

INSPECTION REPORT

**STICKLANDS CHURCH OF ENGLAND VOLUNTARY AIDED
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Evershot, Dorchester

LEA area: Dorset

Unique reference number: 113799

Headteacher: Mrs M Davy

Lead inspector: Mrs J Ikin

Dates of inspection: 6th - 8th June 2005

Inspection number: 267989

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:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	102
School address:	Summer Lane Evershot Dorchester Dorset
Postcode:	DT2 0JP
Telephone number:	(01935) 83287
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs D Slate
Date of previous inspection:	22 nd February 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Sticklands Church of England School is much smaller than other primary schools and has 102 pupils on role, 61 boys and 41 girls. It is a popular school and many parents who live outside the immediate area choose to send their children to the school because of its Church of England nature and its reputation for supporting pupils with special educational needs. The majority of pupils who attend the school come from white United Kingdom backgrounds, other white backgrounds and mixed white and black African are also represented. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language and none in care. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. Attainment on entry varies widely from year to year, but overall it is average. The socio economic nature of the area is above average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is above average; the number with a Statement of Special Educational Needs is average. These needs include moderate learning, social, emotional and behavioural, communication difficulties, autism and physical disability. The school has a Basic Skills Quality Mark 2004, Healthy Schools Award 2004 and Schools Achievement Award 2001.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
3349	Mrs J Ikin	Lead inspector	English Information and communication technology Art and design History Geography Personal, social and health education and citizenship
31758	Mr E Tipper	Lay inspector	
20893	Mr D Curtis	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Design and technology Physical education Music Foundation Stage
22729	Mr R Arnold	Team inspector	Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school which is strongly committed to inclusion. The personal and social development of its pupils as well as their academic achievement are at the heart of its work. Leadership and management are good and all pupils achieve well. Standards are above average in reading, mathematics and science. Overall, the school gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The strong ethos of trust and respect, which is evident throughout the school, and the school's very good programme of personal, social and health education and citizenship, make a very good contribution to pupils' confidence and self-esteem and the standards achieved.
- The curriculum is good overall and it is enriched very well through a very wide range of visits, visitors and after-school activities.
- Pupils have very good opportunities to learn through enquiry and investigation; however, there are not enough opportunities for Reception-aged pupils to develop their physical skills and to learn through outdoor play.
- The school's good links with parents and very good links with the community make a significant contribution to the curriculum and to the standards achieved.
- There are weaknesses in pupils' skills of presentation and their use of writing across the curriculum.
- Formalised assessment is not in place for art and design, design and technology, geography and history.

The school's improvement since the last inspection is good. The school has maintained the majority of the strengths identified in the last inspection and improved its provision for cultural development, the curriculum in the Reception class, information and communication technology, and design and technology. It has not yet fully developed the use of its provision for outdoor play for Reception-aged children.

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	D	C	C
mathematics	C	D	C	B
science	C	D	C	C

*Key: A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average.
Similar schools are those with similar prior achievement.*

The results of national tests need to be interpreted with caution because of the small size of some year groups and the varying proportions of higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs within them.

Inspection findings show that **achievement is good** overall. Standards are above average in reading, mathematics and science in Year 2 and Year 6. They are average in writing and standards of presentation and writing across the curriculum are not as good as they should be. Standards in information and communication technology are average and achievement is good. Pupils achieve well in history and geography and standards are above average. Standards are average and achievement is satisfactory in physical education. Higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well because of the individual support that they receive.

Children in the Reception class achieve well and standards are above average overall. Pupils' **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development** is **good** overall and their moral and social development is very good. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils' attitudes to their work are very good and they behave very well. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. **Teaching** and learning are **good** and some very good and excellent teaching also occurs. The teachers make good use of skilful questions to move learning on. Pupils' are given good encouragement to ask their own questions and their enquiry skills are very well developed. An over use of worksheets constrains opportunities for writing in some lessons and in the occasional weaker lessons the pace of learning is too slow. Teaching assistants provide good support. Assessment is satisfactory overall. It is very good in English and mathematics, and good in science. It is satisfactory overall in other subjects but in design and technology, art and design, history and geography it is not sufficiently formalised. The curriculum is good and is enriched by a very good range of interesting visits, visitors and a very good range of activities which take place at lunchtime and after school. Provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship is very good. However, there is not enough planning for the development of pupils' writing skills across the curriculum. Provision for pupils who have special educational needs and for those who are talented and gifted is good. The school is well staffed and accommodation resources are good. A considerable strength is the new 'Discovery Centre', which is providing valuable space for practical activities throughout the curriculum. However, a weakness is the limited planning for outdoor play for Reception-aged pupils. Pupils are well cared for and there are very good procedures for involving them in all aspects of the school's work. The school's partnership with parents is good and links with the community and other schools in the area are very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The **leadership and management** of the school are **good** and its governance is good. The headteacher provides good leadership with a clear sense of direction and purpose. The leadership of the senior teacher is good and subject leadership is also good. Governors provide strong support to the school, take their job seriously and fulfil their statutory duties well.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents hold the school in high regard. Pupils love their school and take great pride in showing visitors around.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve pupils' skills of presentation and their use of writing across the curriculum.
- Formalise assessment in art and design, design and technology, geography and history.
- Ensure that Reception-aged pupils have regular opportunities for physical activity and learning through outdoor play.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils **achieve well** throughout the school. Standards are average in writing, and above average in reading, mathematics and science in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils in the Reception Year achieve well overall and standards are above average in communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and personal and social development, and average in their physical development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' positive attitudes to problem solving, investigation and enquiry make a significant contribution to the good standards that they achieve in mathematics, science, history and geography.
- Throughout the school, there are strengths in pupils' reading skills but weaknesses in their use of writing in other subjects of the curriculum.
- The physical development of Reception-aged pupils is limited by the lack of opportunities for outdoor play and physical exercise.
- The attention given to the needs of individual pupils with special educational needs ensures that that they achieve well.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.2 (16.8)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.6 (15.4)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.2 (17.7)	16.2 (16.3)

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

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.7 (25.7)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	27.3 (26.3)	27.0 (26.8)
science	28.9 (27.7)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 19 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

1. The results of 2004 national tests for Year 2 pupils were average for reading and above average for writing and mathematics. In Year 6 tests, the results were average for English, mathematics and science. The school's particular circumstances make comparisons with schools with similar prior attainment and similar numbers of free school meals difficult. For example, when compared to schools with similar prior attainment, Year 6 results were average for English and science and above average for mathematics. However, this does not give a totally accurate picture because the Year 6 year group included a higher proportion of pupils, most of whom joined the school in Years 3 to 6. When Year 2 results are compared to schools with below eight per cent of free school meals, then results are average for writing and mathematics and below average for reading. This latter comparison is not entirely valid because Dorset does not have a school meals service and so very few families apply for free

meals, even when they are eligible for them. The school has set itself challenging targets for the 2005 tests and is on course to meet them.

