

INSPECTION REPORT

SANDFORD SCHOOL

Crediton

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113107

Headteacher: Mr Wilson Forster

Lead inspector: Mr Jeffery Plumb

Dates of inspection: 7th – 10th February 2005

Inspection number: 267626

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:	172
School address:	Sandford Crediton Devon
Postcode:	EX17 4NE
Telephone number:	01363 772256
Fax number:	01363 777817
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Ms Christine Ridgewell
Date of previous inspection:	15 th March 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is a smaller than average village primary school for children aged four to 11 years. Over a third of the pupils live outside the village. There are 172 pupils on roll, including 26 Foundation Stage children. There are few minority ethnic pupils. The proportion of pupils who have English as an additional language is a little higher than the national average. None is at an early stage of learning to speak English. The number of pupils who join and leave the school other than at the normal time is above the Devon average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, at 6 per cent, is below the national average. The social and economic circumstances of the pupils are above average. Attainment on entry is average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, including those with a Statement of Special Educational Need, is average. The school is part of the '*Crediton Learning Community*'.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
16930	Jeffery Plumb	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education Religious education English as an additional language
9614	Carolyn Webb	Lay inspector	
22254	Hazel Callaghan	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Music Foundation Stage
16038	Jill Bavin	Team inspector	Science Geography History Personal, social and health education and citizenship Special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

Altecq Inspections Limited
102 Bath Road
Cheltenham
GL53 7JX

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **very good** school. Attainment on entry is average. Achievement is very good. Teaching is very good. The headteacher and deputy provide very good leadership. Leadership and management are very good. The school gives very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The clarity of vision, sense of purpose and high aspirations of the headteacher are excellent.
- All pupils are valued and fully included in a flexible and innovative curriculum.
- Achievement in English, mathematics and science is very good.
- The monitoring of performance data and action taken to raise achievement is excellent.
- The links with the community are excellent.
- Standards are not high enough in religious education.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are very good.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The modelling skills of pupils in Year 6 in information and communication technology are not sufficiently secure.

Improvement since the last inspection is very good. All of the issues identified have been addressed successfully. Standards and the quality of teaching and learning are better than they were then.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

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

Achievement is **very good** throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs and those identified as gifted and talented achieve very well. Minority ethnic pupils, including those with English as an additional language, achieve very well.

Test results in 2004 for Year 6 pupils show that attainment was well above the national average in English, very high in mathematics and above average in science. Compared with similar schools (as determined by prior attainment), standards attained were above in English, well above in mathematics and below in science.

Results in tests for Year 2 pupils show attainment in reading and mathematics was well above the national average and in writing above the national average. Compared with similar schools (determined by the number of pupils eligible for free school meals), reading

was well above average, mathematics was above average and writing was in line with the average. Standards have risen since 2002 and the gap between boys' and girls' achievement in writing has narrowed very significantly. Teacher assessments in science in 2004 showed attainment was in line with the national average but below average when compared with similar schools.

Inspection findings show standards attained in speaking and listening and reading by Year 2 are well above average and above average in writing. By Year 6 standards are well above average in English, with reading significantly better than writing. In mathematics and science, attainment is above average by Year 2 and well above average by Year 6. Improved standards in science reflect what the school has done to raise achievement in the subject. The difference between standards in the mathematics tests and standards seen reflects the greater numbers of pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 2 and Year 6 groups. Attainment in ICT, except for modelling skills in Year 6, is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. In religious education standards meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of both key stages.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good** overall. Their spiritual and cultural development is good, but more could be done to raise their awareness of cultural diversity. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their work and their behaviour is very good. Attendance is very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a **very good** quality of education. Teaching is **very good** and a significant proportion is excellent. However, not all teachers are confident in teaching religious education. Assessment is very good. The curriculum is very good. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory, but more equipment is required to improve teaching in ICT. The school provides a very good level of support, advice and guidance for pupils and effectively ensures their care, welfare, health and safety. The school has very good systems for seeking the views of pupils. Links with parents and other schools are very good. Community links are excellent.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good** overall. The monitoring of teaching and learning is a significant strength as is the management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs. The headteacher works very effectively with the deputy and together they provide very good leadership based on an excellent vision that all pupils will achieve their very best. Governance is very effective. Statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very pleased with the quality of education and care provided for their children. They consider that the school is extremely well led. Pupils enjoy coming to school, find their lessons challenging and fun. They like their teachers. Inspectors agree with the very positive views of both parents and pupils.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise attainment in religious education by improving teachers' confidence and skills in teaching the subject;
- improve pupils' modelling skills in ICT by ensuring that there are sufficient resources available to teachers and that they are confident in using the resources.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Achievement is **very good** in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development in the Foundation Stage. In the other areas of learning where sufficient evidence could be gathered achievement is good. Achievement is **very good** throughout Years 1 to 6. By Year 6, standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is very good in English, mathematics and science.
- By Year 6 pupils' knowledge and understanding that world faiths other than Christianity are celebrated in Great Britain are not secure.
- Pupils have weak modelling skills in ICT in Year 6
- The achievement of pupils with special educational needs, those who speak English as an additional language and those identified as gifted and talented is very good.

Commentary

1. Standards have improved in English, mathematics and science since the last inspection. The trend (comparison with national averages over time) in Key Stage 1 has been in line with the national trend but in Key Stage 2 it has been above. Achievement of pupils with special educational needs is very good because teachers and teaching assistants use the specific targets on their individual education plans very effectively when working with them and because they know pupils' needs so well they are able to challenge them to improve their work. Very good strategies to support pupils who are gifted and talented ensure that they succeed and achieve very well. Those pupils with English as an additional language achieve very well and are amongst the highest attainers in the school. There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls.

Foundation Stage

2. Attainment on entry is similar to that found nationally although there are fluctuations from year to year. Achievement in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development is very good and the majority of children are on target to reach the Early Learning Goals in these areas of learning. Achievement in personal, social and emotional development and knowledge and understanding of the world is good. Insufficient evidence was gathered to make a secure judgement on achievement in the other areas of learning.

Key Stage 1

3. Based on the 2004 national tests for Year 2, pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics was well above the national average and in writing above the national average. Compared with similar schools, reading was well above average, mathematics was above average and writing was in line with the average. Standards have risen since 2002 and the gap between boys' and girls' achievement in writing has narrowed very significantly. Teacher assessments in science in 2004 showed attainment was in line with the national average, but below average when compared with similar schools.

