

INSPECTION REPORT

THURLBEAR CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Taunton

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123849

Headteacher: Mr Brian Crudge

Lead inspector: David Welsh

Dates of inspection: 10 – 12 January 2005

Inspection number: 268120

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 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	200
School address:	Thurlbear Taunton Somerset
Postcode:	TA3 5BW
Telephone number:	01823 442277
Fax number:	01823 444177
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr A A J Garland
Date of previous inspection:	19 April 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Thurlbear Church of England Primary School serves several neighbouring village communities and a number of families from the outskirts of Taunton. It has grown in size as a result of its popularity and is full in all year groups except one. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average and reflects the high levels of employment in the area. The number of pupils who join the school part way through their education is average. With 200 pupils from Reception to Year 6, the school is of average size. Most children come with some previous pre-school experience and this ensures most have some understanding of early literacy and numeracy skills. Attainment on entry is above average overall. Nearly all pupils are of white British origin and they include 6 traveller pupils. There are no pupils who are at the early stages of learning English. Twenty-five pupils have special educational needs, either learning, sensory or behaviour and this is a proportion close to the average. There is one pupil with a statement of special educational need and two other pupils for whom the school receives funding from the local education authority because considerable help is required. This is a similar proportion to most other schools. In 2004, the school received the Investor in People Award for its work in developing staff and the Healthy Schools Award for encouraging healthy attitudes in the pupils. The school works closely with other schools in the area to develop good practice.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
10992	David Welsh	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Music Physical education Personal, social and health education
9769	Margaret Morrissey	Lay inspector	
20534	Nichola Perry	Team inspector	English as an additional language Special educational needs English Art and design Design and technology
16472	Catherine Shirley	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Geography History

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a school that gives its pupils a satisfactory standard of education. Pupils achieve as well as expected, overall, as a result of sound teaching in most areas. The school caters well for children from all backgrounds and of all abilities and is very well thought of by parents and pupils. Leadership, management and governance ensure a strong Christian ethos in which pupils feel very well cared for. **The school gives satisfactory value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Children achieve well in the reception class.
- By Year 6, standards in mathematics and science are above average but standards in writing are below average.
- Overall, the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- Pupils' contributions to school life are much valued.
- Links with parents, the community and other schools are very good.
- Teaching and learning are not monitored systematically enough or with sufficient rigour.
- Subject leaders are not consistently effective in raising standards across subjects.

The school has made satisfactory progress in addressing the issues identified at the last inspection. The school's provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is now satisfactory as a result of improved resources and teachers' confidence and expertise. School development planning has improved and is now satisfactory. Pupils enjoy the full range of activities in physical education as a result of the new hall, with a consequent improvement in the standards achieved, particularly in gymnastics and dance. Pupils' cultural development has improved and arrangements for registration are now good. The school has addressed the issues concerning the provision of information to parents in the Annual Governors' Report. Other improvements include better curriculum planning, an annual curriculum review to assess strengths and areas for improvement in order to focus or re-focus initiatives, school improvement through self-evaluation and improved data analysis to track pupils' progress and identify priorities for improvement. Nevertheless teaching has declined and the curriculum is less good.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 6 results

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

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Achievement is satisfactory overall. Generally, attainment on entry to the school is above average. When pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6, attainment is average, overall, although many pupils attain above average standards in speaking and listening and reading. In the national tests, nearly all pupils attain the expected level 4 at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. Fewer pupils attain the higher level 5 in English than in mathematics and science, mainly on account of the weaknesses in writing. Since 2000, the national test results show a steady decline in English and a consistent improvement in mathematics and science. Attainment

in ICT is in line with that expected of pupils aged 11, an improvement on the findings at the last inspection.

By the end of Year 2, pupils attain average standards in reading, mathematics, science and ICT. Standards in writing are below average. Children at the Foundation Stage make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of the support they receive. Traveller pupils and those who are talented or gifted make progress similar to other pupils.

Pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to school. Attendance is very good and punctuality good. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.**

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory overall.

Teaching is satisfactory, overall. This is not as good as at the last inspection. The main reason for this is the change in teaching staff but also, there is no systematic programme to monitor and improve teaching and learning across the school. Teaching is good at the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 and 6. Some good teaching was also observed in Year 5.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of experiences within a sound curriculum that is enriched by a good number of visitors, visits and other activities. The school has very good procedures for pupils' welfare, health and safety. The arrangements for the induction of new pupils are very good and the school is highly effective at seeking and acting upon pupils' views. The school works very closely with parents and values their involvement. Links with the local community and other schools are very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall.

The headteacher, who has been at the school for twenty-five years, and the deputy headteacher work well in partnership. Together with other staff and the governors they ensure a climate in which pupils are respected and learning is valued. They have identified most of the school's strengths and weaknesses correctly, but some actions to bring about improvement, especially in teaching and learning, have not been implemented effectively. Subject leadership is not consistent in raising standards. The capacity for further improvement is satisfactory.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents think very highly of the school. They say their children enjoy school and they are pleased with the progress their children make. They believe the school is well led and managed and they appreciate how approachable the school is. Pupils say they like being at this school. Teachers make them work hard and show them how to make their work better, but a number of pupils do not always find lessons interesting and fun. Inspectors largely agree with the views of parents and pupils but have identified some elements of teaching and management that require improvement.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise standards in writing
- implement a systematic programme to monitor and improve teaching and learning
- address the inconsistencies in the effectiveness of subject leaders in raising standards

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall boys and girls achieve satisfactorily. In the reception class standards are above average. In Years 2 and 6 pupils reach average standards overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in the reception class achieve well in reading, speaking and listening, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and creative and physical development.
- Standards in reading and in speaking and listening are above average in all age groups.
- By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards in writing are too low and affect the progress pupils make across other subjects.
- Standards in mathematics and science are above average by Year 6.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

Commentary

Foundation Stage

Standards at the end of the Foundation Stage

Standards in relation to the early learning goals by the end of reception in:	
Personal, social and emotional development	Very good
Communication, language and literacy	Good
Mathematical development	Good
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Very good
Physical development	Good
Creative development	Good

Inspectors make judgements in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor.

1. When children join the school their attainment is above average. Most children achieve well in the reception class because of good teaching. Overall standards are above average and most children are expected to reach above the expected levels in communication, language and literacy, mathematics, and in physical and creative development. Standards are well above average in knowledge and understanding of the world. Standards of personal, social and emotional development are also well above average due to the teacher's good management skills and high expectations.