2. The findings of the inspection are that pupils in the school achieve well overall as a result of the good teaching they receive and the particular attention that is given in most subjects to their individual needs. The above average standards found at the time of the last inspection have been sustained in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics and science. Standards in history and geography are better than they were and are also above average. Pupils achieve well in information and communication technology (ICT), standards are average overall and they make good use of their skills to support their learning in other subjects of the curriculum. The school has attended to the criticisms of the last report and pupils now have good opportunities to use sensor and control devices in both science and design and technology. Pupils' problem solving, investigational and enquiry skills are developed well and this makes a positive contribution to the standards that the pupils achieve, not only in subjects such as science and mathematics, but also in history and geography.
3. Standards are average in writing and achievement is satisfactory overall. This is not as good as in the last inspection. Although pupils have the skills that they need to write in a range of styles and to produce work which is generally grammatically correct, weaknesses occur in both spelling and handwriting. They make good use of their speaking, listening and reading skills to support other subjects of the curriculum but their skills in using writing are unsatisfactory because of careless spelling and untidy handwriting.
4. Pupils in the Reception class achieve well in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and acquire a good knowledge and understanding of the world about them. However, their physical development is satisfactory rather than good because of limited opportunities for this aspect of their work.
5. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and many with communication and language difficulties and emotional, social and behavioural difficulties achieve the levels expected by the end of Year 6 in reading and mathematics. This is as a result of well targeted support from teaching assistants and good teaching, both in the course of whole-class lessons and in small withdrawal groups. The very good support for a pupil with physical disabilities includes a programme of regular physical exercise which is effective in increasing his strength and coordination. Coupled with the provision of a sloping wooden support for books, it contributes to his good achievement in written work. Higher attaining pupils achieve well as a result of work well matched to their needs and the opportunities that they are given to think for themselves and to carry out their own research and enquiries.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The pupils' attitudes are very good and behaviour is very good overall. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also good overall. Attendance is satisfactory but punctuality is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Caring and respect for others are embedded into the ethos of the school and result in very good relationships throughout the school.
- Pupils are very confident and keen to take responsibility. This is the result of being provided with many opportunities to mature and become independent.
- Pupils are interested in their work and enjoy finding things out for themselves; however, they are not as careful as they should be in the presentation of their written work.
- Pupils' moral, social, spiritual and cultural development is promoted very well in all areas of the curriculum.

Commentary

6. Pupils' attitudes to the school and their work are very good overall. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. Pupils feel a real sense of ownership of their school and take a great pride in it when they greet visitors and show them around. They show very good attitudes to learning in most lessons as a result of the interesting and often practical way that work is presented. Nearly all pupils listen attentively, are keen to contribute and undertake tasks enthusiastically. They enjoy carrying out investigations and enquiries and tackle research work confidently in a range of subject areas. However, they are not always so careful in their written work, where careless mistakes often detract from the quality of the content.
7. Relationships between pupils are good overall and often very good. Standards of behaviour are good overall, and often very good in the classrooms and around the school when pupils show high levels of care and sensitivity towards each other. Consistent management of pupils with emotional, social and behavioural difficulties ensures that they concentrate on their work and make good progress. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. A good example of this is when pupils who are trained peer mediators act as mentors for pupils experiencing relationship difficulties. On the few occasions that behaviour is less than good, it is when the pace of lessons is too slow and pupils become restless and engage in silly behaviour. There are very good procedures for dealing with bullying should any arise. There were no exclusions last year. Pupils with special educational needs are fully accepted into the life of the school and respond very well to their work as a result. Their peers respect their views and their behaviour and attitude to learning is good as a result. Relationships between pupils and staff are very good with a high level of mutual trust and respect. There are high expectations of what pupils should be able to do for themselves and their ideas and suggestions, both in lessons and in school council meetings, are valued and acted upon. This ethos of the school encourages pupils to become confident and independent by the time they reach Year 6.
8. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils has improved since the last inspection. Moral and social development is very good and very strongly embedded in the ethos of the school. Pupils have a clear sense of right from wrong, fairness and justice, for example, when considering the issues surrounding the need for clean water in third world countries. The opportunities that pupils have to influence the work of the school through the School Council make a very positive contribution to the development of pupils' understanding of their roles and responsibilities within the school community. This includes pupils with special educational needs, for example, those who have language and communication difficulties, who quite confidently show visitors around the school.
9. Spiritual development is good overall and promoted well through assemblies, religious education and other subjects. Pupils have numerous opportunities to reflect on their own feelings and the feelings of others, as well as to develop their awareness of the wonders of the natural world. Cultural development is promoted well through most areas of the curriculum and enhanced by visits to local art galleries, museums and places of interest. The school takes every opportunity to celebrate cultural diversity. The school is particularly successful in helping pupils to develop an understanding of, and a respect for, the feelings and points of view of those who come from ethnic minority backgrounds, for example, those arriving in England for the first time when they do not know anyone.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

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

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

10. Attendance rates are average rather than good because of a small number of parents take their children on holiday in term time. The school does all that it can to deter this and monitors attendance and punctuality well.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning is good overall. The curriculum is good and the school provides a very good standard of care for its pupils. There are very good links with parents and the community.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their own ideas and think for themselves.
- There is very good curriculum planning in English and mathematics which result in the needs of all pupils being successfully met; however, opportunities are often missed to promote pupils' writing skills across the curriculum.
- Teachers have improved their skills and confidence in teaching ICT.
- Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils with special educational needs.
- There are not enough opportunities for Reception-aged pupils to learn through outdoor play.
- Assessment in English and mathematics is very good and it is good in science but in history, geography, art and design, and design and technology it is not systematic enough.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 28 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2	10	13	2	1	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

11. The good quality of teaching has been maintained since the last inspection. Teachers plan relevant and interesting work that engages pupils' interest and systematically develops their knowledge, skills and understanding over a series of lessons. This makes a significant contribution to pupils' attitudes to learning and the standards that they achieve. In English and mathematics, there is very good attention to ensuring that work is well matched to the different needs of pupils. This ensures that all pupils, including those with a wide range of special educational needs and those who are higher attaining, achieve well. An excellent English lesson in Years 5 and 6 is an example of this. A highly organised session ensured that work in reading, handwriting and spelling was tightly matched to pupils' differing capabilities and pupils' achievement was very good as a result. The pupils with special educational needs are given the specific support that they need to enable them to succeed and be fully involved in lessons. Teachers pay good attention to the pupils' individual education plans when planning their lessons.
12. Pupils' learning is often effectively extended by the use of practical tasks in which pupils are required to think for themselves and apply their factual knowledge and skills. In English, this involves pupils in writing in the style of different authors, for example, Years 5 and 6 pupils have written sonnets in the style of Shakespeare, and in mathematics, pupils apply their numeracy skills well to problem solving situations. An excellent mathematics lesson seen in Years 3 and 4 was a good example of this; cries of delight were heard when pupils spotted the number patterns that occurred when doubling numbers up to 5,000. They couldn't wait to be set a similar investigation to find out if the pattern occurred again. Teachers make good use of

questioning and encourage pupils to discuss their ideas with each other. This ensures that all pupils are involved in thinking for themselves and learning at the edge of their capabilities. There are many well planned opportunities in geography and history for pupils to carry out their own enquires and to do research using information books and the Internet.

