

INSPECTION REPORT

ST PETER'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Budleigh Salterton

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113425

Headteacher: Mrs Susan Noden

Lead inspector: Mrs Christine Nuttall

Dates of inspection: 4th - 6th July 2005

Inspection number: 267928

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:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	220 + 26 full time equivalent in Nursery
School address:	Moor Lane Budleigh Salterton Devon
Postcode:	EX9 6QF
Telephone number:	(01395) 443 167
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev Robert Charles
Date of previous inspection:	23 rd November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Peter's Church of England Primary School is in the town of Budleigh Salterton, to the east of Exeter. It has eight classes for pupils from Reception to Year 6 and a separate morning and afternoon Nursery class. Pupils come from a wide range of social, economic and academic backgrounds. Just over five per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average and reflects the advantaged background of some of the pupils. However, there are a number of families entitled to free school meals that choose not to claim because of parents' concern about the perceived stigma of claiming benefits. Pupils live in the town of Budleigh Salterton and a few outlying areas. All pupils are White British. When children start school, their skills, knowledge and understanding are wide-ranging, but regularly below the levels expected for their age. Fifteen per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is just below average. These pupils have a range of learning or physical difficulties. Eight pupils have a statement of special educational need. Last year the percentage of pupils either joining or leaving the school other than at the normal time was broadly average. The school gained a 'Schools Achievement Award' in 2002 and a 'Healthy Schools Award' in 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
31046	Christine Nuttall	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology
11072	Shirley Elomari	Lay inspector	Personal, social and health education
24022	Julia Lawson	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Art and design Design and technology Physical education
31233	Elizabeth Slater	Team inspector	English History Geography Music Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school with several very good features. Pupils are taught well, achieve well and reach high standards by the time they leave in Year 6. The headteacher provides a clear educational direction and enables pupils and staff to do their best. Governors are proactive and fulfil their statutory duties well. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards at the end of Year 6 are above the expected levels in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT).
- Teaching is good and, as a result, all pupils achieve well.
- The headteacher is an effective leader; she is very ably assisted by the deputy headteacher.
- Individual pupils are valued, very well cared for and the school strives very successfully to provide for the needs of all pupils.
- Pupils enjoy school, are extremely confident, behave very well and are very positive about learning.
- Standards in writing, particularly with younger pupils, still need further development.

The school has moved forward well since its last inspection in November 1998. It has developed the good provision noted at that time even further. The quality of teaching has improved and pupils make good progress. There have been significant improvements to the provision for teaching ICT. The staff team works together very well and, with clear direction and support from the headteacher, has successfully tackled all of the areas noted for improvement by the last inspection. These were related to the behaviour of a minority of pupils, outdoor play provision for under fives and aspects of staff induction. Statutory requirements for child protection are now fully in place.

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	A
mathematics	A	B	B	B
science	D	C	B	B

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

The achievement of all pupils across the school is good. In the Nursery and Reception classes, children achieve well and, by the time they move into Year 1, most children have reached the nationally expected goals, with some doing better.

By the end of Year 6 in 2004, standards attained by pupils were above the national average in mathematics and science and well above the expected levels in English. In comparison with pupils at similar schools in 2004, Year 6 pupils achieved results above their peers in mathematics and science and well above in English. The standards achieved in national tests in reading by the end of Year 2 in 2004 were well above the national average. Standards in mathematics were above the level achieved in most schools nationally but standards in writing were below expected levels. In 2004 national tests, the performance of Year 2 pupils at St Peter's was below pupils in schools with similar free school meal entitlement in writing. In mathematics, St Peter's pupils were above their peers in similar schools and in reading, they were well above.

Both at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, with the exception of writing, results were notably better in 2004 than they were in previous years, suggesting that pupils have made good progress. In writing at the end of Year 2, results have generally stayed the same, suggesting only satisfactory progress.

Inspection evidence indicates that pupils of all levels of attainment make good progress. Currently, pupils in Year 6 are achieving above expected levels in English, mathematics, science and ICT. They achieve standards in music at the level expected nationally. In Year 2, pupils are achieving the expected levels in mathematics, science, ICT and music. This cohort entered the school with below expected levels and several of the year group have special educational needs. All pupils in Year 2 have made good progress and are achieving well. Standards in Year 2 in reading are above expected levels. In writing, however, standards are below expected levels. There was insufficient evidence to make a firm judgement on standards in all other subjects.

Throughout the school pupils with special educational needs achieve well. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys or girls.

Pupils' very good personal skills are very effectively promoted by very good overall provision for their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. Almost all pupils are positive about school and behave very well. Pupils' attendance is above the level typically found in primary schools nationally.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good overall. Teaching and learning are good. Teaching is strong overall. At times it is very good and, on occasions, excellent. As a result of this and the effective partnership with support staff, pupils move forward in their learning at a good pace. The curriculum is broad, well balanced and rich. The accommodation is good and this, together with good resources, has a positive impact on pupils' learning. There is a satisfactory partnership with parents, with many doing all they can to support the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership, management and governance of the school are good, with some very good features. The headteacher provides a clear direction for the teaching and support staff, as well as for the knowledgeable, hardworking and well-informed governing body. She is very well supported by the deputy, who brings many talents to bear on the school. Governors meet all legal requirements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Many parents expressed a high level of satisfaction with the school. A small minority who returned the questionnaire were concerned about information about their child's progress and arrangements for seeking parents' views. The inspection found some evidence to support these concerns. Annual reports on pupils' progress lack detail, particularly in foundation subjects. Only a small sample of parents are regularly asked for their views so many never get the opportunity. Pupils are very positive about school and clearly like and respect their teachers.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

In this good school there is one significant area for development. The school should work to further develop aspects of pupils' writing, particularly in the first few years of schooling.

A minor area for development includes:

- Providing regular opportunities to seek the views of all parents and improving the quality of information contained on annual reports.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards are above the expected levels in English, mathematics, science and ICT by the end of Year 6. Standards in music are at the expected levels. By the end of Year 2, standards in reading are above the expected levels. In mathematics, science, ICT and music, standards are in line with expected levels. In writing, standards are below the expected levels. All pupils achieve well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils throughout the school achieve well.
- Children make a good start in the Foundation Stage.
- Standards of work in English, mathematics, science and ICT are above expected levels by the end of Year 6.
- Standards in writing are not high enough in Year 2.

Commentary

1. When children start school in the Reception classes, the school's assessments show that their knowledge, skills and understanding are very wide-ranging. The proportions of children who are doing well for their age and those who are behind their peers vary from year to year. So, although the overall profile of the groups starting school is broadly below the levels expected for their age, this masks a very wide span of attainment. Children achieve well in the Reception Year because work planned is challenging and interesting and the staff are very supportive. Consequently, children have a good start to their education in school. Most will meet the goals expected by the end of the year in all areas of learning¹ and some will exceed these.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.0 (17.5)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	14.2 (15.0)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.9 (16.9)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. The standards achieved in national tests in reading by the end of Year 2 in 2004 were well above the national average. Standards in mathematics were above the level achieved for most schools nationally. In writing, standards were below the national average. In 2004 national tests, the performance of pupils at St Peter's was slightly below that of pupils in schools with similar free school meal entitlement in writing. In reading, St Peter's pupils were well above their peers in similar schools and in mathematics, they were above their peers.