Key Stage 1

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.2 (18.0)	15.8 (15.7)

writing	15.5 (16.9)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.1 (17.8)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 25 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- In the national tests in 2004, standards in Year 2 were above average in writing and mathematics and average in reading. When compared to similar schools with a comparable range of free school meals, the standards in mathematics and writing remained average and standards in reading were below average. Teacher assessments show that fewer pupils than average attained the expected level in science although a broadly average number of pupils attained the higher levels. Over the past five years, the trend in the school's average points in the National Curriculum tests for all core subjects was broadly in line with the national trend.
- Standards in the current Year 2 are above average in reading and speaking and listening. They are average in science and mathematics. Standards in writing are below average. The key reason for this is the number of pupils with significant literacy needs identified by the school and the weaknesses in the teaching of writing. Pupils achieve satisfactorily overall in Years 1 and 2.

Key Stage 2

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.8 (28.0)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	28.8 (28.9)	27.0 (26.8)
science	30.9 (31.0)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 24 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- In the national tests in 2004, the school exceeded its targets in English and mathematics in relation to the number of pupils who achieved the expected level 4. In mathematics, it exceeded its target for the proportion of pupils attaining the higher level 5. However, in English, the school did not achieve its target at the higher level because there was an above average number of pupils with specific literacy needs in the year group and writing skills were weak. The school worked hard to enable all pupils to achieve the standard expected. Overall, standards in Year 6 were average in English when compared with all schools. They were well above average in mathematics and science. When compared with schools whose pupils attained similarly in Year 2, pupils attained well above average standards in science, average standards in mathematics and well below average standards in English. Pupils, including traveller pupils, made satisfactory progress overall since they were last tested nationally in Year 2. There was no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Overall, in the last five years, the school's average points score in the National Curriculum tests was above the national trend, although in English, due to weaknesses in writing, there has been a steady decline.
- Standards in the current Year 6 are above average in speaking and listening and in reading and below average in writing. They are generally above average in science and in mathematics. Overall, standards are generally satisfactory considering the high number of pupils with significant literacy needs. Inspection findings show that pupils in the current Year 6 achieve well in reading, speaking and listening, mathematics and science. This age group started Year 3 with well above average levels of knowledge and understanding in reading and writing and above average levels in mathematics, but there has been a significant change in the composition of the class as a result of inward and outward mobility since then. Achievement in writing is unsatisfactory and reflects the weakness in the teaching and

development of writing, which means that pupils do not achieve as well as they could in other subjects. Weak writing skills, for example, hold back the recording of investigations in science.

6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets in their Individual Education Plans. Pupils with specially designed programmes receive good support in lessons so that they achieve well. Traveller pupils and those who are identified as talented and gifted make similar progress to other pupils in their year group.
7. Standards in ICT are in line with those expected in Years 2 and 6. This is good improvement since the previous inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' behaviour is good and they have good attitudes to learning. Attendance and punctuality are very good. Pupils have a high degree of sophistication and willingness to learn: they respond to challenge well and show good initiative.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils use the good opportunities provided to take responsibility and develop independence.
- Pupils respect property and are trustworthy, courteous and build good relationships.
- There has been improvement in pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development since that reported in the previous inspection.

Commentary

8. Pupils' behaviour is good. The school creates a happy and industrious atmosphere, which promotes the good behaviour and this has a positive impact on pupils' learning. All respond well to the school's expectations of good behaviour and this contributes well to pupils' progress and development.
9. Good relationships are a priority in the school. The Task Force [a group of elected and selected pupils from Years 3 to 6], has as a priority the promotion of good relationships. Pupils arrive in school prepared to learn and enjoy the opportunities provided to develop independence in their work. Good opportunities to develop personal skills are taken through Task Force and as class monitors.
10. Acts of collective worship meet statutory requirements and contribute particularly strongly to pupils' spiritual and moral development. Pupils' spiritual awareness is very good. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop self-knowledge and understanding; opportunity for discussion and debate is well established and this also contributes to their personal development. Moral development is very good; all understand right from wrong and show evidence of this in their daily actions. Pupils are keen to take responsibility for themselves and others. Social development is very good. Pupils are keen to take responsibility and very keen to provide support for others in the school and through charity work. Cultural development is good and this is an improvement since the last inspection. A good range of visits and visitors raises pupils' cultural awareness and a variety of other activities ensures that pupils' multi-cultural education is developing well, particularly through art, religious education, dance and personal, social and health education.

Attendance

The school's very good procedures are resulting in very good attendance by pupils.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.1	School data :	0.0

National data:	5.1
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National data:	0.4
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The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Exclusions

There were no exclusions in the last academic year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory overall. Pupils' care and welfare, links with the community and other schools and partnerships with parents are very good. The curriculum is satisfactory.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is satisfactory. Assessment procedures are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching of reading, speaking and listening and mental arithmetic are good.
- Teaching of writing is unsatisfactory.
- Teaching is good overall in the reception class and in Years 3 and 6.
- Most teachers encourage pupils to try hard and insist on high standards of behaviour in the classroom.
- The overuse of textbooks and worksheets results in mundane and unchallenging tasks.
- Tracking of pupils' progress is good.
- Most often, teachers' marking does not tell pupils how well they have done or how they can improve.
- Pupils' targets are not being used consistently in lessons.
- The lack of a systematic and rigorous programme to monitor and improve teaching and learning is hindering improvements in teaching especially in Years 1, 2 and 4.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 37 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	2 (5%)	16 (43%)	18 (49%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

11. The quality of teaching has declined since that reported at the previous inspection. This is due in part to a change in staff as good experienced teachers have left for promotion and been replaced by relatively inexperienced staff. The other main factor is the lack of a programme to monitor and improve teaching.
12. The teaching of children in the reception class is good overall. Significant strengths include planning, effective teaching methods which incorporate games and practical activities and the procedures for assessing children's progress. The teacher's good management skills and enthusiasm for learning mean that children behave well, are keen to learn and co-operate willingly. The use of teaching assistants is good and this helps pupils of all abilities to learn well.
13. Teaching in Year 1 and Year 2 is satisfactory overall. In Years 3 to 6 teaching is good overall. Only one unsatisfactory lesson was seen and this was due mainly to weaknesses in the use of resources in physical education and lack of well-developed management skills.