13. When weaknesses occur, it is because teachers do not have high enough expectations as to how pupils should present their work. In addition, the use of commercially-produced worksheets which require pupils to write brief answers restricts pupils' use and application of writing skills. In the one unsatisfactory lesson seen, the pace of learning was too slow and pupils were kept sitting listening for too long.
14. Reception-aged pupils generally learn well and there is good attention to teaching them the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Higher attaining pupils in this year group are particularly well challenged and benefit from working alongside their Year 1 classmates. However, there are not enough planned opportunities for learning through creativity, outdoor play and for physical activity. This results in achievement in their physical and creative development being satisfactory rather than good.
15. Teachers make good use of ICT to support learning in all areas of the curriculum, including science and design and technology, which were criticised in the last inspection. For example, pupils make use of sensors to record temperature and use electronic control systems on small vehicles that they make. Good use is made of the interactive whiteboards in lessons to illustrate teaching points and to check pupils' understanding. All teachers have very good relationships with their pupils, and as a result, an atmosphere of mutual trust has been created in which pupils grow in confidence and are eager to learn.
16. The quality and range of assessments of pupils' progress have improved since the last inspection. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are very good in English and mathematics and good in science. They are satisfactory in other subjects but rely too much on teachers' good informal knowledge of their pupils in history, geography, design and technology, and art and design. Monitoring procedures for special educational needs pupils are supported by teachers' own records which ensure that their needs are fully met. Pupils are fully involved in assessments of their own work and they are also encouraged to evaluate each other's work and to offer constructive criticism. Target setting for reading, writing and mathematics is rigorous and pupils' attainment is closely monitored to ensure that their learning is moving forward. The school carries out good assessments of children in the Foundation Stage, which include discussions with the local pre school playgroups.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **good**. Curriculum enrichment is very good. Accommodation and resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHEC) is very good.
- Pupils benefit from an impressive range of extra-curricular clubs, educational visits and visitors to the school.
- ICT is used well in other subjects of the curriculum and there are some good links between literacy and numeracy and other subjects, but these are not systematically planned.
- The key skills of personal development, problem solving, investigation and enquiry are incorporated well into many subjects.
- The school environment is used effectively to support learning in Years 1 to 6 but children in the Reception Year do not have sufficient access to regular outdoor play.

Commentary

17. The school is successful in ensuring it fully meets requirements for the teaching of the National Curriculum. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. Recent successful initiatives by the school have made learning much more meaningful to pupils because of some effective links between subjects and the key skills of learning. A significant strength of planning is that in each subject there are planned links to the school's PSHEC programme and to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is a significant factor in pupils' very good personal development. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop the skills of problem solving and enquiry. ICT is used well in all subjects of the curriculum and there are some good links between other subject areas, including English and mathematics. However, there is not yet a systematic whole school plan for this and opportunities are missed for pupils to apply their writing skills in some subjects.
18. Although the curriculum in the Foundation Stage has improved overall, planning does not address the need for children in the Reception Year to have regular daily access to outdoor play. Currently, they have one timetabled lesson a week, which is inadequate. As a result, children do not achieve as well in this areas of learning as they do in the others.
19. Pupils' learning is enhanced considerably by a very good range of educational visits. A rich range of visits by outside speakers and performers places a significant part in giving pupils stimulating experiences to support their learning in art, music and sport. The number and range of clubs in art, music, foreign languages and sport provided during and after school is very good and these activities are well attended by pupils.
20. There are significant strengths in the way in which the school uses its resources and accommodation. The stimulating school grounds are used effectively to support pupils' learning in science. The new 'Discovery Centre' building is having a positive impact on the teaching of science, art and design, and design and technology because of the space and equipment now available to teachers. In lessons, teachers make very good use of the interactive whiteboards in demonstrations and explanations of new skills, knowledge and understanding.
21. Provision for special educational needs is good. All pupils who have special educational needs have individual education plans, which support continuity. The quality of the targets in the plans is satisfactory but a weakness is that review comments, which refer specifically to what has been achieved in lessons, are not transferred from the teachers' records to their individual education plans often enough. The school is committed to inclusion for all and this ensures that all pupils are fully involved in all aspects of school life and given the opportunities that they need to succeed. A good example is the involvement of a physically disabled pupil in drumming lessons. He demonstrates very good achievement and growing confidence as he joins with other pupils in following musical notation to beat out rhythms. Disabilities are treated with respect by both staff and pupils.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes **good** provision for the care, welfare, health and safety of pupils and provides them with good support, advice and guidance. Its arrangements for seeking and acting on the views of pupils are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils develop very trusting relationships with adults within the school.
- Pupils are well cared for in a safe and healthy environment.
- The school encourages its pupils to become actively involved in influencing the school life.
- Good arrangements exist for pupils joining the school.