¹ There are six nationally agreed areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and creative development.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.5 (28.4)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	28.2 (27.8)	27.0 (26.8)
science	29.8 (28.4)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 26 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. By the end of Year 6 in 2004, standards attained by pupils were above the national average in mathematics and science and well above the expected levels in English. In comparison with pupils at similar schools in 2004, pupils at St. Peter's achieved results above their peers in mathematics and science and well above pupils in similar schools in English. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys or girls.
4. Both at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, with the exception of writing, results were notably better in 2004 than they were the previous years, suggesting that pupils have made good progress. In writing at the end of Year 2, results have generally stayed the same, suggesting only satisfactory progress.
5. The findings of the inspection are that, in Year 6, standards are above the levels expected in English, mathematics, science and ICT. In music, standards are at the expected levels. Insufficient evidence was gathered in the time available to make firm judgements about standards in other subjects although, on the evidence seen, standards are at least at the expected levels. In Year 2, the inspection found that standards in English, mathematics, science, ICT and music are at the levels expected. This particular cohort entered the school with attainment well below the expected levels. More than a quarter of the year group have significant special educational needs, yet all pupils have made good progress and are achieving well. Standards in Year 2 in reading are above the levels expected, reflecting the emphasis the school places on this important aspect of learning. However, standards in writing are below expected levels, indicating that more work needs to take place to develop this aspect of learning. Insufficient evidence was gathered to make a firm judgement in other subjects.
6. All pupils do well in this school as achievement is, overall, good because of the quality of teaching and learning. This is a judgement which mirrors the views of most parents and pupils. The school knows its pupils very well and uses its assessment procedures effectively to plan their work and to check their progress. As a result, pupils are given work which is challenging but attainable and they make good progress. Relationships between all class members are very good and contribute positively to pupils' progress. Gifted and talented pupils are carefully identified across academic and broader areas. Provision for these pupils includes work in mathematics, literacy, ICT and music.
7. Pupils with special educational needs, including both those with learning difficulties and with physical disabilities, make good progress towards their specific targets. Pupils are well supported in lessons by teachers and learning support assistants with appropriate tasks. The majority of pupils, who are receiving additional mathematics and literacy support, make good progress. The few pupils who are supported for behaviour are very well managed by teachers and learning support assistants and do not adversely affect the learning of others.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have very good attitudes to learning. Their behaviour is very good both in lessons and around the school. Pupils' personal development is very good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. Attendance and punctuality are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils throughout the school are well motivated and enjoy learning.
- Pupils' behaviour is very good and they enjoy taking responsibility and helping others.
- Pupils work very well together because they form very good relationships with one another and with the adults in school.
- The school is very committed to the personal development of its pupils: their moral and social development is very good. Spiritual and cultural development is good.
- Attendance levels are good and pupils arrive punctually in the morning.

Commentary

8. Pupils of all ages have very positive attitudes to learning. They enjoy their lessons, trips and other activities planned for them. Pupils almost always concentrate very well and try hard. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported so that they have positive experiences of learning. Pupils particularly like the trips and special focus weeks that make learning interesting and enjoyable. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes plan some of their own activities and this encourages the development of good attitudes to learning. Pupils appreciate the wide range of extra-curricular activities and a large proportion chooses to take part. Pupils' positive attitudes make a significant contribution to their achievement.
9. Pupils' personal development has a very high priority, with teachers and other staff setting very high expectations for behaviour. The school has a strong sense of community. It is orderly and purposeful. Pupils of all ages share equipment very sensibly and look after the school's, their own and others' belongings very carefully. They are polite to one another, staff and visitors. Behaviour during playtimes and around the school is very good. In the Nursery and Reception classes behaviour is good but overall, behaviour in lessons is almost always very good. A few pupils, mostly boys, find it hard to live up to the expected high standard but this is generally well managed so that the learning of others is not disrupted. Pupils value the praise and rewards they receive, especially the chance to become 'Star of the Week'. There have been no exclusions in the last year.
10. Pupils form very good relationships with one another and with staff. They learn to treat others as they wish to be treated and the school is a very friendly place. Pupils work together very well in small groups. Older pupils enjoy taking care of the younger ones, which helps to foster very strong relationships throughout the school. The very good relationships help to ensure that there is little bullying. All pupils with special educational needs, including those with behavioural difficulties, are socially very well included.
11. Pupils' moral and social development is very good. Teachers are very good role models and pupils throughout the school respond well to their high expectations. Pupils are willing to look after one another. They co-operate very well when working or playing together. Pupils work well independently. In lessons, they listen carefully to others' ideas and learn to be tolerant of views that differ from their own. Pupils, especially those in Year 6, have a very good range of opportunities to take responsibility. They respond to these in a mature and sensible way. The school council operates in a democratic way and pupils learn from this about the way a community functions. Pupils' spiritual development is good but there are some very good aspects, such as the many opportunities they have to reflect on their feelings and on the world around them. For example, a display about the sea challenges pupils to think about what

anchors them and makes them feel secure. Pupils develop a high level of respect for the views and feelings of others. Pupils gain a good appreciation of their own culture in lessons, extra-curricular activities and by contributing to local events and festivals. Subjects such as art, music, religious education and geography provide opportunities to explore cultural ideas and experiences from their own and others' cultural traditions. Most children in the Nursery and Reception classes are in line to meet the goals for personal, social and emotional development: some will exceed them.

12. Attendance is above, and unauthorised absence below, the level typically found in primary schools nationally. Pupils want to be at school as they enjoy the lessons and other activities planned for them. Parents support the school by reporting most absences promptly and by getting their child to school on time in the morning. However, the school is concerned about the increasing amount of absence caused by holidays taken in term time. The school has good procedures in place to monitor absence and involves the educational welfare officer appropriately when attendance becomes a cause for concern. Pupils usually arrive promptly in the morning and most lessons begin on time.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.4	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.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching is good overall and ensures that pupils move forward well. The curriculum is broad, rich and relevant. Good assessment procedures are in place.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is good overall throughout the school. Procedures for using information about pupils' progress to plan carefully for the needs of individuals are good. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and all pupils achieve well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning of interesting and relevant activities.
- Teaching assistants work well to include pupils and move them forward.
- Teachers have good subject expertise and knowledge of pupils' individual needs.
- Lessons have a good level of challenge and high expectations.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Pupils engage well in learning.
- Some marking, while celebrating pupils' achievements and efforts well, does not help them know how to improve their work.
- Teachers do not always involve pupils in evaluating their own progress.

Commentary

13. The table below indicates the quality of teaching seen across the school. Both parents and pupils are positive about the teaching staff. Pupils especially feel that their teachers help them learn effectively.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 34 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2 (6%)	10 (29%)	15 (44%)	7 (21%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

This 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.

14. There are common strengths in teaching that underpin the good quality of pupils' learning. These include:
- Good lesson planning that sets a clear focus for learning in each lesson, takes into account the needs of all pupils and provides interesting and relevant activities.
 - Teachers have a good grasp of the subjects they teach and are using a widening range of innovative methods and approaches to further motivate and inspire pupils.
 - Teaching assistants are well deployed and help to include and support individuals and groups of pupils.
 - Relationships between pupils and teachers are very good and make for a harmonious and purposeful atmosphere.
15. In the best lessons interesting activities and a lively approach grip pupils' interest and help them to move forward quickly. Teaching in English in two junior classes was excellent as a result of superb subject knowledge, excellent use of time and the teachers' lively delivery.

Example of outstanding practice in a Year 5 literacy lesson

There was a cacophony of shrieked, hissed, whined, grunted and growled complaints, as the "gargoyles", able to speak and move at night, grumbled sinisterly about humans – and then silence, as the two rows of "gargoyles" facing each other listened to the evaluation of their expression and words by another pupil.

Earlier in the lesson the teacher had asked pupils to consider a particular phrase, "They have no love of humans", as he re-read Eve Bunting's *The Night of the Gargoyles* (1999), introduced the previous day. The teacher built on the noisy complaints of the "gargoyles", picking out words like *vengeance* and *revenge*, encouraging the "gargoyles" to think how they would play tricks on humans in revenge for "being created with no room for hearts to love", as one pupil put it. Groups discussed possible events and locations, and prepared "before and after" freeze-frames, in role as gargoyles and humans. Groups developed imaginative scenarios, for example, leaping out of the cinema screen into the audience, or frightening evening library users. Pupils photographed the freeze-frames to illustrate a version they were going to write, *The Revenge of the Gargoyles*, and evaluated each other's work. The teacher asked them to consider what they would have been thinking as in the next session this was to be used for the text to accompany the pictures.

16. Pupils are seen as individuals, which means that all, including higher- and lower-attaining pupils, are given the support they need. Teachers use questioning well to include pupils of all abilities, challenging them to think and learn. Expectations are high, and as a result pupils make good progress. A good knowledge of pupils as individuals underpins all teaching and helps teachers match their good subject expertise to the stage of learning for individuals in their class. As a result, all pupils engage well in lessons, joining in well with group activities and working with growing independence in individual tasks as they get older. The use of ICT to support learning in other subjects is developing well. ICT skills are used to support work in science, literacy, humanities and numeracy as, for example, Year 6 pupils' work on the environment in a geography lesson. ICT was well used in a Year 5 design and technology session where pupils used 'Flowal' to turn lights on and off in a house.

