

# INSPECTION REPORT

**MINETY CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

Minety

Malmesbury

LEA area: Wiltshire

Unique reference number: 126379

Headteacher: Mr B Crooks

Reporting inspector: Mrs L Woods  
21079

Dates of inspection: 10 – 12 July 2000

Inspection number: 188590

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Sawyers Hill Minety Malmesbury Wiltshire
Postcode:	SN16 9QL
Telephone number:	01666 860 257
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Wildeboer
Date of previous inspection:	June 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs L Woods	Registered inspector	Information technology	What sort of school is it?
		Art	How high are standards?
		Design and technology	How well are pupils taught?
		Physical education	How well is the school led and managed?
		Under fives	
Mrs C Webb	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mr M Pipes	Team inspector	Mathematics	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
		Science	Assessment
		Music	
Mrs J Bavin	Team inspector	English	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
		Geography	
		History	
		Religious education	
		Special educational needs	
		Equal opportunities	

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Minety Church of England Primary School is a valued, integral part of the village community. It has grown since the time of the previous inspection, and there are currently 155 boys and girls on roll between the ages of four and 11, including nine children under five who attend school part time. Almost all pupils come from the two Minety villages and the local rural community, most from favourable socio-economic backgrounds, and there are no pupils from ethnic minorities in the school. Only two pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is low by national standards, and pupils' attainment on entry to the school is above average. Thirty-seven pupils are identified as having special educational needs, which is 24 per cent of the school, and above the national average. Eight of these pupils are at Stage 3 and above of the Code of Practice for the identification of such pupils, and one has a statement of special educational need.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Minety is a good school. It provides a broad, balanced and interesting curriculum, and achieves above average standards in English, mathematics and science. The quality of teaching is good, with a high proportion being very good, and all staff are dedicated and committed to maintaining a rich and varied range of experiences and high standards for the pupils. The school has a warm and caring atmosphere and a good ethos. The school is soundly led by the headteacher and governors, and provides good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- The school achieves above average standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.
- The broad and interesting curriculum, good cross-curricular links and high quality teaching enable pupils also to achieve good standards in geography, history and religious education. Standards in art and music are particularly high.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school, appreciate the opportunities available and work hard.
- Children under five benefit enormously from their gradual entry into full-time education.
- The school has a good ethos, and relationships are almost always very good.
- Pupils' understanding and evaluation of their own attainment and progress is exceptional.
- Provision for all pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements of need, is well managed and successfully promotes good quality learning. The school is very effective in identifying pupils who are particularly gifted or talented.
- The school makes good provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

#### **What could be improved**

- Provision for and standards in information technology, particularly for the older pupils, which are unsatisfactory.
- Co-ordinators need to play a greater part in managing and monitoring their areas of responsibility.
- Governors should increase their involvement in monitoring the school's performance and making long-term decisions to shape the direction of the school.
- Communication with parents about children's progress is not always effective, leading to misunderstandings.

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.*

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1996, and it has made good progress in addressing the key issues identified at that time. The quality of provision for children under five is now good, given the limitations of the available accommodation. They attain good standards in their personal and social development, language and literacy and mathematics and sound standards in the other areas of learning. All subjects have schemes of work, and lessons are planned in detail with clear objectives, which are shared effectively with the pupils. Assessment is good in English, mathematics and science and used well to plan future work. Co-ordinators take an active interest in their areas of responsibility, and all have provided action plans for development of their subjects and aspects. The school has identified continuing improvement of these roles, to include a greater involvement in overall monitoring, within the comprehensive school development plan.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	A	C	A	A
Mathematics	A	B	A*	A*
Science	A	B	A	B

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
very low	E*

The table shows that in 1999, pupils' attainment in English and science was well above the national average, and compared favourably with performance of pupils from similar schools. In mathematics, attainment was in the highest five per cent nationally. Provisional results for Year 6 pupils in the 2000 tests show lower, but average levels of attainment overall, although national comparisons are not yet available. However, within this group of pupils, 50 per cent are identified as having special educational needs, and in addition, 50 per cent of the pupils have not spent all their time in Key Stage 2 at the school. On average, there has been no significant difference in the performance between boys and girls over the past three years, although variations occur in different years as a result of the proportion of pupils identified with special educational need in each year group. The school makes detailed analysis of the attainment and progress of each group of pupils from the time they start school, and sets realistic and challenging targets for each year which are met successfully.

The standard assessment tasks for seven-year-olds for both 1999 and 2000 show an equally positive picture. In 1999, attainment in reading was above the national average. In writing, whilst the percentage of pupils who reached the expected Level 2 was above the national average, no pupils reached the higher Level 3 and attainment was average overall. In mathematics, attainment was well above the national average. By comparison with schools having a similar intake of pupils, attainment in mathematics was above average; it was average in reading but below average in writing. The school has identified improving standards in writing, particularly in relation to spelling as an area for development. Results from the 2000 tests show equally good standards in reading and mathematics, and 17 per cent of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 in writing.

Inspection findings confirm the positive picture shown by the results from standard assessment tasks. Attainment in English, mathematics and science is above average by the end of Key Stage 1 and for most pupils at Key Stage 2. Attainment in information technology is in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1, but below expectations by the end of Key Stage 2, resulting from a lack of emphasis, either as a subject in its own right or in its use to support other areas of the curriculum. In religious education, attainment is above the expectations in the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in art and music are a strength, and are above expectations for the age of pupils throughout the school. Standards are good in geography and history, and in design and technology and physical education are in line with expectations for pupils' ages throughout the school.

Children under five benefit enormously from the good start they make to their full-time education through the school's Joint Arrangement with the pre-school. By the age of five, children's attainment in personal and social development, language and literacy and mathematics is above expectations for their age, and they are working well within the first levels of the National Curriculum in English and mathematics. Their attainment in knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development is in line with expectations for their age. However, limitations within both the available space and levels of adult support mean that a full range of activities in the last two areas of learning are not available on a daily basis.

### **PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Good overall. Almost all pupils enjoy coming to school and work hard. They listen attentively and co-operate well, quickly becoming engrossed in the tasks provided.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall. Almost all pupils wish to please their teachers, and are polite and friendly towards adults and each other. A significant minority of the current Year 6 boys do not behave well, and their disruptive behaviour mars the otherwise good school ethos.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Almost all pupils are sensitive towards the feelings of others and have very good relationships with adults and each other. They willingly take responsibility around the school, and their understanding of their own attainment and progress is impressive.
Attendance	Very good.

### **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

<b>Teaching of pupils:</b>	<b>aged up to 5 years</b>	<b>aged 5-7 years</b>	<b>aged 7-11 years</b>
Lessons seen overall	good	very good	Good

*Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.*

The quality of teaching is a strength of the school. All staff are committed to providing a rich, varied and challenging range of opportunities for all pupils, and this makes a significant contribution to the good school ethos, the enjoyment pupils have in learning and the high standards attained. Throughout the school teaching is never less than satisfactory. It is good or better in 70 per cent of lessons and very good or better in 30 per cent. One lesson was judged to

be excellent. Teaching for children under five is good. The youngest children are taught together with pupils of statutory school age, but staff provide appropriate work for all age groups in the class. Whilst work is challenging, children are given as much adult support as is possible, and staff work hard to talk to them as they complete each task, to develop their understanding and improve their concentration. Children respond well to all the opportunities provided, and the quality of learning is good.

Teaching at Key Stages 1 and 2 is good overall and frequently very good. Teachers work hard to provide lively and interesting lessons, and almost all pupils respond well to the opportunities provided. A strength within the teaching is the close links made between different curriculum areas. Teachers plan carefully to ensure pupils' knowledge and skills are developed progressively and that work is matched well to individual abilities in the class. As a result, both older and younger pupils in mixed age classes make good progress. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been introduced successfully and the quality of teaching in English and mathematics is consistently high.

### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. Statutory requirements are met, although insufficient time is devoted to information technology. The curriculum is broad and balanced, with a strength in the way learning is made relevant by effectively linking different subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The school implements the Code of Practice well, and pupils' individual education plans are useful and relevant. Good quality learning support ensures all pupils have full access to all the activities provided.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Spiritual and moral development permeates the whole curriculum, and pupils enjoy opportunities to take responsibility to promote their personal and social development. Regular visits and visitors effectively support pupils' cultural development, although opportunities to promote understanding of life in a multi-cultural society are occasionally missed.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Teachers know their pupils very well, and feelings of mutual trust permeate the school. Satisfactory procedures are in place to support their welfare, and these are almost always effective in practice, although a minority of pupils have not responded to the school's code of conduct.

The school works hard to involve parents and maintain good relations with them. It provides satisfactory information for parents, and values their help in its daily life. However, it is aware that a significant minority of parents is not happy with levels of communication.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Sound. The headteacher takes a close interest in the welfare and wellbeing of staff and pupils, but needs to re-think his delegation of responsibilities. Co-ordination of Key Stage 1, literacy and numeracy is good. Other staff take their roles seriously, but have insufficient input into monitoring delivery and standards in their areas of responsibility.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Sound. Governors are committed, and interested in the work of the school. They meet regularly and are well informed, but as yet have too little involvement in monitoring the school's performance or shaping its future development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school has a clear understanding of its strengths, and has sound plans for development in the comprehensive school development plan.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. All specific grants are spent appropriately, and best value is consistently sought. Recent action has resulted in repayment of funds, and the school is already considering carefully the most effective ways to use this budget surplus.