Commentary

22. The provision for the care and welfare of pupils has improved since the last inspection. Teachers and the classroom support staff get to know their pupils very well. They develop a deep understanding of each one's personal and social strengths and help them to address their weaknesses. This information is shared amongst teachers but there is no written record, making this transfer difficult if the teacher is suddenly absent. Parents are very appreciative of the personal support their children receive and the overwhelming majority of pupils are confident there is an adult they can turn to if they have any concerns. Pupils also support each other well, either informally or through the peer mediation service. They have had full training for their roles as 'playground buddies', and take their roles very seriously. Their efforts are appreciated by the other pupils.
23. The school treats the health and safety of its pupils as a major priority. Members of the buildings and environment committee thoroughly inspect the school every term in addition to an annual LEA audit and fire safety check. They are supported by the constant vigilance of staff. The safety of pupils is paramount in areas such as the swimming pool, wildlife garden and adventure trail and all outside visits receive thorough risk assessments. Whilst no major hazards were observed during the inspection, some areas of concern have been shared with the governors. There is good first aid provision and an appropriate system for administering medicines. The headteacher is the fully-trained child protection officer who operates a system in accordance with LEA guidelines. She also ensures all members of staff receive awareness training once a year. This is an improvement on the situation at the time of the last inspection. The school actively encourages its pupils to develop healthy lifestyles through initiatives such as banning chocolate and sweets as morning snacks and encouraging the eating of fruit. It also provides numerous opportunities for them to participate in sporting activities. In recognition of its efforts, the school has achieved the Healthy Schools Award.
24. The School Council is regularly involved in making decisions affecting the way the school is run. Their views are sought for anything from the purchase of playtime equipment to the employment of teaching staff. They also carry out their own survey of pupils' views, which they analyse and then present the findings to the governors. As a result of their concerns and suggestions, for example, the timings of the morning playtimes were rearranged. Pupils have also been involved in designing the new playground markings and the naming of the Discovery Centre.
25. There are good induction procedures which ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are fully welcomed and involved in school life. These are enhanced by the very good relationships that the school has developed with the two main pre-school organisations from which the majority of its pupils come. Pupils who join during the year receive the same information and are assigned a 'buddy' to help them get to know the routine. The great majority of parents feel the arrangements for helping their children settle in are good.
26. Support for pupils with special educational needs is good. Identification of needs is effective and prompt action in providing good provision means that significant numbers of pupils are removed from needing additional help. All statutory requirements for pupils with special educational needs are met and there is good use of local authority agencies to give specialist advice where it is required, for example, for physically disabled and autistic pupils.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a good relationship with its pupils' parents and carers. Links with the community and with other schools and colleges are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents make a very good contribution to their pupils' learning at school and at home.
- The school keeps its parents well very informed about its activities but could do more to ensure they are kept regularly updated on their children's progress.
- Links with the local community do much to improve pupils' learning and develop their social skills.
- The school has established links with other schools of clear benefit to the progress of pupils.

Commentary

27. The quality of the links that the school has with parents and the community has been maintained since the last inspection. Most parents are enthusiastic in their support for the school and are eager to help their children with their learning. Parents of younger children attend fortnightly sessions playing educational games with their children and many help within the school in activities such as hearing readers or helping with cookery, ICT and after-school clubs. The Friends Association is particularly active in organising social and fund-raising events, which are well supported by the majority of parents and raise over £3,000 each year. The money is used for specific tasks such as refurbishing the adventure trail. In a recent survey by the governors, parents' desire for more information to help their children with their learning was identified. In response, the school has set up a family learning programme and is looking to provide more information to enable them to assist their children more.
28. The fortnightly newsletters are informative and are supported well by high quality, termly governors' newsletters. There are good arrangements for seeking parents' views, for example, there is once a year a questionnaire, the results of which are presented in detail along with proposed actions to address any concerns. A website has also been developed which enables those connected to the Internet to access most of the written information. Reviews for special educational needs pupils are satisfactory and they are augmented well by the careful records from individual teachers. Parents of pupils who have special educational needs are informed and consulted each time the targets on individual education plans change. There are good links with local authority support services and these are used appropriately by the school when pupils' individual needs cannot be fully supported. The annual pupil reports, while better than at the time of the last inspection, still provide little information about attainment and progress in the foundation subjects. There is also no written report or formal meeting to discuss pupils' progress between October and July. This helps to explain why one-third of parents, who answered the pre-inspection questionnaire, didn't feel they were kept well informed about their children's progress.
29. The school is very much part of its local village community. It takes part in the annual street fair, holds its school productions in the village hall, its sports day on the cricket pitch and Harvest and Christmas assemblies in the church. In return, the school grounds and swimming pool (under supervision) are open to members of the local community who are not necessarily involved with the school. The governing body is looking to develop this involvement further following suggestions made by parents. There are good links with the local team of vicars and lay preachers who take an assembly each week. Despite its relative rural isolation, the school works hard to attract members of surrounding communities to provide sports coaching and run various clubs. It also makes very good use of surrounding towns, tourist attractions and historical sites to enrich pupils' learning. The opportunities for developing business links, other than with the village shops, are limited but a visit to the sewage works to examine the water treatment process is an example of this being done successfully.
30. The school is an active member of the 'pyramid' of six schools serving the catchment area of the nearest secondary school, Beaminster. They participate in a detailed programme of events including training for teachers and governors, subject co-ordinator meetings and sessions where policies, such as homework, are reviewed and revised in the light of differing experiences. The pupils benefit from playing in football and netball leagues and a range of sporting tournaments and cultural festivals. A particularly good example of the close working relationship with other schools is the orienteering exercise that is part of geography in Key

Stage 2. Here, the school visits another primary school one day to complete their orienteering course, an exercise that is reversed the following day. Pupils attend classes in English, science and mathematics at the secondary school as well as various science days. There are also very good links to ensure pupils' transfer to the secondary school. Sticklands primary school, despite its location, is able to attract trainee teachers who are then utilised well and has been chosen to participate in a project run by Brunel University on developing creative thinking with the aim of raising the academic standards of all pupils in Year 2.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**. The headteacher provides good leadership and she is well supported by the senior teacher. The governance of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has built an effective team who work well together and are fully committed to raising standards.
- Governors fulfil their roles effectively.
- Good opportunities are provided for continuing professional development of staff, and good use is made of subject expertise across the school.
- Finances are well administered, and the school makes very good use of additional grants to improve provision.

Commentary

31. The leadership of the school is good and has been maintained since the last inspection. The school has benefited from the professionalism of the headteacher and her commitment to moving the school forward. The positive ethos, care and support for individual pupils and their families and the very good commitment to inclusion that have been established, support learning and achievement well. The headteacher gives a clear lead to other members of staff through the good quality of her teaching and there is a strong sense of teamwork throughout the school. The senior teacher gives strong support and leads her curriculum areas well. Leadership is evident at every level within the school community. All, including the pupils, are aware of their role in the school's work and take a great pride in the school's achievements. This, together with the constructive links that the school has with the local community and other schools in the area, significantly aids the school's efforts in raising achievement.
32. The management of the school is good and has been maintained since the last inspection. The headteacher carries a heavy workload of subject responsibilities, including that of special educational needs co-ordinator, and she manages these well within the time available to her. She is highly sensitive to the needs of her staff and has instigated good systems to support them in the leadership and management of their curriculum responsibilities. There is a well planned programme of monitoring and evaluation. The school regularly analyses assessment data, looks at its performance and uses its findings effectively to inform its actions for improvement. The school's good commitment to inclusion is demonstrated in its analysis of the 'Every Child Matters' guidance and its incorporation into all aspects of the school's improvement plans.
33. There is good delegation of roles and responsibilities, and the curricular strengths of individual staff are used very effectively to support learning throughout the school. The quality of teaching and learning is regularly monitored by the headteacher, subject co-ordinators and governors to identify how well the school is doing and where further improvements need to be made. There are good links between the school's priorities for improvement and performance management. There are good induction procedures and teachers new to the school are supported well. Training opportunities are used well to develop both the teachers' own professional needs and those of the school. The school development plan is a useful

document in that it accurately identifies those issues the school most needs to address and it is well supported by financial planning.

