

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **MARWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Whiddon, Barnstaple

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113161

Headteacher: Mrs Carol Cooper

Lead inspector: Martin Kerly

Dates of inspection: 7<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> February 2005

Inspection number: 270651

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

© Crown copyright 2005

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	90
School address:	Whiddon Muddiford Barnstaple Devon
Postcode:	EX31 4HF
Telephone number:	01271 850395
Fax number:	01271 850395
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Jane Bull
Date of previous inspection:	21 <sup>st</sup> May 1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Marwood Primary School is a small mixed school with 90 pupils on roll aged from four to eleven years. At the time of the inspection there were substantially more boys on roll than there were girls. The school is in a relatively isolated rural position and almost all the pupils arrive by car from surrounding small villages and hamlets and the outskirts of Barnstaple. All but three of the pupils are from a white British background. The remaining three are from a white other than British, a black British and a mixed race background. The proportion of pupils qualifying for free school meals is below the national average as is the percentage of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs; this is below the national proportion. There are no refugees' asylum seekers' or travellers' children, none in public care and none from homes where English is not the first language and who are at an early stage of English language acquisition. Although the full range of ability is represented in the school's intake, the children's abilities on intake are mainly above those found nationally. The school gained an Achievement Award in 2001 and the Activemark Award in the summer of 2004.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
12783	Martin Kerly	Lead inspector	Mathematics Geography History Physical education
31758	Ted Tipper	Lay inspector	
33163	Jan O'Hara	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Special educational needs
28686	Liz Walker	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Music Religious education Personal, social and health education

The inspection contractor was:

Tribal PPI  
1 – 4 Portland Square  
Bristol  
BS2 8RR

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>6</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>9</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>34</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

Marwood Primary School is a good school with some very good features and few aspects in need of improvement. Its pupils achieve well. They enter the school with above average levels of attainment and leave with attainment well above the national average in English, mathematics and science and above average in most other subjects. The school provides good value for money.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards attained in English, mathematics and science are well above those expected nationally by the time pupils leave the school in Year 6.
- The quality of teaching is good throughout the school and pupils learn well in small classes.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to their work and behave very well.
- The headteacher provides very effective leadership and governance of the school is good.
- Provision and supervision arrangements outside at playtime and lunchtime need improving.
- There are very good links with parents, other schools and the local community.
- There is good evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the school but the schedule and processes for doing this in order to ensure improvement are not all formally established.
- Despite significant recent improvements, aspects of the accommodation remain unsatisfactory and impede pupils' learning.
- Attendance is satisfactory but too many pupils take family holidays during term time.

The school has made good improvement since it was last inspected in 1999, most of this in the last three years. All the previously identified weaknesses have been successfully addressed, including standards in information and communication technology (ICT), monitoring pupils' performance, the provision for pupils with special educational needs and health and safety documentation.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Pupils achieve well throughout their time in the school. Having attained standards above national expectations on arrival, the majority attain standards well above national expectations by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science, and above national expectations in ICT, design and technology, music, swimming and personal, social and health education. Standards attained in religious education are above those expected locally. During their time in the Foundation Stage, children achieve well and most are in line to exceed the goals expected nationally by the end of reception. Their achievement in personal and social development and in communication, language and literacy is very good. Good achievement is maintained in the infant and junior years in almost all subjects and most pupils attain standards above national expectations by the end of Year 6. In gymnastics pupils' achievement is just satisfactory, having been constrained by inadequate accommodation. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well as a result of the effective support received in class and when they are withdrawn for additional help. All pupils are valued equally and the school works successfully to ensure they are all fully included. Attendance is satisfactory, but it is declining relative to similar schools, and too many pupils take holidays in term time. Punctuality is very good. **Pupils' personal development is very good, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.** Pupils' attitudes to school are very good and they behave very well.



## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education across the school is good. The teaching is good and pupils learn well.** Teaching is consistently good in the Foundation Stage. In the infant years teaching is good but more variable than in other years, ranging from excellent to satisfactory. In the junior years it is good with almost a third of lessons being very good. There is no unsatisfactory teaching in the school. Teaching and learning in English and mathematics are very good. The teachers have a very good knowledge of the subjects, plan their lessons carefully and ensure activities match the needs of different groups of pupils in the small mixed-age classes, so that all, including those with special needs, are equally included and learn well. They have high expectations of their pupils. Teachers use and extend the pupils' very good speaking and listening skills in work across the curriculum; this enhances the rate of pupils' learning. They frequently assess and record their pupils' learning and use the information well to plan the next steps. The pupils enjoy their lessons and are positive about their work; they collaborate very well and are able to work independently. **Curricular provision is good.** The school provides a very good range of interesting activities that enrich pupils' experiences. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The very good ratio of teachers to pupils enables all pupils to be taught in small classes. Classroom accommodation has been improved significantly, but the accommodation for the reception children is unsatisfactory, curtailing their activities, and the small hall restricts the scope for aspects of physical education.

**Support, guidance and advice to pupils are very good**, but arrangements and supervision outside at playtime and lunchtime require improvement. **The school works very well in partnership with parents** providing them with very good information about the school and their children's progress. There are very good links with other schools and the community.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership of the school is very good and the school is well managed.** The headteacher provides very good leadership and is a very good role model for colleagues. She has great energy and commitment and works very hard to set a clear vision for the school focusing on the provision for all the pupils and the standards they achieve. She has many lead responsibilities within the small effective team in which all colleagues contribute and feel valued. Governors are very supportive and involved in setting the overall vision and direction of the school; the chairman and other governors have a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and fulfil their complex roles well. They have worked resolutely to improve the school accommodation. The management of the school is good with clear information flow and routines. The school understands its strengths and weaknesses and has some good practices for evaluating its performance and ensuring improvement, but the schedule and processes for doing this are not all formally established for the year explaining what is to be done, by whom, how and when.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

The pupils are very positive about their school and enthusiastic about the range of activities provided. They feel listened to and consulted, and members of the school council are proud of its achievements. Parents are very supportive of the school; they are confident that it provides their children with a good education within a caring framework, and they appreciate the very good information they receive from the school. They feel welcome in the school and fulfil their role in the partnership very well.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

**The most important things this good school should do to improve further are to:**

- develop the accommodation to meet the needs of the Foundation Stage curriculum and of indoor physical education;
- formalise the recording of systems and schedules to promote self-evaluation describing clearly who does what and when throughout the year;
- improve the arrangements for outside provision and the supervision of pupils at playtime and lunchtime; and
- work closely with parents to reduce the relatively high absence rate related to annual family holidays being taken in term time.



## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

#### Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

The children's standards of attainment on entry to the school are **above** the national expectations of four year-olds. By the end of Year 2, standards are **well above** those expected nationally in reading and writing, and **above** those expected in mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT), and religious education (RE). By the end of Year 6 standards are **well above** those expected nationally in English, mathematics, science and **above** national expectations in most other subjects. Achievement by pupils of all abilities is **good** overall during their time in school.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards attained in English, mathematics and science are well above those expected nationally by the time pupils leave the school in Year 6.
- By the end of Year 6 standards in ICT, design and technology (DT), music, swimming and personal, social and health education (PSHE) are above those expected nationally, and in RE they are above locally expected standards.
- Boys and girls of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, and those in all year groups, achieve well during their time in the school particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.
- Achievement in aspects of physical education is constrained by inadequate accommodation.

#### Commentary

1. Results from the most recent national tests in the summer of 2004 show that standards attained by pupils in Year 2 in reading and mathematics were high in comparison with the national average and with those schools in similar neighbourhoods. Standards in writing in Year 2 were well above the national average and those of similar schools. Standards in science were in line with the national average, but below those in schools in similar neighbourhoods.
2. Standards attained in the national tests by Year 6 pupils in the summer of 2004 in English were well above the national average and above the average for similar schools with pupils who had a similar starting point at the end of Year 2 four years earlier in 2000. In mathematics standards attained in Year 6 were high in comparison with the national average and with similar schools. Standards attained in science were also high in comparison with the national average and well above those in similar schools. Those Year 6 pupils with special educational needs and who received additional support achieved well, with almost all of them attaining the nationally expected levels in the tests.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.2 (31.7)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	30.8 (28.3)	27.0 (26.8)
science	31.8 (32.3)	28.6 (28.6)

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

3. Standards in recent years have been consistently above the national average in the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science in Year 6, and the upward trend over the last three years has been greater than the national trend. Standards in Year 2 have been less consistent, with some fluctuation related to the small groups of pupils in each year group;

however, as in Year 6, the overall upward trend has been above the national trend. There is no significant difference in the achievement between boys and girls.