The school is fully staffed with well-qualified and committed teachers and support staff. The site is spacious and well maintained, but indoor accommodation is limited for the numbers on roll. The school has good resources for music and physical education, and satisfactory resources in other areas of the curriculum.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

50 per cent of parent questionnaires were returned, and 24 parents attended the meeting with inspectors.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teaching is good, the school has high expectations and their children make good progress.</li> <li>Their children like school, and develop mature and responsible attitudes.</li> <li>Most parents feel the school works closely with them and is approachable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In questionnaire returns, a significant minority does not feel well informed about their children's progress.</li> <li>A minority feels the school does not provide the right amount of homework.</li> <li>The majority feel there are not enough extra-curricular activities.</li> <li>Some parents are concerned about behaviour.</li> </ul>

Inspectors fully support parents' positive views about the school. Inspection findings show that the quality of information provided on pupils' progress overall is satisfactory, but the school is aware of parents' concerns, particularly over information on progress in reading, which could be improved. Findings also show homework is set regularly, and is relevant to activities taking place in school. The school provides an appropriate range of extra-curricular activities, but is aware of parents' ambitious wishes regarding these. Behaviour in the school is good overall, but inspectors support parental concerns over the unacceptable behaviour of a minority of the oldest pupils.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. Children under five benefit enormously from the good start they make to their full-time education through the school's Joint Arrangement with the pre-school. This gradual introduction means that they are familiar with the routines and expectations in Class 1, and confident to participate in all activities provided. By the age of five, children's attainment in personal and social development, language and literacy and mathematics is above expectations for their age, as defined by the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning<sup>1</sup>, and they are working well within the first levels of the National Curriculum in English and mathematics. Their attainment in knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development is in line with expectations for their age. However, limitations within both the available space and levels of adult support mean that a full range of activities in the last two areas of learning are not available on a daily basis. From this good foundation, pupils' attainment when they begin statutory education is above average, and they make good progress overall as they move through the school.
2. In the 1999 standard assessment tasks at the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in reading was above the national average, with the percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 being well above average. In writing, whilst the percentage of pupils who reached the expected Level 2 was above the national average, no pupils reached the higher Level 3. In mathematics, attainment at both the expected Level 2 and the higher Level 3 was well above the national average. By comparison with schools having a similar intake of pupils, attainment in mathematics was above average, it was average in reading but below average in writing. The school has identified improving standards in writing, particularly in relation to spelling, as an area for development. Results from the 2000 tests show equally good standards in reading and mathematics, and 17 per cent of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 in writing. Over the past four years both boys and girls have consistently performed better than the national average, although girls have done better than boys, which is consistent with the national picture. Boys' performance in 1999 was lower overall than in previous years, as a result of the proportion of pupils with special educational needs in this group.
3. In the 1999 end of Key Stage 2 standard assessment tasks, attainment in English and science at both the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5 was well above the national average. Attainment was very high in mathematics, particularly at the higher Level 5. By comparison with similar schools, the picture was equally good. The school was delighted with these results, particularly in mathematics where two pupils attained an exceptional Level 6. It is realistic about the fact that results from the 2000 tests will be lower, with 50 per cent of pupils in this group being identified as having special educational needs, and only 50 per cent having spent all their time at the school. Provisional figures show a broadly average picture, although national comparisons are not yet available. On average over the past four years there has been no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls, although variations occur in different years.

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<sup>1</sup>Desirable Learning Outcomes – these are goals for learning for children by the time they enter compulsory education at the age of five. These will be replaced by the Early Learning goals in September 2000.

4. The school makes a detailed analysis of the attainment and progress of each

individual and group of pupils, from the baseline assessment when pupils start full-time education, and statutory and other tests. This enables them to set realistic and challenging targets for each year and to clearly establish the value added by the school. Evidence shows that they are accurate in their predictions year-on-year.

5. Inspection findings confirm the positive picture shown by the results from standard assessment tasks. Attainment in English, mathematics and science is above average by the end of Key Stage 1. Whilst attainment for the current Year 6 is broadly average, standards throughout the rest of Key Stage 2 are above average in these three core subjects. Attainment in information technology is in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1, but below expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. This results from a lack of emphasis, either as a subject in its own right or in its use to support learning in other areas of the curriculum. In religious education, attainment is above the expectations in the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in art and music are a strength, and are above expectations for the age of pupils throughout the school. Standards are good in geography and history, and in design and technology and physical education are in line with expectations for pupils' ages throughout the school.
6. The school places a high emphasis on developing good standards in the core skills. Standards of speaking and listening are good throughout the school. Pupils of all ages listen attentively to explanations and take part in discussions with maturity and a good level of understanding. They enjoy sharing their news and views in the younger classes, and develop good powers of reasoning and debate in older classes. Standards of reading are good in all classes. Pupils read regularly and discuss their books intelligently, having decided views on their favourite authors and reading material. The older pupils understand how to find information in the library and enjoy researching information for their topics and personal interests. Standards of writing are good, and writing skills are used well across the curriculum, for example, in science, history and geography. Pupils' agility at mental calculation is well developed, and again mathematical skills are used effectively in other curriculum areas. By contrast, however, skills in information technology, particularly for the older pupils at Key Stage 2, are under-developed, and they do not automatically consider using information technology as a natural extension to work in other subjects.
7. As a result of good teaching, boys and girls enjoy learning and make good progress throughout the school. In the mixed age classes older pupils are not held back and, whilst the younger pupils have demanding work, their progress is carefully monitored and the work provided is within their capabilities. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Separate sessions place a good emphasis upon literacy with specialised schemes for increasing pupils' awareness of phonics. These sessions proceed at a good pace and are an efficient use of time and resources. Support in class is discrete, sensitive and effective. As a result, pupils with special educational needs make good progress in the school, which represents an improvement in the quality of learning since the last inspection. The school identifies gifted and talented pupils effectively and formulates specific targets on individual educational plans for them. This makes a significant contribution to the good progress that these pupils make.

## **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

8. The school continues to encourage the good, positive attitudes and values reported four years ago successfully, and parents are pleased with these. Attendance is very good, pupils enjoy coming to school and almost all arrive promptly. A good work ethic is quickly developed from the time children start visiting Class 1. The school has a warm, family atmosphere and older pupils care well for those younger than themselves. Pupils with special education and other needs are well integrated and supported by their peers.
9. Most pupils have good attitudes to school. In almost all lessons the atmosphere is purposeful, with pupils listening attentively to teachers and carrying out their work conscientiously. Pupils share resources and help each other happily, for example, in Year 5 when designing and costing a new bedroom during a mathematics lesson. In Class 1, when printing out their blocks, pupils are excited to see the result of their own design and appreciate those of the others. Pupils in Class 3 behave sensibly whilst enjoying their swimming lesson. Relationships between pupils and with adults are generally very good.
10. The vast majority of pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes to learning. They are keen to improve their skills and take pride in their achievements. They work willingly in small separate sessions and also with adult support in class alongside their peers. They contribute confidently in class. However, boys in Year 6 identified as having special educational needs do not consistently sustain positive attitudes to learning. On occasions they lose concentration and do not apply themselves to the lesson. On other occasions they participate enthusiastically but they are immature and constantly seek adult attention and approval.
11. Most pupils behave well. They wish to please their teachers and produce good work in class. They want to gain the rewards, such as team points. They understand what is expected of them and what will happen if they transgress. There have been no exclusions. All age groups play well together at break-time, and no bullying was observed during the inspection. However a significant minority of Year 6 boys do not always behave well. At times they indulge in disruptive behaviour in the classroom and some harassing behaviour in the playground. These boys have become disaffected with school, some refusing to acknowledge team points they have been awarded and thereby distorting team results, and disturbing those who want to learn. The atmosphere is sometimes uneasy, with the class waiting for problems to erupt. This 'don't care' attitude mars the otherwise good school ethos, and has been developing without effective check over the last two years, despite sanctions being applied and their parents being involved.
12. Pupils' personal development is good overall. They are fully aware of the difference between right and wrong from the time they start school. In sensitive discussion at 'circle times' good social and moral values are fostered well. Class 1, for example, provide thoughtful suggestions on who should be thanked and for what. Pupils are sensitive towards others' feelings, and understand how their actions can affect others. Pupils are very willing to help and exercise their responsibilities well. Older pupils act as monitors and those in Class 2 frequently collect pupils from Class 1 to take them to assembly. The school council, started in Class 5 at the beginning of the year, has given most of these pupils maturity and a good understanding of democracy and citizenship. They are disappointed, however, that the main purpose, which was to find strategies to deal with the unacceptable behaviour, has not really