17. Teaching is well planned for pupils with special educational needs, focusing on specific targets in individual education plans, which are frequently planned to be met within the context of the class lessons. Learning support assistants are deployed well with pupils in Years 1 and 2, and very well in Years 3 to 6. Pupils' developing knowledge, skills and understanding are assessed and monitored well, informing targets and individual education plans well.
18. Assessment procedures are thorough and the use of assessment to respond to individual needs is good. In the Foundation Stage, assessment is less well developed than in the rest of the school. Teachers of Reception classes satisfactorily assess their children in most activities. These assessments are then used soundly to plan future activities. Pupils in the rest of the school are tested each term in English and mathematics. An effective tracking system is used to show the progress that pupils make and whether this is good enough. The statutory tests are carefully analysed so that staff have a clear picture of the patterns in pupil attainment. This data is then used to plan subsequent work and intervention on an individual basis if, for example, a pupil is judged to be under-achieving. Staff also use 'targets' in English and mathematics to let pupils know what they have to do to improve. In some lessons, teachers give pupils good verbal feedback on their work. However, pupils are not consistently involved in evaluating their own work to see how well they are doing or recognising what they need to do to improve. Marking is used well to celebrate pupils' achievements and efforts, but in some cases opportunities are missed to help pupils to understand how they can improve.
19. Homework is regularly set throughout the school and pupils tackle it conscientiously. Occasional curriculum newsletters are sent home to suggest a range of ways that parents can support and extend learning at school. However, this system is not consistently followed and, as a result, some parents feel less well informed about homework.

The curriculum

The school provides a **good** curriculum. It has good breadth, is well balanced and very rich. Staffing and accommodation are good and resources for learning are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is well developed, relevant to pupils' needs and very effective in its access to all.
- Innovative approaches are used very effectively to enliven and enrich the curriculum.
- The very good use of visits, visitors, clubs and practical activities greatly enhances the learning opportunities.
- Teachers and support staff work together effectively.
- The accommodation is good and this, together with good resources has a positive impact on pupils' learning.
- Curriculum management is good.

Commentary

20. The school has made good use of national guidelines and advice to plan and develop a broad and well balanced programme of interesting and stimulating learning experiences. All statutory requirements are met, including those relating to sex and relationships, drugs education and special educational needs.
21. All subjects are very well supported by clear policies, which are reviewed with staff as part of a cycle, and detailed long-term planning documents. Teachers use them effectively and consistently alongside the literacy and numeracy strands of the National Primary Strategy as the basis for planning. This ensures that pupils' learning builds systematically on their prior knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. Good procedures are in place to prepare pupils for transition to secondary schools; pupils visit secondary schools and

teachers from the secondary schools visit Year 6. In literacy, pupils start a unit of work which will be completed at one of the secondary schools in Year 7. Arrangements as pupils move from Foundation Stage to the National Curriculum and from class to class and teacher to teacher within the school are currently less well developed.

22. The school's intention to balance excellence with enjoyment is evident in its determination to secure the all-round development of pupils, and this commitment to a broad and balanced curriculum is seen in the wide range of opportunities to take part in sport, the arts and many other activities. Educational visits and visitors are integral parts of the teaching and learning process. They make a powerful contribution to the quality of teaching as well as pupils' personal development. In addition there are numerous extra-curricular clubs and activities that complement pupils' learning in lessons, extend their skills and develop their particular interests.
23. The headteacher and staff share a very strong commitment to achieve equality of access and opportunity for all pupils, boys, girls, pupils with special educational needs and high-attaining pupils. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers are effectively supported in identifying pupils with special educational needs, and appropriate individual action plans are developed to help pupils make progress across the curriculum, particularly in literacy and mathematics but also behaviour. There are no disapplications. Good links are maintained with a wide range of external agencies for specific, focused support. Appropriate tasks and support are allocated well.
24. A particular strength is the way that the curriculum is kept under continuous review as the school constantly seeks new ways to enliven and enrich the learning opportunities it provides. A programme of audits, monitoring and action planning and assessments and analysis support this review, and aspects such as the learning environment and subjects' contributions to personal, social and health education are also monitored. Through these procedures, subjects in need of development and support are identified; for example, art was a focus with external advice and teaching alongside classroom teachers earlier this year. Also identified through these procedures and subsequently developed are aspects of teaching and learning, such as approaches to speaking and listening, role play and questioning. Learning through enquiry, particularly in history and geography, is another innovation. Overall, this continuous review is well managed by the co-ordinators, under the very able guidance of the curriculum manager, who works closely with the headteacher and a very active governor with responsibility for the curriculum. The most significant innovation has resulted in the introduction of themed weeks, carefully planned into the provision; those for next year are already planned. The current whole-school theme on coastlines is much more than a geographical theme. Most subjects in the curriculum have contributed to this, including a whole-school "Songs of Praise" on the beach, and many opportunities for literacy activities. Wherever possible, cross-curricular links are made in subjects at other times, supporting pupils' application of a range of skills across the curriculum and developing their understanding further.
25. The school is staffed well with well-qualified and committed teachers who are deployed effectively. They are well supported by a good number of teaching assistants who make a valuable contribution to pupils' good achievement, particularly in Years 3 to 6. The accommodation is good. Resources are good overall. They are used well to support learning in all subjects.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes very good provision for the care, welfare, health and safety of all pupils. The support, advice and guidance provided for pupils are of a very high standard. Pupils are well consulted and actively involved in improving their school. The arrangements for admitting children to the school are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' care, welfare and well-being are accorded a very high priority by the school.
- The school provides very effective guidance and support so that pupils can learn well.
- Pupils enjoy trusting relationships with teachers and adults.
- Pupils' views are regularly sought and they are well involved in the process of change and improvement.
- The arrangements in place when children join the school are good and help them to settle quickly into school life.

Commentary

26. The school has very good arrangements in place to ensure pupils' health, safety and well-being. Teachers and other staff pay very good attention to health and safety in lessons. Risk assessments are in place and are carried out whenever pupils go on trips. The health and safety arrangements when pupils use the school's swimming pool are a particular strength. Pupils are very well supervised outside lessons. Procedures for first aid are very good. Clear records are kept when medicines are given and of first aid interventions. At the time of the previous inspection, arrangements for child protection were unsatisfactory. The school has addressed this and current procedures fully meet requirements. The school ensures that the individual needs of pupils are met so that they take a full part in its life and work.
27. Pupils of all ages are very well supported. They are confident that teachers and learning support assistants will explain and help them if they do not understand what to do. Pupils' work is marked regularly and some teachers make comments that help pupils understand how to improve their work. Teachers set targets twice a year for every pupil, in consultation with the pupil and his or her parents. The previous inspection report stated that there was insufficient support for pupils, particularly those with special educational needs. The school has addressed this so that all pupils are now very well supported. Pupils with special educational needs have individual plans that provide clear targets and strategies. They are very ably supported in lessons by learning support assistants. Pupils also benefit from sensitive help and guidance when problems arise in their lives. A particular feature of the care provided by the school is that several learning support assistants have been trained as counsellors. The care and guidance meets pupils' individual academic and personal needs very well so that they are able to focus on learning.
28. From their earliest days in school, pupils develop very trusting relationships with teachers and other staff. They are confident to share any worries quickly when they arise because they know that effective help will be forthcoming. Parents and pupils feel confident that bullying is dealt with promptly and effectively when it occurs. Although some pupils are concerned that those who behave inappropriately do not always respond quickly enough when teachers intervene, pupils of all ages are happy and feel safe in school.
29. The school council plays a major role in ensuring that pupils' voices are heard and is also involved in planning and implementing changes. For example, the council helped to choose equipment for the playground and was involved in the development of the new timber trail. Councillors are confident that their views matter. They are proud of the changes they have helped to bring about because they improve school life for everyone. The school undertakes regular 'pupil attitudes surveys' so that pupils' opinions of and attitudes towards school can be taken into account when changes are planned.
30. Children are well supported when they join the school. This ensures that they settle quickly and happily into school routines, developing confidence and making friends. Almost all parents appreciate the arrangements for settling their child into school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's partnership with parents is satisfactory. Links with the community and with other schools are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school makes good use of parental expertise and enjoys the support of most parents.
- Parents are not informed clearly enough about their child's progress in every subject.
- The school regularly asks for the views of sample groups of parents.
- Pupils are able to start playing a part in the life of the local community.
- Strong partnerships with other schools and with the Carousel Club benefit both staff and pupils.