4. Inspection evidence and the school's own performance data show that standards in English, mathematics and science are being maintained well above national expectations for pupils by the end of Year 6. The attainment of children on entry to the school is above national expectations in all six areas of learning. During their time in the Foundation Stage, children achieve well so that, by the end of the reception year, most are in line to exceed the goals expected nationally, particularly in personal, social and emotional development and in communication, language and literacy. The few pupils with special educational needs, including the one with a statement of special needs, are helped to become fully involved in all activities and achieve very well during their reception year.
5. By the end of Year 2 standards are well above national expectations in speaking and listening, reading and writing. They are above national expectations in mathematics, science, ICT, music and PSHE, and above those expected for RE in the locally agreed syllabus. These above average standards reflect the good achievement by pupils in Years 1 and 2.
6. By the end of Year 6 standards are well above national expectations for the age group in all aspects of English including speaking and listening, reading and writing. They are also well above national expectations in mathematics and science. These standards are higher than those at the time of the last inspection. In these core subjects the pupils achieve very well, benefiting from good teaching, a very good pupil - teacher ratio and their own very positive attitudes to their work. Their very good literacy and numeracy skills and competence in ICT contribute to their good achievement and higher than nationally expected standards in most other subjects. Standards attained in ICT are above national expectations; this is a significant improvement on those reported at the last inspection when they were below national expectations. Standards attained in DT, music and PSHE are also higher than national expectations. Standards in RE are above those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in art and design are in line with national expectations. Geography, history and physical education were only sampled and so there are no overall judgements about standards and achievement in these subjects. However, the school's records show standards in swimming by Year 6 are above national expectations and in discussion, pupils are able to talk confidently and knowledgeably about their recent work in geography and history. Standards seen in gymnastics lessons are in line with national expectations in the junior years. In this aspect of PE the pupils' achievement, whilst satisfactory, is constrained by the inadequate accommodation, with insufficient room to develop movement and sequences in the very small hall.
7. In all four mixed-age classes pupils of all abilities achieve well. The more able pupils are challenged and extended within routine class activities. Pupils with special educational needs are supported by their teachers and frequently by learning assistants enabling them to work at broadly similar concepts but with greater structured support. The one pupil with a statement of special educational needs is very well supported by specifically trained staff and is able to be fully integrated in all lessons helping her to achieve well. The pupils' achievement is supported well by their teachers' high expectations and the good use made of performance data. The older pupils have a good understanding of their targets and what they need to do to achieve them. Almost all the parents are keen that their children do well and actively support them in their school work contributing to their overall achievement.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils have **very positive attitudes to their work** and behave **very well**. Attendance is **satisfactory**, however the number of holidays taken in term time is a cause for concern. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are all **very good**. The school provides very good opportunities for pupils to develop and foster their personal growth.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The enthusiasm and disposition of the pupils.
- The school's high expectations of their pupils.
- Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to their work and towards others in the school are very good.
- The very good range of experiences and opportunities to support pupils' personal development, and the focus on working together within the school community.
- Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- Attendance is broadly in line with the majority of similar schools across the country but too many pupils take holidays in term time.

## Commentary

8. All pupils are very aware of the school's code of conduct and behaviour and respond very well to the challenges and high expectations which are in place. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is fostered through a very good range of different speakers, music and arts events which are held both in and out of the school day. These aspects are successfully promoted by the staff team recognising their importance in a relatively small and isolated community. Pupils' work is displayed well and reflects the opportunities and good results pupils achieve when exploring the work of different artists and types of music. The school celebrates different festivals from other faiths, such as holding pancake races and replicating the traditions surrounding Shrove Tuesday.
9. The very good relationships which are paramount throughout the school are as a result of all the staff valuing the efforts and achievements of their pupils. They are quick to praise and indicate a trust and respect for their pupils. This is reciprocated so the care and concern shown by pupils, one to another, is very good. There have been no recent exclusions. Behaviour is very good because pupils' attitudes are very positive and they respect and enjoy learning and work hard in their lessons. They play equally well and share their games with one another; older pupils caring and supporting younger children in the playground. There are very few incidents of bullying or name calling, and when they occur they are dealt with immediately and very effectively by teachers and other adults in school.
10. Pupils have frequent and good opportunities to develop their social and moral codes of behaviour. They help and assist in classes. The pupils' very good moral principles allow them to be very supportive of each other; they show a pronounced sense of responsibility for living and working in a school community. They are considerate to their friends, valuing each other's opinions and are very polite to visitors. The older pupils take responsibility in preparing the hall and assist in the playground. The recently formed school council is already raising its own items and suggestions for improvements to the school and its environment. The school is anxious to seek the views of its pupils and the council is fulfilling the role well through the elected class representatives. The school works hard and effectively to prepare the pupils for life in a multicultural society beyond that experienced in their immediate neighbourhood. Pupils visit various places of worship and receive visitors from different ethnic groups and faiths. The school offers a wide range of extra-curricular activities for its pupils including music, sport and the arts. Pupils have the opportunity to join in residential visits where both social and moral development is fostered through a range of team building activities.
11. Attendance is satisfactory. It has remained around the same level as it was at the time of the last inspection. This represents a fall in real terms as attendance rates for similar schools nationally have increased. The school's own analysis has identified the increasing number of pupils who take holidays during term time as a major contributory factor in this. Consequently, it needs to work more closely with its parents to reverse this trend. Pupils attending the school do so with enthusiasm and are rarely late ensuring a prompt start to lessons. Punctuality has improved since the last time the school was inspected.

### **Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)**

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.9	School data	0.2
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. The quality of teaching and learning is **good** as is the curriculum in which there are **very good** opportunities for enrichment. The provision for the care, guidance and support of pupils is **good**. Partnership with parents is **very good** as are the links with other schools and colleges.

#### **Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching is **good** throughout the school and consequently pupils learn well. Teaching and learning are frequently **very good** in the junior years.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children in the Foundation Stage are taught well and learn effectively.
- The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics and English is very good.
- Teachers have a very good knowledge of their subjects.
- All teachers have high expectations of their pupils and carefully plan the activities to meet the needs of all pupils in their mixed-age classes.
- Teachers use and extend the pupils' very good speaking and listening skills in work across the curriculum; this enhances the rate of pupils' learning.
- Teachers assess and record pupils work in detail and use the information well.
- Teachers manage behaviour well and maintain a very good learning ethos in lessons.
- The pupils' very positive attitudes to their lessons contribute strongly to their learning.
- Pupils collaborate well and are capable of working independently.

#### **Commentary**

12. At the time of the inspection two of the four class teachers were absent on sick leave; their classes were being taught by the headteacher and another teacher who normally works just one day a week in the school. The quality of teaching and learning across the school is good. This judgement is based on lessons observed during the inspection, on a scrutiny of pupils' work over time, on teachers' lesson plans and records and from talking to the pupils. This good teaching and learning builds on the previously reported good teaching. During the inspection one third of the lessons observed in the junior years was very good with the remaining two thirds being good. In the infant years whilst good overall, the quality was more variable. One lesson was excellent, some were good and others were satisfactory. In the Foundation Stage the teaching and learning observed were consistently good.

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 24 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1	4	16	3	0	0	0

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

13. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is effective because it is very well planned in all six areas of learning. The children are constantly provided with interesting and diverse tasks which engage their attention and challenge them to think and explore different ideas and situations. Practitioners ensure the children use the good learning opportunities to develop and apply a variety of key skills and to develop their own ideas promoting both language and mathematical skills at every opportunity. The children achieve well and use their skills in a mature and confident manner, moving within groups and working both independently and with different practitioners within the mixed-age class.
14. Teaching and learning in English and mathematics is very good in the infant and junior years. The teachers have very good knowledge of the two subjects and have developed principles from the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. In all subjects they plan their lessons well and carefully prepare for all the pupils in their mixed-age classes, ensuring they are all challenged appropriately. Their good knowledge of the subject being taught enables them to explain it clearly to the pupils. They also explain clearly the focus of the activity and exactly what the pupils will be learning from it. This helps the pupils' understanding and adds to their sense of achievement. This was demonstrated well in an excellent Reception / Year 1 lesson in which very imaginative activities were prepared for different groups of pupils developing their phonic skills whilst naming and describing characters in a story. Excellent modelling by the class teacher and her high expectations led to very good learning by the pupils and a sense of achievement by all, including a pupil with a statement of educational need who, as a result of skilful intervention by a well-directed learning assistant, was able to participate fully in the activity and be recognized by peers for her achievements. Teachers use learning assistants well to support groups of pupils in the classroom, particularly those few pupils who have special educational needs. For example, in a Year 6 lesson the assistant worked effectively with a group of pupils with special educational needs charting a method of multiplication while the class teacher extended the more able pupils with a series of challenging questions about the relative efficiency of different calculation strategies. In the reception class practitioners deploy skills learnt in specific training to help communicate with a child who has complex needs involving communication. This effectively supports the child's learning.
15. Teachers make good use of and further extend the pupils' well developed speaking and listening skills by regularly involving them in pairs to discuss, very briefly, their ideas about the concept being taught, or a possible solution. This very effective strategy engages all the pupils and helps them to learn effectively. They are also encouraged to evaluate their own work and that of their peers. For example in a Years 4/5 gymnastics lesson pupils demonstrated their sequences and were given points to look for and then report on. The pupils' learning is enhanced significantly by their own positive attitudes and the mature way in which they set about tasks. Pupils of all ages collaborate very well. For example in a Years 4/5 science lesson they worked very sensibly testing features of parachutes in the classroom and outside, and together were able to overcome some practical and unforeseen problems; and in a Year 2 mathematics lesson they collaborated very well in pairs identifying properties of two dimensional shapes and agreeing criteria for grouping them. In geography, history, DT and RE pupils' work is sometimes recorded in a general workbook with different subjects from page to page. This detracts from the pupils' ability to recognize any patterns in their learning in any one subject.
16. Teachers use a range of assessment procedures during lessons in addition to marking work alongside pupils. Examples of this include quick checks at the beginning of the lesson of what pupils have remembered from the previous lessons, the use of mini-whiteboards in mathematics lessons for pupils to jot down answers and share with the class, teachers moving effectively between groups during the main part of a lesson to check understanding, and in history, at the beginning of a unit of work, inviting the pupils to record all they already know about the Vikings, and then add to the concept map at the end of the unit. The small class size is a significant factor in strengthening the quality of learning and helping teachers to assess the pupils' understanding, with more time to give to each pupil. The additional time

helps the teachers to know their pupils very well; this knowledge of pupils is further strengthened by them being in the same class for two years. The good ongoing assessment and recording is carried through well to formal recording in all classes, enabling teachers and the headteacher to track the progress of each pupil from one term to the next. ICT is used well to support learning, such as researching information in history and the production of multimedia presentations on The Gambia by pupils in Years 5 and 6 geography lessons.