been accomplished. Pupils grow in confidence and maturity steadily as they progress through the school.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. The quality of teaching is a strength of the school. The commitment of all staff to providing a rich, varied and challenging range of opportunities for all pupils makes a significant contribution to the good school ethos, the enjoyment pupils have in learning and the high standards attained. Throughout the school teaching is never less than satisfactory. It is good or better in 70 per cent of lessons and very good or better in 30 per cent. One lesson was judged to be excellent.
14. Teaching for children under five is good, which successfully addresses the key issue from the previous report. The youngest children are taught together with pupils of statutory school age, but staff provide appropriate work for all age groups in the class. They know all the children very well and have a clear understanding of the needs of each individual. Whilst work is challenging, children are given as much adult support as is possible, and staff work hard to talk to them as they complete each task, to develop their understanding and improve their concentration. Children respond well to all the opportunities provided, and the quality of learning is good. Additional teaching staff, on the mornings when children from the pre-school join the class, make a valuable contribution to this quality of learning, as smaller groups enable a greater concentration on the needs of the youngest children.
15. Teaching at Key Stages 1 and 2 is good overall and frequently very good. Teachers have a secure understanding of the requirements of the National Curriculum, with the exception of information technology, which is under-represented at Key Stage 2. They work hard to provide lively and interesting lessons, and almost all pupils respond well to the opportunities provided. A strength within the teaching is the close links made between different curriculum areas such as science and geography, English, religious education and art which effectively makes learning relevant and stimulating. Teachers plan carefully to ensure pupils' knowledge and skills are developed progressively and that work is matched well to individual abilities in the class. As a result, both older and younger pupils in mixed age classes make good progress. Joint planning and the close partnership between teachers and classroom assistants at Key Stage 1 is particularly effective in ensuring parity of experience as the class structures alter on different days of the week.
16. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been introduced successfully and the quality of teaching in English and mathematics is consistently high. In English, whilst the structure of the literacy hour is not followed fully, the school is adhering closely to the framework. Teachers consistently share the purpose of the lesson with their pupils and provide activities which capture their imaginations. They are adept at providing questions which could have more than one answer, which effectively encourages pupils to think and talk about their work. In Class 4, for example, pupils show great mental alacrity when discussing 'Sharon's Difficult Choice' and develop their arguments and reasoning very well. In Class 3, the teacher uses excellent strategies, 'playing dumb', which very skilfully encourages pupils to explain their work. During a final discussion in Class 1, the teacher very effectively uses pupils' own words in her next sentence, which generates intense excitement and very close listening. Most English lessons are packed with activity and the quality of learning is fast and furious!
17. Teachers use equally effective strategies in mathematics lessons to develop pupils'

numeracy skills. Mental arithmetic sessions at the start of almost all lessons are brisk and adventurous, and almost all pupils rise to the challenge well. Teachers consistently encourage pupils to explain their reasoning, and use good strategies to develop pupils' mental agility. In Class 2, for example, the teacher allows pupils time to discuss addition and subtraction strategies in pairs and then share their results with the whole class. Mathematical activities are frequently relevant to pupils' experience and interest, for example, designing and costing a new bedroom from a commercial catalogue in Class 5, which generates excited discussion and a good quality of learning.

18. These effective teaching methods permeate all areas of the curriculum, and lessons have a good balance of discussion, practical activity and time at the end to draw together findings and results. Teachers have consistently high expectations of behaviour and hard work, and almost all pupils respond well to these. Relationships are very good in almost all lessons, and feelings of mutual trust and respect contribute to a positive classroom ethos on almost all occasions, so that learning is fun. Teachers, their assistants and parent helpers manage pupils well. They work effectively with individuals and small groups to ensure pupils understand what is expected of them, and progress is good as a result. However, despite the best efforts of the teacher, a minority of the oldest pupils does not respond well as a group, although individually they are interested in their work. Their culture of disaffection mars the quality of learning in this class.
19. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs and those identified as being particularly gifted or talented is good. Teachers and support staff know pupils extremely well. They constantly assess their impact upon pupils' learning and behaviour, and work well with the special educational needs co-ordinator to review teaching and behaviour management strategies. They continually seek to enhance pupils' learning by meeting individual needs, and this contributes to the good quality of learning achieved by all pupils.
20. All teachers have a detailed understanding of the abilities and progress of pupils in their classes, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Most work is marked regularly and thoroughly. The best marking is very good, with constructively critical comments well matched to the needs and understanding of the pupil. It is not always clear, however, when a piece of work has been discussed with the pupil. Whilst a significant minority of parents feel that the school does not provide the right amount of homework, evidence shows that teachers set this regularly, although the school acknowledges that practice is inconsistent. Homework is relevant to the work being done in class, for example, calculating the area of their bedrooms in connection with mathematical work in Class 5, and makes a positive contribution to learning in school.
21. Teachers make good use of most of the school's resources to make lessons lively and interesting. In music in Class 2, for example, an extensive range of percussion instruments enables every pupil to be an active part of the 'orchestra'. Resources for information technology are, however, under-used. Lessons almost all move at a brisk and exciting pace, but time is sometimes lost when these start late, for example after break-times, or when the previous lesson has overrun.

## HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

22. The school has successfully addressed the key issue, to improve the curriculum for children under five, identified by the previous inspection. Although taught in a class together with pupils of statutory school age, teachers are careful to match the work provided to the requirements of the recommended areas of learning for young children. However, the space available for practical activities is limited, and the level of adult support is insufficient to allow a full range of opportunities in some areas of learning, such as physical and creative development, to be provided on a daily basis. The school is aware that careful consideration of these issues is needed when the Early Learning Goals become a statutory requirement in September 2000.
23. The key issue, to strengthen the structure and delivery of the curriculum at Key Stages 1 and 2 has also been addressed well. The curriculum meets statutory requirements, and includes appropriate education about sex and drugs' misuse. The school follows the locally agreed syllabus for religious education satisfactorily and makes good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education, but allocates insufficient time to information technology. The curriculum is broad and balanced, and meets the needs of all pupils satisfactorily. The successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has introduced good teaching and learning strategies, which are reflected beneficially across the whole curriculum. Different subjects are inter-linked well, for instance, referring to hot and cold climates explained in geography, and the way animals adapt to their habitat, a part of the science curriculum. A particular strength in curriculum planning is the way the school, with five classes but seven year groups, meets the needs of pupils who, twice in their time in the school, have to spend two years in the same class. Schemes of work ensure that themes and core concepts are visited each year but at an increasingly demanding level. This means that, for instance, the Year 5 pupils in Class 4 and Class 5 may not be taught the same topic at the same time, but will, over the year cover the same ground. Additionally, and this is a strength in the school's approach to this problem, the curriculum is planned to be challenging for the older pupils in the class, with appropriate support provided for the younger pupils.
24. Gifted and talented pupils are catered for by the strategy of teaching all subjects to a demanding level: in 1999, for example, the school achieved Level 6 passes in mathematics. The school implements the Code of Practice for the identification of pupils with special educational needs well. Teachers write useful and relevant individual educational plans with clear, measurable targets. The combination of these plans and the good quality of learning support available ensures that all pupils have good access to the full National Curriculum.
25. A significant minority of parents expressed some unhappiness at the level of extra-curricular activities provided by the school. With one newly qualified teacher fully occupied by her core responsibilities, and another member of staff absent on maternity leave, the burden on the remaining few teachers is considerable. In the circumstances, inspectors judge that the school is right to focus on teaching and learning, which it is doing successfully. There is a reasonable range of other activities outside school time, and the headteacher is aware of the more ambitious wishes of parents.

26. The school supports pupils well at the beginning and end of their time there. Through the Joint Arrangement with the pre-school, children enjoy a very smooth entry into Class 1, having already spent an increasing number of days there during the term preceding their arrival at school. Liaison with local secondary schools is good and pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
27. There is good provision for pupils' spiritual development. The school's strong Christian ethos promotes effectively qualities such as respect, endeavour, compassion and empathy, and these are also successfully promoted through the curriculum. For example, in art and religious education pupils reflect regularly upon feelings and moods. They consider their own feelings with considerable maturity and write very thoughtfully when they describe emotions, such as 'scared is like an avalanche starting to fall inside you'. In religious education, pupils identify why people pray, and write and 'paint' their own prayers. In history they write with empathy about people's lives in the past. There are daily opportunities for quiet reflection. When the whole school assembles together, staff promote a good spiritual atmosphere by providing sufficient time for contemplation.
28. The school makes good provision for pupils' moral development. This permeates the curriculum, and pupils develop a very good awareness of the complexities of moral issues. For example, pupils in Class 5 prepare cases for famous people who should be saved from a disaster according to the contribution they make to society. Their selection includes Marie Curie, Albert Einstein and Princess Diana. In Class 4, they discuss at length the rights and wrongs of a child taking money that is not hers, and consider whether her motive for taking it affects the judgement of her behaviour. Teachers plan regularly for personal and social education, and 'circle times' provide additional valuable opportunities to discuss moral and social issues.
29. Provision for pupils' social development is good. Pupils relate well to each other for the most part, and treat peers and adults with respect. With the exception of a minority of Year 6, they are considerate of each other. There are regular opportunities for pupils to take responsibility, for example by checking the bus register or looking after younger peers at lunchtimes. Additionally, they enjoy raising money for good causes, sometimes initiating or taking responsibility for organising a fundraising event that they have selected, such as a sponsored non-uniform day to raise money for the St. John's Ambulance Service. The regular opportunities for pupils to assess their own learning at the end of a lesson make a significant contribution to their social development.
30. The school provides well for pupils' cultural development. It regularly invites theatre groups into school, such as a group recently working with pupils after school on a project using drama to increase historical understanding of the Vikings. Music and art have a high profile in the school and enhance the curriculum effectively. The school uses art techniques such as batik and identifies and values the cultural origin of the artwork in India. In English, pupils appreciate Japanese poetry when they write Haiku poems. While the curriculum for religious education focuses primarily on Christianity it also increases pupils' understanding of beliefs and cultures that differ from their own, such as Judaism and Islam. Although this represents satisfactory improvement since the last inspection the school still occasionally misses opportunities to prepare pupils for cultural diversity in Britain, such as using examples of famous people from non-western cultures throughout the curriculum.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