14. Planning ensures a good focus on key questions and the use of resources. Most teachers use questioning effectively and include pupils in sessions well. This supports pupils of all abilities so that they achieve well. Almost all teachers insist on high standards of behaviour and as a result most pupils behave well in lessons. The majority of pupils concentrate and co-operate well because of teachers' good management skills.
15. Teachers generally have good subject knowledge, and especially with regard to the teaching of reading, speaking and listening and mental arithmetic. A high emphasis is placed on the development of reading. As a result, in Years 1 and 2, pupils are learning to read simple words effectively and they are developing good skills which help them when trying to read unfamiliar words. By Year 6, they read fluently from a wide range of literature and with expression. Speaking and listening are also taught well so that pupils become very able at expressing their thinking. Teachers have a good grasp of mental arithmetic and the pupils benefit from lively sessions at the beginning of numeracy lessons. The teaching of writing is unsatisfactory overall. Opportunities to produce extended pieces of writing are too few and the overuse of text books and published worksheets in some parts of the school often detracts from the quality of the curriculum, as it results in mundane tasks that do not offer sufficient challenge. It can also lead to work not matched to needs of all pupils and is not helped by the inconsistent application of the marking policy. These factors contribute to the view of a significant number of pupils that lessons are only interesting and fun on some occasions.
16. ICT is used effectively to teach basic computer skills and research skills in the two classrooms with interactive whiteboards and also in the computer suite. However, computers are not used sufficiently to support learning in other classrooms.
17. Assessment has improved since the last inspection. The school holds plenty of high quality data on its pupils and teachers know their pupils well. However, teachers' day to day marking is underdeveloped and does not tell pupils consistently how to improve their work. At the beginning of lessons, teachers generally share the learning objectives with the pupils but they do not return at the end of the lesson to ask the pupils to comment on the progress they have made with their learning. The school is also not making sufficient use of pupils' targets because teachers do not give enough specific feedback about what pupils are doing well. While targets exist in some areas, pupils are not clear about what they need to do to improve or how to measure their improvement. These weaknesses restrict pupils' learning.
18. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good overall. Pupils are well supported in lessons by additional adults and most teachers ensure good access to learning through effective use of questioning. However, in some classes, teachers' planning does not ensure that activities are sufficiently well matched to individual pupils' needs and there is too much reliance on support staff to help pupils develop their basic skills. Targets in pupils' Individual Education Plans are appropriate, specific and measurable.

The curriculum

The provision for the curriculum is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for the Foundation Stage is good.
- The increased emphasis on investigation in science enhances the quality of learning, particularly in Key Stage 2.
- The Pupil Task Force has a positive impact.
- There is a lack of opportunities for extended writing.
- The curriculum is enriched well.
- Some pupils who catch a school bus do not receive their full entitlement of time.
- Accommodation and resources have improved significantly since the previous inspection.

Commentary

19. At the previous inspection, curricular provision was reported to be good. It is now satisfactory. Although there has been some decline in provision, there have nevertheless been improvements in some areas such as the provision for ICT and the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy. The curriculum is broad and balanced. It covers all subjects and aspects and pupils benefit from a structured personal, social and health education programme of work, which includes sex and drugs education. There is a breakfast club and staff provide extra support for some pupils prior to the start of the school day. The school has a long established Task Force as a forum for pupils to make their views known, and these are taken into account when planning improvements in school. This involvement provides a valuable opportunity for pupils to prepare for their move to secondary school. Pupils are confident members of the Task Force and take their role seriously.
20. The curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular activities, in particular opportunities for sports and music. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs. The school continues to make good use of visits, visitors and the local area to enrich the curriculum. These experiences help to put pupils' knowledge in context and Year 6 pupils understand how knowledge gained at school could be used in the world of work. The pupils' understanding of other cultures has improved since that last inspection and provision and outcomes are now good. Many subjects, such as art and design, geography, music, religious education and personal, social and health education are used to enhance pupils' understanding of other cultures and to prepare pupils to take their place in a multi-cultural society.
21. The deputy headteacher plays a key role and is knowledgeable about curriculum development across the school. She offers advice and guidance to staff when she meets with them each term and, together with class teachers and subject co-ordinators, is working to make the curriculum more creative. These developments began last term and so still have to be completed and the approach evaluated. The school has a policy for pupils who are gifted and talented and this is a developing area of the school's work.
22. The curriculum that children receive in the Foundation Stage is good and provision is particularly good for knowledge and understanding of the world, personal, social and emotional development and speaking and listening. Provision ensures children learn to work and play with others in a range of situations. Speaking and listening are well integrated into play opportunities.
23. Staff plan thoroughly and the pupils are provided with a wide range of interesting activities in many parts of the curriculum. Where this happens, lessons are stimulating and engage pupils' interest. An example of this is the increased emphasis on investigation in science which enhances the quality of learning, though there have been insufficient opportunities in the past and this has to be addressed. However, some teachers are less effective in teaching this way.
24. The school encounters some difficulties because some children leave school on a bus that reduces the amount of teaching time in Key Stage 2. The loss of time at the end of the school day means that some pupils miss parts of lessons or the teachers finish the lesson early so all pupils miss some time. Whilst teachers try to ameliorate the situation using a range of organisational strategies, the loss of time cannot be made up.
25. Accommodation and many resources have improved. The hall is a valuable resource for physical education and other activities. The computer suite is a significant improvement from the last inspection. It is well equipped for about one third of a class and the arrangements for its use are well managed. However, the organisation of its use still causes some difficulties because the work in ICT does not always reflect the topics being taught in lessons. It also leads teachers, on occasions, to break into other lessons to brief pupils on what they will do in the ICT session.

Care, guidance and support

The care and welfare of pupils are very good. Health, safety and child protection arrangements are very good. Pupils are involved in the school and contribute well to its development. These findings are an improvement on those reported at the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school affords pupils a safe and caring environment.
- The school values pupils' views and uses their ideas appropriately.
- Health, safety and child protection arrangements are very good.

Commentary

26. Child protection procedures are very good. The governing body has agreed a policy that is well known to the staff and there are good working relationships with all relevant support agencies; this provides good protection for pupils.
27. The procedures for pupils' safety and welfare are very good. The daily awareness of health and safety is very good and checks are carried out regularly. This is monitored by the governing body and the headteacher on a daily basis. Risk assessment procedures are well established and the school monitors and reviews safe working procedures. Parents are pleased with the welfare procedures provided by the school and the vast majority of pupils are confident that they would know to whom to turn when worried.
28. Through everyday learning and through the personal, social and health education programme, pupils are learning to care for their own health and safety and that of others. The procedures and practice for the induction of reception children into school are very good. There are very good procedures for any pupils joining the school at other times.
29. The support and guidance offered to pupils are good; pupils have a good awareness of individual lesson targets, are confident to ask for help and respond well to class teachers.
30. The school Task Force provides good opportunities for pupils to have a voice in the school; pupils are very pleased with their work and are clear about what is needed to improve their school. The school is very keen to take full account of pupils' opinions and acts on them when feasible.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Overall links with parents are very good. There are very good links with other schools, colleges and the community. These findings are an improvement on those reported at the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are enthusiastic about the work of the school.
- There are very effective links with other schools and the community.