34. The governance of the school is good. Governors carry out their statutory responsibilities well. The chair of governors and other governors visit the school regularly to meet with subject leaders, look at work and attend lessons. Consequently, they have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are fully involved in school improvement planning and share the headteacher's aspirations for improving the school's facilities and raising standards further.
35. The school makes very good use of specific grants and additional funding for school improvement and special educational needs and this makes a good contribution to standards and achievement. The recent development of the school's new 'Discovery Centre', which is already making a positive contribution to teaching and learning in practical and creative subjects, is a very good example of this. The school's finances are prudently and carefully managed with an appropriate carry forward to cater for unexpected contingencies. Day-to-day financial arrangements are good. The school provides good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	332,345
Total expenditure	329,825
Expenditure per pupil	3,171

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	5,054
Balance carried forward to the next year	4,232

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in their Reception Year in the Foundation Stage is good overall and the children achieve well. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. Overall, it is well managed. The teacher and teaching assistant work as an effective team and the classroom and the children are very well managed. There are good induction arrangements in place and very strong links with the local playgroups. Assessment arrangements are good and there is good provision for pupils with special educational need and those who are higher attaining.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Arrangements to introduce the children to the school are very good.
- Children acquire good attitudes to learning because they are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions from an early age.

Commentary

36. Pupils achieve well and standards are above average by the end of the Reception Year. The children settle into school quickly and are confident and secure from an early stage. This is achieved by the very good procedures to gradually introduce them to school life which include visits to the children's playgroups and opportunities for the children to visit the school in the term before they start. Teaching and learning are good. Many children are not used to doing things for themselves when they first start school and often find it difficult to get along with each other. They are also unaware of how to share and of what to say when someone is in their way or when they want to use something that someone else has. The teacher and teaching assistant help the children to develop these skills, setting up tasks which require them to work together, organise their own resources and use the language of social conventions. As a result, the children have very good relationships with each other and adults and behave well. They know the day-to-day classroom routines and are helpful in clearing up at the end of the day. When working, they show good levels of concentration and independence.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good attention to the basic skills of reading and writing.
- Parents give good support to the development of children's early reading skills.

Commentary

37. The children achieve well and standards are above average by the end of the Reception Year. Teaching and learning are good. Careful daily attention to the development of reading and writing skills ensures that they are systematically taught and practised. The children are taught their sounds progressively and use their knowledge to identify initial and final sounds and to sound out words. The children are actively encouraged to look at books and to make their own attempts at writing from an early stage. Most have acquired a bank of known sight sounds and some are starting to write independently. They show a satisfactory understanding of the elements of a story and follow the events as the plot unfolds when they listen to stories being read aloud. The higher-attaining children enjoy looking at books, comment on the illustrations, recognise letters of the alphabet and associate them with the sounds that they make. This

enables them to read words in simple texts by the end of the Reception Year. Most compose and write down, with help, short, simple statements and sequences of ideas by the end of the Reception Year. Higher-attaining children use their knowledge of letter sounds to build simple three-letter words and make very plausible attempts at spelling the words they need. Children enjoy making up their own imaginative stories when writing with their teachers in small groups, working independently in the role-play area. Children have opportunities to take their books home daily and to change them frequently. They regularly share stories with the teacher and other adults.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good attention given to the basic skills of numeracy.
- There is good provision of a wide range of practical and enjoyable opportunities to help the children learn.

Commentary

38. Achievement is good and standards are above average by the end of the Reception Year, teaching and learning are good and the children develop their numeracy skills well as a result of a wide range of opportunities to count and use in practical situations. Most can count up to ten and some can count reliably up to 20 and beyond. They begin to gain an early understanding of addition and subtraction and to use language such as 'more' and 'less' when counting on a number line. Higher attaining pupils achieve well as a result of challenging work which enables them to work on National Curriculum level, for example, adding up three single digits, counting in twos accurately to 20 and recognising odd and even numbers. Children recognise and name correctly common two-dimensional shapes. They enjoy making repeating patterns using colours and shapes. Most children develop the language that they need for space and measure. They know the names of simple two-dimensional shapes and have sound understanding of directional and positional language.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The provision of an area for outdoor play is an improvement since the last inspection but it is not used enough.
- A good range of activities is provided for children to find out about the world about them in the classroom.

Commentary

39. Children achieve well and standards are above average by the end of the Reception Year. Teaching and learning are good overall. There are good opportunities for children to build and construct with a range of objects, including construction kits, and cardboard packaging. Most children select the appropriate components and resources to develop their work. They are carefully taught the techniques that they need and so develop the skills and confidence to use tools and materials independently. There are good opportunities for children to develop their understanding of the place where they live and of past and present in relation to familiar objects. The children make satisfactory use of computers as part of their learning. Children develop good computer skills as a result of frequent opportunities to use them in the course of lessons. Opportunities to plant seeds and watch them grow and to observe butterflies

hatching in the classroom, fascinate the children and help them to learn something of the life cycles of plants and animals. Resources for the outdoor area have improved since the last inspection and are now satisfactory. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to learn through playing outdoors and this limits their effectiveness.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for outdoor play has improved since the last inspection but not enough use is made of it to promote the children's physical development.

Commentary

40. There is good encouragement for children to develop their manipulative skills through a well planned range of opportunities such as the use of construction toys, drawing and cutting. They are taught how to hold pencils and scissors correctly and this supports their work in other areas of learning. Opportunities for picking up small objects such as seeds also improve their manipulative skills and their hand-eye coordination.
41. The school's resources for outdoor play were found to be a weakness in the last inspection. It has now improved and is satisfactory. However, children do not have enough regular opportunities to develop the control and coordination of the movements on a larger scale than is possible indoors. The equipment for outdoor play is adequate and the school has plans to improve it further.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

42. Insufficient activities were seen to make an overall judgement about provision in this area of learning. However, evidence from teachers' planning indicates that this area of learning is fully covered. There are satisfactory opportunities for children to paint and draw what they feel, see and imagine. Role play activities are provided both indoors and outdoors. However, pupils learning in music are constrained by sessions being far too long and over formal for young children.