## The curriculum

The overall curriculum is **good**. A **very good** range of extra-curricular activities enriches the curriculum well.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management of the curriculum are good.
- The school plans a very good range of interesting activities that enrich pupils' learning.
- Provision for pupils with special education needs is good.
- The provision for personal, social and health education is effective.
- The very good match of teachers and support staff to the curriculum enhances provision and enables pupils of all abilities to learn well in small classes.
- Improvements have been made to the accommodation since the last inspection which is now satisfactory overall; however, accommodation for children in the Foundation Stage remains unsatisfactory as it is for indoor physical education.

### Commentary

17. The school provides a good quality curriculum for its pupils. Despite a heavy focus on English the curriculum is broad and sufficiently balanced, and fully meets national guidance for pupils in the Foundation Stage and the statutory requirements for pupils in Years 1 to 6. The school has a strong focus on helping pupils develop their literacy and mathematical skills, as well as providing many opportunities to be creative in subjects such as art and design and music. Religious education follows the locally agreed syllabus. Sex education and drug awareness are covered within the personal, social and health education programmes, which are good, and French has recently been introduced as a pilot project for pupils in Years 5 and 6.
18. The school provides a curriculum that is purposeful and relevant to pupils' learning needs. It is well planned and organised and kept under review. Learning opportunities are varied and directly linked to pupils' experiences in and beyond the classroom. Effective links between subjects help make pupils' learning meaningful, and the mixed-age classes very effectively support pupils as they move to the next stage of their education, as do the very good links with the partner secondary schools.
19. The school's strong commitment to ensuring equality of access and opportunity for all is achieved by active intervention by teachers and learning assistants overseen by an experienced co-ordinator for special education needs. As a result, provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good in the Foundation Stage, including the level of support given to the pupil with a statement of special educational need, and good throughout the rest of the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection when withdrawal of pupils identified as having special needs was perceived as a weakness in curricular provision. Individual educational plans clearly highlight what needs to be done and give helpful and specific guidance to staff, parents and pupils. The pupil who has a statement of special educational needs is supported very well. Teaching and non-teaching staff have all undergone communication training in order to support a pupil with special needs in the classroom and around the school.
20. The school provides a very good range of additional activities that enrich and extend the curriculum for pupils in and beyond the classroom. After-school and lunchtime clubs include

football, netball, singing, recorders, tennis, tag-rugby, computers and an African drumming Group, the latter involving more than half of the junior pupils. The drumming group has performed at a number of venues including Exeter Cathedral, local churches and the North Devon Festival. A programme of educational visits to such places as the Tate Gallery at St Ives and the Barbara Hepworth Museum brings purpose to subjects such as English, history and art. This is further enhanced by a number of visitors to the school to talk about, for example, beach safety and art sessions on Polish paper cutting and ceramics. Younger pupils take part in day trips, such as, to see performances of 'The Owl and the Pussy Cat'. From Year 3 all pupils are offered the opportunity of residential visits to places such as Slapton and the city of Bath; these enrich their learning as well as enhancing their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Successful whole-school events such as a recent family tree planting day actively promote the community spirit.

21. The match of teachers to the curriculum is very good, enabling pupils to be taught in small classes. The policy of appointing part-time staff further extends the range of expertise in what is a relatively small staff team helping to ensure all subjects are covered appropriately. There is a good number of additional support staff to assist teachers in providing effective support for pupils' individual learning needs. Resources and equipment to support pupils' learning, including those with special educational needs, are good and used effectively. Recent extensive building work has improved accommodation significantly in the main building, increasing the size of two classrooms and improving access and other domestic facilities. Accommodation is now satisfactory and includes a small but well stocked library supporting pupils' learning across the curriculum. The computer suite is too small for whole-class teaching but is used very effectively for small group skill teaching. Accommodation for the Foundation Stage and Year 1 pupils remains unsatisfactory and the outdoor play area restricts opportunities for large motor skill activities. The hall, which is used for gymnastics, music, school assemblies and for lunches, is also unsatisfactory being small and having a very low ceiling restricting movement. The school has creatively sought to address this problem by bussing pupils to a more appropriate venue off site for gymnastics sessions. A recently acquired playing field and designated off-road car park are further improvements since the last inspection.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The school makes **good** provision for the care, welfare, health and safety of pupils and provides them with **very good** support, advice and guidance. It actively seeks the views of pupils and acts on them in an appropriate manner.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school ensures its pupils receive good personal and academic support and guidance and develop very trusting relationships with adults in the school.
- Pupils are well cared for in a safe and healthy environment although the outside provision and supervision arrangements at playtimes and lunchtimes need improving.
- Very good arrangements exist for pupils joining the school.
- Pupils' views are sought and valued and they are involved in setting their own targets.

### **Commentary**

22. Teachers and their assistants get to know their pupils very well. They build up trusting relationships, which led to the overwhelming majority of pupils stating, in the pre-inspection questionnaire, that they are 'treated fairly' and there is 'an adult they can go to' if they have a problem or concern. Several instances were seen, during the inspection, where pupils supported each other and pupils from classes 3 and 4 are designated to look after their younger colleagues, especially in the playground. Parents confirm their children are well looked after at school. The very thorough system of assessment enables pupils' academic development to be tracked effectively ensuring they have a clear understanding of what they

need to do to improve. Support for personal development, while still good, is not so well recorded. Nevertheless, teachers and assistants observe pupils carefully and have a good knowledge of their personal development.

23. The school has worked hard to address the issues raised at the last inspection in relation to health and safety policies and monitoring. A health and safety audit of the whole school is carried out twice a year. The main one takes place in the winter, led by two governors, who report their findings to the governing body. The administrative officer performs a supplementary one in the summer term and reports to the headteacher. In addition, all members of staff attended a training day in July 2004 where they learned what to look out for and are, as a result, constantly vigilant in ensuring pupils work and play in safe surroundings. Several structural changes, such as to the outside wall, have been made to ensure this. However, the various outside steps on the sloping site continue to constitute a hazard, and the arrangements for playtime still give some cause for concern with relatively few adults supervising and with too many pupils either confined to the narrow pathway between the playground and school or straying into areas on different levels and out of sight of adult supervision.
24. Detailed risk assessments are completed for outside trips and in-school activities and electrical equipment is regularly checked. The provision for first aid and the administration of medicines is appropriate. The headteacher is the fully trained designated child protection officer who operates a system in accordance with the local education authority guidelines. All staff members receive awareness training and a very good information booklet and there is clear information in the staff handbook. The school is taking steps to ensure its pupils develop healthy lifestyles through subject lessons, visiting health professionals and actions such as only allowing fruit to be eaten at break times. It has also just received the sports Activemark in recognition of its contribution to improving the physical fitness of its pupils.
25. The arrangements for introducing children to the school are very good and comprehensive. There is a very effective relationship between the playgroup, which meets in the school, and the reception class whose staff also have good links with other local pre-school groups. Members of staff carry out home visits to meet the children and their parents and carers, prior to joining the school, and begin to build personal profiles of them. The children and parents make visits to the school where they can familiarise themselves with the place and the people. Parents were virtually unanimous, in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, confirming that there are good arrangements for allowing their children to settle in to the school.
26. The school conducts an annual survey of its pupils asking them what they like best about the school and what they would like most to see improved. There is also a school council, with a Year 6 pupil in the chair. This council meets regularly to discuss a range of issues raised by representatives from each class. Their members' views are treated seriously and feedback is given by the headteacher on any proposals made. Pupils are also involved in setting and reviewing their own targets in English and mathematics and are knowledgeable about their performance levels and what they need to do to get better. There is general agreement that the school is interested in their views.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents are provided with a high standard of information about the school and the standards achieved and progress made by their children.
- Parents make a very good contribution to their children's learning at school and at home.



- Very effective links have been established with the local community.
- The school has established relationships with other schools of clear benefit to the progress of pupils and the professional development of staff.

## Commentary

27. The information provided by the school has improved considerably since the last inspection. The prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are very well presented and informative and all statutory requirements are now met. The weekly newsletters keep parents well informed about pupils' achievements, forthcoming events and various aspects of concern or interest. There is a formal evening in October where teachers discuss pupils' progress with their parents and are given advice on how best to support their children at home. At the end of the spring term, written reports are sent home to parents of all pupils except of those in Reception who are invited to school to discuss their children's progress. Although the reports concentrate on what a pupil can do, rather than what they need to do to improve, they do include effort grades in all subjects and current SAT levels in English, mathematics and science. Specific targets are also set in these subjects. In the summer term, parents are invited to discuss the reports with the teachers. Parents are very appreciative of the efforts made to keep them informed of their children's progress. Those with children who have special educational needs are fully involved in annual reviews and how they can contribute to targets set in individual education plans.
28. Parents are very supportive of their children's education both at home and at school. This is demonstrated by the very high response rate to the pre-inspection questionnaire and the good attendance at the parents' meeting. Turnouts are very good at school functions and the Marwood School Association is very well supported in raising finance for various school projects from buying a new piano to refurbishing a classroom and helping with school trips. Several parents work in school carrying out tasks such as helping with reading or running the library. In return, the school is very approachable to parents and welcomes their views. For example, in last year's parental survey it identified a desire for more information on what the pupils will be studying during the year and has addressed this through its newsletters. Most parents are clear about the homework programme and feel it is beneficial to their children's education. They also feel the school consults them well on changes within the school.
29. The school has developed a very good range of links with the community despite its rather isolated rural location. It makes regular visits to local churches and leisure centres as well as to theatres, museums and art galleries that are further afield. Its drummers are particularly well travelled including Exeter Cathedral amongst their playing venues. Many visitors, such as a Buddhist, a veterinary nurse and a surf guard, increase pupils' awareness of the wider world and peoples' occupations. Others, such as sports coaches and health professionals, help to promote the importance of developing a healthy lifestyle. School projects are also supported by outside experts such as an archaeologist or citizens of countries being investigated. The link with the National Tree Council which resulted in a family tree planting day in the school grounds is intended to provide a lasting legacy for future generations while involvement with the Devon Arts in School Initiative has seen Japanese and Polish artists work with the pupils. There is also a close relationship with the community council with which the school is currently working on a project for a new community hall. The main area for development is with business organisations but opportunities are very limited locally. Overall, the school's community links do much to improve pupils' learning and develop their social skills.
30. The school is a very active member of the Braunton Academic Council consisting of the nearest secondary school and its partner primary schools. As a result the pupils have several opportunities to join with their peers in other schools in attending a range of arts events. As part of the Schools Sports Co-ordinator programme pupils participate in a range of activities such as country dance and multi-sports festivals and netball and football tournaments. There are also an increasing number of matches played against other schools, something that is currently a focus in the school improvement plan. Teachers from the secondary school also take Years 5 and 6 French lessons and there are teaching links in literacy. They also visit