4. Inspection findings indicate that attainment is well above average in speaking, listening and reading and above average in writing by Year 2. In mathematics attainment is above average and the difference between this finding and the test results can be explained by the fact that there are more pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 2 group. In science standards are above average and this very significant improvement on the test results in 2004 reflects the success of the action plan put in place to raise achievement in science. Achievement is very good in all three subjects.
5. In ICT, pupils' achievement is good and by Year 2 they attain the nationally expected level. Standards in religious education meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Achievement in religious education is satisfactory. Insufficient evidence is available to make secure achievement and attainment judgements in the other subjects.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.8 (16.2)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.6 (14.5)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.7 (16.6)	16.2 (16.3)

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

Key Stage 2

6. On the basis of the 2004 national tests for Year 6, pupils' attainment was well above average in English, very high in mathematics (in the top 5 per cent of schools) and above average in science. Compared with similar schools (this is progress since Year 2), attainment was above average in English, well above average in mathematics and marginally below average in science. Standards attained by the current Year 6 pupils are well above average in English (although reading is much better than writing), mathematics and science. Achievement is very good in all three subjects. Standards in science are better than the test results because of the action taken by the school to raise achievement. In mathematics the difference is because there are a few pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 6 group and this was not the case last academic year. In ICT standards are average and achievement is good. In aspects of ICT such as control technology and PowerPoint media presentations attainment is close to being above average but attainment overall is brought down by the lack of pupils confidence in modeling skills.. There is an action plan to address this deficiency. Standards in religious education meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and achievement is satisfactory. However, the knowledge and understanding of Year 6 pupils are muddled and not as good as they should be, given their ability.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.2 (30.5)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	30.4 (30.5)	27.0 (26.8)

science	29.4 (31.6)	28.6 (28.6)
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There were 25 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **very good**. Other aspects of pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are **very good** overall. Attendance and punctuality are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very interested and involved in all aspects of school life.
- Their initiative, desire to learn and to take responsibility are exceptional.
- The school promotes very good relationships.
- Pupils respond very well to the school's extremely high expectations for their behaviour.
- Pupils' social and moral development is very good.
- Strategies to promote pupils' awareness of the ethnic diversity within our society are not sufficiently well developed.
- Attendance is well above the national average.

Commentary

7. Pupils' attitudes throughout the school continue to be very good as at the time of the last inspection. Children in the Foundation Stage settle quickly into class and school routines and show very good attitudes to their work and to each other. Their confidence and self-esteem are nurtured by the consistently positive response of all adults so they ask for help when they need it and respond appropriately to directions and questions. They work and play together collaboratively and show interest in each other's activities. Older pupils are often eager to come to school and show high levels of concentration and perseverance in their lessons. Pupils with special educational needs share the same very positive attitudes to school as their peers.
8. The school stimulates in pupils a desire to learn and the vast majority of pupils readily participate in the life of the school and the range of activities outside the classroom. Pupils are keen to take on responsibility which they carry out reliably. Members of the school council take their responsibilities very seriously. Pupils are quick to take the initiative as exemplified by one group of girls who have started their own dance club. They organise and manage this club by themselves. Pupils are fully involved in the school's regular fund raising events for charities.
9. Relationships throughout the school are very good. Pupils show great care for each other. Strong friendships between pupils of different ages that develop as part of the shared reading scheme are evident at playtimes as older pupils often look after younger children. Pupils and parents feel that pupils are caring towards each other and respect each other's ideas. They work and play together very harmoniously.
10. The school sets very high expectations for pupils' behaviour to which they respond very well. Their behaviour is very good. Pupils move around the school sensibly and have good and trusting relationships with each other and with adults, both at work and at play. Pupils who were interviewed expressed very positive views about all aspects of the school. There was no evidence of oppressive behaviour. There have been no exclusions for many years.

11. Provision for pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development continues to be very good overall. The provision for pupils' spiritual awareness is good and promoted through religious education, school assemblies, art and music. The recently revised personal, social and health education curriculum provides very good opportunities for pupils to discuss and reflect on a range of moral and social issues. The range of educational visits and visitors and the wide range of activities outside the classroom also encourage pupils to develop socially and morally, as well as contributing to their achievement and personal development.
12. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good, but strategies to promote pupils' awareness of the ethnic diversity within our society are not sufficiently well developed. Pupils are provided with many various opportunities to extend their awareness of different cultures, especially through art and design, music, religious education and geography. In religious education, they develop satisfactory knowledge of different religious and festivals from around the world. Their own experiences are of a community made up mainly of white British families and they are not sufficiently aware that there is a huge diversity of races with different religions and cultural backgrounds in England.
13. Pupils like their school and arrive very promptly in the mornings. The school's procedures to promote and monitor attendance are satisfactory. The school does not always make first day absence telephone calls to parents when no reason has been received. The education welfare officer visits regularly and is appropriately involved when necessary.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.0	School data:	0.2
National data:	5.1	National data:	0.2

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **very good** quality of education. Teaching and learning are **very good**. The curriculum is **very good** and the school provides a **good** range of enrichment opportunities. The school **effectively** ensures the pupils' care, welfare, health and safety and provides **very good** levels of support, advice and guidance. The school has **very good** systems for seeking the views of pupils. Links with parents and other schools are **very good**. Links with the local community are **excellent**.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is **very good** with a significant amount that is excellent. Assessment is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A significant proportion of the teaching is excellent because it is interesting and exciting and so makes learning fun and enjoyable for pupils.

- Hands-on experience and the very effective use of visual cues in the teaching enable pupils with special educational needs to achieve very well.
- Assessment data is used very effectively to set targets for each pupil and so raise achievement for all.
- Some teachers lack confidence in their teaching of religious education.

Commentary

14. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. A significant proportion of the teaching is excellent. This is a very significant improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. Teaching and learning are very good in the Foundation Stage. The teaching of English, mathematics, science and personal, social and health education and citizenship is very good. The good teaching in ICT is impeded by the small size of the computer suite. This deficiency is being addressed by the school. Lack of confidence on the part of some teachers prevents the teaching of religious education from being as good as it could be – nonetheless, it is satisfactory.
15. The best teaching is characterised by excellent subject knowledge, cracking pace, a range of exciting and challenging activities and very effective use of questions to extend pupils' thinking. These qualities are seen in all classes and so pupils achieve very well in lessons. Behaviour is managed skilfully and because relationships between teachers and pupils are very good pupils, including those with special educational needs, are not afraid to take risks in a learning environment where they feel safe. This leads to rapid gains in their learning and confidence as seen in a very good Year 6 mathematics lesson. Teachers' recently gained confidence in the use of interactive whiteboards has very significantly improved the quality of teaching and led to pupils being more interested in their learning, as observed in an excellent Year 2 mathematics lesson on shape. Achievement in this lesson was excellent.
16. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is successful because the skilful support given by teachers enables them to be included in all activities in lessons. Specific learning programmes are designed on a '*needs-led*' basis for individual pupils. Out of respect for these pupils, whilst this strategy is very successful, teachers are flexible enough to abandon it as a matter of dignity when pupils can access the learning objectives for the class without using it. Teachers and teaching assistants know the '*individual quirks*' of these pupils and very successfully meet their needs. The specific targets on individual education plans are used very effectively to support the learning for these pupils. There are challenging activities in lessons for pupils identified as gifted and talented and so they achieve very well. All pupils with English as an additional language have no difficulty in accessing their learning using the English language and they achieve very well.
17. Assessment is very good and has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Assessment in English and mathematics is used very effectively to set specific targets for individual pupils. Their progress is then meticulously tracked and any concerns identified are nipped in the bud early. Teachers know where pupils' strengths and weaknesses lie and use the information well when planning their teaching. Because assessment is used so effectively to set targets for individual pupils and to measure their progress against these targets, it makes a valuable contribution to their very good achievement.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 24 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
4 (17 %)	10 (42 %)	7 (29 %)	3 (12 %)	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.

