support and guidance and is an excellent role model for leadership and teaching.
- The quality of teaching has improved and is now satisfactory.
- The accommodation, although improved, is still too cramped.
- The outdoor area has been improved but access to it is awkward.

Commentary

40. Reception children join an established class of Year 1 and Year 2 pupils in either September or January, initially on a part-time basis. At the time of the inspection, half of the group of ten had been in school for only one day. Attainment on entry varies considerably between years. Attainment of the current group of ten children is wide-ranging, but overall it is average.
41. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. The new headteacher is dynamic and is determined to raise standards. He has taken swift and effective action to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage. For example, a new teacher has been appointed who is passionate about the education of this age range. She and her support staff work together closely to provide sound support and guidance, with an appropriate emphasis on personal and social development. Her good short-term planning effectively embraces the specific curriculum for this age group, incorporating the early learning goals in all six areas of learning. Satisfactory assessment systems based on the Foundation Stage Profile are beginning to be used effectively to record children's progress and achievement. Very good school developmental planning, approved by the governing body, clearly maps out further long-term improvements. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are satisfactory.
42. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory in all six areas of the curriculum with strengths in planning and relationships. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The teacher has particularly good subject knowledge in art. The majority of children make satisfactory progress and their achievement is also satisfactory in all six areas of learning. They are on course to reach the expected levels of attainment in all the areas of learning by the beginning of Year 1. They are well on course to reach the early learning goals in art, because of the teacher's expertise. Teaching assistants are enthusiastic but their support is not always spontaneous enough. For example, during the inspection there were few examples of teaching assistants engaging children in meaningful conversation to stimulate interest, extend vocabulary and promote children's personal and social development.
43. The school has worked extremely hard to improve the internal and external accommodation for the Foundation Stage children. The accommodation is used well, and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Even so, the accommodation for this age range is unsatisfactory. The internal accommodation is not spacious enough for the needs of reception children to be met in full. This was the case at the time of

the last inspection and has still not been addressed successfully, although governors and staff are doing the best they can. It is a matter of considerable concern and regret in the community that, in spite of rising numbers and increased popularity, a new classroom has not been completed, although its footings have been in place for some time. The outdoor play area has been very much improved since the last inspection. However, access to it is awkward, and is not conducive to spontaneous, freely chosen play activities. This deficiency impedes progress in children's physical development and diminishes the opportunities for children to exert their initiative and independence.

44. Children make sound progress in their **personal, social and emotional development** because of consistent and satisfactory care, guidance and support provided by the teacher and her support staff. Children settle happily into the routines of school because of good induction arrangements and links between pre-school placements overseen conscientiously by a school governor. In these early days, children depend heavily on adults for help until they are more responsible for their own behaviour. There are limited opportunities for children to select their own activities and resources, which is in part due to the cramped accommodation. Parents say they are very happy with the way the school welcomes their children and the open-door policy that means they have frequent formal and informal contact with the school. Children with special needs are identified early and effective support is provided to ensure they settle well and gain in self-confidence. The school's ethos is excellent and good behaviour is rewarded promptly whenever it is noticed, for example by the headteacher in assemblies, lunchtimes and playtimes.
45. Satisfactory teaching in **communication, language and literacy** ensures that children make the expected progress in developing their speaking and listening skills. For example, children respond well in whole-class discussions, listening attentively and responding to the teacher's directed questioning. A few children are better at speaking than they are at listening. However, they enjoy storytimes and listen particularly closely in assemblies. They are beginning to acquire early reading skills such as handling books correctly, and recognising some letters and words. Their early writing skills are taught in a highly structured way, including handwriting practice, phonic work and re-telling stories in their own words. There are few opportunities for children to practise their developing writing skills in the role-play area. The majority of children write their own names accurately, and the more able write frequently used words from memory. The more able children achieve well, and make good progress. They are well on course, especially in writing, because of good teaching in this aspect.
46. Children make satisfactory progress in **mathematical development** because of satisfactory teaching. Some recognise numerals correctly and count confidently up to ten. The more able children write numbers accurately and are beginning to add two numbers together, whilst others with learning difficulties are unsure of the names of different colours. There are regular opportunities for them to use the computer, for instance they count the numbers of items in a set and select the correct numeral. Because of the constraints of space, there are limited opportunities for children to explore practical mathematical activities such as investigating the properties of sand and water.
47. Children's development in gaining **knowledge and understanding of the world** is soundly promoted through a variety of opportunities, including visits out of school, for example to the local stream, as well as visitors into class. For instance, children listen attentively to the vicar who shows his special vestments. Children are included fully in assemblies, in the traditional festivals such as Harvest and the Christian celebration of