Year 6 pupils to prepare them for their move to secondary education and introduce transition units in English and mathematics that are completed on their transfer to the secondary school. These initiatives do much to develop the confidence of pupils and prepare them for the move from a small rural school to a much larger town one.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership by the headteacher is **very good**. The school is **well** managed and the governance is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher provides very clear and dynamic leadership and is a very good role-model for colleagues.
- There are very good systems for monitoring the data on the pupils' performance.
- There is an effective staff team in which all colleagues contribute and feel valued.
- The headteacher has many lead responsibilities within the small staff team.
- Governors are very involved in setting the overall vision and direction of the school.
- There are good systems for evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the school and promoting school improvement, but the schedule and processes for these are not all formally established.

### **Commentary**

31. The leadership provided by the headteacher is very good. Its impact has improved the school significantly in the short time she has been in post, and is an improvement on that reported at the time of the last inspection. She has great energy and commitment and works very hard indeed to set a clear vision for the school focusing on the provision for the pupils and the standards they achieve. She has managed change sensitively, acknowledging the school's previous strengths whilst addressing weaknesses. She leads well by example in the classroom as a teacher, as a subject leader and as a creative thinker. She has high aspirations for all the pupils and has successfully led a number of initiatives to enrich the curricular experiences of pupils in this relatively isolated rural school. On appointment she immediately recognised the limitations imposed by the accommodation and together with the governors, she has worked most effectively to improve the accommodation and facilities, establishing and implementing a long-term strategic plan. Within this small school and staff team the headteacher alone carries all the formal additional responsibilities in addition to teaching for a considerable proportion of the week and has a very demanding workload. At the time of the inspection she was teaching a class full time. She includes staff colleagues well as a team, involving them in key decision making and policy setting. Members of staff demonstrate their own commitment and contribute well; however, none of them formally share the leadership and management. This situation creates a degree of over-reliance on the headteacher, and the potential for discontinuity when she leaves the school at the end of the term during which the inspection took place. The Foundation Stage is well led by the class teacher. The provision for special educational needs is co-ordinated well by a part-time member of staff who has a good understanding of her role and responsibilities. The leadership of individual subjects is well managed, and has been a development plan priority this year. Some subjects are led by a co-ordinator and others worked on from time-to-time by the whole staff team. This arrangement is appropriate for a small team. There is a good school development plan, it being clearly written and with relatively few priorities given the size of the staff team. However, it does not contain an overall summary of staff development.
32. Management of the school is good. There is an effective school development plan with clear targets and strategies for achieving them. The school has developed some effective practices for evaluating its strengths and weaknesses, and these involve all staff and governors at various stages. The findings are used well, for example careful targeting of particular pupils for additional help with specific aspects of their learning, the setting of challenging targets for

pupils and the support for teachers in developing their own subject knowledge and teaching skills. Whilst the school understands its strengths and weaknesses well, there is no formally established schedule for when it checks each element of its performance, how it is done, the precise roles of various partners in the process and how any findings are shared and acted upon. This is a weakness, particularly in the absence of any posts of responsibility in addition to that of the headteacher.

33. A previous weakness was the absence of some statutory policies. This is no longer the case; governors and the headteacher have worked effectively to establish all the key statutory policies. There is a very good staff handbook which outlines well day-to-day procedures, roles and responsibilities. Previously reported personnel issues have been resolved and all members of staff feel valued and clear about their roles. Members of the support staff team are well qualified and deployed effectively in the classrooms, library and ICT suite, working with groups of pupils of all abilities, particularly those with special educational needs. Professional development of staff is seen as a priority for this small team, especially important given the relative isolation of the school. Staff meetings are used well and links within the 'Academic Council' operated by the local authority enable members of staff to share professional issues with other schools. There is sound use of in-service days, although no overall in-service programme. Most of the five days are related to priorities in the school development plan and in recognition of the school's responsibility to meet the needs of all its pupils. For example, a day was recently devoted to learning aspects of sign language in readiness for the admission of a particular pupil; another day considered ways of ensuring more able pupils are fully challenged and extended. Whilst there is much ongoing effective staff development there is no clearly defined whole-school staff development programme for the year which is a weakness. Performance management is securely established for all the teachers and led by the headteacher. It does not formally involve members of the support staff team although informal meetings are held with them to discuss their needs. There are good systems for recruiting and retaining staff and very effective systems for the support and induction of new teachers; these have been implemented well. Financial management is sound. A very recent independent audit conducted by the local authority identified minor financial administrative issues for improvement. These were being addressed at the time of the inspection.

**Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004**

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	301,158	Balance from previous year	10,502
Total expenditure	289,984	Balance carried forward to next year	21,676
Expenditure per pupil	2,929		

34. The relatively large carry forward figure is intended to enable the current provision of four classes to be maintained at a time when numbers are falling slightly.
35. Governance of the school is good. The governors are very supportive and fully committed to the school. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities well. Their role has been strengthened since the time of the last inspection and they now play a full part in helping to set the long-term strategic plan and direction for the school. They have been particularly successful in relation to their long-term plan to improve the school's accommodation. The chair provides effective leadership and has regular and frequent meetings with the headteacher enabling her to be well informed about the work of the school. Together with other governors, she has a good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Good systems have been established for individual governors to monitor aspects of the school's work and then report back to the full governing body. The governors have an effective system of committees and information flow is efficient between them and the full governing body. The planned amalgamation of the finance and buildings committees is rightly intended to strengthen the

current budget monitoring arrangements given the relatively low attendance at recent finance committee meetings. The governors' annual report to parents is particularly informative and very accessible.

36. There are a number of significant aids to raising achievement further in this successful school. They include the good teaching and learning and the pupils' very positive attitudes to their work. The main barrier relates to the unsatisfactory accommodation for the Foundation Stage and for physical education. Pupils achieve well during their time in the school and benefit from good quality provision, so although the unit cost per pupil is relatively high within this small setting, the school provides good value for money.

## **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

Children enter the reception class early in the year in which they are five. Many have experience either at a local nursery or within the playgroup based at the school. Almost all the children join the class with above average levels of attainment in all areas of learning within the Foundation Stage curriculum. Teaching and learning are good and the children achieve well during their time in the Foundation Stage. Almost all are in line to exceed the nationally expected goals by the end of reception in all six areas of learning.

The Foundation Stage children are taught in a class with Year 1 pupils, sometimes as one class unit. A varied and appropriate curriculum is built carefully around their needs. Lessons are very well planned so that good progress is made in all areas of learning. Children are encouraged to develop their independence, pursue a very wide range of activities and to socialise and integrate well with the older pupils in the class. They acquire and use their skills in a mature and confident manner, moving within groups and working both independently and with different practitioners. Expectations by the practitioners in the classroom are high and the children respond well.

Teaching is effective because it is very well planned in all six areas of learning. The children are constantly provided with interesting and diverse tasks which engage their attention and challenge them to think and explore different ideas and situations. The enthusiasm is caught by the children who use the very good learning opportunities to apply a variety of key skills to develop their ideas and promote both language and mathematical skills at every opportunity. Children's progress is recorded carefully and monitored on a regular basis so that learning opportunities are always appropriate. Children with special educational needs, including a child with significant and complex needs, make good progress and are carefully nurtured so that they have every opportunity to share in the well planned activities. Provision for these children is very good with very good support from well trained learning assistants under the direction of the class teacher. The Foundation Stage is well managed and led by the class teacher who carries a number of other responsibilities across the school. She leads the team well and has a good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and the needs of the children. The curriculum is very well planned by the team within the restrictions of the temporary building. The accommodation is unsatisfactory; it is situated away from the main school and limited by the physical condition of the building and the restricted opportunities for learning outside the classroom. However overall provision has improved since the last report because increased facilities are available for the reception group and they are used well.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Most of the children are in line to significantly exceed the goals expected nationally by the end of the reception year.
- Relationships between the practitioners and the children are very good.
- The very good provision enables the children to achieve well.
- Children are encouraged at every opportunity to reason and think for themselves about the way they behave and to respect each other.

#### **Commentary**

37. The personal, social and emotional development of the children is successfully threaded through every aspect of the curriculum. The children respond very positively to the silent signs and quiet words of command as they move around the classroom. The subtle, but well

organized, routines mean that children are confident and blend their responses easily into the next task or activity. Their behaviour and attitudes towards their work are very good; they share their ideas and play well alongside each other. All activities and tasks provide good opportunities to develop these aspects of their learning so that specific skills can be enhanced within working groups. They line up quietly, dress themselves for outdoor play and respond well to rhymes and sounds which indicate a change of focus or activity.