31. The school continues to provide the good support and guidance for pupils reported in 1996, and has satisfactory procedures to promote their welfare. Teachers know their pupils very well and are trusted by them. Trained first aiders are on site at all times and practice is good, with incidents recorded appropriately. Regular fire drills are correctly listed. The headteacher, as designated teacher for child protection, has received appropriate training and staff are fully aware of these issues. Risk assessments take place regularly, the latest on safety was carried out by all staff. Governors have minuted the need to review the health and safety policy, and security is under regular review. The school was apprised of a number of minor concerns noted during the inspection, including the need to repair broken gate latches and to keep the school gates closed during the day. Inspectors also noticed some girls wearing shoes which were inappropriate for school activities.
32. The school's introduction of new identification procedures, combined with the difference in individual year groups, accounts for the significant increase in the percentage of pupils on the register for special educational needs since the last inspection. These procedures are well understood, consistently implemented and followed closely. Good liaison is established with local agencies. The school responds well to all pupils with special educational or other needs, and has been particularly successful in providing flexible and imaginative support for the hearing impaired. It works closely with the sensory support service to ensure the good progress already made is continued. This high quality provision is one of the school's strengths.
33. Procedures for monitoring attendance are satisfactory. The headteacher looks at the registers once a week, and visits from the educational welfare officer occur once or twice a term. Good records are kept of pupils' attendance and parents are aware that every absence has to be explained. Telephone calls are now made on the first day of absence if no explanation has been received. Parents are encouraged with reasonable success not to take their children on holiday during term-time.
34. The school has satisfactory systems in place to promote and monitor good behaviour and these are effective for most pupils. All staff know the policy and implement the code of conduct consistently. Rewards are valued, although these vary from class to class, and sanctions are perceived as fair. However, the school's procedures have proved less effective in curbing the aggressive stance adopted by a number of boys in Year 6. They have been flouting the school's rules and indulging in this behaviour for some time. A school council was formed in Class 5 at the beginning of the year in an attempt to combat this, but has been largely unsuccessful in generating a change in attitude.
35. The school has good procedures to promote and monitor pupils' personal development. In lessons, pupils make honest evaluations of their work and understand clearly how to improve. Through assemblies and 'circle time', good moral and social skills are encouraged, and pupils are alerted effectively to difficulties outside school and Minety village. Visits to the locality and beyond widen and enhance pupils' experience well. The residential visit, made by all pupils in Years 5 and 6 every other year, is eagerly anticipated and remembered with affection and enjoyment. A police representative talks to pupils when there has been any local incident, and the older pupils participate in the 'joint services' day every other year. Through these activities, pupils' confidence and self-reliance is successfully promoted and they develop a good team spirit. The school belongs to

the effective inter-school phone link, through which local schools contact each other if there are suspicious characters in the vicinity. Appropriate opportunities are provided for pupils to take responsibility and the school encourages pupils to take care of each other. Personal and social education is time-tabled and forms an effective part of the curriculum.

36. The school's procedures and routines for assessing pupils' progress and the standards they achieve in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are good. In addition to statutory end-of-key-stage tasks, the school tests regularly. For example, in reading there is an annual measurement of reading ability, taking into account the pupil's age, which is expressed as a standardised score referenced to a mean value of 100. These records show high reading standards and steady improvement for nearly all pupils. Each pupil also has very useful 'gold books' in which regular assessments in English, mathematics and science are recorded. Pupils have access to these, and a very good feature of the school's procedures is that their progress is discussed in detail with the pupils. This has a significant, beneficial effect on pupils' personal development, as they learn to take some responsibility for their own learning and progress.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

37. The school tries hard to maintain the good relationship with parents reported in 1996, and values the help and expertise they bring into school. However, many parents feel these links could be improved. Parents are pleased their children attend this popular village school. They are very supportive of the school's aims, and ambitious for their children. They want to help them in any way they can, at home and at school. Many parents volunteer to help, and are well deployed by teachers, supporting in classes and with swimming lessons. Parents and members of the local church take assemblies regularly. Parents' attendance at meetings is very good, well demonstrated at the recent 'drugs' evening. They give very generously of their time, and their considerable contributions are valued and appreciated by all staff. However, a surprising number have not yet signed the home/school agreement.
38. Parents have varying views on the information the school provides. A significant minority, for example, does not feel well informed about their children's progress. Inspectors found that parents receive satisfactory information from the school in the form of regular news and other letters. The school brochure, governors' annual report to parents and newsletters are well written and informative. The pupils' annual reports contain appropriate detail on individual children's achievements and include pupils' own perceptive evaluations of their performance. However, they do not always give pointers for improvement, and are not signed by the headteacher. The school regularly seeks parents' views through questionnaires and tries to act on these, but on average under a third of parents reply. Parents of children with special educational or other needs are kept well informed and are regularly involved in reviews of their individual education programmes.
39. Communication is a concern to many parents, who feel this is not good enough. Whilst teachers know their pupils' abilities and their achievement levels very well, the lack of full reading records and dialogue in the homework book in the lower part of the school leaves some parents frustrated. The headteacher is almost always in the playground at the start and end of each day. However, as a result of the office being unmanned for part of the school day, and the door being closed when he

needs to deal with confidential matters, parents and visitors form the impression that the headteacher is not easily approachable nor readily available when they might need him. The school is aware of parents' concerns and the urgent need to address these.

40. The enthusiastic parent-teacher association runs well organised and successful fun and fund-raising events, for example, children's discos and school fairs. The village hall is occasionally used to host these events, when the assembly hut is too small for the numbers who want to attend. Neighbours and the local community as well as families enjoy these occasions. Monies raised are well spent to augment the school's own resources and have recently contributed to the refurbishment of the staff-room.
41. Committed staff and strong parental support for, and involvement in, their children's education all make a positive contribution to their academic achievement, widen their experience and enhance their personal development.

#### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

42. The leadership and management of the school is sound overall. The aims of the school are reflected well in its daily life, and the shared commitment amongst all staff to provide a caring and welcoming environment and to achieve high standards creates a positive ethos. The headteacher provides sound leadership, and he is well supported by staff, governors and the majority of parents. He takes a close interest in the welfare and wellbeing of staff and pupils, and is a visible presence around the school throughout the day. However, he does not always make effective use of time or delegation of responsibilities, for example, spending time taking and delivering telephone messages which could be done by others.
43. There are good relationships between the school and the governing body. Work commitments prevent the chair of governors from taking an active part in the daily life of the school, but the vice-chair is a frequent visitor and is well known to staff and pupils through her work in the classrooms. Other governors visit as often as their commitments allow, and formal visits are recorded and reported to the full governing body. Governors bring a reasonable degree of expertise to their roles, and attend appropriate training to keep up-to-date with developments in education. Many are parents, take a keen interest in the school, and have a sound understanding of its strengths and areas for development. Governors' committees meet regularly, and these and the full governing body, have a satisfactory overview of the day-to-day work of the school through regular reports from the headteacher, discussions, for example on test results, and presentations from other members of staff. However, governors' strategic role in monitoring the school's performance in relation to targets set and the standards attained, and in making long-term decisions to shape the direction of the school, is at an early stage of development.
44. Together with the deputy headteacher, the headteacher has an appropriate overview of the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school by monitoring teachers' planning and regular classroom visits, both formal and informal. Specific responsibility for the Early Years and Key Stage 1 has been delegated to the deputy headteacher, and these are managed well. All co-ordinators take their roles seriously and have produced detailed action plans for the development of their areas of responsibility. However, apart from literacy and numeracy, co-ordinators have insufficient input into monitoring the delivery and standards in their subjects.

Teachers regularly meet to monitor the standards of work in English, mathematics and science, but in other curriculum areas monitoring is informal, for example, through observing the work on display. The school has identified improving the scope of co-ordinators' roles amongst the priorities within the detailed and comprehensive school development plan.