Commentary

31. The quality of pupils' annual reports is variable. Those for pupils in the Nursery and Reception classes are good and provide detailed information about all the areas of learning. In Years 1-6, reports in English, mathematics and science are clear but the reliance on tick lists means that parents receive little detail about their child's progress. Written comments focus on areas for improvement and set targets but do not identify areas of strength. In other subjects, the report consists of a series of tick lists with no specific comment. Personal, health and social education (PSHE) is covered under 'general comments' but the inconsistency with which teachers do this means that PSHE is inadequately reported on. Parents are involved in target setting twice a year, in discussion with their child and his or her teacher. Although this is valuable and helps to involve parents in their child's learning, not all parents appreciate that these meetings form part of the consultation process. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are successfully involved in their child's individual educational plan and invited to attend the annual review meetings.
32. The school benefits from the active support of many parents, either as part of the school association or help in the classroom, on trips and at home. Parent helpers are well supported so that they are able to make a positive contribution to children's learning. In particular, the school makes effective use of parental expertise in such areas as art, swimming and the environment. Parents are actively involved in trips and during the 'focus weeks', which enable them to share in their child's learning. Meetings are held about aspects of the curriculum such as drugs education, literacy and numeracy: attendance is variable. School policy is that an outline of the curriculum is sent to parents every term. However, a significant minority of parents feel that they do not receive sufficient information about what their child is being taught.
33. The school seeks the views of small groups of parents on a regular basis through questionnaires and the parents' forum. However, some parents believe these groups to be carefully selected, which limits their effectiveness. The outcome of the parents' surveys is shared with staff and governors but not with the parents and a few parents believe that critical comment is discounted. The school operates an open-door policy but its effectiveness is limited because a small but significant minority of parents do not find their child's teacher or the office staff to be approachable.
34. The school has very strong and well established links with the local community. Pupils take part in the town's annual Gala Week and perform music in local residential homes. Local clergymen visit regularly to take assembly and pupils visit St Peter's church, with some services being held there for pupils and their parents. Pupils study the local area in history and geography. Local businesses provide prizes for special events at the school. A significant number of the regular voluntary helpers in school are drawn from the church congregation and local community. The strong links between the school and the local community enable pupils to take an active role in the life of their town and make a positive contribution to their personal development and understanding of citizenship.

35. Links with other schools are very good. The Carousel Childcare, on site, works closely with the school both in developing its before and after school care and in making the move into school as smooth as possible for children. Local schools work closely together in an active academic council. Some innovative work has been done so that all the local schools work in partnership. For example, the educational welfare officer works in all the schools and common systems have been established to deal with attendance and punctuality issues. The council provides regular opportunities for teachers to meet together and, by spreading the cost, is able to offer a wider range of training courses. Local primary schools join together for some sporting activities. Links with the Community College support the curriculum in music and design and technology. The primary and secondary schools work closely to make pupils' move to high school as smooth as possible.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management are good, with very good strengths in some areas. Governors make a significant contribution to the school, and the governing body undertakes its work well. The headteacher's leadership is good and she is very well supported by the deputy headteacher. Effective management structures ensure the school is effective and applications of the principles of best value are good. Financial management is good overall, although the school would benefit from improved forward planning in view of the current rise in the number on roll.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the headteacher is good.
- Very good support from the deputy headteacher.
- The headteacher and deputy head have created a united and effective staff team.
- The commitment towards inclusion and concern for individuals shown by the headteacher, staff and governors is very good.
- The leadership and management of the work with pupils who have special educational needs is effective.
- Forward financial planning would benefit from further consideration to ensure the current rise in numbers on roll is addressed.
- Governors support and challenge the school well.

Commentary

36. *'We aim to provide dedicated and imaginative teaching which will develop confidence, equality, self-respect and motivation in all children, and which will give them every opportunity to fulfil their potential in a safe and secure environment'*. The school's aims successfully underpin the work of the school. The key to this good school is the good leadership by the headteacher and the very good support she receives from the talented deputy. The headteacher has a clear educational vision, linked closely to providing a broad education that enables pupils to develop as well-rounded people. She has a clear picture of the strengths of the school and areas for development. This is based on her careful monitoring of teaching and learning and her good analysis of assessment data. She works sensitively with staff and governors and enables them to develop their own roles through a programme of training and support. This has a positive impact on the high standards achieved when the pupils complete their education at the end of Year 6.
37. The deputy headteacher works extremely enthusiastically and effectively. He leads the staff team very well and brings his many talents to bear on his work in the school. Whilst fulfilling his teaching commitment particularly well, he has also developed a very good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses within the school. He is aware of what needs to be improved and makes an important contribution to the management of the school's priorities. The deputy, with the headteacher, regularly reviews teaching and learning, adapting and improving as appropriate.

38. Most teaching staff have responsibility for leading at least one subject area. These roles are well developed, especially in relation to monitoring and evaluating provision and standards in their particular areas. Strategic planning in individual subjects is good because action plans clearly identify what needs to be done to push standards higher. Action is effective and higher standards are achieved as a result.
39. Overall, the management of the school is good. Effective systems are in place to ensure that there is a clear programme for monitoring and review of standards to inform governors and staff throughout the year. Governors are involved in the analysis of achievement by different groups, including those with special educational needs. Results of monitoring form a basis for the school improvement plan. The day-to-day running of the school is efficient and all procedures are designed to ensure this is maintained. Induction procedures for new staff have improved since the last inspection and are now very effective.
40. The general administration is good and owes much to the competence of the administrative officer and her assistant. All staff enjoy working at St Peter's, and the headteacher and governors ensure that all are valued for their contribution. All staff are consulted when changes are proposed and everyone involved with the school contributes to the very effective care of the pupils.
41. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is managed well, although the special educational needs co-ordinator has no regular dedicated classroom release to implement her responsibilities. Learning support assistants are appropriately trained and liaise closely with their classroom teachers. Teachers write individual action plans in consultation with the special educational needs co-ordinator, and wherever possible individual needs are met within the lessons planned. Progress is carefully monitored, particularly in mathematics and English, and targets adjusted as needed. Regular reviews with teachers, parents and the appropriate agencies, when available, inform the target setting. The governor with responsibility for liaison over the aspect of special educational needs visits the special educational needs co-ordinator regularly, becoming involved in reviews from time to time and, as a result, she is very well informed.
42. The management of the school's finances is good. The governors are active at all stages of planning and monitor outcomes well. They plan annual expenditure, taking into account information on standards achieved. A high priority is given to maintaining a good level of good quality staffing. Funding is tight and the recent building works have resulted in a small deficit budget. Although the headteacher and governors have clear plans about how they will reduce the deficit, they do not have any longer-term financial planning which outlines a range of scenarios on staffing, pupil numbers and funding.

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	659,789	Balance from previous year	52,104
Total expenditure	661,563	Balance carried forward to the next year	-1,774
Expenditure per pupil	3,007		

43. Balances this year are slightly in deficit and currently stand at five per cent below the recommended contingency. In common with most building projects, capital funding fell short of the actual cost of adapting the existing building and acquiring additional resources. The headteacher and governors are aware of this and regularly seek ways to reduce spending in one area to support it in another.

44. The school makes good use of the principles of best value in its expenditure decisions. Full competitive tendering is employed and the school seeks and uses comparative information effectively. The school is giving good value for money.
45. There are good procedures for evaluating the work of the school, and these are based on a carefully planned programme of monitoring that includes both the headteacher and her deputy. Detailed analysis of pupils' performance in statutory tests provides important information of where improvement is required and this feeds into the school's improvement plan. Rigorous self-evaluation of other aspects of the school, including teaching and learning, ensures that additional priorities are clearly identified and action taken.
46. Overall, the governance of the school is good. Present governors have a good range of talents and expertise, which they use well in the best interests of the school. Many are frequent visitors to the school. Governors effectively challenge decisions made by the management team and ensure that all the options are considered. A range of committees has been established and much of the work is undertaken in these and then reported to the full governing body. The governors account well to parents and their most recent annual governors' report is of a high quality. The long-standing chair of governors provides good support and is very committed to his work in the school. All statutory requirements related to governors are met.

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

SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The recent addition of a Nursery class has improved provision for children in the Foundation Stage. They now benefit from a new open-plan area and from opportunities for shared learning between Nursery and Reception children. The school has worked hard to introduce a curriculum which meets the needs of all children in the Foundation Stage and short weekly topics are particularly effective for sustaining their interest.