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 average in Year 2 and Year 6 and standards in writing are average.
- The quality of teaching is good and pupils are achieving well in lessons.
- Standards of writing and presentation in other subjects of the curriculum are not as good as they should be.

Commentary

43. The findings of the inspection are that most pupils achieve well overall and standards in reading and speaking and listening are above average in Years 2 and 6. Standards in writing are average. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. For example, those with language and communication

difficulties often achieve the levels expected for their age in reading by Year 6. Higher attaining pupils also achieve well and exceed the expected levels by Year 6.

44. Pupils have many opportunities to speak, both in lessons, when they have a 'talk partner' to discuss their ideas with, and as part of their whole school responsibilities, for example, showing visitors around the school. They express their ideas confidently, listen to others carefully, and show good levels of respect for ideas that are different from their own.
45. Pupils become competent readers because of the emphasis that is placed on reading from an early stage. They are taught the skills they need to work out unfamiliar words and heard to read regularly, both in groups and individually. The very good encouragement for parents to hear their children read at home also makes a significant contribution to the standards achieved. Individual progress is monitored and any difficulties are quickly dealt with. Well planned literacy sessions are effective in teaching pupils how books work and teachers use skilled questions very effectively to deepen pupils' understanding through the analysis and evaluation of text. Pupils use information books well to support their work and make extensive use of Internet websites for independent research.
46. Pupils learn to write for an increasing range of purposes as they move through the school; however, achievement in writing is satisfactory rather than good because of weaknesses in spelling and handwriting of which the school is aware. Some improvements are evident as a result of an increased emphasis on practice sessions and the development of pupils' editing skills. However, pupils are not yet consistently transferring these skills to their written work. An over use of published worksheets in some lessons, and limited opportunities for extended writing, constrain opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in depth. Good use is made of computers for writing and pupils' word-processed work is generally well presented, showing a greater degree of accuracy than handwritten work.
47. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. The very strong relationships enjoyed between staff and pupils, together with very positive encouragement, ensure that pupils are enthusiastic learners who generally work hard and try to do their best. A good range of teaching methods is employed in an attempt to meet the needs of all pupils, and a team of knowledgeable and experienced teaching assistants supports teachers well. Very good organisational arrangements and planning ensure that all the time available for teaching is very well used. A very good example of this was an excellent lesson seen in the Years 5 and 6 class, where not a moment was wasted and pupils worked with high levels of concentration throughout. Both teachers and teaching assistants give good support to individual pupils, particularly those with special educational needs in language and communication, and they make good progress and achieve well as a result. This includes working alongside pupils in whole class lessons and group work, and, on some occasions, giving pupils individual tuition outside the classroom. A pupil with physical difficulties is given all the resources that he needs to support his written work. In most lessons, teachers share with pupils at the beginning of lessons what they are going to learn, and the plenary session is used well to challenge pupils to analyse their own learning and to highlight the purpose of the lessons. This helps to reinforce pupils' understanding and knowledge. Assessment procedures are good overall. Teachers regularly assess pupils' progress and these assessments are used systematically to set pupils individual targets for improvement.
48. The headteacher manages the co-ordination of English well. Through very good assessment procedures and monitoring of the curriculum and teaching and learning, she has a good idea of standards, and accurately identifies the key areas for improvement which are then incorporated into in the school improvement plan. On the whole, resources for the teaching of English are good and they are used well to support learning.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

49. The use of language and literacy in other subjects of the curriculum is satisfactory overall but is variable because it is not systematically planned for. In some history and geography lessons, pupils make very good use of their reading skills, for example, when carrying out their own research into the history of shipping in Bridport. In personal and social education, they make good use of their speaking and listening skills to ask questions and debate issues, for example, when preparing for a debate with their local Member of Parliament. By contrast the standard of writing in subjects other than English is often below the levels expected and work is often marred by careless presentation, handwriting and spelling. There is good support for pupils with autism and physical disabilities to apply their literacy skills in other subjects of the curriculum and this enables them to achieve well.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' mental arithmetic and investigation skills are good.
- Teachers' planning is of high quality.
- Teaching assistants and student teachers support pupils effectively.
- Pupils do not take sufficient care in the way they present their work.

Commentary

50. Results of the Year 2004 national tests for pupils in Year 2 were above average and continued the overall trend of above average standards in recent years. Standards in the current Year 2 are well above average and achievement is very good. Results in the national tests in 2004 for pupils in Year 6 were average and showed improvement over the previous year's results. Improvement continues because of good teaching and standards in the current Year 6 are well above average and achievement is good. Improvement since the previous inspection is good.
51. Pupils enjoy mathematics lessons and show particular interest and enthusiasm in mathematical investigations and problem solving. Mental arithmetic skills are good and pupils show rapid recall of number facts. Because their knowledge and understanding of number is very good, they are successful in applying these key skills when they solve problems. A particular strength is pupils' willingness and enthusiasm to answer questions and to explain how they find answers to problems. In this, they make very good use of their speaking and listening skills.
52. Teaching and learning are good and have a significant impact on the high standards achieved. There are strengths in the quality of teachers' planning where the different learning needs of pupils are met successfully. As a result, work is matched carefully to pupils' needs with the result that in lessons they are challenged and extended in their learning at all ability levels. There is very good use of questioning to help pupils think for themselves and to develop an understanding of the patterns and relationships that exist between numbers. A good example of this was seen in an excellent lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4 as they searched for number patterns up to 5000. Strong support from teaching assistants helps pupils to talk about their mathematical ideas and contributes successfully to the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs. There are good resources to support a pupil with physical disability with written work and the individual help that he receives enables him to be fully involved in lessons. During the inspection, student teachers gave very effective support to the groups with whom they worked in lessons. The factor that stops teaching being very good is that teachers do not have high enough expectations as to how pupils should present their work. Through marking, teachers do not encourage improvement in presentation skills.

53. Leadership and management are good and contribute successfully to the standards achieved. The subject leader has a detailed understanding of strengths and weaknesses in standards and in the quality of teaching because of effective monitoring of the subject. Assessment is very good, with teachers and pupils having a clear understanding of targets for further improvement.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a very good knowledge of life processes and living things.
- Work in experiments and investigations is good.
- Teachers make very effective use of the school grounds to support learning.
- Pupils do not take enough care and pride in presenting their work.
- Too many commercially-produced worksheets are used which restrict pupils' use of literacy skills.