45. Since the last inspection there has been a new co-ordinator for special educational needs. Provision is well led, and teachers now identify initial concern, specifying areas where a pupil needs extra help. They use forms that may identify areas of need as literacy, numeracy or behaviour. The co-ordinator monitors pupils' progress closely and effectively, through a regular system of reviewing individual education plans and meeting with class-teachers. However, she has not yet used release time to observe pupils in class and so further support the identification of need and focus of teaching. She and the newly appointed named governor for special educational needs have made a good start in working together to audit the strengths of the provision and identify further areas for development.
46. The school is fully staffed with well-qualified and committed teachers, ably assisted by well trained support staff and many enthusiastic parent helpers. Good induction procedures for newly qualified teachers provide effective guidance and support. Staff appraisal takes place regularly and professional development courses are effectively targeted as a result of this. Information is shared fully, both at staff meetings and informally on a daily basis. All staff have job descriptions which are reviewed annually. Through the Joint Arrangement, a pre-school teacher comes into Class 1 one morning a week and provides valuable support with all children in the class.
47. The school is situated within a large attractive, well-kept site, but it has very limited indoor accommodation for the numbers on roll. All teaching areas in the main building are very well used, the shared area and library space doubling as an additional classroom on most mornings and as a dining area daily. With space at a premium, the headteacher shares an office with clerical staff, and the staff-room doubles as the computer suite. Classes are imaginatively planned and used, and attractive, well mounted wall displays throughout the school make a positive contribution to the environment. The screen divider between Class 2 and the shared area, however, is torn, and the lack of any solid dividing wall between Classes 1 and 2 sometimes results in noise levels from one class affecting lessons in the other. In addition, many ceiling tiles throughout the building are damaged and the roof needs repair. The three mobile buildings, containing three classrooms and the assembly hall, are well cleaned and in satisfactory condition overall, although some wooden slats are broken underneath and loose wiring outside requires attention. The condition of the courtyard between these is poor with sunken earth squares and crumbling concrete presenting trip hazards for adults and pupils.
48. The large field is well used, when weather permits, for recreation and physical education. Hard play areas are in satisfactory condition and the patio, where Class 1 pupils have planted and care for flowers and herbs, provides good cover. The well kept swimming pool and changing cabins are securely enclosed within stone walls, although hanging wires on the outside are unsightly and unsafe. Some paving slabs surrounding the pool have lifted. The site is secure with some minor attention required to the perimeter fences.
49. Overall the school has sufficient resources for all subject areas of the curriculum.

These are good for music and physical education at both key stages, and for mathematics at Key Stage 1. There are appropriate resources for children under five to achieve the Desirable Learning Outcomes and toy/resource exchanges with the pre-school on site enrich their curriculum. All resources are well used except in information technology. Good use has been made of literacy funding to promote cross-curricular links. The library has a sufficient range of books and is well catalogued, and the school has gone to some effort to improve the book areas in classes. The swimming pool is used by all pupils twice a week during the summer, when the weather permits.

50. The school's financial procedures are sound. The budget is managed carefully and all specific grants are used and monitored appropriately. Through the finance chair's thorough scrutiny of past years' income and accounts, the school has been able to correct spending and reclaim money under the Joint Arrangement, and this has resulted in the higher than average carry-forward figure. Governors have formulated an action plan for its use, which includes additional non-teaching time for the headteacher and providing additional and improved space within the school. Despite being a small school the income per pupil is average. The budget was set this year after careful consideration of properly informed forecasts and is now very well monitored. Best value is sought before any spending decisions are made. The school's day-to-day finances are managed satisfactorily by the two part-time clerical staff, and although their hours do not permit the office to be covered throughout the school day, all telephone calls made to the school are answered. The headteacher has already begun to address matters raised in the very recent auditor's report.
51. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, and standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science are above average. The quality of teaching is good, and all staff are dedicated and committed to maintaining a rich and varied range of experiences and high standards for the pupils. This, together with the warm and caring atmosphere, means that the school has a good ethos. Leadership and management of the school is sound, although governors do not take a sufficiently active role in strategic managing and monitoring of long-term development. Taking these factors into account, the school provides good value for money.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

52. The governors, headteacher and staff should now:
- (1) Improve provision for and use of information technology, and raise standards in the subject throughout the school, but particularly by the end of Key Stage 2.  
(Paragraphs 5, 15, 21, 23, 49, 88 – 91)
  - (2) Improve the management of the school by:
    - reviewing the delegation of responsibility by the headteacher and the use of his time;
    - strengthening the role of all co-ordinators in monitoring standards in, and managing, their subjects and areas of responsibility;
    - increasing the involvement of the governing body in monitoring the school's performance and making long-term decisions to shape the direction of the school;
    - improving effective communication with all parents, for example in

relation to the approachability of office staff and access to reading records.

(Paragraphs 38,39,42-45,50,51,64)

53. In addition to the issues above, the following points should be included in the governors' action plan:
- (1) strengthen provision for children under five in line with requirements in the Early Learning Goals, which will be statutory from September 2000; (Paragraphs 1, 22, 54, 58-60)
  - (2) reconsider behaviour management strategies, in light of the persistent issues presented by current pupils in Year 6; (Paragraphs 10, 11, 18, 29, 34)
  - (3) address time slippage at the start of lessons; (Paragraph 21)
  - (4) maximise all opportunities to promote pupils' understanding of life in a multi-cultural society; (Paragraph 30)
  - (5) address health and safety issues; (Paragraph 31, 47, 48, 98)
  - (6) make more effective use of art sketchbooks; (Paragraph 81)
  - (7) consider how to improve and enlarge the school's indoor accommodation. (Paragraph 47)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	37
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	35

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	27	40	30			

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y R – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	151
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	2
Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	37
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

### Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	3.4	School data	0.1
National comparative data	5.4	National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	14	10	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	12	14
	Girls	10	10	10
	Total	21	22	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88	92	100
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	13	13
	Girls	10	10	10
	Total	22	23	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92	96	96
	National	82	86	87

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	11	10	21

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	10	11
	Girls	10	10	9
	Total	21	20	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100	95	95
	National	70	69	78

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	10	10
	Girls	8	7	9
	Total	18	17	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86	81	90
	National	68	69	75

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	129
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

*This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: Y R - Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	31

#### **Education support staff: YR - Y6**

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	57

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999 / 2000
	£
Total income	258 970
Total expenditure	240 003
Expenditure per pupil	1 631
Balance brought forward from previous year	1 901
Balance carried forward to next year	20 869

## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	155
Number of questionnaires returned	78
Percentage returned	50

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	32	55	12	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	22	66	8	1	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	18	72	5	1	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	18	53	18	8	3
The teaching is good.	29	56	4	1	10
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	14	42	34	6	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	45	47	5	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	41	49	9	1	0
The school works closely with parents.	21	59	15	4	1
The school is well led and managed.	26	51	6	3	14
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	29	60	4	1	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	0	44	37	10	9

## PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

### AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

54. The school has had considerable success in addressing the key issue from the previous report; to improve the curriculum, teaching and standards of attainment for children under five. Their attainment on entry is above average and, for most of the day, these children are taught together with pupils who have passed their fifth birthday and with pupils in Year 1. The available space and level of classroom support impose limitations on the school's ability to provide a full range of activities within each session. However, staff are fully aware of the requirements of the recommended curriculum for young children, and provide a stimulating learning environment in which their needs are met sympathetically and largely effectively. The quality of teaching is consistently good in sessions observed. Staff work hard to engage children in discussion about their work, and develop their independence and love of learning, with evident success.
55. Children under five join the school in the term before their fifth birthday, and benefit enormously from the gradual introduction they receive through the school's Joint Arrangement with the pre-school on site. Under this arrangement they spend increasing amounts of time with their older peers in Class 1, beginning with one morning each week. Their **personal and social development** is good. Children are confident, through knowing the class routines well, and willingly join in with all activities, supported well by close interaction with adults in the room. They concentrate well for reasonable periods of time and enjoy all the opportunities provided. They co-operate sensibly as they work and chatter happily with both adults and peers whilst completing their tasks. They respond reasonably promptly to instructions and clear up enthusiastically at the end of the session.
56. By the age of five children attain above average standards in **language and literacy**. They listen attentively during class discussions and make sensible contributions, for example, when sharing their weekend news. They enjoy sharing books and stories, such as 'The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse', and confidently express their views and opinions in lively discussion. In these discussions, good teaching effectively involves all children in the conversation and the quality of learning is good as a result. Children handle books carefully, and enjoy 'reading'. Most recognise whole words and initial letter sounds in their books. They have good pencil control and practise writing with serious concentration. They make good progress in writing skills and, at this stage in the year, most shape their letters correctly and write short sentences correctly.
57. Children attain above average standards in **mathematics** by the age of five. They count confidently to ten and beyond and understand different ways to make ten, such as two add eight. They know the names of different shapes, and use mathematical vocabulary such as 'more than' and 'less than' correctly and confidently. They explore the number of different objects which will fit into a container with intent concentration, and are amazed at the number of pasta tubes they can fit into the cup! Although no activities involving number rhymes and counting songs occurred during the inspection, children were keen to play 'What Time is it Mr Wolf' and took delight in explaining the rules of the game. Teaching is good. A wide variety of practical apparatus is provided to support children's learning, and staff make good use of opportunities to reinforce mathematical

development, such as counting the number of skittles knocked down in an outdoor game.