Many children start in Reception with standards below those expected for children of this age, although some are above the expected levels. By the end of their Reception Year, all children, including children with special educational needs, make good achievement and standards are satisfactory overall. This is a result of good teaching and small group tasks which allow for the different needs of children to be met. The school has plans to improve its procedures for recording the achievement of Nursery children. At present staff are not sufficiently clear about how well children are doing in relation to the Early Learning Goals.

The co-ordinator successfully leads the Foundation Stage team and carefully monitors teaching and planning. She has supported new staff well.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are confident in their surroundings.
- All children sustain good focus in self-directed tasks.

Commentary

47. Children have settled well into their new Nursery environment. They are happy to come to Nursery and to join in with the range of interesting activities available for them. Staff have worked hard to plan familiar routines and this helps all children to feel secure in their surroundings. For example, they use pictures to inform children about their daily activities and play music to signal the end of each activity. In response, children eagerly tidy away their toys and come together on the mat.
48. Reception children are also confident within their surroundings. For example, they happily choose their own morning activities when they arrive at school. There is a good range of interactive displays and interesting resources for children to use at this time which sustains their interest. There are very good opportunities for Nursery and Reception children to engage in shared independent learning together. These contribute well to the very good relationships between children and adults. The use of role play contributes well to children's social development and there are good systems for promoting self-esteem.
49. Children behave well and clearly know the difference between right and wrong. They are generally motivated and excited about their work because topics are well chosen and interesting. Occasionally, children lose interest because work is not well matched to their needs.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are well-planned opportunities for children to develop their skills in speaking and listening.
- Children have good attitudes to books.
- The development of writing skills is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

50. Children have a range of well-planned opportunities which develop their speech and extend their vocabulary. In Nursery, for example, children confidently talk about their activities and willingly involve adults in their play. In Reception, children's talk is stimulated through good teaching. For example, they eagerly discuss the contents of a suitcase that has been left in their classroom during playtime. Children also benefit from working in small groups where they can initiate and respond to discussions with the support of an adult.
51. All children show good attitudes to books because they are attractively displayed and regularly used as a stimulus for learning. For example, in Nursery, children listen to the story of *'The bear who went to the sea-side'* to stimulate their imaginative play. In Reception they follow the story of the *'Hungry Caterpillar'* to support their work on *'lifecycles'*. Children willingly choose to look at the range of attractive books on display and enjoy using the school library, to share and discuss their books with others. Good attention is given to the teaching of letter sounds, which supports children in their reading. There are good opportunities for Nursery and Reception children to share reading at home. This contributes to children's good achievement in this area. Good teaching, well-planned lessons, effective adult support and the flexible use of accommodation and sharing resources all have a positive affect on children's learning.
52. Children's writing skills are generally unsatisfactory by the end of their Reception Year. They do not have enough opportunities to regularly practise their writing for a range of different purposes. Scrutiny of their work shows that some children do not make sufficient progress in forming their letters and in spelling simple words. This is because children are not made sufficiently aware of how they can improve their work. Children use their writing in role play to make labels and to book holidays, but there are not enough opportunities for children to engage in stimulating independent writing tasks throughout the day. Teachers' assessment of children's writing is not used effectively to support and improve achievement in their writing.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good focus on developing children's numeracy skills.
- Good use is made of appropriate vocabulary to ensure understanding.

Commentary

53. In Nursery, children learn about shape and size by using different containers in the sand and water. They build tall towers, fish for sea creatures and count them and measure ingredients in cooking. Through these well-planned activities children learn about mathematical language. This is continually introduced and reinforced throughout the day.
54. In Reception, staff use every opportunity to help children to learn about numbers. During registration, for example, they calculate the number of children present by counting back, and use tallying to work out how many children are staying for lunch. Most children are confident in counting and combining numbers to ten because tasks allow for children to practise and

consolidate these skills. There are good links with other subjects and good resources to support practical tasks. The spacious accommodation allows children to engage in a good range of practical activity. Reception children also benefit from working in small groups and from the additional support of adults. This allows for the different needs of children to be met through additional challenge and support. However, scrutiny of work shows that recorded work for some children is not well matched to their needs and this affects their progress.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good range of first-hand experiences to support learning.

Commentary

55. Topics are carefully chosen to help children to make sense of the world in which they live. They collect caterpillars and watch them change into butterflies, and plant seeds to learn about what plants need to grow. In their current work on 'holidays', Nursery children learn to make sandcastles and explore creatures from under the sea. Reception children learn about their own location by taking photographs and by visiting the beach. They learn about other places through role play in the 'Travel Agency'. In these sessions all children achieve well because they are thoroughly involved in their learning.
56. Nursery children develop good skills on the computer and benefit from dedicated lessons in the ICT suite. They confidently follow simple programs and use icons appropriately. By the end of their Reception Year, standards in ICT are generally in line with levels expected for this age and children make good achievement overall.
57. There is a good range of construction equipment which both Nursery and Reception children access frequently. Weekly topics sustain children's interest well and make good links with other areas. The use of a good range of resources, including effective visits and visitors, supports learning. All adults make good use of appropriate vocabulary with the children and all children show positive attitudes to their work.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of resources supports learning in this area.
- Lack of adult support restricts access to the outside area for some Reception children.

Commentary

58. The provision for outdoor play has improved since the last inspection. There is now a good range of equipment for helping children to develop their skills in steering, climbing, balancing and swinging. The new 'timber trail', for instance, encourages Nursery children to negotiate beams, moving platforms and different levels. They make good progress because they are sufficiently challenged and well supported by staff. One Reception class does not have ready access to the outside area and both Reception classes are restricted in their use of this space because of insufficient adult support. There are regular timetabled opportunities for all children to develop their physical skills and they achieve well as a result. Reception children make good use of the school swimming pool and benefit from skilled teaching. They are very well

supervised at this time and are exceeding the levels expected for children of this age. The Nursery nurse makes a valuable contribution to children's learning.

59. Children are developing their skills effectively in the use of small tools because there are good opportunities for all children to experiment with scissors, glue, paint and dough.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is very good provision for role play.

Commentary

60. There are very good opportunities for children to engage in role play and this contributes well to children's achievement in other areas. For example, Reception children take bookings in the 'Travel Agency' and Nursery children write in the 'visitors' book' at their caravan site. They negotiate roles with one another, plan and pack for their 'camping holiday' and drive their train to their holiday destination. There are very good resources to stimulate this play and staff join in to extend this learning further.
61. There are good opportunities for children to experiment with materials and to make pictures and models, and this links well with their learning in other areas. For example, they pattern butterfly wings and observe and draw patterns from shells. They also experiment making different shades of green as part of their work on growth.
62. There are good opportunities for children to regularly mix their own colours and to explore the effects of different brushes on their work. All children have regular effective opportunities to sing to the accompaniment of the piano. The curriculum is well planned and adults make good use of effective resources.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in speaking and listening and reading are above the expected levels in Year 2 and Year 6.
- Leadership and management are very good.
- Pupils achieve well because of the predominantly good teaching.
- Classroom support assistants are deployed well.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
- Writing skills are underdeveloped with younger pupils, and writing lags behind reading in Year 6.
- Approaches to marking are inconsistent.

Commentary

63. Standards in speaking and listening are above nationally expected levels in Year 2 and Year 6. In English and in other subjects, pupils talk about their work clearly and confidently to each

other, their teachers and other adults. Planned opportunities for pupils' speaking and listening are, however, inconsistent.