Christmas. They are beginning to gain an understanding of the power of information technology and operate computers confidently, and take part in the whole school's 'One World Week,' gaining an insight into the wider world beyond school. In science, they make good use of play dough to show their developing understanding of pushing and pulling.

48. Very good teaching in art enables children to make very good progress in this aspect of **creative development**. They are completely engrossed in their practical activities because the teacher has very good subject knowledge, she makes the purpose of the lesson very clear and the task is sufficiently challenging and interesting to engage their concentration. In music, children have satisfactory opportunities to appreciate pulse and rhythm as they explore the different sounds that untuned percussion instruments produce. Role-play resources are available in the newly extended area of the classroom, but this area is cluttered and becomes congested on occasion when too many children play there. Adult intervention and interaction are intermittent so opportunities are missed to promote children's vocabulary and personal and social development.
49. During the inspection it was not possible to observe children's **physical development** other than during activities in class. These successfully promote dexterity, such as handling construction apparatus, pencils and crayons, glue brushes and collage materials. Children show considerable skill in using the computer mouse to click and drag. The outdoor provision for play on large wheeled toys is good, and an improvement since the last inspection. However, access to it is awkward which restricts opportunities for children to select and use large outdoor equipment.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Years 5/6 pupils' achievement is very good in literacy lessons.
- Standards in reading are above average at the end of Year 6.
- Pupils' attainment in writing could be higher.
- There are not enough opportunities for infant pupils to improve their literacy skills in science, history, geography and religious education.

Commentary

50. The number of pupils taking the national tests is very small so the use of comparative information must be interpreted with care. In the unvalidated national tests in 2004 for pupils aged seven, standards were well below average in reading and average in writing. The 2004 test results show an improvement on the 2003 results as three of the seven pupils who took the tests attained the higher Level 3 in reading and writing. Pupils' attained average standards when compared with other seven-year-olds.
51. Results dipped slightly in 2004 for the Year 6 pupils in their national English tests. Although pupils' attainment was above the national average it was not as high as their attainment in mathematics and science. Overall standards in English are average at

the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 6. The standards seen during the inspection were average overall by the end of Year 2 and at Year 6 in writing. Reading standards are average at the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 6. Year 2 pupils' achievement at Year 2 is satisfactory in reading and writing and Year 6 pupils' achievement is good in reading and writing overall and very good in literacy lessons due to the high quality of teaching in the Years 5/6 class.