The curriculum

The breadth of curricular opportunities is **very good**. **Good** opportunities are provided for enrichment of the curriculum. Accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is innovative and flexible, responding very well to pupils' learning needs.
- The curriculum is enhanced by a good range of additional activities.
- Pupils of all abilities are supported and challenged so they make very good progress.
- Staff provide a wide range of expertise that is used well to extend pupils' knowledge, skills and experiences.
- There is a very good range of additional sporting and music activities.
- Pupils are prepared very well for the next stage of learning.

Commentary

18. The curriculum is broad and well balanced and fully meets statutory requirements. The school provides a daily act of collective worship of a mainly Christian nature and the religious education curriculum fully meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The curriculum effectively responds to pupils' learning needs and provides very well for their personal, social and health education with an appropriate focus on sex and relationships education and knowledge of the use and misuse of drugs. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is very good and meets the needs of children well. It is well planned and enables children to achieve very well in their communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Stimulating activities promote children's interest and curiosity and promote their independence well.
19. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is very good and matched to pupils' learning needs. Teachers have clear guidelines which set out the range of knowledge and skills that are to be taught, linked clearly to National Curriculum levels. This is an improvement on the curriculum planning seen at the previous inspection. From this secure basis teachers have used their good knowledge of the curriculum and developed flexible methods of teaching that suit the pupils' different learning styles. English and mathematics are taught regularly, usually every day to classes of pupils in the same age group. This enables teachers to be more focused in their teaching, building successfully on pupils' prior learning. The afternoons are more varied with extended lessons providing additional time to explore thoroughly and consolidate new skills and knowledge in subjects such as science, physical education and art and design. Many subjects are taught in blocks of time so pupils' skills are more effectively developed. In a few cases, a whole day is taken to complete one activity, such as the designing and making of jam tarts in design and technology. The balance in pupils' learning is secured by careful planning of other subjects. The overlying focus on developing pupils' creativity is strong in the curricular planning and in many lessons.

20. The basic curriculum is enhanced by a good range of additional activities that promotes pupils' interest further. Visits to many local places of interest and visitors to the school extend pupils' knowledge and experiences. Weeks that focus on one area of study, such as art and design or science, also enhance pupils' knowledge and skills. They become absorbed in learning new skills, often supported by additional adults from the local community.
21. Pupils of all abilities are supported and challenged so they make very good progress. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Pupils who are underachieving are also identified and additional support is provided in the areas of concern so that their understanding is consolidated. Pupils who are identified as gifted and talented are very well supported and further challenged. For example, those who are gifted and talented in English and mathematics are provided with a modified curriculum that challenges their knowledge and further extends their skills. Pupils with special skills in sport and art and design are given opportunities to attend special courses and work with pupils with similar talents.
22. Staff provide a wide range of expertise that is used well to extend pupils' knowledge, skills and experiences. Teachers are encouraged to lead the teaching of subjects that are of a particular interest to them. The school has also allocated additional funds to the employment of many specialist teachers so that pupils' knowledge and skills in sport, music, dance and drama are effectively extended. Sandford School works in close collaboration with other schools in the Crediton Learning Community and they share the expertise of a specialist teacher for information and communication technology who works closely with staff and pupils to develop their knowledge and skills.
23. Specialist teachers for sport also give their time to lead the school's very good range of sporting extra-curricular activities. Pupils join other schools for competitive sports as well as participating in club activities. Instrumental tuition is also offered for an extensive number of instruments. Many pupils in Years 3 to 6 attend these sessions regularly, extending their learning from lessons. The range of other extra-curricular activities is narrow, with little provided for pupils interested in creative or intellectual pursuits.
24. Pupils are prepared very well for the next stage of learning. The very effective links between the Foundation Stage and Year 1 ensure that children are enabled to develop successfully, with an extended early years' curriculum that is particularly important for children who have only attended for two terms in the reception class. Pupils in Year 6 are also prepared very well for transition to their next stages of education by their high academic standards and the regular links with the secondary schools. There are links between Years 6 and 7 in terms of curricular activity and pupils frequently visit the secondary school. In addition, teachers from the secondary school come into the school to teach French, design and technology and science to Years 5 and 6 on a regular basis.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes **good** provision for the care, welfare, health and safety of all. All pupils receive **very good** support, advice and guidance. Procedures for consulting pupils are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good relationships are evident throughout the school.
- The school does not fully comply with recent child protection legislation.
- The quality of support for all pupils, whatever their difficulty, is very good in this all-inclusive school.

Commentary

25. The health, safety and welfare of the whole school community are high priorities for staff and governors. Regular risk assessments and security reviews are carried out and the security cameras are a good deterrent against 'nuisance' vandalism. First aid by trained staff is practised well and child protection procedures are well known, but all governors need training and one governor given responsibility in order to comply with recent legislation.
26. As a result of very good relationships between pupils and with adults, all pupils have someone in whom they can confide, knowing that their concerns will be resolved. Pupils help each other and Year 5/Year 1 pairing is a positive example of this. Pupils know the school listens to their views. At regular school council meetings, representatives, democratically elected by pupils from Year 3 upwards, discuss matters raised by their peers. Disappointed that school meals have not really improved since they spoke with the contractor, they are to raise this issue again.
27. The school is an inclusive community and all pupils, whatever their difficulty or problem, are very well supported by teaching staff and their peers. Pupils understand their individual targets for literacy and numeracy, written on cards or in progress books, and the whole school has 'ladders' to climb. Pupils know how they can improve their work through useful comments made by teaching staff in lessons and on their written work, but the targets contained in their annual reports do not always give sufficiently clear indications of how or where they could do better. Pupils who have special educational needs are involved in the setting and review of their targets in their individual education plans, as are their parents.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents are **very good** and the partnership with the local community is **excellent**. Links with other schools and colleges are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very supportive.
- The school is at the heart of the local community and a focal point for local residents.