64. Pupils enjoy reading and achieve well. In Years 1 and 2, pupils read individually and in groups from a range of books, including those from published schemes. Standards in reading in Year 2 are above nationally expected levels, in spite of there being a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in this year group. Pupils representing a wide range of abilities talk about their favourite reading well and are very knowledgeable about an impressive range of authors, for example, Michael Foreman, Shirley Hughes and Simon James. Year 2 pupils understand how to use an information book, and they know the difference between non-fiction and fiction. Reading with parents and carers at home is encouraged throughout the school as part of the regular arrangements for homework, and this supports pupils' learning well.
65. Pupils' achievement in reading from Years 3 to 6 is also good, and standards in reading are well above nationally expected levels by the end of Year 6. The library is appropriately stocked and up to date overall, using county library loans to add to the variety. Pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6 act as librarians and library loans are recorded electronically. A separate ICT suite adds to the resources for research. Careful records are kept of reading progress of pupils both individually and in groups throughout the school, and sample pupils' reading progress is monitored regularly. All classes have book corners and information books related to the current themes and topics. In some classes, authors feature in displays, with pupils' work related to the text.
66. Pupils' achievement in writing in Year 2 is satisfactory overall but standards in Year 2 are below expected levels. In Years 3 to 6 pupils' achievement in writing is good and standards in Year 6 are in line with national expectations. Opportunities for self-assessment are being developed, but this and marking and noting of individual targets are inconsistent at present and do not always help pupils know what they need to do next to make their writing better. This has already been identified as an area for improvement by the school. There is also inconsistency in the range of books used by pupils for recording writing. The teaching of handwriting is rarely linked with spelling, so that common letter strings are not practised, and joined handwriting, which is not taught until the end of Year 2, does not transfer securely to other writing, particularly for Years 2 to 4, but also for a few pupils in Years 5 and 6. This does not prepare these pupils effectively for rapid note-taking required at Year 7. The youngest children do not practise the handwriting and spelling skills of writing sufficiently and there is little pride in presentation. They have a wide range of opportunities to write, but their writing is rarely transcribed, nor is there evidence of young children dictating at length to an adult scribe. This means that they and others cannot return to their writing to re-read it and enjoy it, nor recognise when their writing is becoming conventional, and good stories are, in effect, lost. The school has identified writing as an area to develop for younger pupils and this is on the school improvement plan.
67. The achievement of all groups of pupils, including boys, girls, those with special educational needs and higher-attaining pupils, is good throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively by good planning and the good deployment of classroom support assistants. Classroom support assistants are also appropriately trained and deployed well to manage additional literacy intervention programmes for small groups of pupils who are underachieving, and these pupils also make good progress.
68. Teaching and learning are good. Of the lessons seen, one was very good and two were excellent. Teaching approaches reflect the literacy strand of the National Primary Strategy, which is now well established since the last inspection. The elements seen of very good and better teaching typically include:

- Good planning, well informed by good assessment, so it includes different approaches to the work for pupils of different abilities, meeting pupils' needs well.
- Teachers keep up a good pace with clear reminders of time limits, so that pupils work well, with concentration.
- High expectations of work, behaviour, independence and responsibility, so that pupils achieve well.
- Good links are made with other areas of the curriculum so that pupils learn literacy skills well in context, for example, Year 6 pupils wrote safety advice leaflets about the sea within the school-wide theme of coasts, particularly relevant here.
- Marking which is responsive and indicates an interest in the content of what pupils write as well as helping them to see where they can improve.
- Good inclusion of pupils with special educational needs through involvement in whole-class sections of literacy hour.
- Teachers' strong subject knowledge and enthusiasm which stimulates and motivates pupils well.
- Very good use of drama so that pupils' better understanding of a situation helps them to improve their writing, for example, groups of Year 5 pupils devised 'freeze-frames' to depict the 'before and after' moments in an incident they had imagined.
- Very good relationships between teachers and pupils, together with very good classroom management, support learning very well.
- Teachers make opportunities for pupils to talk to each other about what they know or remember, about their work and what they have learnt, so that pupils are focused on their learning.
- The good use of ICT in the lesson which supports pupils' learning very well, for example, in a Year 3 lesson, the teacher demonstrated story-writing well using the computer and whiteboard, helping pupils to understand the choices made by writers.

An excellent literacy lesson in Year 3

"And now," announced the teacher, in role as commentator, "Welcome to the International Authors' Convention, where publishers are eagerly waiting to listen to 28 new authors. Will the publishers buy their stories? What makes a good story?"

Pupils respond with what they have been working hard on as they were writing:

"Synonyms for said, bad, move and nice."

"Adjectives."

"Time connectives."

"New person, new line." (for speech punctuation).

The "commentator" invited a series of pupils of varying ability to read their stories so far. They sat in the author's chair which was cushioned and brightly draped. After each story, still in role, she invited comments on what they noticed. Pupils listened avidly, talking knowledgeably about expression and ideas as well as synonyms, adjectives and time connectives.

This was end of a lively, pacy session. Pupils achieved very well because of the teacher's careful planning to support writing and an impressive ability to make all pupils feel important and confident, both as writers when writing and critics when listening.

69. The relative weaknesses noted in some teaching include incidents where the teacher talked too much, with missed opportunities for pupils to talk to each other about their learning. As a result, pupils were less active in their learning. There was insufficient time for review and assessment of what pupils had learnt in the plenary. Teachers' subject knowledge about the complexities of word structure was weak and there was an overemphasis on word and sentence level in marking. On occasions there was a lack of involvement of pupils with special educational needs in whole-class work and a lack of pace.
70. The co-ordinator leads English very well, with enthusiasm and commitment. His subject knowledge is excellent, he is up to date with recent research in language and literacy, and he models teaching very well, including the use of books for pupils to write in, and the effective

use of marking. He has been actively contributing to materials in use by the local education authority which ensures he is fully up to date with both local and national initiatives. He manages the subject very well, regularly monitoring needs for staff development, lesson planning and longer-term planning, lessons, pupils' work annually, progress of pupils who receive support through intervention programmes, and the use of resources and the learning environment. He has overseen the introduction of increased planned opportunities for talk to support learning and this has improved both speaking and listening throughout the school. Assessment is thorough, including analysis of data, and this and pupil tracking inform target setting well. Reading has improved as a result of assessment and monitoring informing lesson planning and action planning well. Author visits have also contributed to improvements in reading. The next focus is to be writing, and the most recent monitoring has focused on that, identifying various aspects to develop. So far, a start has been made by making good opportunities across the curriculum to apply what is being learnt in writing, and a review of handwriting is planned, but there is more to develop. A very good example of supporting pupils at the end of their primary school years is the use of a unit of work on two authors, Michael Morpurgo and Jacqueline Wilson, which will be developed further at one of the feeder secondary schools in Year 7. Resources, which include whiteboards and a wide range of fiction, are good. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported in lessons and this ensures that they make the same good progress as their peers. Overall, improvement since the last inspection is good.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

71. Overall, pupils use their language and literacy skills well in other subjects, and links with other subjects appear clearly on the planning. Teachers use ICT in the suite well to develop and apply pupils' reading, writing and research skills. Less use is made of the computers in the classroom.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and standards are above expected levels in Year 6.
- Teaching is good, with a strong emphasis on the development of numeracy skills.
- Mathematics is used well in other subjects and reinforces learning.
- Higher-attaining pupils are challenged well.
- The use of numeracy to solve problems is underdeveloped.

Commentary

72. In Year 2 standards are broadly in line with expected levels. These pupils entered the school with weak mathematical skills and therefore are making good progress. The school is successfully targeting the relatively small proportion of higher-attaining pupils in this age group as well as those who are just below average in order to raise standards further. Inspection evidence and the school's own records show that pupils' learning builds systematically over their time in school and in Year 6 standards are above expected levels.
73. As a result of the consistently good quality of teaching pupils achieve well and often very well, as in their acquisition of well-developed number skills. Teachers are alert to the needs of different groups of pupils. They work hard to ensure there is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls by designing activities and tasks that motivate both genders. In Years 3 to 6 pupils are taught in groups of similar ability, allowing teaching to be focused at an appropriate level and ensuring that all pupils receive good levels of support. Pupils with special educational needs achieve equally well.

74. Teachers make good use of the Numeracy Strategy and the linked Unit plans to ensure lessons provide suitable challenge, continuity of approach and the structured development of skills and understanding. They introduce pupils to different methods of calculation and encourage them to explore and discuss the methods used by others. This is a key strength of teaching and learning. Pupils grow in confidence and work with increasingly complex calculations as they move through the school. New skills are always reinforced by employing them in practical situations. By Year 6, most pupils deal confidently with fractions, decimals and percentages. However, they are less successful in applying their knowledge to solving problems.
75. The quality of teaching is good. In the lessons seen it was consistently good or very good and examination of pupils' earlier work confirms this good quality. In the most effective lessons particular strengths included very good relationships and skilful questioning. Teachers always share the purpose of the lesson with pupils at the outset and intervene with reminders to ensure pupils remain focused before returning to it at the end to review progress. Increasingly, and particularly as they get older, pupils are starting to be involved in the process of assessing their own progress. However, this is less well developed in the majority of classes. Teachers have high levels of subject expertise and confidence and use this to plan interesting and stimulating tasks that successfully motivate pupils. For example, they make good use of their projectors and whiteboards as teaching tools. As a result pupils are enthusiastic learners and they enjoy their mathematics lessons. They take part eagerly in group and class discussions, secure in the knowledge that teachers value their contributions. Oral feedback in lessons to help pupils improve is helpful and constructive but marking of pupils' work is not consistent across the school.
76. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and, as a result, they achieve well.
77. The co-ordinator is caretaking the subject in the long-term absence of another teacher. She provides good leadership and has recently updated resources across the school.