58. Children have a sound **knowledge and understanding of the world** and attain above average standards in some aspects of this area of learning. For example, they talk confidently about their homes, families and local environment when using card and construction kits to make slides and swings for their playground. Careful interaction by adults with the children as they work encourages them effectively to think and talk about what they are doing. Children know the names of different parts of plants, understand the needs of living things and treat them carefully. They use tools and materials such as pencils, scissors, card and construction kits confidently and competently, but have insufficient opportunities to experiment with different materials such as sand and water to investigate their properties. Children competently control a tape recorder when listening to taped stories, but do not have regular access to computers within the classroom environment.
59. Children's **physical development** is appropriate for their age. They move confidently around the classroom and school, and are well co-ordinated. They show good control of pencils, crayons and scissors when writing, drawing and cutting. They really enjoy class physical education lessons, responding well to teacher and taped instructions to act as 'floppy rag dolls' and 'automatons', and have a good awareness of space as they move round the hall. They also enjoy outdoor play when they have the opportunity, such as bowling skittles, at which the boys are considerably more adept than the girls! These opportunities, however, are infrequent, and children do not have sufficiently regular access to large apparatus, such as climbing frames and wheeled toys, to support their physical development fully.
60. Children attain satisfactory standards in their **creative development** by the age of five. They play musical instruments loudly and softly, following instructions carefully, and sing enthusiastically and reasonably tunefully. They enjoy experimenting with paint, and their contributions to the class display of spring flower paintings are impressive. They enjoy creating imaginative worlds, playing happily in the 'jungle', complete with binoculars, bird boxes and a picnic hamper. It is in this area of learning, however, that the school's provision for the youngest children is least satisfactory. Activities are almost always directed and controlled by adults, in line with timetable restrictions. Whilst the adults are sensitive to the needs of the children under five, and involve them fully in discussing their work, children do not have enough opportunities to initiate their own investigations and activities, or to use their imaginations to the full.

## ENGLISH

61. In the 1999 standard assessment tasks at the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils reached expected levels in reading and the percentage of pupils attaining higher levels was well above the national average. The percentage of pupils attaining the expected levels in writing was above average, although no pupils attained the higher levels. However, inspection findings show that overall standards in reading and writing are consistently above national averages. Girls steadily sustain a very high standard, but boys' levels of attainment vary within different year groups and there are proportionately higher numbers of boys on the register for special needs. The school uses extensive procedures for tracking individual pupil progress to determine the value added.
62. In the 1999 standard assessment tasks at the end of Key Stage 2, attainment was

well above the national average. All pupils achieved Level 4 or above which is very high in comparison with the national average and 43 per cent achieved Level 5, which is well above national averages. These results are also well above those of pupils from schools with similar backgrounds. The school is realistic about the fact that these results will not be matched in the 2000 tests, and inspection findings concur with this. Standards of attainment for the current group of pupils reaching the end of Key Stage 2 are in line with national averages. Just over 50 per cent of this group of pupils is on the register for special educational needs. However, if current standards are maintained, results for pupils currently in Year 5 will be very high when compared with national averages at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2001. The school has successfully maintained the above average standards in English, found by the previous inspection.

63. Standards in speaking and listening are above average at both key stages, and are well above average for a significant minority of pupils. Pupils throughout the school develop their ideas confidently. The youngest pupils share their 'news' clearly and audibly with the rest of the class. They enthusiastically and imaginatively share ideas before they begin a piece of descriptive writing, for example, when they suggest that they might find 'tigers and crocodiles' in a wood. By the age of seven pupils listen very carefully and make very thoughtful responses. For example, when pupils are asked if anyone thinks that they have not met their objective for a literacy lesson, one boy replies that he has not met the objective fully, 'because I couldn't think of the right sort of question'. In Years 4 and 5, pupils debate complex issues with impressive maturity. For example they discuss, 'Sharon's Dilemma', a story concerning the theft of a £5 note, listening very carefully to the story, their teacher and each other. They consider the relevance of motivation when deciding whether behaviour is right or wrong and express ideas from different perspectives, such as parent and child. When pupils in Year 6 discuss their plans for a 'balloon debate', they do so with lively interest and challenge each other with relevant questions.
64. The school has recently identified reading as a focus for development and it places a high emphasis upon fostering an enjoyment of books. These factors contribute to the high standards of achievement. Younger pupils develop their taste in reading well. They enjoy, for example, books about animals or books that rhyme. They also enjoy reading to adults and demonstrating their growing fluency and understanding. By the age of seven pupils enjoy books that challenge their skills, that are 'spooky', or provide information about a topic of particular interest to them. Older pupils formalise their opinions in the book reviews that they complete for every book read at school. They enjoy mystery and adventure, and appreciate humour with a growing understanding of irony. Most pupils read for pleasure as well as for research purposes. They are adept at using non-fiction to gather specific information and are confident in using library resources. Some parents are concerned at the lack of reading records. Teachers keep detailed assessments of pupils' reading levels and monitor what pupils are reading in a variety of ways, such as pupils' reviews, and individual teachers' notes. However, the lack of an easily accessible shared and formalised format for recording what pupils are reading and to what level, means that teachers' information is not easily available to parents on a regular basis.
65. Throughout the school there are strengths in pupils' writing, which represent a significant improvement since the last inspection. The school has chosen to prioritise encouraging pupils to express themselves freely on paper first, and to develop spelling accuracy and neat handwriting once pupils are very confident in

writing ideas. This has had a very positive impact upon pupils' interest in writing, and the school successfully provides an environment where the vast majority of pupils write with considerable pleasure. Pupils at all attainment levels and ages develop their ideas and expressive skills with varied and imaginative vocabulary which they use with increasing precision. This has a positive impact upon their learning in other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 2 record work on fluorescent materials with lively descriptions, stating that they would use them 'because they are reflective', and provide extended explanations of the value of 'silver strips...that glow in the dark'. Pupils in Year 4 write quickly and adventurously to record their response to a story that stimulates thought and discussion. Pupils in Year 5 begin to write imaginatively to represent aspects of a story from differing points of view.

66. The school has correctly identified that, while standards in spelling are satisfactory, they do not match the high standards of expressive writing. This is the next identified priority for development. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils' understanding of grammar and use of punctuation; for example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 write 'prepositional poems'. Pupils in Year 3 have a very good understanding of the use of speech marks and conduct conversations with their teacher which accurately include these and other relevant punctuation such as commas and exclamation marks.
67. Almost all boys and girls at all attainment levels enjoy their literacy lessons. A small minority of pupils in Year 6 finds it difficult to listen and concentrate well, despite teachers' high expectations of their behaviour, effort and attainment. The vast majority of pupils throughout the school, however, shows good levels of interest in their work. They co-operate well with staff and with each other and are keen to learn. They work very hard and appreciate being challenged.
68. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory. It is good or better in 73 per cent of lessons and very good or better in 36 per cent, with one lesson judged excellent. In this lesson, very high expectations are supported by highly effective and imaginative strategies. All pupils are successfully challenged throughout the lesson and work is skilfully adapted to meet individual pupils' needs exceptionally well. A consistent strength of literacy teaching throughout the school is the use of the final session to invite pupils to evaluate their learning in relation to the lesson's key objective. The framework from the National Literacy Strategy is used well to ensure that pupils at all ages are challenged well. It supports the consistently high expectations held by teachers and so contributes to the high standards in literacy throughout the school. Teachers keep detailed assessment records and use these well when planning to ensure value added in literacy. The school has made improvements in the library since the last inspection. It is now located in a reasonably sized area, with sufficient reference books that pupils are clearly accustomed to using. The classification system is clear and understood by pupils.

## **MATHEMATICS**

69. The school has improved on the standards in mathematics reported by the previous inspection, and these are above average throughout the school.
70. Standards by the end of Key Stage 1 are above average, with most pupils working confidently within the higher Level 3. In the 1999 end of key stage standard assessment tasks, attainment was well above the national average, and above average compared to similar schools. Results from the 2000 tests are equally good,

although national comparisons are not yet available. Pupils enter the school with above average understanding of number, shape and space and the confidence to investigate and explore. In the two classes containing reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils, expectations are high and the work is pitched at a well above average level. Older pupils in the mixed age classes are not held back and though the younger pupils have considerable demands made on them, their progress is monitored very effectively and they are given work to do within their capability. For instance, Year 1 pupils learning to add nine to a two-digit number readily grasped the idea of adding ten and taking one away. Year 2 pupils meanwhile offered alternative and in some cases intriguing strategies, such as noting that the sum of the 'tens' digit and the 'units' digit remained constant.