52. Achievement in speaking and listening is satisfactory overall for pupils by the age of seven and eleven and the majority of pupils reach the expected levels by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. They listen carefully when others are speaking and pupils in Years 5/6 confidently explain their thinking and learning in all subjects. Teachers work hard to ensure pupils understand specific words in texts and most encourage pupils to respond to questions in full sentences. Some teachers encourage pupils to discuss their learning together which promotes effective speaking and listening skills but this is not consistent practice throughout the school.
53. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 reach above average standards in reading, whilst the majority of pupils attain average standards. Infant pupils achieve satisfactorily, whilst Year 6 pupils' achievement is good. More able Year 6 pupils read fluently and give mature explanations about the books they read. They are enthusiastic about books and can skim and scan texts for information. Year 2 pupils enjoy reading and are learning to use letter sounds to deduce new vocabulary. The bookcases in the reception/Years 1/2 class are too high and pupils cannot easily access books, which hinders their learning. There is no central library area for non-fiction books, which restricts class opportunities for research. However, the school has worked hard to improve its limited space and books in the Years 5/6 class are attractively arranged and older pupils know how to access information.
54. Writing is identified as an area for improvement on the school's improvement plan. It is evident in some literacy lessons that, although work is planned for pupils' different abilities, in reality all pupils complete the same work and so higher attaining pupils are not challenged enough to achieve their full potential. Work in the Years 5/6 class is differentiated very effectively for pupils with special educational needs. This is not always the case in other classes, when all pupils complete the same writing tasks with limited support in organising their work. However, in the Years 5/6 class, pupils of all abilities achieve very well as the work is skilfully matched to their specific needs. Handwriting and the way older pupils present their work are areas of strength because of the teacher's high expectations. Standards of spelling are average overall but several pupils have weaker skills and would benefit from a structured approach to learning of new spellings.
55. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in the infants and the Years 3 /4 class and very good in the Years 5/6 class. Where teaching and learning are very good it is because the teacher is very clear about what the pupils are to learn and builds very skilfully on their previous achievement in writing different forms of texts. Very useful hints are provided to encourage pupils' recall of exactly what are the main features of a 'flashback' text, which enables pupils of all abilities to achieve very well. Individual feedback and encouragement ensure all pupils persevere and successfully complete the task. Pupils' behaviour is excellent as the teacher only has to say 'Eye Check' in a quiet, calm manner and immediately he has the whole class's focused attention. In the satisfactory lessons the work provided is the same for all ability levels and there are few strategies to support lower attaining and less confident pupils' learning.

56. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership and management. She has only recently become co-ordinator but has received very good support from the headteacher and has constructed a detailed action plan to improve provision. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection, particularly in terms of tracking pupils' progress and in setting priorities for future improvements.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

The use of language and literacy across the curriculum is unsatisfactory in the infants and good in the juniors. Years 3 to 6 pupils are encouraged to record their work in their own words and very few worksheets are used. However, a scrutiny of infant pupils' work reveals an overuse of inappropriate worksheets in many subjects, where pupils merely have to fill in one or two words. This practice does not further their literacy skills.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have risen and attainment by the end of Year 6 is well above average.
- The quality of teaching in the Years 5/6 class is excellent.
- Individual target setting contributes significantly to the accelerated rise in standards.
- There has been underachievement in Years 1 and 2 in the past but this has now been resolved.
- The use of ICT is not yet fully embedded in mathematics in the infants.
- The accommodation for Years 1 and 2 pupils is cramped and restricts opportunities for practical mathematics.

Commentary

57. The number of pupils taking the national tests is small so the use of comparative information must be handled with care. The standards attained by seven-year-olds in national tests in 2004 were well below average compared with similar schools and below average compared with all schools nationally. The standards reached by eleven-year-olds in national tests in 2004 were very high when compared with similar schools and well above average when compared with all schools nationally.
58. During the inspection, the standards in lessons observed indicate that pupils in Year 2 make satisfactory progress and reach the expected average standards. In Year 6, pupils make excellent progress and reach standards that are well above average. In Years 3 and 4, pupils make good progress and reach standards that are above average. The scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that achievement in Years 3 to 6 is good. Pupils work assiduously and do their very best. However, achievement has been sluggish in Years 1 and 2 in the past. Achievement is accelerating now because the new teacher uses assessment effectively. She is well aware of pupils' individual needs and is beginning to plan work that challenges them more precisely.
59. The quality of teaching varies across the school. Overall it is good. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory, with strengths in planning and the provision of a positive and supportive ethos. However, the cramped accommodation makes implementing practical mathematical activities difficult. In Years 3 and 4, the quality of

teaching is very good with particular strengths in classroom organisation, the use of ICT and support for pupils with special educational needs. In Years 5 and 6, the quality of teaching is excellent.