38. The staff team has worked hard to ensure that children have every opportunity to express their ideas and to build up the confidence of those children who are of quieter disposition. The children are being well taught; they are achieving well and likely to make very good progress well beyond the nationally expected level by the time they leave the reception year.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are very good.
- Children work hard and use their language skills well.
- Tasks and activities engage the interest of the children so they are enthusiastic learners.
- Most of the children are in line to significantly exceed the goals expected nationally by the end of the reception year.

### **Commentary**

39. Language skills of almost all the children are above average when they enter school. The children are encouraged very effectively to develop and enhance their speaking and listening skills in every area of learning by the use of challenging questions and the very good use of direct and focused discussions between practitioners and groups of children. The children are encouraged to explore a wide variety of role-play and other activities to promote their language skills.
40. They are well conversed with a wide range of fairy-tale characters. This knowledge is used very well to develop their thinking and reasoning skills, such as when they were required to work out, from a series of clues, which character the teacher was portraying. The very good use of language and variety of approaches which make the children think before putting a question are developed further through the different tasks related to the children's ability. They are very well supported by learning support assistants who manage groups of pupils well so that all children make very good progress, including those who have special educational needs. The resources are very good and well managed by the children who are able to work hard and consolidate new skills very effectively.
41. Teaching and learning are very good in this area. The very well taught phonic sessions ensure that children develop a wide range of spelling and reading strategies. The imaginative and well-structured approach develops blending techniques which children assimilate as an interesting and varied game. They are all eager participants using their knowledge well and make very good progress.
42. Stories and reading are a vital and important part of the day. Children use books both with excitement and keen interest. They listen carefully to well told stories, select their own books and read to adults with confidence using word building skills efficiently. They use the computer with some confidence and interact well to develop their word building skills. They are taught very well to use writing tools and develop their writing skills in short and well focused sessions based on letter patterns which are then utilised in other areas of learning. The good achievement means that almost all the children are likely to significantly exceed the goals expected for their age by the end of reception.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in this area is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Resources are used imaginatively and promote the children's mathematical language very well.
- The children are enthusiastic mathematicians.

### **Commentary**

43. Numeracy sessions are lively and children are eager to explore the different range of well planned activities to develop their recognition of different coins and how to match and exchange different denominations. The well planned lesson observed challenged all levels of ability. Astute questioning techniques ensured every child had an opportunity to succeed and develop their recognition of coins and awareness of their values. When children enter school, many are able to count well and within a term can count to numbers beyond 20. The children are carefully monitored so that counting and simple number bond skills are embedded through a range of carefully planned activities. The activities are very well planned so that individual achievement is noted and future learning activity is based on the progress children make. This enables all the children to achieve well.
44. The children co-operate and share their ideas in the café about the costs and how many portions of fish are required to feed the customers. They prepare bills and match coins carefully to ten pence. They recognise and add together, one and two pence coins. Mathematical development permeates many areas of the curriculum and children are encouraged to use mathematical words carefully and accurately. Teaching and learning are good, resources are used well and almost all of the children are likely to exceed the national goals for mathematics by the end of their reception year.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

Provision in this area is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teaching and support is good, helping the children to achieve well.
- Effective questioning by all the practitioners helps children to think more carefully about the world around them.
- Visits and visitors to school help children to explore and recognise the wider world.
- There is good potential for learning outside but access to this is limited by the nature of the building.

### **Commentary**

45. Children achieve well and most are on course to exceed the nationally expected goals by the end of reception. Within the limitations of the classroom and difficult access to the outdoor area, they are encouraged by the very good use of appropriate resources and a purposeful classroom environment to promote learning opportunities in a range of topics based on a theme. The children observe and measure the seeds they have planted. They are knowledgeable about the conditions plants need to grow, and recognise that they need to be mindful of their own needs to be happy and healthy children.
46. Teaching and learning in this mixed-age class are good. Activities are well planned to take account of the needs of the reception group to explore for themselves an interesting range of activities stemming from ideas presented by practitioners. For example, following a story

about life under the sea, they were eager to share and co-operate with each other as they searched for treasure, created tactile underwater pictures, or acted as willing customers at the seaside café. The teacher made very good use of the opportunities to develop both language and number as an integral part of the session. All children show a good degree of independence and engage well with each other. Practitioners use very good interventions to enable all children including those with special educational needs to make good progress in developing both their physical and creative skills. At the time of the inspection sand and water-play provided good opportunities to develop imaginative play based on discovering buried treasure in the limited outdoor area.

47. The innovative use of short-burst activities where all children have the opportunity to explore and experiment keeps them involved and is a feature of very good teaching and learning opportunities. The innovation and clear links within a well-planned theme present children with good opportunities which are continual and permeate all other areas of learning, giving them confidence to use their skills and develop their understanding of the world around them.

## **PHYSICAL AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about provision and standards achieved in these areas.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The practitioners help the children to develop their control of manipulative skills through well-structured activities.
- The provision for outdoor learning in these areas is unsatisfactory.

### **Commentary**

48. Children's creative and physical development is promoted through using a good range of interesting activities in all areas of learning. Children use pencil, paint brushes and other tools to develop their mark making skills. The emerging handwriting patterns are used well to extend their understanding about colour, form and pattern. The themes, which are present in every learning opportunity, allow the children to explore and build various large and small structures and to engage in a good range of role-play activities.
49. Music-making is an important part of the curriculum and the children share a large repertoire of songs which they sing well at key times during the day. Teaching in this area is good and children learn well. They have a good musical vocabulary to describe the long and short sounds which they play on their selected instruments. They are developing a good awareness of a range of instruments and are beginning to group similar sounds together.
50. Children are encouraged to share in jingles and rhymes which they do with enthusiasm; they are given time to listen and share their music making ideas within a group. They are interested and enjoy sharing their music making skills. As is the case with all areas of learning, results are assessed and individual progress is recorded well to plan the next steps in children's learning in this area. Children with special educational needs make very good progress and are well supported in this area of learning.
51. In other creative activities the children are lively and enthusiastic when using tactile materials to create an under the sea scene, and recognise the different textures and objects when finding the treasure in the sand. Their play is facilitated well as all practitioners focus on a specific skill to promote learning with every child during the session. Their manipulative skills are enhanced through new and different ways to explore shapes and materials and to practise their mark making and cutting skills. Children use interesting words to describe their results and achievements to the rest of the group.



52. Outdoor play is very limited for the reception group but children enjoy the regular sessions and teaching is good when small groups can use the area away from the main teaching areas. Children listen well, but in the small space available have only limited opportunity to develop running, jumping and ball skills to best advantage.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **very good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards attained by all age groups are well above those expected nationally in speaking and listening, reading and writing, and are a strength of the school.
- The quality of teaching throughout the school is very good and pupils learn very well.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good.
- Information and communication technology is used well as a tool for learning in the subject.
- The pupils' advanced literacy skills are used well in other subjects.

#### **Commentary**

53. Standards attained in reading in the national tests for Year 2 pupils in the summer of 2004 were high in comparison with standards expected nationally and in comparison with those of schools in similar neighbourhoods. Standards attained in writing were well above those expected nationally and in similar schools. Standards in both reading and writing in Year 2 have fluctuated in annual tests over recent years but have been mostly above national expectations, in line with those in similar schools, and above the national upward trend. Standards attained for English in the national tests for Year 6 pupils in the summer of 2004 were well above standards expected nationally and above those in schools where pupils had similar starting points. In annual tests Year 6 standards have been consistently well above national expectations for several years, above the national upward trend and above those reported at the time of the last inspection. These consistent standards are commendable and a strength of the school.
54. Inspection evidence and the school's own performance data show that standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing have been maintained this year across the school, and in Years 2 and 6 are well above national expectations for these age groups. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is above national expectations. During their time in school pupils of all abilities achieve well so that most are well above national expectations by the time they leave the school in Year 6.
55. Lessons provide very good opportunities for speaking and listening so that pupils become very confident speakers by the time they reach Year 6. Throughout the school, introductions to lessons, explanations and discussions are well used to encourage pupils to speak and listen. Teachers use good questioning techniques, and give good opportunities for pupils to enhance their vocabulary by modelling appropriate subject specific terms. Pupils respond with growing confidence as they progress through the school and use subject specific vocabulary well in their discussions with one another. Pupils in all lessons are given the opportunity to confer with peers before sharing their views with the whole class. In Year 1 pupils respond well to handling materials and are able to say what they look like, smell like and feel like during a recall session. Year 1 pupils are also able to speak in sentences using nouns and adjectives when asked to describe a character from a story. Years 5 and 6 pupils demonstrate their powers of persuasion and use of emotive language as they engage in debate. Equally they show their sensitivity to share ideas and make thoughtful observations of the work of artists and of their peers in art and design and design and technology lessons. Pupils in Years

4 and 5 are able to recall accurately the process they use to input data whilst working independently in the ICT suite. Younger pupils benefit from planned opportunities to see such performances as 'The Owl and the Pussy Cat' and 'Burglar Bill'.