71. Standards by the end of Key Stage 2, for the current Year 6, are disappointing in comparison with recent results obtained by the school. Most pupils are at the national average standard of Level 4, with very few above. In the 1999 standard assessment tasks, two pupils achieved Level 6 and standards were well above average. However, the current year group has 50 per cent of pupils identified as having special educational needs, and only 50 per cent of the pupils taking the 2000 Key Stage 2 tests have been in the school for the whole of the key stage. Overall comparison with previous years and judgement about progress since Year 2 are, therefore, unreliable for the cohort. However, the school has tracked the progress of individual pupils and lower but realistic targets, set in consultation with the local authority, look set to be exceeded comfortably. Standards in Year 5 and throughout the rest of Key Stage 2 are, by contrast, above average. This is because the pupils absorb and retain knowledge well, expectations are high and the work tackled is demanding and at a higher level than would normally be seen in the particular year groups. In mixed-age classes expectations are pitched to stretch and stimulate the older age group but younger pupils are not left floundering. They are given good support and the work set when they move to work in groups is accurately and sensitively matched to their needs.
72. The quality of teaching is very good at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. This is the major factor contributing to above average rates of learning. Learning is very good at Key Stage 1 because the predominant characteristic is high expectations. For instance, in the mental arithmetic sessions there is, from an early age, an expectation that simple computations will be done 'in the head'. Pupils are not deprived of support mechanisms such as number lines, but Year 1 pupils, for instance, were seen adding and subtracting single digit numbers within a total of 20 quickly and confidently. At Key Stage 2 learning is good, mainly because pupils are challenged with work at a slightly more advanced level than would normally be expected in their year group. Throughout the school, teachers show confidence bordering on panache in teaching the subject. This translates into pupil confidence, enthusiasm and good standards of learning. Teachers are particularly good at encouraging pupils' own strategies in problem solving. In number work and other aspects, such as interpreting graphs in Year 3 or finding ways of calculating areas in Year 5, teachers encourage pupils to look for efficient methods as well as the correct solution.
73. The National Numeracy Strategy is applied very successfully. The opening sessions throughout the school are snappy and conducted at a brisk pace, keeping the pupils under mild but enjoyable pressure and teaching them to think quickly and accurately. Group work is skilfully built around a common class theme but with different levels of challenge well matched to pupils' needs. In two of the lessons

seen, the teachers concentrated well on one of the groups and those pupils made very good progress. However, in the other lessons, the teachers dissipated valuable energy and time moving around groups. The plenary sessions are used effectively to revisit the objective of the lesson. Skilful teacher questioning tests pupils' understanding and good records are kept of pupil progress. Pupils, even the youngest, understand what is meant by a lesson objective and throughout the school they take a good share of responsibility for their own progress. For instance, in a very good lesson for a class containing a few older Year 2 and predominantly Year 3 pupils, the teacher invited those having difficulty with the work to come to the front for extra help. The pupils responded promptly and without embarrassment, and the well-judged extra explanation sustained confidence and enthusiasm.

74. Pupils show a good attitude to their work in this subject. The review of pupils' work showed that good habits are formed early. The use of exercise books with squares printed on each page encourages pride and neatness. Pupils learn to set out calculations in a logical way, for instance reinforcing the concept of 'place value' by keeping two and three-digit numbers in clear columns. Homework is set regularly and according to national guidelines. Marking is accurate and informative.

## **SCIENCE**

75. Standards in science throughout the school are above average, which is an improvement on the picture found by the previous inspection. Teacher assessment of pupils' attainment in the 1999 Key Stage 1 standard assessment tasks was above average, and the 2000 assessments show an equally positive picture. In the Key Stage 2 test in 1999, attainment was well above the national average, and above average compared to schools with a similar intake of pupils. Whilst results for the 2000 tests are lower, all pupils have attained the expected Level 4.
76. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a good understanding of the expected elements of the subject. For instance, in a class containing older Year 1 pupils and the majority of Year 2, pupils were given an assessment test to see how well they understood the way light travels and is reflected; the more advanced pupils were given the opportunity to give their explanation of fluorescence. This was skilfully and effectively done in the context of road safety, with a very good wall display which included the spelling of key words. The outcome showed not only how well the pupils understood the concept, but also a good range of writing skills, providing valuable evidence in assessing progress in English.
77. By the end of Key Stage 2, work has included not only technical concepts, such as how to separate substances in a variety of ways, but also practical considerations such as the insidious chemical properties of certain drugs. As early as Year 3, pupils are challenged at a high level to understand not only the way in which creatures adapt to their habitat (Level 3), but also to use a key to identify them (Level 4) and to try to classify them by certain characteristics (Level 5). In a good lesson linking the idea from geography that the earth rotates, tilts and gives rise to day, night and seasons, pupils were asked to sort out a good selection of animals on any logical basis. Whilst three groups plumped for the obvious and intended separation, which was between those which had adapted to cold or warm climates, two groups used other imaginative criteria, such as fierce and gentle animals. The teacher was complimentary and encouraging and all the pupils made good progress and were left feeling good about the lesson and the subject.

78. Teaching is good throughout the school. Work is well planned to ensure smooth progress and comprehensive coverage. This is particularly important as a pupil will cover seven years worth of work whilst progressing through only five classes. The scheme of work is well planned to ensure that wherever in the school a pupil spends two years in one class, progress is maintained. Learning is good and mirrors the good teaching. Pupils are enthusiastic and have a good attitude, especially to investigative work; they enjoy thinking things through. Resources are adequate and good use is made of a pond and small nature reserve in the grounds.

## **ART AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

79. Attainment in art is above average throughout the school, and the quality of work on display is impressive. This is an improvement on the position found by the previous inspection, when attainment was average. Pupils experiment successfully with a wide range of media in both two and three dimensions, including paint, pastels, fabric and card. The quality of observational work, such as delicate water-colour spring flowers in Classes 1 and 2 and detailed pencil drawings of musical instruments in Class 4 is high, and shows a good development of pupils' skills. Pupils understand how to mix colours to produce tints and tones of different shades, and use colour sensitively, for example, to represent moods and prayers in Classes 2 and 4 and atmospheric pastel drawings representing the sinking of the Titanic in Class 5. Pupils explore the work of different artists, their style and use of colour, and produce lively and effective work of their own in a similar style. The work by seven-year-olds, in the style of Andy Warhol, is exceptional. Extensive, well-mounted displays of finished work around the school enliven the learning environment and reinforce effectively pupils' sense of pride in their achievement.
80. No lessons in design and technology were seen during the inspection, but evidence shows that attainment is appropriate to the age of the pupils throughout the school, which maintains the position found by the previous inspection. Projects are frequently linked to work in other subjects, for example, geography in Class 1, where pupils design and make playground equipment, and mathematics in Class 5, where pupils plan and design their ideal bedrooms. Teachers place appropriate emphasis on producing detailed initial designs and subsequent evaluation of the end product, although these are not displayed alongside the finished work, such as the lively and imaginative space rockets by Class 3 and fabric shoes by Class 5, in the entrance hall.
81. Teaching is at least satisfactory, and is good in half of the few sessions seen. Work in both art and design and technology is linked effectively to different curriculum areas, such as English, science, history and religious education, and planned carefully to improve pupils' skills in the techniques used. Interesting projects capture pupils' imaginations. In Class 5, for example, pupils carefully study action pictures of sports-men and women, draw 'pin-figures' and then create pipe-cleaner figures to represent the movement with great accuracy. Teachers' high expectations are effectively communicated to the pupils, who in turn take pride in completing their work well, and the quality of learning is good. Teachers use praise and individual pupils' efforts well to reinforce teaching points. In their turn, pupils are pleased with their efforts, but examine results critically and identify ways in which these could be improved. The co-ordinator provides enthusiastic support for her colleagues in both subjects, and is proud of the standards achieved in art. All classes have art sketch-books but these are not used well as a valuable tool for monitoring pupils' attainment and progress. In most, although entries are of a good quality, they are

sparse; dates and annotations, except in Class 2, are few and far between. The co-ordinator is aware that this is an area for development in an otherwise strong subject, and that some similar form of assessment in design and technology is needed.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

82. No lessons were observed in geography or history during the inspection. However, evidence taken from an analysis of pupils' work, talking with pupils and staff and a scrutiny of planning documents shows the school has improved the standards found at the previous inspection. Pupils' attainment and the quality of learning at both key stages and in both subjects are above expectations for their age.
83. At Key Stage 1, pupils have a good understanding of the world beyond their immediate locality. They have strong opinions about which countries other than England would be good places to live and justify these opinions well with reference to different climates and landscapes. For example, Australia is a popular choice because of its warmth and beaches, while India might be too hot! They have a good geographic vocabulary, describing for example a 'desert' and confidently using 'north', 'south', 'east' and 'west' accurately. They work collaboratively to produce illustrated route maps of the school grounds and recount this activity confidently and enthusiastically, using good directional vocabulary. They begin to use symbols accurately to represent buildings on these maps.
84. Younger pupils have good factual knowledge of aspects of the past. They know, for example, that the Great Fire of London occurred in 1666, lasted for four days and coincided with the plague. They also appreciate that there were no fire engines at the time to help combat the flames. They have a good understanding that during the last war people were issued with gas masks for protection and that parents prioritised using them for children. They confidently identify famous people from the past such as Guy Fawkes and Henry VIII, and the reasons for their fame.
85. At Key Stage 2, pupils from Year 5 use atlases confidently to find, for example, a country in North - East Africa, and then to make geographical judgements about the country. They determine, for example, key features of climate and landscape and begin to hypothesise about the impact of these upon the people living there. They speedily locate the Brazilian rainforest in the atlas and hold strong opinions about its destruction showing particular concern for its impact upon wildlife. They understand that people have an opportunity to conserve their environment, for example by reducing pollution and re-cycling waste materials.
86. Older pupils also hold strong opinions about their favourite period in history. They justify these with a good awareness of key features of various periods. They describe different conditions for the daily lives of rich and poor in different societies, and acknowledge different gender roles with a good level of understanding. They begin to spontaneously make comparisons between periods in history, identifying the lack of hygiene as a common feature of many past societies. They have a good understanding of the range of sources for historical evidence.
87. At the time of the inspection older pupils were enthusiastically anticipating a week's project studying the geography and history of Minety. The subjects benefit from the school's approach to linking subjects in order to enhance learning. For example, the school used some of its allocation for purchasing big books for the literacy hour to buy history books, in order to teach history through literacy. Older pupils use their

writing skills to produce poetry empathising with the experience of children evacuated during the last war.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