Commentary

31. Parents are very satisfied with the work of the school and recognise its value in giving equal importance to ensuring that pupils are happy, safe and well cared for. Parents are confident that pupils enjoy coming to school, and that parents are recognised as an integral part of the school community. Parents are pleased with the sense of community and understanding the school is promoting and the positive approach to pupils' learning and progress provided by the professionalism of the staff.

32. Parents receive good information from the school: their views are sought and, when possible and appropriate, are acted on. There is a range of written communications on a weekly and termly basis providing very good quality information on the curriculum and school activities. Formal and informal consultations are a feature of the school. This is much appreciated by parents who have a true sense of ownership and involvement in school matters.
33. Parents make a very good contribution to pupils' learning. They are very supportive of homework and the majority feel the school provides the right amount of work with sufficient challenge. The Parent Teacher Association, supported by all parents and the community, makes a very good contribution to the school, helping to establish relationships between home and school and raising significant amounts of money to support the school curriculum, and to improve accommodation.
34. Links with other schools are very good. Pupils are well supported before and during transfer to secondary school. The strong links with pre-schools and the Early Years partnership help parents and children prepare well for entry to the reception class. A range of initiatives, including work with the Co-operation Amongst Small Schools group [CASS] and shared in-service training for staff, help provide good support for pupils.
35. There are very good links with the local community. Members of the community visit the school to support the curriculum, broaden pupils' learning and extend pupils' environmental awareness. Community links are further strengthened by liaison with local churches and this helps extend pupils' learning and develops their awareness of a variety of beliefs and cultures.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Leadership by the headteacher is satisfactory overall. It is very good in those aspects of the school relating to the ethos, pupil care and welfare, and links with parents and the local community. It is satisfactory in respect of the academic curriculum. Governance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Governors are very supportive of the headteacher and the school.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher work very well together and provide a good role model for other staff.
- The school is effectively inclusive so that pupils of all abilities have full access to the planned curriculum.
- Teaching and learning are not systematically monitored.
- Subject leaders are not effective enough in raising standards.
- School Improvement Planning has improved since the previous inspection.
- The school does not make sufficient use of ICT.

Commentary

36. Governance of the school is satisfactory. Governors are fully supportive of the headteacher but this does not prevent them from asking searching questions and challenging the headteacher over matters such as the National Curriculum test results. They have supported the school well in its desire to enhance its facilities and resources. They are proud that in 2004 the school was awarded 'Investor in People' status and the 'Healthy Schools Award'. They were fully involved in drawing up the school improvement plan along with parents and staff. The plan is a helpful document as it specifies most of the details necessary to ensure that improvements occur and is much improved on that reported at the last inspection. Developments are now closely related to financial planning. However, in those areas relating to developments in the curriculum, the success criteria are not sufficiently linked to the attainment of pupils. Within the improvement plan is a helpful annual calendar to consider plans and reviews, some of which pertain to governors, but this does not include all aspects of

governors' work, for example, the review of school policies. The governors have ensured that the school has dealt satisfactorily with all the key issues from the last inspection and they ensure that the school fulfils its statutory duties. Best value is sought on all occasions.

37. The headteacher and deputy headteacher work well together. They have different strengths and use these well for the benefit of the school. They have high aspirations for every pupil in all areas of school life; for example, the headteacher provides very good leadership in promoting the Christian ethos and the deputy headteacher is currently leading staff in implementing the Primary National Strategy, a means to improve the curriculum and the quality of teaching and learning. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, and those from minorities, such as traveller pupils, are fully included in all lessons and activities. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. The school provides pupils with a wide range of extra-curricular activities that enhance pupils' learning. Pupils are well cared for and they are actively encouraged to be involved in the running of the school. The school's links with parents, the local community and other schools are very good. The school has adopted good strategies to track pupils' progress across the school and it uses a variety of tests to help identify strengths and weaknesses in the attainment of individuals and across year groups.
38. Management by the headteacher contributes very well to the ethos of the school and it is sound in ensuring the school runs smoothly from day to day. Teachers new to the school report that they feel very well supported. However, the school does not have in place a systematic and rigorous programme for monitoring teaching and learning and this is a significant factor in why pupils are not attaining higher standards. This element of management is unsatisfactory.
39. Subject leadership is varied; for example, it is good at the Foundation Stage, for pupils with special educational needs and in ICT, where significant progress has been made since the previous inspection. In mathematics and science it is satisfactory but it is unsatisfactory in English. Subject leaders have insufficient opportunities to develop skills in accordance with their needs. Performance management is behind schedule and is therefore not contributing sufficiently to their development. There is too little time to monitor teaching and learning or the curriculum in order to support development in their subjects. Co-ordinators and the senior management team regularly report to the governing body, but monitoring of the curriculum remains unsystematic. Overall, school self-evaluation of the curriculum provision is unsatisfactory and as a result the school does not ensure that pupils in all classes receive a consistently high quality delivery of the curriculum.
39. Nearly all teachers have been issued with a laptop computer and good use is made of them, such as when lessons are planned, but there is no overall strategy to use ICT to help reduce teachers' workloads.
40. The large balance carried forward in the last financial year and the previous financial year [see table below] is the result of an outstanding payment to be made in respect of the new hall that has been built. When this has been settled, the balance will be in the order of £6000, an acceptable sum.
41. The school has recently been the subject of an internal audit carried out by Somerset County Council and the findings indicate there are only a few minor matters to be attended to.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	438466
Total expenditure	424091
Expenditure per pupil	*2304.84

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	39734
Balance carried forward to the next	54109

* The expenditure per pupil is based on the number of pupils attending the school in January 2003

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the reception class is good and children achieve well. The integration of children into the reception class is well planned. Wherever possible the teacher visits pre-school settings. Children attend a series of sessions over some weeks in the summer term prior to starting school and this prepares them well to settle in to the class. The move from the reception class into Year 1 is also managed well, with more formal liaison between class teachers either side of the summer holiday.

The nursery nurse and the early years co-ordinator work effectively as a team, managing the class well and giving the children opportunities to experience an exciting learning environment. This has been enhanced by improvements to the outdoor provision since the last inspection and the children's increased access to a wide range of learning opportunities throughout the day. Through thorough assessment, staff have a very good understanding of children's needs as learners. Educational needs and particular aptitudes are identified early in the year and so the teacher, nursery nurse and learning support assistant all provide very effective and appropriate intervention which extends learning and aids children's progress. Children with special educational needs are catered for well and are fully integrated into all activities during the school day.