56. Achievement in reading is good in both Year 2 and Year 6. The school uses a variety of books, some of which are graded into colour bands, to support development in reading. Each child has a reading diary and reading homework is set regularly for all pupils. Year 2 pupils enjoy books and know the difference between fact and fiction, recognising that non-fiction books have content lists. Most of the relatively few pupils with special education needs recognise familiar words and carefully decode simple unknown words using their knowledge of letter sounds. Targeted intervention strategies, across the school, support pupils identified as needing additional support. Structured, well-planned guided reading is timetabled daily for all pupils. These sessions have a clear focus on specific skills to be developed and pupils are grouped with those of similar ability. All pupils in Year 6 can maintain attention without adult support. They read, at a good pace, a range of challenging texts including fiction and plays. Pupils of all abilities are highly motivated. Expectations are very high. Displays in classrooms include a variety of labels, instructions and headings which contribute to a very good literary environment. All classrooms have a good collection of books for group and independent reading. These are well ordered and easily accessible to all pupils. Books in classrooms and in the library are supplemented by material from the Devon Library Service. The library is housed in the ICT suite corner and provides a central information base. The library is Dewey classified with a good selection of reasonable quality and recently published material. Pupils can competently identify and select books from the library and follow a trail to the classroom to use other material as a research tool.
57. Attainment in writing is well above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Across the school, the secure use of the National Literacy Strategy helps to ensure that achievement is good. Handwriting is taught outside of the literacy hour and pencil control of pupils is very good with almost all pupils in Year 6 writing in a fluent joined script. By Year 2 most pupils can sequence sentences and instructions using full stops to separate them; one pupil explained, "I'm using commas because I'm writing a list". Younger pupils are beginning to show an awareness of the reader. The majority of pupils in Years 4 and 5 can construct adjectival phrases to emulate a modern poet. Their writing reflects their rural experiences in such phrases as 'the smell of spring' and 'the smoothness of the back of a cow'. By Year 6 writing is very good with almost all pupils adapting their writing for a range of purposes including poetry and limericks and to write in the style of Dickens. Accurate spelling is a feature of pupils' writing. All year groups are set spelling homework each week from the key word list from the National Literacy Strategy or from a commercial publication. Sentence structure, punctuation and spelling are good and powerful phrases such as 'recent research suggests' are used very well to enhance writing. Pupils are enthusiastic in their writing and can develop their arguments logically and with maturity, such as when writing on whether dogs should be banned from parks or mobile phones allowed in school. For example one pupil wrote 'Some schools point out that children carrying mobiles could be vulnerable to bullying and stealing'.
58. Teaching and learning throughout the school are very good. Teachers show very good understanding of the subject and knowledge of the National Literacy Strategy. Lessons are well planned with clearly focused learning objectives that are shared with the pupils, so they can judge for themselves whether they have achieved the objective by the end of the lesson. Teachers and learning assistants know their pupils well and very good relationships have been established. The teaching of knowledge and skills to enable pupils to become effective speakers, readers and writers is very good. This along with good literacy skills on entry means pupils make good progress and have positive attitudes. Early additional literacy support is targeted at pupils with special education needs. In the main this reinforces what is being taught in the classroom. The school has a very detailed map of the differentiated provision available to pupils requiring additional support. Marking is positive and helpful and related to the focus for writing. Teachers have high expectations and pupils are engaged and enthusiastic throughout their lessons.

59. Leadership and management in the subject are very good. The co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and is herself a very good role model for the teaching of English. Pupils' assessment tests are analysed very carefully for strengths and areas of weakness and priorities for development established. Good tracking procedures are in place and these are used effectively to establish support and set individual targets for improvement. All pupils including those with special educational needs have specific targets related to their writing. These are shared with pupils and teachers' marking celebrates when these targets have been met. Assessment data is very accurate, closely reflecting the outcomes of national tests, showing how well teachers know the pupils. An aspect of the very good provision is the significant time given to the subject, more than in most similar schools. Some of this extensive time is appropriately used to practise language skills whilst working in other curriculum areas.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

60. Language and literacy are used well across the curriculum. Teaching positively encourages the use of books, texts and the Internet for reference in subjects like geography, history, art and religious education and there are very good opportunities for pupils to express their opinions and listen to each other. Topics in other subjects are well supported by collections of books from the Devon School Library Curriculum Topic Service.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in mathematics are a major strength of the school.
- By the end of Year 6, standards are well above those expected nationally for this age group.
- Pupils of all abilities achieve well in Years 1, 2 and 3, and very well in Years 4, 5 and 6.
- Pupils enjoy talking about mathematics and demonstrating their oral and mental problem solving skills.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good, particularly in Years 4, 5 and 6.
- The subject is well led.

#### **Commentary**

61. Standards attained in the national tests for Year 2 pupils in the summer of 2004 were high in comparison with standards expected nationally and in comparison with those in schools in similar neighbourhoods. Standards in Year 2 have fluctuated in annual tests over recent years but have been mostly well above national expectations and those in similar schools, and above the national upward trend. Standards attained in the national tests for Year 6 pupils in the summer of 2004 were also high in comparison with standards expected nationally and in comparison with those in schools where pupils had similar starting points. In annual tests Year 6 standards have been consistently above or well above national expectations for several years and well above those reported at the time of the last inspection. These high standards are commendable and a strength of the school.
62. Standards attained by pupils in Year 2 are now above national expectations and by the time pupils reach Years 5 and 6 they are attaining standards well above national expectations; this is a significant improvement on those reported on in the last inspection, when they were only in line with national expectations. Pupils arrive in school with a good understanding of number, pattern and shape; this is built on well throughout their time in the school. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and those who are particularly able, achieve well during the infant years and very well during the junior years. The school exceeded its challenging targets for pupils in Year 6 in 2004. The targets for this year, for a different group of pupils, whilst not quite so high, remain challenging and, if attained, will represent very good achievement by these pupils.

63. At the time of the inspection most pupils were working on numbers and the number system, number calculations and the properties of shapes. However, evidence from pupils' mathematics workbooks, from talking to pupils and from teachers' plans shows that the relevant range of mathematical concepts in the National Curriculum is covered during the course of the year in all classes; the pupils' workbooks in all year groups contain a substantial amount of recorded work. Most pupils are very enthusiastic about the subject and very pleased to be able to talk about what they have done. When questioned, some older pupils are very competitive in demonstrating their rapid and accurate mental calculation skills and their reasoning skills in solving problems. Pupils who have recently joined the school report their mathematics work is harder than it was in their previous schools but they like it and are learning more.
64. The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall; this is a significant improvement on that reported last time. At the time of the inspection half of the regular class teachers were absent; however, much of the quality of teaching and learning seen was very good, and evidence from pupils' work, teachers' plans and talking to pupils, confirms this to be the case over time. Teachers have a very good knowledge of their subject and explain new concepts clearly. They have appropriately high expectations and all of them carefully match work to groups of pupils with different levels of understanding. They make good use of the mixed-age class structure, grouping pupils according to mathematical level of ability rather than age, enabling very able younger pupils to be working alongside older pupils from time to time. They also encourage pupils to talk about their mathematics using correct terminology. This helps significantly in the pupils' learning. Pupils with special needs are supported well in the classrooms by the teachers and, when available by teaching assistants. For example, Year 2 pupils were able to work in a small group identifying properties of two dimensional shapes and Years 5 and 6 pupils continued working with a teaching assistant and a flip chart on multiplication of two digit numbers rather than be overwhelmed in a concluding discussion led by the teacher with very able pupils on the efficiency and merits of different calculation strategies. Some of the pupils with special educational needs have aspects of mathematics identified in their individual education plans. Nearly all pupils take a pride in their recorded work and present it well. Teachers use homework well to support pupils' learning and most pupils complete this conscientiously.
65. There are good systems for assessing and recording pupils' progress in mathematics. Day-to-day work is marked regularly, although not always indicating how pupils can improve. There are regular more formal assessments which are systematically recorded and analysed so that the school can track individual pupils' progress and that of year groups. This data is used effectively to help identify and target pupils for additional support and evidence from last year shows pupils identified thus, made good gains.
66. The subject leader was absent at the time of the inspection. However, it is clear she provides good leadership, with a clear understanding of standards and practice across the school. She has observed colleagues' mathematics lessons and has provided useful feedback. She is regarded by the school as a very good role model. She has analysed performance data to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' understanding of mathematics, enabling a greater focus on those areas perceived to be relatively weak and led staff discussions examining pupils' work. There is a mathematics action plan but it lacks a clear focus for the year.

## Mathematics across the curriculum

67. The principles of the National Numeracy Strategy (NNS) have been adopted and are embedded in the practice throughout the school. Pupils' very good competence in numeracy effectively supports their work in other subjects such as completing databases in information and communication technology, their understanding of time and chronology in history, and their awareness of shape and tessellation in art. Some Year 4 pupils struggled, at first, to use stopwatches successfully when reading to one hundredth of a second within a science experiment, but their evolving knowledge of place value enabled them to overcome this problem.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well and attain standards well above national expectations by Year 6.
- Investigations are an integral part of the science curriculum.
- Pupils show great enthusiasm and interest in the subject.