88. Very little use was made of computers or other technology during the inspection period. Evidence from discussions and the work scrutiny shows that standards in information technology are in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1, but below national expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1, pupils use data handling competently to produce interesting graphs of their favourite lollies and sandwiches, and graphics programs to create shape pictures. They experiment successfully with different fonts, changing style, size and colour, and enter instructions into a programmable toy to complete a sequence of movements. Pupils in Class 1 enjoy listening to taped stories, such as 'Old Bear', and control the tape recorder competently. Older pupils in Class 2 experiment with taking photographs using a digital camera. They are amazed at its versatility, and the difference between digital and conventional photographs, although some are disappointed in their personal efforts as photographers!
89. As at the time of the previous inspection, word processing skills are used satisfactorily at Key Stage 2 to publish pupils' work, for example, newspaper reports in connection with a project on the Titanic. Skills in other aspects of the curriculum, however, are under-developed, and information technology is not used as a valuable extension of work in other subjects of the curriculum. This represents a decline in standards since the previous report. In Class 5, for example, an attractive display of data handling is all 'hand produced'. Younger pupils were seen experimenting with a graphics program to create pictures. Valuable parental help is used to support pupils in this activity, but the skills displayed are below those expected of pupils' ages. Computer generated art work was not seen in other displays and there was no evidence of work in control technology. Rare examples of information downloaded from a CD-ROM or the Internet were seen in pupils' topic work, but the school does not maximise use either of its own resources or of pupils' access to modern technology at home to support this.
90. In discussion, boys and girls enjoy using computers and are enthusiastic about activities they undertake, both at school and at home, but their understanding and appreciation of information technology as a natural tool to extend their learning is unsatisfactory. An exception to this is the use of computers, and specifically word processing, to support pupils with special educational needs. Again, valuable parental help is used to teach individual pupils to touch-type, which effectively increases their access to other areas of the curriculum. There is, however, insufficient evidence to judge the quality of teaching in information technology in the school as a whole.
91. The school is aware that substantial improvement is needed to meet the requirements of the new curriculum in this subject, and it has a high priority in the school development plan. Current resources are sufficient to fulfil statutory requirements, but some computer systems are out of date and all are under-used. The suite of five computers is not used for class or group teaching and information technology is only specifically time-tabled in two classes. The co-ordinator has identified both improving resources and increasing teacher confidence as top priorities, and input into Key Stage 1 is evidently effective.

## MUSIC

92. Music is a strong area of learning in the school and standards are above expectations for pupils' ages. This maintains the strong position reported by the previous inspection. At Key Stage 1, pupils quickly learn respect for the school's wide range of percussion instruments, which they play properly. They learn and ask searching questions about how sounds can be high, low, loud or quiet. In a good lesson in Class 1, pupils passed around a tambourine and tried to play five sounds getting quieter. There was good discussion and mutual support. The headteacher takes a lunchtime recorder club, which welcomes pupils of all ability. He is a specialist musician and these pupils make rapid progress, learning to memorise and mimic short melodies and read conventional staff notation. About twenty pupils are learning an instrument and are taught by specialist peripatetic teachers. Pupils enjoy playing their instruments to support the headteacher's piano playing for singing in assembly. At Key Stage 2, pupils are keen to show their attempts to write down their compositions on display in one of the classrooms. There is a full and proper coverage of all the expected elements of the curriculum.
93. Teaching and learning is good throughout the school; pupils make good progress. Though professing less confidence about their subject expertise than in other curriculum areas, teachers take their own classes for music. The headteacher, as the subject expert in the school, is encouraging and helpful. Pupils show a good attitude to the subject; they enjoy making and listening to music and recognise that some individuals have particular expertise and talent, applauding and showing genuine pleasure in the success of their peers. Resources are plentiful and of good quality.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

94. Attainment in physical education is appropriate to the age and abilities of pupils throughout the school, which is a similar position to that found by the previous inspection. At the time of the inspection the focus was on athletics, swimming and dance, but evidence shows a full programme of activities throughout the year.
95. Pupils reach good standards in dance. The younger pupils are well co-ordinated and move rhythmically to music, following taped and teacher instructions well. They perform specific actions, such as ringing the bell, acting as floppy rag dolls and automatons, with enthusiasm and precision and remember sequences of movement well. They make good use of space and their own bodies to act out the story convincingly. Older pupils show equal enthusiasm and increased control when performing actions to music, both on their own and in pairs.
96. Pupils at Key Stage 2 practise athletics skills with energy. Uncertain weather during the inspection meant that these lessons were taken in the hall, which was really too limited in space to allow pupils to demonstrate fully their co-ordination and skills at throwing and catching. They worked sensibly and co-operatively, understood the different activities clearly and tried hard to improve their personal performance, for example in the standing jump. In one group, pupils timed each other using measured counting to see who was fastest at collecting all the bean-bags.
97. All pupils swim regularly in the school's own pool, which is a much appreciated valuable resource. Only one lesson took place, as a result of the weather, but Class 3 thoroughly enjoyed the session and more confident pupils noticeably improved

their front crawl style through good teaching and concentrated effort. All pupils in Year 6 swim the required 25 metres competently.

98. Boys and girls enjoy their physical education lessons and work hard to follow instructions and improve their personal performance. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, take a full part in all activities, and those whose co-ordination is less well developed are helped sympathetically by teachers and their peers. Teaching in dance and swimming is good, and is satisfactory in athletics. Lessons are well planned. All sessions begin with appropriate warm up activities, and teachers reinforced the value of these and of physical exercise as beneficial to health well. However, for the older pupils, organisational difficulties presented by taking an outdoor activity inside meant that pupils spent too long between warming up and beginning the main focus of the lesson, and sustained periods of physical effort were too short. The quality of learning is good as teachers take an active, practical role in demonstrating what they want the pupils to do and make good use of pupils' efforts to show good achievement and encourage others to improve their performance. Both adults and pupils change into appropriate clothing for the lessons, but some pupils were seen wearing stud and hooped earrings during lessons, which is a safety hazard.
99. The school is well resourced, with a large field, swimming pool, hall and a good range of small apparatus. These resources are used well, both in lessons and in extra- curricular activities such as football, netball, rounders and athletics, which are open to all pupils.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

100. The school follows the agreed syllabus for religious education in Wiltshire. This curriculum requires pupils to cover two strands, 'learning about' and 'learning from' religion. This syllabus also provides guidance regarding the expectations of pupils' attainment with level descriptors that parallel those of other subjects in the National Curriculum. During the inspection only one religious education lesson was observed. However, judgements are made from a scrutiny of pupils' work and discussion with pupils. These indicate that their knowledge and understanding exceed the expectations that are provided in the level descriptors for the agreed syllabus. This represents good improvement since the last inspection. This improvement is enhanced by the school's selection of additional units from the syllabus provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority.
101. At Key Stage 1, pupils paint their feelings and identify sympathetically how colours make them feel. They readily embrace the idea that it is possible to paint a prayer, and willingly attempt this. They have a clear understanding that prayer is a means of communicating with God. They have a good recall of elements of stories from the Old Testament, such as Hannah wanting to have a baby. They know and understand that Christmas and Easter are important times in the Christian calendar, and that there is a Christian festival associated with harvest. They have a good understanding that the Bible is a special book for Christians, and that the Torah is a special book for Jews. They have an understanding of symbolism and concepts that exceeds expectations for their age, when, for example in Year 2, they identify qualities as gifts such as 'friendship' to a friend, 'love' to a parent and 'kindness' to a peer.
102. In Years 4 and 5, pupils develop their association of colour with emotion by

analysing carefully an abstract painted prayer, provided by a parent, with considerable thought and maturity. They suggest, for example, that the consistent use of colour may symbolise that 'God is everywhere'. All pupils meet the challenge to produce their own abstract painting of a prayer and exceed the requirement in the Agreed Syllabus to 'express ideas about prayer'. Older pupils use graphic imagery to explore emotions and behaviour, such as 'stubbornness is like two brick walls coming towards you never stopping'. They gain good knowledge of Bible stories, such as Pontius Pilate's role in Christ's crucifixion, when they sequence the events leading up to Christ's death.

103. Pupils behave well in religious education lessons and they treat discussions about the subject seriously. They speak with sensitivity and respect about beliefs that are different from their own. The only teaching seen was good, characterised by high expectations that encourage mature responses. The subject is well led and benefits from a school policy to support learning through linking religious education with other subjects. The co-ordinator recently attended a course to consider using literacy to enhance religious education, for example by using a text to explore themes and enhance spiritual development.