All six areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum are implemented and provision is good overall. Teaching and learning are consistently good and there is a very good balance of activities chosen by the children and planned and led by the teacher. Learning goals are identified for all activities and areas of learning. On entry, standards are generally above average, but there is a small number of children with significant special needs who are unlikely to reach the goals children are expected to reach nationally at the end of the reception year.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very broad range of activities, the well planned environment and well-established daily routines ensure that children learn to work and play with others in many different situations.
- The classroom provides opportunities for children to collaborate on tasks and the very effective introduction to school has integrated this approach into all activities.
- Many children are already achieving some of the goals children are expected to reach by the end of the reception year and nearly all are on track to exceed many of these goals.
- Good provision ensures that children with special educational needs also feel fully involved in the class community.
- Most children are confident to speak out when working and playing with others.
- Children learn to take account of others in their class by taking turns.

Commentary

42. Very good teaching ensures that children achieve very well and their attitudes to learning are very good. Many display high levels of sustained and intense concentration when working with others and by themselves. They understand the meaning of fairness in the relationship with other children and this is underpinned by the sense of trust which has been established in the class. Adults have high expectations of behaviour and learning which are consistently reinforced during their dealings with children. Visitors to the classroom are welcomed confidently and most children are used to meeting new people.

43. From the start of the school day, children are expected to take personal responsibility when putting their bag, book, lunch box and snack in the correct place in the classroom. This establishes good routines which are sustained throughout the day. The opportunities to take decisions and operate independently are extensive and children's confident choice and noticeable independence are encouraged by the organisation and management of the class. In preparation for the physical education lesson, for example, children undressed and changed quickly, needing only minor assistance.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are very good at speaking confidently in front of the class.
- They listen and respond to each other in a mature manner.
- Opportunities for children to converse are well integrated into play opportunities.
- Children understand how to use language to convey meanings and in imaginative play.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Many children are already attaining some of the goals children are expected to reach by the end of the reception year and nearly all are likely to exceed many of these goals.

Commentary

44. Children achieve well. Standards are above expectations overall and well above expectations in speaking and listening and so the majority of pupils are likely to exceed the goals for learning in communication, language and literacy by the end of the reception year. These high levels have been sustained since the last inspection. Children come into school above average and the school builds on their successes. Planning is very thorough and both adult-directed and independent activities enhance the learning in all aspects of this area.
45. The children are generally very fluent and confident when speaking to large and small groups. They communicate their needs, ideas and views with ease whether in front of a large group or working in a small group with other children. Adults are genuinely interested in what each child has to say and children are keen to listen to each other, especially when they are working in small groups.
46. Children enjoy talking together as a central part of their play. In the role-play area, they interact well and are able to carry on a conversation for a substantial amount of time. Their imaginary play employs language in a range of situations, many of which they act out from personal experience, so they readily negotiate, question and explain. This very effective use of language extends into all areas of the curriculum and children are constantly improving their range of vocabulary.
47. When writing, they are encouraged to put pencil to paper and attempt to spell unknown words. More able children already have a wide vocabulary of words they can spell and many others have a core of words they use correctly when writing. Those with special educational needs show they understand basic letter sounds when spelling a new word, even when they cannot yet write it legibly. The pencil grip of most children is good. The adults model writing well and provide a language-rich environment. The computer is available throughout the day and is well used to support and develop communication skills through phonic and writing programmes.
48. Reading is a skill that children employ in all areas of their learning; for example, a group of four boys spent a considerable time poring over a book that an adult had found about building sites, reading some of the words and interpreting the pictures. Many children can read the instructions and questions on the computer programmes, playing games and producing their own current weather forecast, and when retelling the African story on display, the children showed knowledge of the story line and the characters.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are good in teacher-directed situations.
- Many children can count to 20 and are learning to order numbers.
- Numeracy is less obviously linked to the general learning environment than literacy and less well integrated into opportunities for play.

Commentary

49. In the teacher-directed sessions, teaching and learning are good, which enables children to achieve well. All children participate in counting rhymes and are confident when standing in front of the group to order numbers. The more able have a good grasp of the numbers to twenty and are able to add on, frequently using their knowledge of number bonds. They are already exceeding the national goals for their age. In one lesson, a singing rhyme helped to reinforce numbers to five for the less able and work on the missing numbers was very well differentiated for children of all abilities. Learning was ably supported by the teaching assistants who were effectively deployed during the session to reinforce the ordering of numbers in a practical group activity when the children were given a number and had to get into the correct order.
50. Children have access to the resources in the mathematics corner and a few chose to complete jigsaws. They talked about 2-dimensional shapes when they were cutting and sticking some on their models. However, there were few other opportunities to choose an activity with a numeracy element to the learning and numbers could be more evident in the general environment inside and outdoor, not just in the mathematics corner.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are eager to participate in the range of activities on offer.
- Very good intervention by adults promotes effective learning.
- Standards are very good, with children showing a rapid grasp of how their world works.
- Many children are already achieving some of the learning goals.
- Children are competent in the use of the computer and keyboard.

Commentary

51. Most children are well supported in their learning before they come to school and they bring a range of experiences and general knowledge that they draw on when engaging in the activities provided by the adults. This aspect of the curriculum is planned thoroughly and supports children's cultural development very well. The children retold the African story they had listened to and could understand some of the differences compared with their own lifestyle.
52. Provision for developing children's knowledge and understanding of world has improved since the last inspection. Teaching is good. Adults engage in play with the children and assess very well when to intervene and extend the children's thinking. For example, the children turned the building boxes into a building site, erecting a crane and lifted boxes onto the structure they were constructing. When discussion on the need to wear hard hats began, the adult produced books and jigsaws to help clarify some points of dissension. The children

spent a long time discussing the content of the book before returning to their building site. When they came back into the classroom, the same four children sat down to complete the jigsaw, still continuing their conversation.

53. There were high levels of concentration evident when the children were engaged in many of the activities on offer. They persevered with their designs and made recognisable models. When on the computer, tasks were completed and they did not get disheartened if they made a mistake. This area of the curriculum strongly supports many of the other areas of learning by integrating opportunities to use language, collaborate in pairs and small groups and utilise their physical skills. Children achieve well.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good. Many children are already achieving some learning goals.
- Children have good body control and can run, jump and skip confidently.
- They confidently ride the bikes in the playground.
- Children have a good sense of space.
- They have good manipulative skills which they use in creative and design activities.
- They enjoy the freedom provided by the outside learning space.