Commentary

28. The school has maintained its very strong partnership with parents reported at the time of the last inspection. Parents value the education their children receive. Their attendance at consultation meetings is very good, although the last governors' annual general meeting was cancelled through lack of interest. Parents are kept well informed through their children's annual reports about their children's progress and what they need to do to support them with their school work. Parents of children with special education needs attend the reviews of their children's individual education plans and are involved in target setting.

29. The parent teacher association organises fun and very successful fund-raising events which families and local residents enjoy. So great is local community interest and support that taxis are booked to ensure elderly members can attend the Strawberry Fair, held on the top field. Children enjoy reading with 'grannies' as well as parents and hearing about a grandfather's experiences during World War II. Parents benefited from working alongside their children during recent school workshops and all parents whose children attend the Sunflowers Out of School Club are very pleased with this.
30. The headteacher's involvement in local education and other pilot schemes and initiatives, such as the Effective Partnership with Parents Project and the Healthy Eating and Lifestyle project, ensures that the school community benefits from everything 'on offer' – his success in this area is an excellent example of what can be achieved. Links and liaison with pre-schools, other primary schools and the local secondary school are enriched as a result and are now very good. Currently French, design and technology and science are the only cross-phase curriculum units and these enhance the transfer arrangements for pupils, who have no fears about the next step in their education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good**. The headteacher, in a very effective partnership with the deputy, provides **very good** leadership. Management is **very good**. Governance is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher and deputy provide an excellent vision which focuses on the inclusion of every child in an exciting curriculum.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning is very good and contributes to very good achievement.
- The analysis of performance data and its use to inform planning to raise achievement is excellent.
- The leadership and management of special educational needs are very good.
- Strategic planning is very good.
- Creative thinking is going on in respect of workforce remodelling to ensure that teaching assistants become fully included in the performance management cycle.

Commentary

31. The headteacher and deputy provide very good leadership. They are supported by very able staff. The leadership of the Foundation Stage is very good and contributes to children's very good achievement in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Very good leadership of the core subjects of English, mathematics and science contributes to the very good achievement pupils make in all three subjects. The headteacher has an excellent and clear vision for the school which focuses on the highest achievement for every pupil. The inclusion of 'every child' in a very rich and exciting curriculum lies at the heart of the success of this school. The headteacher keeps a watchful eye on the national agenda and is currently giving careful consideration to the workforce reform agenda, so that the model developed empowers teaching assistants within the school. Morale amongst the staff is excellent. All staff gel as a very effective team and so the school is very successful in meeting its aims.

32. Management is very good. The monitoring of performance data and taking action to raise achievement is excellent. Following disappointing test results in science for 11-year-olds in 2004, the co-ordinator has analysed the results and shaped a robust action plan to raise standards. As a result standards in science are now well above expectations in Year 6. The monitoring of teaching and learning is very good and results in the best practice being shared across the school. Monitoring systems are significantly better than at the time of the previous inspection and so there has been a very good improvement in management since then. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very well managed. Great emphasis is placed upon including all pupils equally in all activities and the school is very successful at this, consequently pupils with special educational needs achieve very well. Successful management of personal, social and health education and citizenship has contributed to pupils being very independent and confident learners.
33. The school improvement plan is a very effective management tool and so makes a very valuable contribution to school improvement. The priorities on the plan focus on improving the quality of education for all children and on raising the achievement for all. Financial planning is very good and careful consideration is given to spending decisions in order to be effective and efficient. Financial control is excellent. The protocols for best value are good.
34. The governors have a very good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses in the school. They know what is going well and what is in need of improvement. They visit the school regularly and their visits are focused and purposeful. They provide very good challenge and support for the headteacher and the staff in their role as the *'critical friend'*. They are fully involved in decision making, ask penetrating questions and are involved in setting the budget. They bring a wealth of skills and expertise which they use to very good effect in supporting the headteacher to manage the school very effectively. Their interest and involvement in areas of the curriculum are appreciated by the subject co-ordinators, who feel very well supported by the governors. All statutory responsibilities are met.
35. Performance management is very good. The model is being reviewed within the context of workforce reform so that it meets the needs of support staff as well as teachers. Continuing professional development is inclusive of support staff and teachers and makes a very valuable contribution to raising achievement. Staff are trained to be used flexibly and imaginatively and this makes a very valuable contribution to the very good and exciting curriculum offered to pupils and to their very good achievement.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	465,332
Total expenditure	454,770
Expenditure per pupil	2,772.99

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	8,388
Balance carried forward to next year	18,950

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **very good**.

36. Children are admitted into the school in the year they become five, either in September or in January. They attend part-time for the first week so that they settle into school routines smoothly. At the time of the inspection half of the class had only been in school for four weeks. Attainment on entry to the school is similar to that found nationally, although there are fluctuations from year to year. By the time children enter Year 1 most are attaining the standards expected nationally in the Early Learning Goals and many children, especially those in the older group who have attended for the full year, are working within the National Curriculum levels in reading, writing and mathematics. This is good achievement for children of all ages and abilities and is due to the very good teaching they receive, especially in the areas of communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Improvement since the last inspection is good.
37. Lessons are very well structured and have a good balance of teacher-focused tasks and effective opportunities for children's self-directed learning through play. Activities are thoroughly planned so that all children have good opportunities to work with an adult on tasks that are very effectively matched to their abilities and needs. The free choice activities are carefully selected and very well organised, building on learning in whole class lessons. They promote children's very good learning across the recommended six areas of learning for these young children. The teaching assistants are well trained, fully involved in lesson planning and the assessment of children's learning. They work with the teacher as a strong team that provides consistently good and very good teaching based on a clear understanding of how children of this age learn. Children's work and progress are successfully monitored using thorough strategies that build effectively into the Foundation Stage profile. Knowledge of children's learning is used very well to adapt questions and expectations to children's abilities so that they are supported and challenged.
38. The very good pastoral care given to pupils is evident in the Foundation Stage. The teacher lays the foundations of good communication by visiting children's homes before they start school so parents are able to share any concerns about their child's health or early development. Very effective communication with parents and the play groups ensures that the school is aware of any issues that might affect how children settle in school and their learning. Good support is provided for children with special educational needs and guidance from outside agencies is quickly obtained if specific support is required.
39. Parents are welcomed into the reception class each morning and this significantly supports children's early days in school. Opportunities are made for parents and staff to share information and concerns, ensuring good levels of communication and support. Parents' very good relationships with staff are evident. The teacher has also developed strong links with the local play group. They have worked together exploring issues on planning and teaching so that children's learning progresses effectively.

40. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are very good. The class teacher has developed a strong team that works very well together to promote children's learning very well. Very good links with the local play group and nursery ensure the smooth transition from pre-school provision into the reception class. Similar strong links have been forged with the Year 1 teacher so that the Foundation Stage curriculum continues to be a significant part of the pupils' experiences. This is particularly important for the development of children who have had only two terms in the reception class.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children develop well in a sensitive and supportive environment.
- Very good relationships between children and adults create an atmosphere of effective learning.
- Planning is good.

Commentary

41. This area of learning receives a high profile when children start in school and they achieve well. They make good progress and by the time they start in Year 1 all children have reached the Early Learning Goals. They organise themselves effectively and co-operate with each other sensibly. Children are already developing good levels of independence as they choose their own activities and select the resources they need. This is due to good teaching, very good relationships and a well planned and ordered environment in which children quickly settle and feel secure. Older children act as good role models for new children in the class, who quickly recognise and follow class and school routines. Children show very good levels of interest and concentrate well on their tasks. They take turns being monitors, leading the class to the hall and taking the register to the office very sensibly. Behaviour is usually very good. The youngest children who find difficulty in sitting quietly, especially in whole class sessions, are supported satisfactorily and encouraged to co-operate and listen. Children with special educational needs are given individual attention so that their identified needs are well met. A very good range of free choice activities is very effectively organised and monitored to ensure children have time to revisit old favourites and to meet new experiences. This leads to a strong desire to find out and learn. Paired reading sessions with pupils in Year 5 are a regular feature of children's learning that enhances their personal and social skills very well.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All children achieve very well.
- Writing is taught exceptionally well.
- Every opportunity is seized upon to enhance children's communication skills.

Commentary

42. In all activities there are very good opportunities for the children to develop their language skills. All children achieve very well and the majority attain the expected standard by the time they start in Year 1, with many already working within the National Curriculum levels, especially in speaking and reading. Standards in writing of children in the older group are already above average, with more able children writing their own ideas using word banks and understanding of initial letter sounds to support them. Children who have recently started school are already writing their own names and most are making marks in their free writing. Very good focused support is given to help the children improve the way they form letters and the shared writing in literacy lessons is taught very well so more able children are totally engrossed in learning. Opportunities for writing in their play activities are very well promoted. The wish box in the Princess' Castle and the office in the doctors' surgery were two examples of how children are encouraged to develop their free writing. The teacher provides challenging activities in adult-led sessions that are well matched to children's abilities and needs. Children with special educational needs are given individual attention so that their identified needs are well met.
43. The classroom is a language-rich environment where adults focus strongly on developing all aspects of children's communication, language and literacy skills. Very successful activities are used to help children to extend their language skills across all areas of learning. The children are taught to listen to one another as soon as they start school and this is reinforced in many activities. Because of this most children listen exceptionally well to adults and to one another. Teaching assistants regularly 'play' with children in the role-play area, extending their spoken language. The sharing of books, listening to stories, playing games and singing rhymes are carefully planned so that children quickly learn letter sounds and the first key words for reading and spelling. Their learning is fun and highly effective. Most parents take an interest in helping their children with reading at home.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All children achieve very well.
- Very good teaching places a high emphasis on learning through practical activities.
- Mathematical skills are put to very good use across many areas of learning.

Commentary

44. Very good teaching of practical activities helps children to achieve very well. Most attain the Early Learning Goals by the time they start in Year 1 and many are successfully working within the National Curriculum levels. This very good teaching and learning gives a very good focus to helping children to use mathematical language more confidently and develop ideas to solve problems through play. Skilled questioning helps children develop a keen interest and understanding of numbers and shapes. Activities are very well matched to the children's age and experiences. Older children in the class are already confidently ordering numbers within ten and recognise which number comes before and which afterwards. The environment around the classroom is used well to stimulate children's observations of shape and number and this makes a natural introduction to more formal activities. Play activities using shapes, for example, very effectively developed children's understanding of the properties of two-dimensional shapes so that more able children used the correctly

shaped triangles to make the roof of a five-sided building. Games and songs are used well to promote children's knowledge and skills. Mathematical questions are a natural extension of all children's activities. Older and more able children already recognise some of the properties of three-dimensional shapes and are beginning to record simple addition and subtraction sums using pictures and numbers.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because their curiosity and interest are well stimulated.
- The outside environment and visitors to school enhance children's learning.

Commentary

45. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is well planned so that all the aspects of children's learning are meaningfully linked and interwoven. These natural connections build effectively on what children already know and further stimulate their interest and curiosity about the world around them. Teaching and learning in this aspect are good and lead to children's good achievement so by the time they enter Year 1 most have attained the expected levels in the Early Learning Goals and many beyond. Children are effectively introduced to aspects of learning such as science, history and geography through their own experiences and first hand knowledge. This was seen well illustrated in the senses walk around the school. Skilled questioning supported children's recall of what they had seen, heard, tasted, touched and smelled in their walk. Good use is also made of the local environment in developing children's sense of place beyond their homes and school. A walk to the local park, children's simple maps to show their journey and the use of a computer program to design their own towns all build successfully on children's previous knowledge. Regular use of construction kits effectively develop children's early understanding of how pieces fit together, when their buildings are stable and what causes them to fall down. Their learning is most effective when these activities are led by an adult whose good questions help children explore their ideas and solutions, so consolidating knowledge and skills. As part of the class religious education lessons children learn satisfactorily about the festivals and beliefs of other people.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

No lessons in physical development were observed during the inspection and so no judgement can be made on provision.

Commentary

46. Children achieve satisfactorily in their physical development. When they start in the Foundation Stage their large movements and control of large wheeled vehicles are similar to those found nationally. Their manipulative skills using simple tools and writing implements are also broadly average. A good range of opportunities are provided for the children to develop these skills further and they make satisfactory progress overall. By the time children move into Year 1 their letter formation is developing well, with the more capable children writing recognisable letters that are fairly even in size. Children's pictures show growing control and they use a range of equipment effectively in their art work. Children have regular opportunities to

participate in physical education lessons in the hall. The playground apparatus also gives opportunities for children to climb in safety. They are developing satisfactory balance, mobility and control in their movements. Children attain the expected standards in these aspects of physical development by the time they enter Year 1.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

No lessons in creative development were observed during the inspection and so no judgement can be made on provision.