Example of outstanding practice

In a Years 5/6 lesson of outstanding quality, pupils contribute very confidently and accurately when learning how to investigate number statements. The main aims of the lessons are made very clear to all pupils, as are the teacher's high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. Pupils' subsequent learning and high achievement are very impressive as they work 'flat out' to test the number statements, displaying excellent achievement in skilfully explaining how they have reached their conclusions. The commanding initial delivery by the teacher, the very brisk pace, the probing questioning to challenge and assess all pupils inspire all pupils to concentrate with avid interest and achieve to the highest level of which they are capable. The end of the lesson is used very well to explore and extend pupils' understanding of number statements in a very positive and encouraging manner.

60. Very good assessment systems are used very well to record achievement and progress, and plot further work for pupils. These practices add considerable momentum to teachers' planning. Pupils know their termly targets and are proud to show what has been already achieved and what they are focusing on now. Teachers' marking is very good, with helpful comments about how to improve. The way junior pupils present their work is very good indeed.
61. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. Monitoring of teaching and learning together with very good action planning are in place to secure further improvements. The co-ordinator leads by example with his own outstanding teaching. Good improvement has been made since the last inspection.
62. Resources are satisfactory and very well organised. All areas of the mathematics curriculum are evident in displays and pupils' exercise books. The school has given increased attention to using and applying mathematics, and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Although Years 3 and 4 pupils make very good use of computers in studying symmetry and older pupils make good use of calculators in checking a string of calculations, there are only limited opportunities for infant pupils to use their ICT skills in mathematics.

Mathematics across the curriculum

63. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to transfer their mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding to other subjects such as geography, science and design and technology. For example, pupils complete complex work about water flow when studying the features of the local stream, and record their findings clearly in charts and graphs. In design and technology, pupils make good use of their skills when measuring accurately in centimetres and millimetres. There are very frequent and good links between mathematics and literacy. Pupils engage in discussions and explanations confidently, making very good use of mathematical terms.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very enthusiastic about science and their attitudes are very good.

- Years 5/6 pupils' achievement is very good due to high quality teaching.
- Too little use is made of ICT in some classes to support and enrich the subject.
- Infant pupils use too many worksheets and have limited opportunities to experiment and investigate.

Commentary

64. Standards attained by the current Year 2 are average and well above average in Year 6. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in Year 2 and very good in Year 6. No significant difference is noted between the attainment of boys and girls. Years 5/6 pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their ability because of the good support they receive with carrying out experiments and recording their work. In the 2004 Year 2 teacher assessments all the pupils attained the expected Level 2, with just under a third of the pupils attaining the higher Level 3, representing satisfactory achievement. Their attainment was well below average in the experimenting and investigating aspect of science.
65. In the national tests in 2004, Year 6 pupils attained well above average results both nationally and when compared with the performance of pupils from similar schools. Year 6 pupils' science results improved dramatically in 2004 because of the high calibre of teaching provided by the new headteacher who has considerable scientific expertise. All eleven pupils attained the expected Level 4 and three-quarters of the pupils attained the higher Level 5, indicating very good achievement.
66. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good. Very good teaching makes learning objectives absolutely plain and sets a fast pace to reach them. Older pupils achieve very well and really enjoy their science lessons. They have very many opportunities to plan their own investigations and methods of recording, which they carry out very effectively. The teacher generates a strong sense of purpose and confidently communicates his own enthusiasm and knowledge so that pupils rise to his high expectations and persevere to achieve their very best work even when they find aspects of the work hard. 'We're here to think and use our brains' says the teacher who instils in the pupils a real zest to investigate and discover. Lessons are very interesting so pupils enjoy their work and are eager and very motivated to learn through investigations and first-hand activities. In sharp contrast, too much of the work provided for infant pupils does not allow them to investigate, discover and record for themselves. Their work is recorded by means of worksheets that are not sufficiently scientifically demanding and restrict pupils' literacy skills. The Years 5/6 teacher and pupils use ICT resources such as data loggers with confidence and accuracy but work scrutiny revealed that in other classes there are fewer links between ICT and science.
67. The co-ordinator leads and manages the subject very well. He has extensive expertise and enthusiasm and leads by example with his highly effective science teaching. He has implemented many successful changes to the science provision since September 2003 including a very good tracking system to monitor all pupils' attainment and achievement. In accordance with the school's determination to include all pupils in all aspects of its work, pupils are in the process of planning and setting up a wild life area within the school grounds to examine animal habitats. Good improvement has been made since the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has worked briskly to bring about substantial improvement since the time of the last inspection, when ICT was judged to be unsatisfactory.
- Resources have been expanded and are now very good.
- Very good strategic planning clearly maps out further improvement.
- The quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 is very good.
- Not enough use is yet made of ICT in some other subjects.