Commentary

54. The teaching and learning in the hall session were good, with children running, jumping and skipping confidently around the room, making good use of the space around them and showing a sense of responsibility towards others. Standards are above expectations in these formal lessons and in the activities which are both self-directed and teacher-led. Children have a good sense of balance when expressing themselves in physical activities in the hall. This is also evident when they are riding bikes, building models, climbing on the large play equipment and when simply enjoying the open space in the playground.
55. Their manipulative skills are good and the many opportunities to handle scissors, pencils, brushes, jigsaws, small construction equipment and a range of art materials are important to aid their development. Their good physical skills support other areas of learning.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children use their imaginations in an exciting way in role-play and other areas of the curriculum.
- They talk imaginatively about pictures they have painted.
- Art resources are not as well organised as other resources and children are unable to access many of them independently.
- Children achieve well as a result of the good teaching.

Commentary

56. Children are given many rich opportunities to use their imagination in role-play, art and design, and stories. Unplanned opportunities extend these activities. For example, heavy rain left a large puddle in the playground and the children sailed boats, imagining themselves off on their

travels, while the building boxes led to their using small boxes on their heads for 'hardhats'. One child described his paintings imaginatively.

57. Art and design resources are not as well organised as they are in other areas of the curriculum. Children do not have independent access to many of them and so end up choosing to use those put out by adults. However, their well-developed manipulative skills enabled them to join boxes together to make a range of structures and they knew that they must wait for the glue to dry before applying paint. The music lesson and the informal singing through the day effectively offer a range of musical experiences. Standards are above average. Most children are already reaching the goals for creative development and many will exceed them by the end of the year.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make good progress in the development of reading and communication skills.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and behave well.
- Standards in English are broadly average in Year 2 and in Year 6, but pupils' writing skills are not developed effectively.
- Marking lacks evaluative comment and does not refer to specific targets.
- Poor presentation, weak handwriting and overuse of published worksheets are contributing to weaknesses in writing.
- Cross-curricular opportunities for reading and for speaking and listening are good.
- There are weaknesses in leadership and management of the subject.

Commentary

58. Inspection findings show that standards in Year 2 and in Year 6 are above average in reading and speaking and listening and below average in writing. Pupils make good progress in developing reading skills but unsatisfactory progress in writing. This is a decline on the findings reported at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because they are supported effectively in most lessons. This ensures that they can take full part in learning at their own level. There was no evidence in lessons of any significant differences in attainment between boys and girls.
59. Reading skills are promoted well across a variety of subjects. Most pupils achieve well and standards are above average by Year 6, because the school has worked hard on developing the teaching of reading from the reception year. Teachers use effective methods when they teach pupils a variety of ways to work out unknown words. Most Year 6 pupils read a wide range of texts fluently and use expression satisfactorily. The majority of pupils can deduce how the story will carry on, using the text effectively. Most pupils enjoy reading and have positive attitudes to their work due to the encouragement and enthusiasm of teachers.
60. Standards of speaking and listening are above average in Year 2 and Year 6 because teachers' planning ensures that there is a strong emphasis on this area of learning. Notable features of good lessons were the many opportunities for speaking and listening. These have been developed very effectively through paired or collaborative working in all subjects, and through lively and constructive class or group discussions.
61. Standards in writing are below average in Year 2 and in Year 6. Teaching and learning in this area are unsatisfactory. Teachers, except in Years 3 and 6, do not set sufficiently high

expectations of pupils or structure their work so that pupils learn to write using interesting vocabulary. There is a heavy reliance on the use of published worksheets and this results in the amount of writing produced in a significant number of classes being rather limited. Weaknesses in spelling and basic grammar show some gaps in pupils' learning. Teachers do not plan regular opportunities for pupils to write for extended periods of time. In the lessons observed, and in pupils' books, evidence shows that teachers do not remind pupils about using literacy skills when they are writing in other subjects, such as science and religious education. Handwriting is not joined-up consistently or correctly formed because there is no clear scheme of work taught or modelled by teachers. The recently introduced scheme has not been effective in developing pupils' handwriting.

62. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, overall. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and behave well in most lessons because of teachers' effective use of encouragement. Most pupils achieve satisfactorily overall but not in writing. Teaching in Years 3 and 6 shows teachers' good subject knowledge and competent teaching styles which motivate pupils to learn. Effective teachers' planning creates a fast pace of learning. However, teaching does not consistently and effectively explain what elements and aspects need to be included in a good piece of writing.
63. There has been satisfactory improvement in the development of a system for assessing and tracking pupils' progress but this is not fully embedded in the school's practice so that all teachers are using it. Marking, while always positive, is not clear in telling pupils what they have done well or what they need to do to improve. Neither does it refer to specific writing targets. Pupils are aware that they have targets and these are evident in pupils' books. However, when asked, too few pupils knew their targets and not enough emphasis was given to these in lessons, which means that pupils are not sufficiently aware of how they can improve.
64. Leadership and management of English are unsatisfactory. There is no clear planned programme of monitoring teaching and learning so that good practice is shared, either through lesson observations or monitoring of planning or children's work. This is a weakness in leadership and management.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

65. English contributes satisfactorily, overall, to other subjects across the curriculum. Pupils' reading, speaking and listening skills are well developed in all subjects. Although writing is being used in other subjects, weak writing skills hold back the quality of recording in other subjects such as investigations in science. Except in Year 6, opportunities to develop pupils' skills in writing across all subjects are not yet being implemented beyond basic levels and writing lacks depth and length.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By Year 6 standards are generally above average.
- Mental arithmetic is a strength.
- The use of too many published workbooks and worksheets restricts pupils' learning.
- Pupils are not sufficiently involved in assessing their learning.
- Teachers do not always make clear their expectations of pupils, or provide sufficient support with vocabulary specific to the lesson.