Commentary

47. Children's creative development is promoted in both formal teaching sessions and through self-chosen play activities. Children's creative response to stories is well promoted in role-play areas, which during the inspection was the Princess' Castle. Along with costumes, two thrones, jewels and exotic surroundings children enjoyed acting out their ideas, often supported by an adult who stimulated further ideas and appropriate language. Weekly music lessons are also linked to traditional stories and promote children's awareness of pitch and rhythms. A changing selection of musical instruments is also available for children to explore different sounds in their free play as they make up their own songs. Children's creative development is well promoted through art and design. Activities are often linked to other areas of learning to enable children to explore different materials and media to create their own patterns and pictures. The children have been learning about their senses. The sense of touch was explored using a variety of materials of different textures. Bright and colourful self-portraits are experimented with, mixing paint to show an introduction to shades and tones of colour. The evidence of children's work and observations in the role-play area indicate children's good achievement. They respond well to the different activities, showing interest and concentration. Most children attain the expected standards on entry to Year 1 and many are already successfully developing their own ideas and responses.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is very good by the end of Year 6 and reflects the dynamic teaching throughout the school.
- Pupils make very good progress in reading through the school.
- Strategies for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are thorough and used very effectively to promote new learning.

Commentary

48. Attainment by Year 6 is well above the national average and has been so for three years as evidenced by the national test results. Achievement is very good throughout the school. Particular strengths in pupils' attainment are the well above average standards in speaking and listening and in pupils' reading skills. These are very well developed from reception through to Year 6 and are the basis of pupils' overall very good achievement. Standards in writing are not quite as high as those in reading but

are still above average in both Year 2 and in Year 6. The pupils' standards in reading and writing together are well above average in Year 6. This is a similar picture to that seen in the 2004 National Curriculum tests in Year 2 and Year 6. Standards and achievement have significantly improved since the previous inspection because teaching and learning are better.

49. Boys and girls make very good progress in reading through the school. There are consistent strategies for teaching reading that focus successfully on pupils' ability to decode new words and on developing pupils' good understanding of the text. Many effective methods are used to help pupils develop their inferential skills so they can predict what may happen next and understand why characters in the text behave as they do. Pupils' achievement and standards in all aspects of English are developing very well. In the most effective lessons, pupils make very good progress in writing. Their knowledge of grammar and punctuation is good and pupils through the school are encouraged to use exciting and powerful language to add impact to their writing. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are developing their ability to recognise the strategies behind persuasive text so that by Year 6 they are able to give well-reasoned arguments. The school has been focusing on how to raise standards in pupils' speaking and listening skills further, recognising that these skills are the basis of effective writing. A wide range of techniques is being developed to stimulate pupils' listening so they are able to recount facts and give considered opinions about what they have heard. Similarly a good number of strategies are being developed to encourage pupils' speaking skills: to different audiences and for different purposes. Role play, drama and debate, and both formal and informal discussions are becoming a common feature in many classes so pupils' confidence in expressing themselves accurately and with conviction is improving very well.
50. Teaching is very good overall and effectively promotes pupils' very good learning in all aspects of English. Lessons observed were never less than good, most were very good and several were excellent. This is an improvement on that found at the previous inspection. Teachers throughout the school have secure knowledge of teaching English and show flair in their exposition so pupils' attention and interest are captured. Pupils of all abilities are challenged and encouraged. Very good levels of support are provided by teachers and teaching assistants. Staff work together as a strong team. Many teaching assistants are thoroughly trained and understand pupils' needs well. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported so they make very good progress in lessons and towards their personal targets. Pupils who are underachieving are encouraged and enabled to make better progress. Pupils who have special talents in English are identified successfully and their learning and skills are very well promoted through the use of a modified curriculum effectively matched to their specific needs. Relationships are very good through the school and pupils of all abilities have very good attitudes to their learning and respond very well.
51. Teachers assess pupils' work thoroughly, using this knowledge to develop new activities that build on pupils' prior learning well. The school has effectively evaluated the types of procedures it uses to monitor pupils' attainment and progress so that information is meaningful and useful. Pupils are kept fully involved so they are developing a good understanding of their own abilities and how to improve their work.
52. Leadership of the subject is very good. There is a consistency in the quality of teaching and learning through the school that is clear evidence of very good leadership, support and guidance. The school is evaluative of its work and, led by the co-ordinator, areas for further development are identified and effective strategies are

employed. The comparative underachievement of boys was recognised and additional materials were purchased to stimulate their interest. This year an additional focus has been given to the teaching of speaking and listening. This is being very well managed so that staff develop schemes of work for their own class that will be shared to support whole school planning. The co-ordinator monitors the work of the school well and has a secure understanding of standards and teaching.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

53. Pupils' literacy skills are used well across the curriculum to promote pupils' learning in other subjects, especially in history and in science. Pupils' reading skills are used well in researching information in other subjects and the use of drama and role play is being developed to promote pupils' empathetic skills in personal, social and health education and history.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement in problem-solving skills is very good because of the high level of challenge given to pupils.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well because of the hands-on support they receive.
- Pupils are interested and excited by their interaction with interactive whiteboards and this contributes to their very good learning.
- The analysis of test papers is used very well to inform planning to raise achievement.

Commentary

54. On the basis of the 2004 national test results, pupils' attainment was well above the national average by Year 2 and above average in comparison with similar schools. Test results for Year 6 pupils in the same year were very high compared with the national average (in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally) and well above similar schools. Attainment for current Year 2 pupils is above average. For current Year 6 pupils attainment is well above average. This difference with the national test results is due to the small number of pupils involved and the fact that there are more pupils with special educational needs in both the current Year 2 and Year 6 groups than there were last academic year. Achievement is very good throughout the school.
55. By Year 2 pupils are confident at solving number problems. They make accurate paper calculations and explain their methods of working out solutions to the problems they have been set. They have a secure understanding of the concept of sharing and demonstrate this well through their work on fractions. Their understanding of shape, space and measure is good and they make sensible guesses about the weight and length of objects. Because ICT is used very effectively to support mathematics, their data handling skills are good. A hands on approach, well supported by teaching assistants, using visual and tactile resources, ensures that pupils with special educational needs achieve very well as seen in the excellent Year 2 lesson on two- and three-dimensional shapes and their properties. Year 6 pupils have well above average problem-solving skills. Their accuracy in carrying out calculations, their understanding of the value of digits in decimal places in the context of measurements of metric capacity and their use of graphs to illustrate mean monthly temperature are

all well above average. Gifted and talented pupils are challenged to work at well above the expected level for 11-year-olds and rise to the challenge with excitement and enjoyment. The few pupils with special educational needs in Year 6 are on target to reach the nationally expected level in the test at the end of the year.

56. Teaching is at least consistently very good. There is a little excellent teaching. Very good use is made of assessment to inform targets to raise the achievement of each pupil. The school has grasped the importance of personalised learning and this is a significant contributory factor in the very good achievement for all pupils. Teachers have very high expectations of all pupils and set work that challenges and excites them. Their subject knowledge is excellent as observed in the Year 6 lesson on combining working with decimal fractions and metric measurement. Very good visual starters grasp pupils' interest at the beginning of lessons and teachers use the interactive whiteboard very effectively to demonstrate new concepts, drawing on the pupils' developing understanding as they do so. These very good features along with cracking pace and fun activities result in very good learning in all lessons and very good achievement.
57. The leadership and management are very good. Thorough analysis is carried out on test papers to inform planning to raise achievement. The subject co-ordinator very effectively monitors teaching and learning and uses evidence gathered from this exercise to share good practice and so improve the quality of teaching across the school. Improvement since the last inspection is very good.