Mathematics across the curriculum

79. Pupils are provided with good opportunities to use mathematics as part of their work in other subjects. These include collecting, recording and analysing data in science and geography as well as developing accurate measuring skills in design and technology.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils attain good standards at the end of Year 6.
- Good emphasis is placed on practical activities that interest pupils and support their learning.
- Marking is not used consistently to support learning.
- The leadership and management of the subject are good.

Commentary

80. Standards are at the levels expected in Year 2 and are well above national expectations in Year 6. Since the last inspection the school has worked hard to improve standards in Year 6. This is because teaching has improved, lessons are more practical and interesting and there is good challenge and high expectations for all pupils.
81. Scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning shows continued good teaching and achievement in Years 3 to 6. Teachers plan for a broad science curriculum and give good attention to teaching scientific enquiry skills. As a result pupils are developing their

investigative skills by hypothesising, recording their findings and drawing conclusions. By the end of Year 6, pupils confidently devise their own investigations and show a good understanding of the need for fair tests. Marking is inconsistent across the school and does not always make pupils aware of their learning and what they need to do to improve. This means that some pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

82. Pupils have an appropriately broad curriculum in Years 1 and 2. By Year 2 they have learned about the needs of living things and investigated wheeled vehicles as part of their work on *forces*. They have successfully used charts to identify the characteristics of materials and are developing their skills of prediction. There are good opportunities for pupils to observe changes over time and to draw conclusions from their observations. Scrutiny of pupils' work in Years 1 and 2 shows some recordings rely too heavily on pupils' literacy skills and this hampers their achievement.
83. Teaching is good; very good in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactory in Year 2. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use it to skilfully question pupils. In Year 3, for example, pupils reconsider their predictions as a result of challenging questions and stimulating discussions. In Year 2 pupils respond well in small group tasks that are generally well matched to their learning needs. The teaching assistants very ably support pupils with special needs to ensure that they are fully involved in their learning. Some tasks for higher-attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenging to extend their scientific knowledge and understanding.
84. There is a strong focus on the use of correct terminology as seen, for example, in Year 3. Pupils use the terms '*opaque*', '*transparent*' and '*translucent*' to explain their predictions about the effects of light on different materials and objects. In Year 6 pupils use appropriate vocabulary to recall their previous work and all teachers plan effectively for the use of scientific language during lessons. In Year 2, good explanations help children to understand the term '*characteristics*'. Pupils make good use of ICT to support their science learning. For example, Year 2 pupils use computer programs to learn about plants and living things. Year 6 pupils enter data, create spreadsheets and charts from their investigations and interpret their findings. There are good links with other subjects and this helps pupils to extend their scientific knowledge. In Year 6, for example, pupils use their experiences of bread making in design and technology to help them to predict how yeast will react in different conditions.
85. Pupils enjoy their science lessons because activities are practical and 'hands on'. As a result they learn new information quickly. Good examples of this were seen in Year 3 where there were animated discussions between pupils as they predicted what would happen to light in water. All pupils with special educational needs achieve well because they are supported well and tasks are adapted to suit their individual needs.
86. The knowledgeable subject leader has a clear overview of provision and has used this to form her subject action plan. There has been good focus on developing investigative skills and practical activities and on improving resources, which has all helped to improve standards in Year 6. The school is now aware of the need to raise standards for pupils in Years 1 and 2. Assessment is satisfactory overall.
87. Other factors affecting pupils' progress are:
 - Good use made of school grounds.
 - Visits and visitors support the curriculum.
 - Good resources.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good leadership has had a very positive impact on improving the quality of provision.
- Pupils throughout the school achieve well and standards exceed the expected levels at the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is good.
- Significantly improved facilities, especially the computer suite, are used effectively.
- Pupils are well motivated and stimulated in their learning.
- Opportunities for independent use of computers, particularly by older pupils, are underdeveloped.
- Pupils are not always aware of what they have achieved or how they can improve.

Commentary

88. Standards exceed the expected levels at the end of Year 6. This is due to teaching of a high quality, a carefully planned curriculum, effective training for staff, very good leadership by the co-ordinator and good use of very good facilities. Pupils and teachers also make well-planned use of other aspects of ICT, such as programmable 'roamers' and digital cameras. In a relatively short space of time, teachers are already exploiting the computer suite fully. They have committed considerable time to becoming conversant with the newly installed systems and have developed a good level of subject expertise, apparent in the challenging nature of lessons.
89. A well-planned programme of lessons for each year group ensures that all pupils achieve well. Pupils are learning and consolidating new skills rapidly because of regular access for full classes to the computer suite. Pupils are highly enthusiastic and motivated and fully focused during their time working in the suite. The extensive range of equipment is proving very good value for money. By the end of Year 2, pupils understand the various forms of communication such as CD-ROMs, tape recorders, text and photographs. They confidently log on, use safe search engines with support, copy and insert pictures, edit text, save their work and log off. By Year 6 many pupils are confident and competent users of computers. They know the usefulness of ICT in their work and in the outside world. For example, pupils readily collect information and present it on spreadsheets and graphs. They use secure search engines to access websites on the Internet. They use 'PowerPoint' to present animated presentations with sound effects, dropping text and graphics onto the screen and moving smoothly from frame to frame. The use of the few class computers is currently underdeveloped and pupils have too few opportunities to use computers independently at times other than timetabled sessions in the computer suite.
90. The teaching and learning observed in the suite during specific ICT lessons were very good in the main. Teachers' class management, their strong subject knowledge and ability to convey ICT skills through questioning and instruction are consistently of high quality. Teachers' confidence, knowledge and encouragement have a positive effect on raising standards. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress as a result. All pupils are enthusiastic, very well behaved and willing to share ideas. At present, most pupils find it difficult to appraise their own work. They are not aware of what they have achieved or how to improve.
91. The leadership of the subject is very good. The co-ordinator has been instrumental in ensuring full use of the computer suite across the school. She has also ensured that all staff have received effective training in order to maximise the use of the very good resources. She is very aware of the next stage of development in the subject and works tirelessly to support staff and introduce strategies to raise attainment levels.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

92. The use of ICT across the curriculum is purposeful and is effective. Teachers' planning for other subjects always identifies opportunities for its use. Teachers and pupils regularly use

work from other subjects as a means to extend or exploit computer skills. Developing skills and confidence in mathematics helps older pupils to develop more advanced skills in the subject. Literacy skills are improved by the pupils' growing proficiency in word processing and by the use of programs to improve their skills in reading and spelling. Pupils use software programs and the Internet for research in other subjects such as history, geography, design and technology and art and design. Data handling in science and mathematics using computer skills is another good development.

HUMANITIES

Work in **history** and **geography** was sampled.