Commentary

54. In Year 2, standards are above average and achievement is good. Standards in Year 6 are above average and show an improvement over the previous year when results in the national tests were average. Achievement in Year 6 is good. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory because the above average standards have been maintained.
55. Pupils enjoy science and show great interest and enthusiasm for investigations and experiments. They have a good understanding of how to plan an experiment and know the importance of carrying out a fair test and the use of variables. Pupils are very articulate in explaining their scientific thinking. Pupils show a very deep knowledge and understanding of the natural world and the life cycles of plants and animals and conditions for growth and survival. In lessons, they talk knowledgeably and confidently about the different habitats in which animals live.
56. Teaching and learning are good and make a strong contribution to the standards achieved. Teachers make very effective use of the richness of the school's natural environment and this explains why pupils have such a strong knowledge and understanding of the natural world. Teachers have good subject knowledge and make good use of the interactive whiteboard to stimulate pupils' interest. Teaching assistants and student teachers provide good support in lessons so that pupils of all ability groups make good progress. When weaknesses occur, it is because teachers do not have high enough expectations as to how pupils should present their work. In addition, the use of commercially-produced worksheets which require pupils to write brief answers restricts pupils' use and application of writing skills. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with autism and physical disability, achieve well and are enabled to fully participate in lessons because of the very good support that they receive from the teaching assistants who work with them. Good use is made of ICT, such as sensors, to support learning in science, which is an improvement since the last inspection.
57. Leadership and management are good and have a positive impact on the standards achieved. The subject leader is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. Through effective monitoring, she has made a good contribution to the improvement of standards and to increased resources to support learning. However, more needs to be done to reduce the use of published worksheets and to improve pupils' presentation skills and written work in science. Assessment is good, with clear targets set for improvement which are understood by teachers and pupils.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good and pupils achieve well.
- Good use is made of information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to ICT and are keen to use it in the course of their work.

Commentary

58. Pupils achieve well and standards are broadly in line with those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The school has improved its provision since the last inspection and kept up to date with technological changes and the consequent increased demands on the curriculum since then. The skills of ICT are systematically taught and pupils are given a range of well planned opportunities to use these skills in the course of work in other subjects. For example, they know how to use word-processing to share and communicate their ideas to others. Younger pupils select and change the type, size and colour of fonts and older pupils edit their work using processes such as 'cut' and 'paste'. They combine text with graphics to illustrate their own writing. Older pupils have produced some good quality multimedia presentations for science. Pupils are introduced to the use of the Internet to find things out and they develop their skills progressively to make increasingly effective use of ICT to research information in the course of their work. This is most prominently seen in history and geography. Pupils make good use of sensors and control devices in the course of science and design and technology. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
59. Although only one lesson was seen in which pupils were being taught specific ICT skills, examination of planning, scrutiny of work and discussions with pupils shows that teaching is good and pupils learn well. The school has ensured that all staff, including teaching assistants, have the skills and confidence to teach the subject-specific skills. Class teachers ensure that pupils make use of computers whenever possible. Years 5 and 6 pupils have a particular enthusiasm for computers, and automatically turn to them in the course of their work if they feel they will support their studies. The recent introduction of interactive whiteboards to classrooms is making positive impact on the teaching of ICT skills and also to teaching in other subjects. Assessment arrangements have improved since the last inspection and are now satisfactory.
60. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject leader has a good overview of the subject and is aware of its strengths and weaknesses. Resources in the classrooms are used well. The school is steadily updating its software and there are well-established plans to update computers and improve provision even further.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

61. Good use is made of ICT in most of the curriculum. Teachers make satisfactory use of appropriate programmes to support literacy and numeracy and good use of ICT to support the science and humanities curriculum. This makes a strong contribution to pupils' research and enquiry skills.

HUMANITIES

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and make it interesting for pupils.
- There is a good focus on developing pupils' skills of historical enquiry.
- The standards of pupils' presentation and written work are not as high as they should be.
- There are good links between history and other subjects of the curriculum.
- Assessment procedures are not systematic enough.

Commentary

62. All pupils achieve well and, by the end of Years 2 and 6, attain above average standards. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 acquire a good understanding of the lifestyles of people in the past, for example, they know something about how the local area has changed over time by looking at photographs from the past and comparing them with how the village looks today. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have a good understanding of significant people from the past, such as Henry VIII, and events from the past, such as the Second World War. Pupils with special educational need receive good support and achieve well. Those with language and communication difficulties are enabled to communicate their ideas both in talk and in writing as a result of the good support given by teaching assistants who work with them. Those with physical disability and autism are also enabled to take a full part in lessons and to record their ideas because of very good individual support and the good use of resources to compensate for their disabilities.
63. Teaching and learning are good. Visits to places of interest, such as Kingston Lacey, are used well to bring the subject alive for the pupils and this contributes to the enthusiasm that pupils have for history. Pupils are encouraged to ask questions and to find out about the past through making their own enquiries. There is also a good emphasis on helping them to think of the reasons why events happened as they did and how they can be interpreted in different ways. This enables pupils to be able to talk in some depth about the political and social impact of events such as the separation of the monarchy from the Roman Catholic Church in Tudor times, and the impact of people moving from the country to work in towns, in Victorian times. There are some good links with other subjects of the curriculum, although these are not yet systematically planned. For example, pupils make good use of ICT and information books for research. They use their literacy skills well to design questionnaires and take notes when visiting places of interest. However, their written accounts are often marred by careless spelling and handwriting and this detracts from the overall quality of the content. There is also an overuse of worksheets in some lessons and this limits opportunities for pupils to apply their writing skills in the course of history.
64. The subject is well led and managed and this has resulted in good improvements in the quality of the curriculum that is offered to pupils. The school is aware of the need to improve assessment arrangements so that pupils' achievement can be more accurately tracked and there are well established plans for this.

Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good and standards are above average because of this.

- Visits to places of interest are used very well to bring the subject to life and make learning interesting.
- Careless spelling and handwriting, and the overuse of worksheets in some lessons detract from the quality of work in geography.
- Assessment relies too heavily on teachers' informal knowledge of their pupils.
- Good leadership and management have resulted in improved standards since the last inspection.