Commentary

68. Since the last inspection, when standards were judged to be unsatisfactory, the school has conducted a wholesale investigation into ICT through a rigorous cycle of monitoring, discussion, evaluation and assessment of needs. Insufficient evidence was available to judge pupils' achievement by the end of Year 2 whilst junior pupils achieve very well in lessons and standards are above average at the end of Year 6. A comprehensive action plan is in place that includes prioritised targets for further improvement. The headteacher, the co-ordinator and governors share a determination to drive up standards in teaching and learning further still.
69. No teaching was observed in Years 1 and 2. Judgements are derived from looking at pupils' work and the teacher's planning. These indicate that standards are probably average. However, between Years 3 and 6, standards in ICT lessons are above average. The quality of teaching is very good. Pupils in the junior classes achieve very well and make very good progress. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection.
70. Teachers in the junior classes make very good use of an interactive whiteboard and the computer suite. Pupils enjoy their regular ICT lessons there and present very positive attitudes, with excellent behaviour. Resources are handled with care. Pupils concentrate very hard and are eager to learn because teachers make their tasks interesting and challenging. For instance, pupils in Years 3 and 4 have to think very hard when moving squares and triangles to construct mirror images that become increasingly more difficult. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 use their powers of observation and critical evaluation very well when considering what features make websites successful. Very good use is made of a good range of peripherals such as a digital camera, roamer robot, a sensory thermometer and a data logger. These enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding of the power of this technology in the world around them. However, the use of ICT is not yet fully embedded in other subjects such as geography, science and religious education. The school is aware of this and has already included this as a priority in its very good forward planning.
71. In accordance with the school's strong stance on educational inclusion, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have full access to ICT. For example, a pupil with special needs, and a more able pupil, confidently and with obvious enjoyment described how to use a data logger when investigating which room is the lightest or noisiest in the school.
72. The leadership of the subject is currently satisfactory because the co-ordinator is new to his responsibilities. He has considerable knowledge and skill in the subject and

works closely with the headteacher in promoting the profile of ICT in the school and community. For example, the 'Parkham Post,' a half termly newspaper about the school and other events, is distributed widely throughout the village. The school's lively website is informative and entertaining. The very good leadership of the school deploys staff to make the most effective use of their skills. For example, the co-ordinator is released from his own class to teach Foundation Stage children and pupils in Years 1 and 2 for one session a week. Good improvement has been made to the ICT provision and curriculum since the last inspection.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

73. Satisfactory use is made of ICT in other subjects. Although pupils in the junior classes use their ICT skills well in mathematics and science lessons, there were few examples of ICT being used in other subjects of the curriculum. For instance, no examples were seen of pupils using the Internet to research religious education topics. This is an area already identified by the school as being in need of development. There were very few examples of infant pupils using their ICT skills to record their work, which restricts their attainment and achievement.