Commentary

66. By Year 6 standards are generally above average. This is the result of good teaching of mental arithmetic throughout the school, which provides pupils with a good understanding of number and algebra, and the consistently good teaching in Years 3 and 6. The school's tracking documents show that nearly all pupils are making at least satisfactory progress and therefore achievement is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively and achieve as well as their classmates. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.
67. Teaching is satisfactory overall. It is good in Year 3 and Year 6. In these years, teachers have high expectations of their pupils. Relationships between adults and pupils are very good and pupils are particularly keen to do well. Teachers use a variety of management strategies to hold the attention of pupils in discussion and to keep them on task when engaged in activity, such as in Year 6, when two 'roving reporters' were assigned to check on how other pupils were coping with their task. Teachers make the most of opportunities to discuss the meaning of words, such as 'systematic', and phrases, such as 'stumbling towards a systematic approach' to ensure pupils are clear in their understanding. Time targets are used to enhance the pace of learning.
68. In Years 1 to 6, teachers begin their lessons with a mental arithmetic activity and this part of the lesson is generally taught well. The pace is usually good and pupils respond well to the challenges the teachers set them; for example, in a Year 6 class, one pupil worked out that $0.5 \times 100 = 50$. The pupil then stated that if 50 was multiplied by the same number (100) the answer would be 5000 and that there was a pattern which made it easy to calculate the answer. The pupil then explained the pattern. The teacher ensured that questions of appropriate difficulty were asked of pupils according to their level of attainment.
69. Teachers introduce the main part of mathematics lessons well by involving pupils in a discussion on what they remember from previous learning and selecting questions appropriate to the individuals who are asked. However, when the pupils are asked to begin their work, too often published worksheets and books are issued to the pupils. These are often the same for all pupils in the class and make no allowance for differences in pupils' levels of attainment. This is unsatisfactory as they restrict pupils' learning, particularly that of the higher attainers. They do not provide pupils with opportunities for tasks that are open and challenging. Pupils do not learn how to set out their work neatly or to practise their writing. On some occasions they are unable to read the instructions and they waste several minutes waiting for some assistance from an adult.
70. At the beginning of the lesson, teachers involve pupils in their learning by making clear the learning intentions of the lesson. These are usually written for the pupils to see so that they understand what it is they are trying to achieve. However, teachers do not return to these at the end of the lesson to ascertain how well the pupils think they are learning. This is a missed opportunity to give pupils some responsibility for their learning and to relate their progress to their personal targets.
71. Where teaching is satisfactory rather than good, teachers do not consistently make clear their expectations of pupils. Presentation is not consistently good throughout the school because teachers do not always specify how work should be set out. In most lessons, teachers introduce specific vocabulary but the words are not always readily displayed for pupils to read and so they do not learn the correct spelling or necessarily use these words in their recording.

Mathematics across the curriculum

72. Pupils use mathematics as part of their work in other subjects. For example, they use graphs and tables to record data in geography, science and in ICT but these opportunities are not planned systematically across the school.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good in Year 3 and Year 6.
- The recent emphasis on investigation in science enhances the quality of learning.
- Provision for the curriculum and standards of teaching and learning are not monitored systematically.
- Inconsistencies in teaching lead to variation in standards, particularly in Years 1 and 2

Commentary

73. Inspection findings show that standards are generally above average by Year 6 and that achievement is satisfactory. The school's test results show an improvement year on year since the last inspection and the quality of experimental and investigative work is good, an area of development to which the school has given priority. Achievement is satisfactory.
74. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The experimental and investigative approach that the school has been promoting is having a very positive effect where teachers embrace this approach, such as in Year 3 and Year 6 where teaching is good overall. However, some teachers are less confident. Teachers are aware of those pupils who need more support, and they structure their questioning and give additional help to meet these needs. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils' abilities were taken into account in the whole class introduction through targeted questioning and practical activities to show the similarities and differences between people.
75. Introductions to new modules of work set the scene well and help pupils understand what they are about to study. In good teaching, collaboration and sharing of ideas between pupils is encouraged so they build on previous learning and apply their knowledge to a new situation. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are regularly provided with the opportunity to collaborate on tasks. When collaborating, the pace of learning and the pupils' productivity is good. Teachers frequently offer the same main activity to the whole class and this is effective where teachers respond to individual needs and give advice to aid pupils in their work. However, the value of the interactions is more evident in Years 3 to 6, where the learning objectives of the lesson are clearly evident, than in Years 1 and 2. When the task lacks challenge, pupils are compliant and complete the mundane tasks they are given, but there is a lack of engagement and enthusiasm. For example, some of the many worksheets pupils are given do not encourage them to pose their own questions or choose how they will record their work.
76. Inconsistencies in provision are not helped by a lack of opportunity for the science co-ordinator to observe what happens in classrooms. Monitoring of planning and scrutiny of work have led to improved resources and an increasing emphasis on experimental and investigational science in many, but not all, parts of the school. The school makes use of visits which enhance the quality of the science curriculum by helping pupils gain a more secure understanding. For example, a trip to the local power station helped pupils learn about the way power is supplied and the implications of its production and use.
77. Standards and teaching have improved in Years 3 to 6 since the last inspection. The school continues to make good use of visits, visitors and the local area to enrich the curriculum and has sustained pupils' positive attitudes towards science and the quality of experimental and investigative work. However, in Years 1 and 2, the investigational approach has not improved significantly since the last inspection. The weakness in some classes, where the teachers offer the whole class the same activity, continues and more able pupils continue to be insufficiently challenged. Monitoring and evaluation of the subject is still limited by school organisation.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has made good progress in improving the resources and standards attained by pupils.
- Standards have improved since the last inspection and, by the end of Year 6, they are in line with those expected.
- Teachers' confidence has grown since the last inspection.
- Direct teaching of ICT skills is good.
- ICT is increasingly being used to support learning in other subjects.
- There has been a significant improvement in resources.

Commentary

78. Pupils enjoy working with computers and, by Year 2, pupils have learnt to find and load the program they need. They are able to use the cursor and to scroll up and down the page. They follow instructions well, such as when they listen to a story. Pupils use a word processing program competently and can insert a picture into the text. By Year 6, pupils change the font to other sizes and colours and put together a multi-media presentation. They have experience of using a database and spreadsheets and use the Internet for research purposes. They communicate with others using electronic mail and they know how to use chat rooms and to use them safely. They are comfortable in using the technology and talk confidently about their ability to use the computer.
79. As a result of the action taken by the school to improve standards, achievement is now satisfactory across the school and this is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers' confidence and expertise has been improved through training and through the appointment of new staff, including a technician, who also does much of the direct teaching. All but one of the teachers has their own laptop, on which they are able to practise skills, and this has been a major factor in improving their subject knowledge. They are therefore much more confident when teaching ICT skills; for example, when using the interactive whiteboard to teach pupils in a Year 1 lesson that sounds, pictures and text convey information. Effective use of instructions and questioning ensured that pupils made good progress during the introduction to the lesson.
80. The school has invested heavily in making the appropriate resources available. A room has been converted into a technology suite and there are ten new computers available. A competent teaching assistant, whose ICT expertise is very good, teaches groups of pupils in this room and the pupils learn well when in her charge. Additional computers are available for use in classrooms, but although most were switched on during the inspection, very little use was made of them. Two classes have been fitted with interactive whiteboards and it is the school's intention to make more available as soon as possible. Other apparatus such as a digital camera and a digital microscope have been purchased. The school is still waiting to be linked to the Internet through a broadband connection and hopes that this will happen in the near future, but this is dependent upon the local education authority.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

81. From discussions with pupils and from studying pupils' work, it is apparent that pupils have used ICT in English, mathematics, science, geography, history, music and art. However, schemes of work in all subjects do not yet identify all the opportunities for using ICT and this is an area for improvement.