Mathematics across the curriculum

58. Very good opportunities are provided for pupils to use their mathematical skills in other subjects. Their numeracy and data handling skills are very well promoted and applied in science, geography, history, art and design, design and technology and ICT. In each of these subjects there is a very strong emphasis on developing pupils' problem solving skills.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well because teachers have high expectations of all pupils.
- There is a strong emphasis on practical work which supports pupils' skills of scientific enquiry very effectively.
- The headteacher and subject co-ordinator are leading the subject with considerable strength and success.

Commentary

59. Current standards in science are above average in Year 2 and well above average in Year 6. Pupils are achieving very well in the subject throughout the school. This represents an improvement since last year when results in national tests were above the national average but below average compared with similar schools. Provision now is better because the headteacher and co-ordinator have identified previous gaps in pupils' knowledge and worked rapidly and successfully to address them.

60. A rigorous analysis has identified the need to include far more practical work and this has had a dramatic and positive effect. Teaching is now very good across the school which reflects significant improvement since the previous inspection. The school ethos is characterised by very good relationships between staff and pupils, where behaviour management is invisible. Consequently, teachers are free to challenge pupils with demanding practical work. They all make very good use of detailed knowledge of pupils to enhance their learning, for example by the very effective organisation as to which pupils work together within a lesson.
61. During the inspection the teaching was never less than very good and there was an excellent lesson when 33 pupils from Years 4 and 5 were inspired as practising scientists. They all made enormous gains in planning a practical investigation. An analysis of pupils' work indicates that these high standards in the quality of teaching are the norm. A consequence of the high emphasis upon practical work is that pupils are making very good use of their literacy and mathematical skills to record their scientific ideas.
62. The headteacher and co-ordinator are not complacent. Having improved the balance of the curriculum and so raised standards and pupils' achievement, they are beginning to collate information concerning which pupils are working at which levels, how much progress they have made over time and therefore what they need to learn next. They continue to determine areas for potential development and have rightly identified that, while the use of ICT to support learning in science is satisfactory, it could be improved. The leadership and management of the subject are highly effective.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good because of the good level of confidence teachers now have in teaching the subject.
- The computer suite is small and on occasions this adversely affects learning.
- The advanced skills teacher from the nearby secondary school has been used skilfully to support teachers and build their confidence in being more adventurous in their teaching.
- Pupils' modelling skills by Year 6 are below average.
- Teachers use interactive whiteboards and computers well to support teaching and learning across subjects.

Commentary

63. Attainment by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is in line with national expectations. Because of a significant improvement in resources since the last inspection pupils can use computers independently to research information. Increased teacher confidence, coupled with the excellent support of an advanced skills teacher for ICT and new equipment, has contributed to pupils reaching the nationally expected standard in control technology by Year 6. However, modelling skills by Year 6 are not sufficiently well developed. Achievement is good.
64. By Year 2, pupils select a program, complete their task, save their work and log off independently. Their control using the mouse to click on edit and undo when they

make an error in their writing using a computer is good. Year 6 pupils are able to program a 'flowgo box' independently and then with the expert help from their teacher test and evaluate their programs in real life situations, such as making an alarm go off when somebody attempts to steal a valuable item. Their interest, enthusiasm and enjoyment make a valuable contribution to their good achievement in developing control technology skills. In addition Year 6 pupils are able to put together a PowerPoint presentation combining sound and graphics.

65. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. It ranges from satisfactory to very good. Discrete ICT lessons are taught in the computer suite but very effective use is made of interactive whiteboards and computers in classrooms. Although the computers in the computer suite are very good quality, the room is small and the pupils are squashed together. On occasions this impedes learning, for example in the Year 1 lesson where neither the teacher nor the teaching assistant could intervene quickly enough to nip some silly behaviour in the bud. In the same lesson, the control skills of the pupils working with the interactive whiteboard were impeded by the fact that some of the key descriptive words they wanted to drag down to describe the wolf in their story were out of their reach. In the best lessons objectives are shared with the pupils before they are sent to work independently on the computers to carry out challenging activities. Teaching in these lessons is characterised by very good demonstrations based on confident subject knowledge, as observed in a Year 6 lesson when the pupils, having watched a very skilful demonstration by the teacher on how 'Val' works, went on to apply it to their own challenges and solutions. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the effective targeted support they receive from teaching assistants and those identified as gifted and talented also achieve well because of the extension opportunities provided for them in lessons.
66. Leadership and management are good. Planning for the use of computers across subjects is good. A good assessment procedure involving pupils in self-assessment has been successfully trialled and is being developed further. The subject leader has a clear vision of what needs to be done to improve the subject and a good action plan to manage change to bring about improvement. Monitoring of teaching and learning is effective and results in the sharing of good practice. An advanced skills teacher from the nearby secondary school is effectively deployed to train and support teachers and to encourage them to trial exciting activities in lessons.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

67. The use of interactive whiteboards and computers across subjects is good and so pupils' achievement in developing ICT skills across the curriculum is good. In geography, history and science pupils access safe Internet sites to find out information. They are able to e-mail schools in faraway places. Computers are used very effectively to develop pupils' data handling skills in mathematics and geography. Year 6 pupils are involved in some exciting animation work using computers and this excites them in their learning.

HUMANITIES

68. This inspection did not focus on **history** or **geography**. It is not therefore possible to make a judgement on provision in either subject. The school follows national guidance in planning for the full National Curriculum in **geography** and **history**. This is reflected in displays of pupils' work around the school. These also provide examples of pupils in Years 3 and 4 using their literacy skills very effectively.

Following a visit to a local Victorian grand house, Year 2 pupils demonstrate that they have acquired good factual knowledge of life for children working in a Victorian laundry by writing 'letters home' as if from a child worker. There are similar examples of geographical learning enriched by the use of the environment local to the school. The only geography lesson seen was well planned and teaching and learning were good. The lesson successfully exploited pupils' interest in maps and extended their skills to using simple co-ordinates and devising their own symbols for a 'key'. Devising a questionnaire about the villages of Crediton and Sandford extended pupils' ideas about local geographical features while also making good use of their speaking and writing skills.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Too little attention has been paid to teaching in Year 6 in recent months and this has had an adverse effect on pupils' learning.
- Too few pupils in Year 6 recognise that world religions other than Christianity are practised in Great Britain.
- Teaching and learning are good in Year 2.
- The school has given too little emphasis to the development of religious education in the past.