HUMANITIES

History and geography

74. These subjects were sampled because no lessons were seen in either subject and there was insufficient evidence to make a judgment about provision overall. Pupils' work in both subjects in exercise books and on display was analysed. Standards in history and geography by the ages of seven and eleven are in line with national expectations and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Coverage of the curriculum in each subject is satisfactory, although work sampling revealed that insufficient use is made of infant pupils' literacy skills and ICT in both subjects in all the classes. Very good use is made of the local environment in history and geography and older pupils have enjoyed successful field trips.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are not enough chances for infant pupils to use their own words when writing about events.
- There are good links with art and design.
- Insufficient use is made of ICT in religious education lessons.
- Good use is made of the local church and clergy.

Commentary

75. Attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is in line with that expected in the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory throughout the school. Years 1 and 2 pupils learn about celebrations in different world faiths. For instance, they have made attractive clay divas whilst studying the Hindu Festival of Light. Year 3 to Year 6

pupils successfully explore the Creation story and consider how artists retell the Christmas story in film, paintings and books.

76. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in the Years 1/2 class. Infant pupils learn about the special clothes worn by the local vicar. They confidently ask questions such as 'Where did you buy your clothes?' and begin to understand the significance of clothes for specific occupations. All Years 1 and 2 pupils complete the same drawing activity after this discussion which restricts higher attaining pupils' achievement and does not extend pupils' writing skills. Years 5/6 pupils achieve well in religious education lessons once their interest is engaged. They enjoy learning about Hindu deities and display excellent attitudes when listening to an over-long introduction. No ICT was used in this lesson, and very little use of the Internet to research religious education topics was evident. A scrutiny of pupils' work in religious education indicates an overuse of worksheets in the infants, which restricts pupils' literacy skills.
77. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership and management. She has a clear vision of strengths and areas to improve. The constraints of a small school and being part time make monitoring of religious education teaching and learning difficult. Good use is made of the local Church and nearby Synagogue to extend pupils' knowledge of places of worship. Satisfactory improvement has been made since the last inspection.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design

78. During the inspection, only one lesson was seen. Evidence has been gathered from displays, pupils' sketchbooks and portfolios, teachers' planning and work in pupils' books. These indicate that standards are above expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards at the end of Year 2 were judged to be average.
79. The standard of teaching in the lesson seen was very good. The teacher, who is also the subject co-ordinator, has very good knowledge of her subject and is confident. She uses resources well and sets work that is both exciting and challenging. Pupils achieve well and make very good progress because they are very motivated and have a clear idea of what to do. Pupils with special educational needs persevere, and willingly and voluntarily modify their work. For instance, a pupil decided to begin a portrait all over again because he was not satisfied with his first attempt.
80. Displays and work in sketchbooks indicate that above average standards are being reached and good progress is being achieved in a wide range of media including paint, pastel, ink, watercolour and fabric. Very good opportunities for pupils' personal and social development are provided in working together on large-scale mosaic murals. Good links with other subjects such as literacy, music and ICT are made when pupils work together on projects such as 'The Firebird'. Resources are well organised and sufficient. The accommodation is satisfactory overall, although in the classroom for Foundation Stage children and Years 1 and 2 pupils there is not much space, and work is restricted to table-top areas.

Design and technology

81. Only one lesson in design and technology was observed during the inspection. Evidence has been gathered from displays and looking at teachers' and pupils' planning. Standards are in

line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. In the lesson seen, Years 3 and 4 pupils make satisfactory progress in recognising the movement of a mechanism. They are refining their skills in correctly labelling the parts of a design, for instance 'drive handle' and 'main shaft'. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress because they are supported effectively by the teacher and the teaching assistant. Although the lesson began well, with good use of attractive resources to focus pupils' attention and engage their interest, the overall quality of teaching was satisfactory. This is because the lesson pace slackened and the activity was not demanding for higher attaining pupils who could have achieved more in the time given. The school has a good, innovative approach to the curriculum for design and technology. For example, everyone spent a day studying how bridges are built and what makes them strong before designing and making their own. The resulting work is of a good standard. Pupils plan their work, investigate and construct bridges following their plans, and evaluate their results. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged to be unsatisfactory. Resources are satisfactory and well organised. The accommodation in the Foundation Stage/Years 1/2 class is cramped, which restricts opportunities for practical activities.