HUMANITIES

82. No overall judgements on provision and teaching can be made in history and geography. This is because no lessons were seen in history and only one lesson was observed in geography. Religious education was inspected by the local diocese and their findings are published in a separate report.

83. In **history**, the limited range of work on display, interviews with pupils in Year 6 and a scrutiny of work in Years 2, 3 and 6 showed that pupils are developing a strong interest in the subject. The evidence also indicates that standards are in line with those expected by Year 6. Recent studies in Year 6 focused on children in the Victorian period, and pupils showed their grasp of key aspects relating to the period and their growing understanding of the reasons behind these. The National Curriculum programmes of study are being covered and teachers' termly plans are thorough.
84. In **geography** the National Curriculum programmes of study are being covered and teachers' termly plans are thorough. The limited evidence from the lesson, pupil interviews, a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' documents indicate that standards are in line with those expected nationally. During the interview, pupils talked confidently about their work and their knowledge of geographical aspects is satisfactory. The river studies recently completed by Year 6 pupils show they have a satisfactory grasp of map skills, the ability to research and present relevant information, and an understanding of how a river is formed. A recent visit to a power station highlighted the impact of human actions on the environment and put earlier learning into context.
85. In the one lesson seen, the quality of teaching and learning was good. This introductory lesson to a local study on Taunton town centre laid the ground well for a traffic survey that pupils are going to design and use. Good questioning by the teacher reinforced the key points, using a well-chosen worksheet.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

86. No overall judgements on provision and teaching can be made in art and design, design and technology or physical education. This is because no lessons were seen in art and design or design and technology and only two lessons were observed in physical education.
87. **Art and design** does not enjoy a high status in the school. There is a very limited quantity of work displayed in classrooms and around the school. Work shows some development of skills and techniques but is of a poor quality. Scrutiny of sketchbooks shows a similar pattern. There are some opportunities for experimentation but this is not well developed. Planning of work is evident but there is not much of it. There is very little sketching or observational drawing and it is evident that skills are not being taught systematically. Writing is not being developed well, with limited evidence of evaluations and labelling. The use of sketchbooks is under-developed, with some poor presentation. The art and design curriculum has not been sufficiently well planned to ensure that appropriate skills and techniques are taught systematically year on year. Discussions with pupils show that, although they enjoy art, the average standards noted at the previous inspection appear not to have been maintained. Pupils struggled to identify primary and secondary colours and were only able to recall one famous artist, Van Gogh.
88. Discussions with pupils about **design and technology** show that most pupils can generate ideas and create designs but the curriculum does not yet ensure progression in the acquisition of skills over time. Examples of work seen in books show that there are some links with English when pupils write lists, label diagrams and write instructions, but these links with literacy and written evaluations are limited. Writing skills are not being sufficiently well nurtured. Standards appear to be below those expected, as found at the last inspection.
89. Only two **physical education** lessons and one extra-curricular sports activity were seen during the inspection. Lessons were observed in Years 3 and 4. The teaching and learning in these lessons were good and unsatisfactory respectively. In the Year 3 lesson, the teacher had good subject expertise and ensured the pace of the lesson was fast. Pupils used the maximum amount of time to practise skills related to hockey, such as how to hold a hockey stick and then to dribble a ball around a set course. In the Year 4 lesson, the learning objectives were to improve throwing and catching but only five balls were produced for the class and two of these were deflated and very difficult to use appropriately. Pupils practised in groups of five or six but this resulted in pupils' spending more time watching others than

practising and they became somewhat uninterested because the activity was insufficiently challenging. This activity was curtailed because of heavy rain and the teacher rightly took the pupils to the hall where they played two games related to the practice. Extra-curricular activities are enjoyed by pupils and they contribute to the development of sporting skills. From discussions with pupils in Year 6, it is clear that they understand the need for warming-up prior to exercise and why they should cool down afterwards. They have a basic understanding of the effects of exercise on the body. They enjoy physical education and particularly appreciate dance and gymnastics now that they have appropriate provision in the new hall.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because teaching and learning are good
- Music enhances pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Commentary

90. Lessons in Years 1, 5 and 6, and one extra-curricular activity, were observed. In these lessons, teaching and learning were satisfactory in Year 1 and good in Years 5 and 6. By the end of Year 6, a significant proportion of pupils attain above average standards. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection.
91. Teaching is carried out by class teachers and a specialist. Pupils are provided with opportunities to listen to music from a wide variety of cultures, such as India. Teaching is enthusiastic and pupils respond well. Pupils learn musical terminology such as *pulse*, *tempo*, *rhythm* and *clusters*. However, these words are not always displayed for pupils to reinforce their learning. From the lessons seen, there is clear progression in the work and pupils enjoy playing instruments. By the end of Year 6, pupils sing confidently in parts and they enjoy composing their own pieces of music. They are able to recognise differences between acoustic sound, drum machines, a percussion loop and processed sound. A significant proportion of pupils extend their learning through performing in the school choir and by playing recorders. A few pupils learn to play other instruments such as the violin, guitar, flute and trumpet. However, only a few of the Year 6 pupils can recall the names of famous composers, such as Mozart and Handel.
92. The singing and playing of religious songs enhances pupils' spiritual and moral development. Nearly all activities require pupils to work together as a class, in small groups or in pairs and this helps to develop their social development.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

93. No overall judgements can be made about provision or teaching as only one lesson was seen.
94. However, from discussions with pupils in Year 6, examination of pupils' work and the one lesson seen, it is apparent that the school recognises pupils' personal development as a very important part of its work and the concepts inherent in **personal, social, and health education** permeate all of the school's activities. There are very good opportunities to discuss pupils' feelings and to reflect on their own circumstances during lessons and assemblies. The school has a strong personal development programme, which includes opportunities for pupils to learn about sex, relationships and the dangers of smoking, drinking and drugs through a sensitive approach compatible with the Christian ethos of the school. Year 6 pupils talk confidently about the programme and can recall what they have learnt about harmful substances. They find the lessons interesting and of considerable use. Pupils have

opportunities to learn about citizenship through the processes related to the Task Force. From the limited evidence it would appear that standards are above those normally expected.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	2
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
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	2
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	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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

poor (6); very poor (7).