Commentary

65. Pupils' achievement is good overall. Achievement is good in Year 2 and Year 6 and standards are above average by Year 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
66. Teaching and learning are good overall. By Year 6, pupils have a good knowledge of local places as a result of the strong emphasis that is put on fieldwork and geographical enquiry. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of environmental change and their appreciation of the application of geography to environmental, social and political issues are good. A good example of this is the study of the tourism in West Bay and how it contributes to the economy of the area. Pupils then carried out a survey on the possibility of developing a caravan park in Evershot and discovered for themselves the social limitations of such an enterprise. They achieve well when carrying out geographical enquiries because good teaching encourages them to pose their own questions. Pupils make good use of the knowledge and skills gained in the understanding of local issues to further their understanding of more complex worldwide issues. For example, they have studied environmental issues of water use and compared the amount of water used by their own families to those in a village in Pakistan. They were fascinated by a visit to a sewerage treatment centre and this made a significant contribution to their understanding of the importance of clean water to their health and wellbeing, again contrasting this with the impact of untreated water on the lives of families in third world countries. Pupils develop a good understanding of the physical processes involved in the shaping of land, for example, when studying their own coastal area. Their map skills develop well, from drawing their own simple maps in Years 1 and 2, to Years 5 and 6 when they learn the skills to interpret Ordnance Survey maps and reading compass directions in the course of orienteering.
67. Pupils make good use of their reading, speaking and listening and ICT skills in geography, particularly when carrying out their own research. However, the presentation of their work is often careless and untidy, which detracts from the overall quality of its content. In some lessons, there is an overuse of worksheets which limits opportunities that pupils have to apply their writing skills in geography.
68. The subject is well led and managed. The subject leader has a clear overview of the subject and is aware of the need to develop a formalised assessment system so that teachers can more accurately track pupils' achievement and plan for their different needs.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Physical education was inspected in full and is reported below. Art and design, music, and design and technology were sampled; not enough lessons were seen to make a secure judgement about provision.

Art and design

69. In art and design, only one lesson was seen during the inspection, and so no overall judgement is made. However, in the lessons seen, in which pupils were developing wire and papier-mâché models of animals, the overall quality of teaching and learning was good. Pupils were fully absorbed in their work and their behaviour was very good. Standards were in line with those expected, and a study of other examples of work confirms this. An examination of pupils' sketchbooks shows that pupils have good opportunities to explore and develop their ideas and practise their skills. A good example of this is the work that pupils in Years 5 and 6 have been doing on movement and perspective. Pupils throughout the school are provided with suitable opportunities to study the work of famous artists and to reproduce artwork from other parts of the world. They use computers well to produce various pictures and illustrations. The art club, which takes place after school, makes a significant contribution to standards and achievement in art and design.

Design and technology

70. During the inspection, only two lessons were seen in design and technology, and no overall judgement is made. Some good and very good teaching was seen in Years 1 and 2, where pupils develop a good understanding of how to plan and evaluate their work, as well as how to combine and join different materials as part of their designs. For example, pupils in one lesson produced a range of different sandwiches and in another lesson pupils designed and made a range of well thought out play equipment models. The work of older pupils shows good links between design and technology and ICT. For example, they have made models of vehicles using construction equipment and fitted computer-controlled devices to them. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of hygiene when handling food and of how to handle tools and equipment safely. The analysis of pupils' work showed a weakness in the quality of presentation of work, with insufficient care or pride shown in designs and written evaluations and an over use of worksheets.

Music

71. In music, there are strengths in the high proportion of pupils who learn a musical instrument in the school through visiting specialist teachers. Many are making good progress and are confident performers. In the lessons observed during the inspection, standards in singing and performing were satisfactory. A weakness of the lessons, one of which was unsatisfactory, was that they were too long, especially for younger pupils. Sitting on the floor for an hour led to restlessness which, coupled with a slow pace, meant that pupils made insufficient progress in learning. Pupils were inactive for too long and lost interest and enthusiasm.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils know why it is important to take part in regular exercise.
- Teachers' planning is good.
- When the pace of lessons slows, pupils lose interest and make insufficient progress.

Commentary

72. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards meet national expectations and achievement is satisfactory. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.
73. Pupils know the importance of warming up at the start of a lesson and older pupils in Years 5 and 6 enjoy leading the stretching exercises. Pupils know why it is important to have regular exercise to stay fit and healthy and this understanding links effectively to their work in science

and in PSHEC. Equally, pupils know why they need to cool down at the end of lessons. During the inspection, there was evidence that pupils show satisfactory skills in throwing and catching. There are strengths in their awareness of and use of space. The school has its own swimming pool, and whilst no lessons were seen during the inspection, records show that this makes a good contribution to pupils' swimming skills with all pupils meeting the required level and many exceeding it by Year 6. Pupils with physical disabilities and autism are enabled to work alongside their classmates and achieve well because of the very good support that they receive from their teaching assistants. A daily exercise programme is effective in improving the coordination of a physically disabled pupil.

74. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Lesson planning is good, with strengths in the planned development of individual skills, to paired work, to small team games. During the inspection some good and very good teaching was seen in Years 1 and 2. There was very good attention to skill development and to giving pupils opportunities to evaluate their progress. The planned use of teaching assistants to make assessments of pupils' progress is good as it supports teachers in planning for individual needs. When weaknesses occur in teaching, the pace of lessons slows because pupils spend too long practising a particular skill. Pupils then lose interest and do not make the progress of which they are capable.
75. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The subject leader supports teaching and learning through ensuring that resources are good. Assessment is underdeveloped and pupils' progress is not recorded in the subject as they move up through the school. Pupils benefit from an impressive range of clubs and opportunities to take part in competitive games against other schools.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship is promoted in all aspects of school life.
- The subject makes a very strong contribution to their good achievement in academic subjects.

Commentary

76. An atmosphere of mutual respect pervades the school and the very good role models set by the headteacher and the teachers are fundamental to pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship. The emphasis that is given to encouraging pupils' confidence and self-esteem and their attitudes towards one another are very effective. Pupils become confident and mature, and are able to take increasing responsibility for their actions as they get older. They have a very good understanding of their role within the school and the wider community and have a responsible attitude towards all tasks given to them. They use their initiative when they see that something needs to be done and readily suggest their own ideas for improvements around the school, or for contributing to initiatives outside the school, such as charitable events, because they know their ideas are listened to and taken seriously. They are very caring and sensitive towards each other and very accepting of those who have different beliefs to their own.
77. The teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship is good. Lessons and discussion sessions are used effectively to enable pupils to discuss personal responses to a wide variety of issues. The written results of one lesson, for example, show that pupils are able to empathise with the feelings of the early migrants to this country, who were unable to find accommodation because of the colour of their skin. Pupils were encouraged to reflect on how they would feel and feelings of inclusion and exclusion were explored well. Opportunities to promote personal and social education are not limited to specific lessons; they permeate all lessons. Opportunities to talk to people who live in the local community, for example, in the

course of historical and geographical surveys, are effective in helping pupils to develop a good understanding of social and political issues that affect their lives. Opportunities to find out about the wider world, for example, in their studies of Pakistan, extend this understanding to issues in the wider world.

78. The school council is used very effectively to fully involve pupils in the school's work and to teach them about how democracy works. Opportunities to meet their local Member of Parliament and to take part in mock elections extend this understanding effectively. Opportunities to take on responsibilities around the school, for example, welcoming visitors and showing them around the school, help pupils to acquire the skills they will need in the adult world.
79. This area of the school's work is well led and managed and there has been effective development of the curriculum.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
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	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

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