Music

82. During the inspection it was not possible to observe any complete lessons in music. Years 1 and 2 pupils have satisfactory opportunities to use untuned percussion instruments and are beginning to gain a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the musical element of pulse or beat. Unaccompanied singing in assemblies is lively and tuneful. There are limited opportunities for pupils to develop their listening skills and their appreciation of the music of other times and cultures as music is not played in assemblies or on other occasions to create atmosphere or stimulate interest. However, a good example of the way the school has used music well is shown in a display illustrating Years 5/6 pupils' work in English, art and design and ICT, inspired by the folk tale and Stravinsky's music for 'The Firebird'.

Physical education

83. No physical education lessons were observed during the inspection, so it is not possible to make secure judgements about provision. However, it is clear that the school works hard to overcome the limitations of its accommodation and the lack of a grassed area for sport by using the nearby village hall and the local recreation ground. From looking at planning and discussions with staff and pupils it is evident that all strands are taught during the school year. Planning has improved considerably over the last 12 months with the support of the Devon Sport's Programme. Standards in swimming are good and the school sets a high priority on teaching all pupils to swim because of its close proximity to the coast. The whole school is taken swimming for one term each year in order to attain this important life skill.
84. There are good opportunities for pupils to enrich their experience through a wide selection of extra-curricular activities, ranging from football to netball. The school is developing a successful profile in local competitive sports tournaments. Physical education makes a very positive contribution to pupils' personal and social education. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and management as he is very enthusiastic and skilfully conveys this enthusiasm to all pupils. For instance, he has introduced and supervises 'Active Playtimes' whereby older juniors are developing their roles as monitors to lead groups of younger pupils in physical education activities at lunchtimes. Good improvement has been made to the physical education curriculum since the last inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHE)

85. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection and so it is not possible to make an overall judgement on the quality of provision. However, it is evident from this excellent lesson taught by the headteacher that the school places considerable emphasis on developing pupils' personal development. It is extremely good at making the most of pupils' social and personal skills. Throughout the school there are frequent opportunities for pupils to grow in confidence, to be motivated in their learning and to succeed in all they do. During the school day, there are many opportunities for pupils to take responsibility, which they do with great eagerness, helping out in their own classes and with assemblies, wet playtimes and lunchtimes. Years 5/6 pupils produce the school newspaper 'The Parkham Post' which enables all pupils and parents to discover more about school events and to celebrate pupils' academic and personal achievements.
86. The provision for pupils' personal development is very good and the consequences are that the pupils respect each other and play and work together in harmony. Older pupils enjoy supporting the reception children, helping them to settle happily and confidently into school. The headteacher has introduced playground 'mentors' who ensure that playtimes are happy and harmonious and that no pupil is lonely. The school council, and class councils in the junior classes, ensures that all pupils have a say in running the school. For instance, the pupils were asked how they would like the outdoor area to be developed. They requested a tunnel and a quiet area to sit and read – both of which were incorporated into the impressive outdoor garden area. Pupils were also very enthusiastic when asked to suggest fund-raising activities for the children left homeless after the tsunami wave in the Far East. There is a good programme for PSHE, and drugs and sex and relationships education are firmly in place. The outcomes of the provision are positive, as seen in pupils' very good attitudes and excellent relationships. These are very positive features in helping to raise attainment and achievement.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement	Grade
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	2
Attendance	4
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	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	1
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	3
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	3

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