### Commentary

68. Standards attained in the national tests in the summer of 2004 in Year 6 were high in comparison with national expectations and in schools with pupils of similar starting points. The pupils are continuing to achieve very well in all years and are attaining standards well above national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards have risen since the last inspection with the upward trend being greater than the national trend.
69. Teaching and learning are good, lessons are well planned and the pupils' previous knowledge is used very well to develop their reasoning and thinking skills. This maintains the good quality of provision previously reported. In every science lesson observed pupils showed an intense interest and enthusiasm. Teaching is good because lessons are planned very concisely and clear learning objectives are shared well with the pupils. For example, pupils in a Year 2 lesson were very confident as they discussed the strength of different textiles, using a simple scientific vocabulary to describe their hypothesis and prediction about which is the most appropriate and hardwearing material. Pupils were well supported in the lesson which used a good range of resources. They worked positively in mixed-age groups, listening carefully to each other's ideas about how to manage the test. The clearly focused introduction from the teacher ensured that pupils were able to construct their own 'fair test'. The ensuing discussions with each other considered how to measure the results. Pupils were able to manage and work together well on the test. They were supported well by the adults with the careful use of good interjections. Pupils with special educational needs made similar progress to other pupils as they described the different textures and recorded their results on a well-constructed chart. The pupils used their results effectively to make comparisons and interpret the results to measure their predictions.
70. By the time pupils are in Year 6 they are well versed in testing a hypothesis and their scientific vocabulary is well developed so that interpretation, gathering evidence and constructing a fair test is integral to their scientific thinking. Teaching and learning observed were good and the pupils' previous work indicates that they are frequently very good because pupils have a very good understanding and knowledge base about a range of scientific concepts. Pupils record their evidence about the effect of different forces on their individual parachutes made from different materials and shapes. They interpret the results well from their individual charts and make good comparisons between different sets of results. The lessons are well managed; the teachers encourage pupils to investigate and discuss their hypotheses by using appropriate

interjections and challenging questions. The pace of the lessons is good, and time is used efficiently so pupils complete all their tasks in the time allocated.

71. Pupils' work is assessed regularly; the results are used well to improve both the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the subject and to plan and review the content of the curriculum.
72. There is an established scheme of work which is planned every year to ensure that mixed-age classes do not repeat any areas of study. The very good resources within school together with the natural resources around the school are used very effectively to support the teaching in the subject. They are easily accessible and very well organized. The subject is managed effectively and the co-ordinator has a clear focus and a good action plan. Members of staff support each other well, so that the very high standards already in place can be maintained.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

The provision in information and communication technology is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There has been very good improvement in provision since the last inspection.
- Pupils are making good progress in developing their skills and standards are now above national expectations.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good and shared well.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) complements learning well in other subjects.
- While the new computer suite is small, with good timetabling, it has improved the pupils' opportunities to learn about and use ICT.

### **Commentary**

73. By the end of Years 2 and 6 pupils have attained standards above those expected nationally for their age and their achievement is good. This is very good improvement since the last inspection when standards were below national expectations and the requirements of the National Curriculum were not being met. Pupils have good research skills, are able to use ICT confidently for sharing information and for controlling programmable equipment, and are able to evaluate the efficiency and value of ICT in other aspects of their school work. By Years 5 and 6 pupils are very confident. They can talk about and demonstrate their skills and understanding. They use appropriate technology terms in discussions with one another. They can support younger pupils in a mature and appropriate manner. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, have their own on-line folder in which they have saved an extensive collection of work.
74. Teaching and learning are good. All taught ICT lessons take place in the computer suite. Pupils are taught in small groups, usually by one of the subject leaders who is a well trained and qualified learning assistant. Pupils are challenged and supported well by the high expectations of the learning assistant and this ensures that all pupils achieve well. The good range of activities planned builds effectively on the pupils' prior knowledge and understanding. Planning and assessment procedures are secure and firmly based on a nationally recommended scheme of work. Pupils are well supported to self-assess at the end of each unit of work. This ensures they have a clear understanding of what they know, understand and can do. For example, after working on a multimedia program, a Year 5 pupil reflected; "I went on the internet, I copied pictures and used PowerPpoint, and I could improve by using more highlighting". A much younger pupil after working on branching databases wrote; "I learnt to sort information into groups of what is true or not".
75. The joint leadership of the subject is effective; the subject leaders have a good understanding of the subject and the scope of their role as subject leaders. Assessment and recording is

established and there is a clear picture of standards in each strand of ICT. Given the number of pupils on roll, the school is well resourced. The school has a small but well equipped ICT suite, good software, programmable devices, recording and performance machines and a digital camera. In addition each classroom has two laptop computers. All of these resources are used well to support pupils' learning.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

76. Pupils use their ICT skills well to enhance their work in other subjects. In Years 1 and 2, they use a range of different programs to support their learning in literacy and numeracy. For example, spelling programs support the development of their literacy skills. They also use the word processor to produce sentences that communicate meaning and can refine their work by adding words, making corrections and adding punctuation. Year 2 pupils can also use a computer graphics package to create a picture and use appropriate tools, develop an image such as a playground scene and modify their work by erasing and changing colours. They are also able to demonstrate how to use keyboard skills to navigate through a maze. Pupils in Year 4 and 5 confidently and independently use spreadsheets to organise information from a survey of a shopping trip to a local town. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 are proud to show their animated multimedia presentations which support, for example, their research projects in geography on The Gambia.

### **HUMANITIES**

Provision in religious education is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards attained in religious education (RE) are above those expected locally.
- The curriculum is well planned to ensure that mixed age classes do not repeat themes and topics.
- Teachers use discussion well to develop pupils thinking about different faiths.

#### **Commentary**

77. Pupils in Year 6 attain standards which are above those expected in the locally agreed syllabus, maintaining the previously reported standards above locally agreed expectations. Pupils of all abilities achieve well; those with special educational needs are fully included within a supportive ethos and are enabled to take a full part in lessons. The curriculum is rich with a wealth of material and interest which ensures pupils have a good understanding of different beliefs. It is very well planned so that pupils explore the key features of Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism and Islam in order that they can develop both their knowledge and their understanding.
78. Teaching and learning are good overall, being satisfactory in the two infant years and good in the four junior years. Lessons are designed carefully taking into account the different needs and ages of each group. Local visitors contribute significantly to the teaching of RE. Local Anglican clergy and visitors from other faiths share their knowledge and experience well with different groups of pupils and this enhances the learning of RE across the school. Good use is made of video material to introduce pupils to concepts of particular faiths. For example, Year 2 pupils watched a video recording of a Christian baptism. The teaching focused very clearly on the introduction of a baby into the Christian church as a naming ceremony. Good use was made by the teacher of pupils' contributions and their knowledge of different ceremonies they were familiar with. Pupils were able to compare naming ceremonies from other beliefs and their importance within the family. The emphasis on making comparisons and drawing on similarities is made very well by Year 6, such as when discussing the Ten Commandments from the Old Testament and the Matta Sitta from the Buddhist faith. Older pupils respond sensitively to the challenging questions from teachers, showing perception and understanding

about the relevance of different texts. They are confident and mature in their responses, both in large and small group discussions. Tasks are well constructed and interest the pupils so they engage well and achieve good results. Pupils respond well to stories and accounts they hear in collective worship, assimilating knowledge and understanding from a range of different beliefs.

79. The subject leader is confident about her subject and is able to support her colleagues well. Resources are good; they have improved significantly since the time of the last inspection. The school uses local resources in the community to good effect to ensure pupils gain first hand experience from a range of different beliefs.

## **Geography**

80. Geography was sampled as only one geography lesson was observed during the inspection. Therefore it is not possible to make judgements about provision, standards attained or the quality of teaching and learning. Further evidence was gained from talking to pupils, consulting one of the joint subject leaders, and from a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' plans.
81. The one lesson observed involved Year 4 pupils recording information on a street map of Barnstaple following a recent visit to the high street to survey the shops. Pupils were making good gains in learning supported by the first hand experience of visiting the high street and the very good preparation of materials by the teacher. They were able to explain possible reasons for the distribution of shops and some market forces which might influence this. Their mapping skills were in-line with national expectations for their year group although their understanding of scale and direction remain limited. In other discussions with pupils across the school they have good awareness of different locations and the influence of human activities on the landscape. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 have studied the island of St Lucia in the Caribbean and have produced a good range of work related to the geography of the island, contrasting life there with that in the United Kingdom. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 studied The Gambia during the term before the inspection. Their recorded work is surprisingly limited in quantity and quality, but discussion with some pupils revealed they have a good understanding of the geographical concepts of this tropical West-African nation. They had used information and communication technology very well to produce good quality multi-media presentations, identifying some of the key features of the country.
82. There is a long-term curriculum plan for each mixed-age class designed to ensure National Curriculum requirements are met and the school is increasingly focusing on teaching geographical skills. However, the subject is taught in blocks with long intervals between; these intervals do not support the notion of pupils gradually developing the geographical skills as sought by the school. Good use is made of visits, including local studies and residential visits in Years 4 and 6 to contrasting locations, enriching the quality of the curriculum. The joint subject leaders provide sound leadership and have a clear picture of priorities. They have done some observation of teaching and learning but do not yet have a clear view of standards in the subject. There are effective assessment and recording procedures in place and recent improvements have been made to the storage of geographical resources.

## **History**

83. No history lessons were observed during the inspection and so it is not possible to make judgements about provision, standards achieved or the quality of teaching and learning. Evidence was gained from talking to pupils, consulting one of the joint subject leaders, and from a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' plans.
84. There was no recorded history work available by pupils in Year 6 for the current school year. The next history topic is scheduled for the beginning of the second half of this school year; this gap is too long to support the notion of steady progress in acquiring historical skills. However, there is a long-term curriculum plan for each mixed-age class designed to ensure National



Curriculum requirements are met. In discussion Year 6 pupils were able to demonstrate a good knowledge of previous historical studies, recalling, in detail, history learnt in the previous year in which they studied life in Ancient Greece and in Britain in World War II. Pupils in Year 4 had completed a topic on the Vikings during the previous term, and had produced a good range of work demonstrating a clear understanding of historical enquiry. They had identified aspects for research and then recorded their findings carefully, and were beginning to interpret and evaluate historical artefacts and evidence. Their recorded work was in a general notebook interspersed with work in two other subjects. This reduces the status of the subject and the ability of the pupil and reader to consider the unit of work as a whole. During the inspection pupils in Year 2 were embarking on a topic on Roman Britain and some of the features of invading and settling.