93. Judgements about history and geography are based on one history lesson from Years 1 to 2, one geography lesson seen in Years 3 to 6, scrutiny of pupils' work in books and on display throughout the school, and discussions with the co-ordinator of both subjects and with pupils. This evidence suggests provision is at least good and standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 to be in line with expected levels. Teaching and learning in the lessons seen were good in history and very good in geography. Pupils achieve well in both subjects, and made good and very good progress in the lessons seen. Year 2 pupils clearly remembered details about Edwardians on the beach which were different and the same as today from a video, and Year 5 pupils were productively engaged in discussion of a local planning issue through very well-organised groups for talk through role play. This last lesson also made a strong contribution to citizenship through pupils' understanding of the issues to be debated and voted on by the local town council.
94. There is a well-organised and appropriate range of history and geography resources and artefacts within school or borrowed from the local education authority and these are used well and displayed to support and stimulate learning. Good use is made of visits, for example, Drake's home at Buckland Abbey, and the local museum and videos are also used well to bring learning alive in history. All pupils have the opportunity to experience the lives of people in different times. In Year 2, for example, they explore the role of pupils and teachers in Victorian times and in Year 3 they investigate the history of the school. In geography, visits to support learning include the local beach and coast. The whole school has been involved in a themed series of lessons on the coast, which has included walks along the coastal path in Year 6, and work on coastal morphology in Year 5. In both subjects teachers identify links with other subjects, and make good opportunities for literacy especially. For example, in Year 4, literacy skills were applied in writing a modern school log book in the style of a Victorian log book, and letters to children in the past to explain the twenty-first century, and in Year 6, pupils use a wide range of formats for recording information. In Year 2, pupils have been writing postcards from coastal holidays, and in Year 1, pupils have been making and reading maps of journeys to school.
95. Curriculum leadership and management are very good overall. The co-ordinator for both these subjects is very well organised, committed and innovative. There is a good range of well-planned topics to support learning in these subjects. In geography, local issues are reviewed each year to ensure that they are included if possible, and world maps are kept up to date. Both subjects have developed an enquiry approach in the last year, and work developed in Year 5 alongside a trainee teacher has been published in the Geographical Association's *Primary Geography Magazine* as well as the *Primary English Magazine*. Monitoring includes not only planning, teaching and pupils' work, but also the learning environment through focusing on teachers' questioning. The co-ordinator also interviews pupils on what they know and understand some time after a topic has concluded and has identified issues from this monitoring for the action plan. Marking of pupils' work is variable in both subjects. When it is good, objectives are clear, and pupils are shown how to improve. Appropriate assessment of pupils' achievement takes place at the end of each unit of work. History has made good improvement since the last inspection; there was no judgement on geography at the last inspection.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Extra-curricular activities enthuse pupils and make a significant contribution to the school ethos.
- Tuition for pupils learning instruments is well organised and effective.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about music.
- Planning for thirty-minute sessions needs to be more realistic, with fewer teaching points.
- Use of ICT and music technologies needs to be developed.
- Further work needed to develop and recognise composition.

Commentary

96. The subject received light sampling during the inspection. Evidence was gathered from two lessons, an orchestra observation, photographic evidence, discussions with the co-ordinator and with pupils from Year 2 and Year 6. In the two lessons seen in Years 3 to 6, teaching and learning ranged from very good to satisfactory. Overall, indications are that pupils achieve well by Year 2 and Year 6 and that standards are at least in line with expectations. Year 2 pupils of all abilities have a good knowledge of a range of percussion instruments and all had favourite songs. Year 6 pupils discuss knowledgeably the music they have experienced. Those playing instruments in the orchestra achieve very well in these settings.
97. The school makes very good provision for pupils who wish to learn to play a musical instrument and for gifted and talented pupils, who participate in the school orchestra, which is a good opportunity for musicians to come together and reinforce their musical ability with others. The school involves about 20 per cent of pupils from Years 3 to 6 in extra-curricular musical activities. Brass, woodwind, flute and guitar tutors from the local education authority provide effective weekly small group or individual lessons. As a result, the subject makes a significant contribution to these pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, as the orchestra participates in rehearsals and concerts in school, the local church, elsewhere in the community and in the local Primary Music Festival. By Year 6, these pupils sometimes bring their instruments into class to accompany class sessions. A choir is formed for certain occasions and also performs in the community.
98. Pupils' progress in class lessons is variable. In one lesson pupils of all abilities were composing "sound pictures", and began well, but good progress was curtailed by the short time allocated. In another, longer, lesson, pupils achieved well, successfully mastering contrasting beat and rhythm. Boys and girls are equally involved and pupils with special educational needs receive effective support from class teachers or assistants to enable them to succeed in maintaining a pulse or copying a rhythm pattern, for example.
99. The school is well resourced with tuned and untuned percussion, which is centrally well organised and accessible; there is little core percussion kept in the classroom, which is difficult when thirty-minute sessions are timetabled. Visiting musicians also contribute well to pupils' cultural and musical knowledge – there have been performances from an ensemble of the local education authority's peripatetic teachers, a visiting brass band, a group of Melaneseans, and a drum group, "Drum Crazy", where pupils learnt at first hand about elements of drumming and types of drums.
100. Leadership and management of the subject are good. There is a clear cycle of audit, action planning, monitoring of planning and teaching and half-termly assessment. The well-established co-ordinator has introduced a commercial programme which supports non-

specialist teachers well, but she also gives advice regularly to these teachers. She has already identified the aspects of composition and music technology as a focus for development. There have been aspects which have improved since the last inspection, notably the move to more non-specialists teaching.

101. Work in **design and technology**, **art and design** and **physical education** was sampled. It is therefore not possible to make firm judgements about standards or overall provision in these subjects.
102. In **design and technology**, three lessons were seen. Teaching was good, with one very good lesson observed. Pupils make good use of knowledge and skills gained in other subjects to support their work in design and technology. For example, in Year 4, pupils successfully applied their previous learning in science to light the bulb in their lighthouse. In Year 5, pupils measured accurately when designing and making their toys. There are good links with ICT. Pupils use graphs and charts to record design data and research topics on the Internet.
103. Pupils are made aware of health and safety procedures and this is a good feature of teaching. They handle saws, drills and glue guns with care as a result. In all lessons seen, pupils enjoy their work. The variety of designs shows good independence and their ability to evaluate their work shows their desire to improve. They use technical vocabulary to talk about their designs and models because this is consistently used by teachers. The new co-ordinator has clear plans for improving the teaching of design skills throughout the school and monitors pupils' work to ensure that they meet the standards expected for this age.
104. In **physical education**, pupils benefit from spacious paved and grassed areas and from their own on-site swimming pool. As a result all strands of the subject are regularly taught. In addition, Year 6 pupils benefit from taking part in adventurous activities such as abseiling, raft building, quad biking and climbing, during their residential visit. There are good opportunities for pupils to follow their particular interests by taking part in extra-curricular activities. They play competitive matches against other local schools, for example, and develop the skills learned in lessons. The school has introduced a girls' football club to encourage their participation and some Year 6 pupils are specially chosen to support younger pupils in Years 1 and 2.
105. In the two lessons seen, the teaching of games skills was good. There were no lessons seen in Years 1 and 2. Pupils respond well to additional challenge and evaluate their own work and that of others with confidence. Pupils clearly enjoy their lessons, they try hard, are willing to show their work and take pride in their efforts. Good initiatives have improved the provision for pupils and the quality of their learning. For example, with the support of an *Advanced Skills Teacher* the school has addressed boys' attitudes to dance and this has improved their confidence. A new fitness trail has recently been introduced to benefit all pupils in the school. Teachers plan well and build on from pupils' previous knowledge. The subject leader is committed to improving the provision for PE.
106. In the one lesson observed in **art and design**, teaching and learning were good and most pupils reached the standards expected for their age. Pupils enjoyed using wire to sculpt three-dimensional underwater creatures and used their sketches from their Aquarium visit to support this learning. Pupils show a good knowledge of different techniques for sculpting wire because they have studied the work of a local sculptor and applied some techniques to their own work.
107. The school has benefited from the support of an *Advanced Skills Teacher* (AST) and this is improving pupils' knowledge and understanding. As a result there is good attention to teaching the techniques and styles from different artists and crafts people. In Year 3, for example, pupils learn about the style of Marc Chagall and copy aspects of his work, and in Year 4 pupils copy Andy Warhol. There has also been good attention to developing the use of sketchbooks in Years 3 to 6. Pupils now use their books to collect and explore ideas. Their observations

are also recorded through the use of digital cameras. There are appropriate plans to continue this in Years 1 and 2.

108. The subject leader has been instrumental in improving the provision for art and design in recent years. A carefully planned programme of learning for each class ensures that pupils experience a range of different approaches and techniques.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION (PSHE) AND CITIZENSHIP

No teaching of **PSHE** or **citizenship** was observed.

109. The school's provision for PSHE is well integrated into other subjects, which increases its relevance for pupils. The school's commitment to healthy living is evident in the 'Huff and Puff' club, timber trail and the focus on healthy eating at lunch times and breaks. The school council initiatives include devising a system to clean the cutlery in the canteen more effectively and helping to choose equipment so that pupils are more active at playtimes. The school achieved a Healthy Schools' Award in 2003 in recognition of its effective work. The school follows a structured scheme for PSHE but issues are also addressed as they arise, both in circle time and in assembly. The subject is well led and the co-ordinator has carried out an audit of the working environment and the curriculum to ensure that all areas of PSHE are covered effectively. Good use is made of external agencies, such as the community police and school nurse, to provide additional expertise.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

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

Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

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

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