Commentary

69. Attainment by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. These findings mirror those of the previous inspection. Improvement since then has been satisfactory.
70. Year 2 pupils have experienced the smells and tastes associated with important Hindu and Christian festivals. During the inspection they enjoyed tasting pancakes whilst learning about the significance of *'Shrove Tuesday'* for Christians. Their knowledge and understanding of the importance of the Diwali festival in Hinduism are satisfactory. By Year 6 pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of Buddhism and Islam and understand that having a faith makes a difference to how a person lives. But too many pupils by Year 6 do not use the correct terms such as minaret and cupola to describe the features of a mosque and are muddled in their thinking about which stories were told by Moses and which stories were told by Jesus. Few have grasped that world religions other than Christianity are practised in Great Britain. A small group of Year 6 pupils interviewed during the inspection said: *'We learn about Islam so that if we visited Pakistan we would understand what Moslems believe and do'*. Probing follow-up questioning revealed that few realised that Moslems lived and worked in Great Britain.
71. Because of the timetable only one lesson could be observed during the inspection. In that Year 2 lesson the teaching was very good. Cracking pace, interesting activities and effective questioning on the part of the teacher resulted in pupils making rapid gains in their understanding of the Lenten practice of fasting as a means of preparation for Easter and to develop self-discipline. Some of the *'sorry cards'* the pupils prepared in this lesson were very moving and made a significant contribution to raising their spiritual awareness. However, careful scrutiny of pupils' work and

teachers' planning and discussion with pupils confirm that teaching is satisfactory overall. Planning is satisfactory but too little attention has been given to the teaching of the subject in Year 6 in recent months and this has had an adverse effect on pupils' learning and understanding as evidenced by the discussion with them. Teaching is more frequent in all of the other year groups, but teachers' subject knowledge and confidence are variable throughout the school.

72. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school has, through its own self-evaluation, recognised that this is a subject in need of improvement and is currently using the adviser from the local educational authority to build teachers' confidence and expertise. The use of assessment to inform planning to raise achievement is not as effective as in other subjects across the school. At the moment, this subject does not have the same sparkle and buzz as other subjects.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

73. None of the above subjects was a focus for inspection. No lessons in **design and technology** and **music** took place during the inspection and so no judgements can be made about the provision, standards, teaching or learning. Evidence of pupils' work and teachers' planning were studied and pupils' experiences in both subjects were discussed with pupils in Year 6. From this evidence it is clear that a satisfactorily broad and balanced curriculum is taught in both subjects. Pupils expressed interest in their work in design and technology, showing pride in the artefacts they have made and satisfaction in the range of skills developed. The subject is taught in blocks of time enabling pupils to get a good understanding of the designing and making process. They have clear views about how they could improve their work having spent time evaluating their activities. Music is taught by specialist teachers throughout the school. This brings a high level of knowledge and skills to the teaching and both pupils and parents expressed pride in the quality of performances in school productions. A good number of instrumental lessons are offered to pupils in a wide range of different instruments. These sessions enhance pupils' learning in music and add to the quality of musical productions. Effective strategies are used to assess pupils' standards and progress in both subjects. There is no co-ordinator for design and technology at present but the co-ordinator for music maintains a satisfactory overview of the curriculum and standards in both subjects.
74. Only two lessons in **art and design** were observed during the inspection, one in each key stage. There was a satisfactory range of pupils' work on display but insufficient to provide a clear judgement of provision or standards in Year 2 and Year 6. The quality of work around the school shows satisfactory progress in the development of skills through both key stages. In the two lessons observed, teaching was satisfactory in one and good in the other. In both lessons there was a strong focus on developing pupils' creativity. The work of well known artists is used effectively through the school for pupils to explore different methods and ideas. There is a satisfactory balance in the use of different media and materials working in two and three dimensions. Strategies for assessing pupils' work and progress are well established and samples of pupils' work at different levels are collected to support the co-ordinator's monitoring of standards and progress through the school.
75. Only one lesson could be seen in **physical education** during the inspection and so there is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements about provision, attainment and achievement. Teaching and learning in the Year 1 dance lesson observed were satisfactory. Specialists are used to support the teaching programme. Currently a

dance specialist is working with Year 6 pupils. Scrutiny of records shows that all but one student (who joined the school half way through Key Stage 2) can swim at least 25 metres, the distance expected nationally. Gifted and talented swimmers have very good stroke technique and are given the opportunity to represent their school in the 'Crediton Learning Community Gala'. All Year 6 pupils take part in sailing, canoeing, kayaking, team building and problem-solving activities over a two day period in the summer term at an outdoor pursuit centre. Gifted and talented pupils are identified by professional coaches and given the opportunity to participate in a wide range of sports at a high level. All clubs run after school are fully inclusive and all pupils are given the opportunity to develop their physical skills to reach their full potential. The resources are good for games, but the small size of the hall impedes the teaching of gymnastics. Assessment of the whole class takes place at the end of each unit. The school is exploring the 'Activemark Award' and this links with the Healthy School Initiative.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHCE) is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- PSHCE lies at the heart of all the school does.

Commentary

76. This area of pupils' education is very good because of the school's deep commitment to valuing each and every individual pupil. This translates into offering pupils choices and respecting their decisions throughout almost every exchange and activity. Consequently, the school's provision is far more than the specific and planned lessons for PSHCE. Nevertheless, in the only specific lesson seen during the inspection teaching and learning for pupils in Year 1 were excellent. This extraordinary lesson enabled pupils to share several very sensible ideas about what to do when you 'fall out' with your friends. It arose from a playground squabble without making any direct reference to the pupils concerned, thus avoiding any risk of embarrassment or distress that would potentially act as a barrier to pupils' learning.
77. Staff, parents and governors quite rightly remark on the exceptional level of confidence that pupils have when speaking with adults. This is one example of the impact of this very good provision. Teachers have high expectations of pupils making choices and taking personal responsibility in lessons and this enriches their learning. There are countless examples of teachers taking the time to consult with pupils sensitively. As a result pupils take a mature interest in their work and responsibility for it. For instance, pupils in Year 3 modified a piece of writing they had created as a whole class with remarkable consideration in response to the class teacher's gentle enquiry: '*Did you wish to change anything?*'. In this excellent lesson personal development and high standards in English were inextricably linked.
78. The school council is a credit to the school and speaks for all pupils in its appreciation of the school and the teachers and assistants. However, the school is working successfully to develop PSHCE further. The deputy headteacher has responsibility for extending the curriculum and is leading this development very effectively. There is already in place a very good planned programme linking work, for example about relationships, keeping safe and healthy lifestyles, with nurturing personal and social

responsibility. Further developments, such as formalising systems for assessment, are currently under careful consideration.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement	Grade
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	2
Attendance	2
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	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	2
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	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	1
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	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).