85. Apart from the relative infrequent focus on history, the pupils experience a good range and quality of activities over time such as a visit from an archaeologist, visits to an historical theme park in Cornwall and the city of Bath for a residential visit in Year 6, and also involvement in local studies of life in World War II in Barnstaple. Some good links with other curriculum areas include the art and design work in Years 2, 3, 4 and 5 where pupils have considered Roman art and used mosaic principles in their own art. There are effective systems for assessing and recording pupils' progress at the end of each unit of work. A good example of involving the pupils in self-assessment was illustrated in the Viking study by Year 4 pupils where pupils identified at the beginning and end of the unit what they knew about Vikings, and had framed their own questions for research. Good use is made of the Internet for research and homework is used well to encourage independent study. As in geography, the two joint subject leaders provide sound leadership and have a clear picture of priorities.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

### **Music**

Provision in music is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards attained in Years 2 and 6 are above national expectations for these age groups.
- Pupils revel in making music.
- Teaching is good and pupils learn well.
- Pupils have very good opportunities to perform and share their enthusiasm for the subject.
- There is good extra-curricular provision which involves a high proportion of the pupils.

#### **Commentary**

86. Music contributes significantly to the life of the school. Pupils of all abilities enjoy their lessons and teaching is good so that all pupils have good opportunities to develop both their singing and composition skills, which they do well. Pupils with special educational needs enjoy participating and the opportunity to perform with their peers. Pupils sing well in collective worship and within a lesson were very competent in singing in two-part harmony. Standards attained in Years 2 and 6 are above national expectations and pupils of all abilities achieve well, benefiting from the varied and rich experiences presented.
87. The youngest pupils are proficient in recognising different types of sounds and how to make a long or short note. They have frequent opportunities to share in both songs and jingles as they journey through the school day. The enthusiasm of their teacher is manifest in the well planned lessons which develop the pupils' musical skills well.
88. Older pupils revel in developing their drumming skills and share their considerable skill as a large group within the community where they perform to both local and wider audiences. Their

sense of rhythm is very well developed and they follow the conductor with great concentration so that tone and quality are very good.

89. Pupils have a good understanding of musical vocabulary and use it well. The subject is well led and has a high priority within the life of the school. The resources are good and used appropriately to develop a wide range of musical skills including listening to a range of different compositions from a variety of composers and performers. Pupils are encouraged to work together to bring their individual talents to form an orchestra which performs to the rest of the school. Pupils are developing their knowledge of notation and sight-reading and younger pupils are enthusiastic recorder players. At the time of the last inspection, music standards were reported as good. The increased activity and involvement of a wider group of pupils in extra-curricular activities have ensured that standards and progress have progressed well since the time of the last inspection.

### **Art and design**

90. Just one lesson was observed during the inspection. There is insufficient evidence to make sound judgements about provision, standards attained or the quality of teaching and learning in art and design as this subject was only sampled.
91. Work displayed around the school and in sketchbooks is of a good standard and shows that pupils have a range of planned opportunities to learn, develop and put into practice a satisfactory range of artistic skills. For example, work from a series of lessons for Reception and Year 1 pupils showed their developing creativity and imagination to work first hand with objects familiar to them. They had used a range of materials, first to create detailed drawings of fruit and vegetables, then to enlarge and paint their observations. Later activities had included batik and stitching to produce a good quality outcome. Year 2 pupils have also explored patterns in Roman art. Year 4 pupils have produced work based on the paintings of Henri Rousseau. Their work shows a good sense of spatial awareness and confidence in using a variety of techniques including mixing colour and experimenting with tone and texture. By Year 6 many pupils' work shows well-developed observational skills and they have produced careful and colourful Christmas card designs, based on the work of William Morris, and playing card designs, based on Greek gods. Years 5 and 6 pupils have explored the contrasting ideas and meaning in the work of artists such as the African artist John Muafangeogo and the abstract artist Terry Frost.
92. Art and design is linked well across the curriculum and supported by visiting artists and trips to places such as a local sculpture park. Pupils are very interested in art. They can recall their experiences and can understand the clear links with design and technology. They have benefited from the Devon Art in Schools initiative and can speak with interest about visiting artists including a visit from an archaeologist, which included a pseudo-dig for bones and pottery.

### **Design and technology**

93. Design and technology (DT) was sampled and so it is not possible to make an overall judgement about provision, standards across the school or the quality of teaching and learning. Two lessons were seen in design and technology. Inspectors spoke to the co-ordinator and pupils and looked at pupils' work.
94. Standards attained by Year 6 pupils are above national expectations. From discussions with pupils it is clear that in DT lessons pupils gain a good understanding of the use of appropriate tools, techniques and materials. In Year 6 pupils had made puppet heads and spent some time discussing amongst themselves materials that would be suitable for the bodies. They had taken care whilst producing labelled sketches and had carefully considered the making process, including appropriate materials and joining techniques. In Years 4 and 5 pupils had investigated commercial books with moving parts to see how they worked. They had made prototypes of pop-ups and then went on to design books with moving parts for younger pupils.

The books had been produced and read to pupils in the reception class after which the young designers evaluated the success of their efforts. Pupils in Year 1 were observed identifying materials and discussing their fitness of purpose. For example they were able to say they would use sponge for washing, cotton for drying dishes and wool for socks. Pupils are aware that safety is paramount. This is borne out in a lesson where Year 6 pupils used measuring tools, junior hacksaws and hole punches with great care.

## **Physical education**

95. Two gymnastics lessons were observed but it was not possible to observe lessons in games, athletics, dance, swimming or adventurous activities during the inspection and so there can be no judgements about overall provision, standards attained or the quality of teaching and learning in physical education (PE) as a whole. Further evidence was gained from talking to pupils, consulting with the subject leader, and from a scrutiny of teachers' plans and records.
96. In the gymnastics lessons observed the pupils' quality of learning, their achievement and standards attained were broadly in line with national expectations for their ages; these average gains did not fully reflect the quality of teaching, particularly in the Years 4/5 lesson where the teacher had high expectations, gave clear expositions and provided very good role-modelling herself and made good use of pupils to demonstrate. The pupils were able to demonstrate good skills in some aspects of gymnastics, such as points of balance, but their development of sequences and movement were curtailed by the lack of space, and the need for constant vigilance in terms of health and safety issues. A large minority of the pupils wore loose outer garments during their gymnastics activities; this also restricted the quality of movement. The small hall in an old 'temporary' hut is unsatisfactory and severely restricts the room available for gymnastics and dance, even with the small class sizes in the school. The school has successfully sought to partially address this limited facility by engaging a specialist gymnastics coach for a few weeks each year to teach junior pupils in a sports hall; sometimes this is combined with the visits to a local town swimming pool. Arrangements for teaching swimming are good, with pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 attending lessons each autumn term. Standards in swimming by the end of Year 6 are above national expectations with most pupils able to swim 100 metres and perform a series of survival skills.
97. Facilities for other aspects of the subject are satisfactory, having been improved significantly in recent times with the development of a large field area for games and athletics. Unfortunately much of this is steeply sloping, limiting its use for PE. The school is effective in extending the range of PE activities, recognising the limitations of its site and the relative small numbers of pupils in each year group and small staff team. Outside specialist coaches have been deployed to lead athletics, tag-rugby, swimming, orienteering, tennis and football sessions and the school takes part in a range of inter-school activities. In the summer of 2004 the school was awarded the Sports Activemark for the range of PE related activities. It has introduced 'Huff and Puff' at lunch times, designed to increase pupils' fitness, with pupils being responsible for the borrowing of playground equipment. Leadership in the subject is good and the recently designated leader has a clear view of strengths and weakness in the subject. Annual reports to parents about PE are good. They give clear information about pupils' achievements and efforts across all aspects of the subject. In the Years 2/3 classroom there was a good display promoting PE and helping the pupils to become clear about taking responsibility for their own health and fitness.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

98. No lessons were observed in which personal, social and health education (PSHE) was the main focus so there is insufficient evidence to make overall judgements about provision, achievement or teaching and learning in the subject. By the time they reach Year 6 pupils show a good awareness of PSHE issues and a level of maturity in discussing the sensitive issues above those expected nationally. Pupils' very good relationships with each other and all the adults who work with them are based on mutual respect and trust; they listen to each other's viewpoints and support one another well. Pupils share responsibilities at break and

lunch time, supporting teachers at assembly and collective worship by managing equipment and preparing the hall. The school council is active and is developing both pupils' understanding of citizenship and democracy and how to improve the school for the benefit of all. Pupils involved in this are proud of the council's achievements and committed to making it work effectively. They are very aware of the wider community beyond the school and are anxious that they share and support a wide range of concerns and charities. The local environment is important to them and the recent tree planting project undertaken by pupils and the local community recognises their concern about general environmental issues.

99. Much of personal, social and health education and citizenship is not taught through specific lessons. Planned opportunities are made in science, PE and RE lessons to discuss a wide range of issues which are pertinent to this area of the curriculum, including sex education and drug awareness. Teachers use these opportunities well to develop and raise topical issues. A national programme is used in all year groups. The pupils respond well and are willing to discuss the issues raised in the programme both in and out of school. Visitors from other agencies support and raise awareness about drug abuse issues and sex education for the older pupils. Pupils are very willing to listen to each other. In a discussion during the inspection, pupils displayed a clear recognition and understanding of the subject.
100. Anti social behaviour and any racism incidents are very rare events and are immediately confronted and not tolerated. The school has a very strong code of behaviour. This is manifested in the care and concern older pupils exhibit towards each other and towards the much younger pupils. The school is a harmonious community which is built on the strong and positive relationships within it.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### *Grade*

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
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

<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
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

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
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).*