

# INSPECTION REPORT

**HOLWAY PARK COMMUNITY PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

Taunton

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123739

Headteacher: Mr David Theobald

Reporting inspector: Mr Raymond Jardine  
7428

Dates of inspection: 24<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> September 2001

Inspection number: 197937

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Shakespeare Avenue Taunton Somerset
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Nick Blee
Date of previous inspection:	6 <sup>th</sup> October 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
7428	Raymond Jardine	Registered inspector	Design and technology Information and communication technology Special educational needs	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
10965	Patricia Edwards	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
21000	Ken Sansom	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography	Equal opportunities How well is the school led and managed?
18079	Patricia Burcher	Team inspector	Science History	How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
11849	Mary Dornan	Team inspector	English English as an additional language Music Religious education	
24805	Alison Cogher	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Art and design Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Holway Park Community Primary School serves the district of Holway in the south east of Taunton. There are 300 full-time equivalent pupils on roll between the ages of four and 11 years. Although the great majority of pupils come from the immediate locality, some come from other areas of Taunton, attracted by the school's reputation for the wide ranging provision it makes for pupils with special educational needs, including those with physical disabilities and emotional and behavioural needs. One of the school's key aims is to provide a socially inclusive education that is broad in its scope. There are currently 37.3 per cent of pupils eligible for free school meals (well above average). The proportion of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs has risen in recent years from above the national average to a high proportion. Of the 100 pupils (33.3 per cent) on the register currently, the largest group have emotional and behavioural difficulties and nine have physical disabilities. Nine pupils (three per cent) have Statements of Special Educational Need. Almost all the pupils are white UK heritage and only one pupil has English as an additional language. Many pupils come from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The pupils' standards on entry into the school are broad ranging but the majority are below average compared to those nationally.

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

Holway Park is an improving school. Pupils' learn in a caring, supportive and stimulating environment. Teachers, support assistants and all those associated with the school are very dedicated and they work hard to enable their pupils to achieve well. As a result, standards are rising. Pupils care for and respect each other, reflecting the school's aims and values. The teaching is at least satisfactory with some good features. The school's management team and governing body understand the school's strengths and weaknesses and there is a good team spirit throughout the school. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Pupils like coming to school, have positive attitudes and enjoy activities the school provides.
- Pupils' personal development and relationships throughout the school are good.
- Provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage, other than that for outdoor play, is good.
- Teaching of pupils with special educational needs, in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 and 6 is good.
- The expertise and contribution of learning support staff enables pupils with special educational needs to make good progress.
- There are a good range of extra-curricular activities.
- Links with parents and the wider community are very good.

### What could be improved

- The use of information about pupils to raise teachers' expectations, particularly of higher attaining pupils, and to shape the development of the school. (This is a priority in the school's development plan.)
- The provision for information and communication technology. (This is a priority in the school's development plan.)
- Resources to support the increasing proportion and diverse range of pupils with special educational needs.

*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 October 1997 when it was found to have a number of weaknesses. There has been considerable improvement since then. Standards in English, mathematics and science are now rising because the school's implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, with intensive support from the local education authority, is having a positive impact. The provision for physical education and music is better. Teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection and few lessons are now unsatisfactory. Curriculum provision and resources for information and communication technology have improved, but not enough. New initiatives such as the provision of a nurture group are proving effective in raising these pupils' personal skills and confidence. Pupils' moral and social development is now good. The management team has clear responsibilities, there is closer teamwork throughout the school and there are now schemes of work in all subjects. Subject co-ordinators are more effective but they are still not focusing closely enough on pupils' standards. Overall the school has made satisfactory progress and is showing it has the capacity to improve further.

### STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E	E	E	E
Mathematics	E	E	E	D
Science	E	E*	E	E

**Key**

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

The school has a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs that has been rising in recent years and so comparisons with similar schools should be treated cautiously. The table shows that pupils' standards by the end of Year 6 have been well below the national average and low in science. This year, standards have risen most significantly in mathematics and in science and there were also some improvements in English, although not sufficient to meet the school's ambitious target for English. The school did however, exceed its targets in 2001 for mathematics. Inspection findings confirm that these recent improvements are being sustained.

The standards of seven year old pupils in 2001 were below the national average in reading and well below in writing and mathematics. However, these results are a significant improvement over previous years, particularly in pupils' reading and writing. Pupils throughout the school are achieving well to reach the expected standards in music, design technology and in art. Their standards in information technology are below national expectations and they are not achieving enough because the school's resources and curriculum for this area have weaknesses that are currently being addressed. Pupils' achievements in history, geography, religious education and physical education are satisfactory. Pupils' with special educational needs make good progress but a few higher attaining pupils underachieve where they are not sufficiently challenged in lessons. The achievements of pupils in the Foundation Stage are mainly satisfactory. Only a small minority reach the nationally expected goals by the end of the reception year.

### PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The great majority of pupils enjoy coming to school. They are interested in activities and respond well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Most pupils are generally well behaved, courteous and polite. However, a small minority of pupils sometimes display challenging behaviour that can affect the learning of others in class.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are good. This has a positive impact on the way pupils treat one another. Pupils value and accept those with special educational needs and respect their contribution to the life of the school.
Attendance	The level of attendance is well below the national average because many pupils take holidays in term time.

### TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

*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.*

Teaching in English and mathematics is satisfactory with some good features. Teachers in the Foundation Stage have a good understanding of the curriculum and plan stimulating lessons well. Teaching in Year 3 and 6 is good. Teachers plan lessons around objectives that are made clear to pupils and resources are generally used well, although information technology is not used sufficiently. Learning support assistants are very effective in working with pupils with special educational needs so that they make good progress. Relationships with pupils are good and most pupils are managed well. Occasionally, pupils can show challenging behaviour that slows the pace of lessons where insufficient support is available. The teaching of the skills of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory for the great majority of pupils although the level of challenge for some higher attaining pupils is sometimes insufficient. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs, including those in the school's nurture group, is very good.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The school provides a broad and relevant curriculum with a strong emphasis on the development of literacy and numeracy. A very good range of extra-curricular activities is offered to pupils. Relations with partner schools are very good and the school makes effective use of the wider community to enhance its provision. Information and communication technology is not used sufficiently in subjects. Provision for outdoor play for children in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Learning support assistants provide effective help for these pupils. Pupils' education plans provide clear guidance and are regularly reviewed. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory and is mainly developed through religious education. The provision for moral development is good as reflected in the school's mission statement. Pupils' social development is good. The school works hard to build up pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory and enables them to appreciate a range of cultural traditions and ways of life.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The provision for pupils' health, safety and general well being is satisfactory with child protection procedures fully in place. Teachers and support staff know their pupils well. Pupils' with special educational needs are monitored and supported well. Procedures for assessing pupils' academic achievements are in place but the school's use of this information to guide planning is unsatisfactory.

The school works very effectively with parents. Parents feel well informed through reports, newsletters and meetings. There is a very active 'Friends of Holway' and parents readily approach teachers to discuss their children's progress.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher and core planning team work effectively together to lead the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governing body know the school well and is now ready to move forward with a clear focus on monitoring the school's performance.

The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. Although work has begun in English and mathematics, further work is required to ensure that co-ordinators and the senior management team use all the available information in the school to raise standards.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory: The deployment of support staff is good. The school should continue to work with the local authority to ensure the level of support and facilities provided meet the needs of all pupils.

Teaching and support staff are well qualified, dedicated and hard working. The accommodation is good and well maintained by the site manager and his staff. The school has insufficient accommodation to meet the diverse needs of all its pupils. Learning resources are generally adequate except in the number of and access to computers and resources to support the Foundation Stage children's physical development. The governing body has embraced best value principles in comparing the school's standards, challenging what it does, consulting the community on proposed changes and obtaining good value for its expenditure. It now needs to link them more closely to its work in raising pupils' standards.

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

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like coming to school.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• Children make good progress and teachers expect them to work hard.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• The school is helping their children to mature.</li> <li>• There is an interesting range of extra-curricular activities.</li> <li>• Parents find the school approachable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Behaviour.</li> <li>• Homework.</li> <li>• Involvement of parents in the life of the school.</li> </ul> <p>These comments were made by a small minority of parents.</p>

Inspectors broadly support the very positive views of the school expressed by parents and carers. Behaviour is generally managed well but there are a few incidents of challenging behaviour that affect pupils' learning. Homework extends pupils' learning in lessons appropriately. The school provides many opportunities for parents to be involved.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Children are assessed on entry into the school using the local authority's baseline assessment scheme. This and other assessments, including analyses of local housing and social circumstances, show that pupils' attainment on entry into the school is below average and many come from families with very low social and economic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs has been rising to a current level of about one third of all pupils in the school and was also high last year. Only a small proportion of pupils reach the nationally expected goals by the end of their reception year. Consequently, national comparisons, particularly with similar schools on the basis only of the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals should be treated cautiously.
2. In the standard national tests for seven year olds, the school's results in 2000 were well below the national averages in reading and in mathematics. Standards in writing were low. However, pupils' standards in that year were a little exceptional compared to the previous, three years. The recent results for seven year olds in summer 2001 showed a significant improvement on the previous year, particularly in reading and writing. Pupils' reading standards rose to below the national averages, while in writing they also rose but were still well below average, as were standards in mathematics. In relation to those in similar schools, the 2001 test results also showed a significant improvement over previous years in reading and writing to standards that are broadly in line with the average. Standards in mathematics have improved but are still well below average. Few pupils have achieved higher levels of attainment in any of the tests. These improvements reflect the positive impact that the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are now having in the school.
3. The school's results in national tests for 11 year olds in 2000 were well below the national averages for English and mathematics while results for science were low, continuing a pattern from previous years. However, in 2001, the school's results showed some improvements in English, mathematics and especially science, although they remain well below the national average. Standards also improved in relation to those in similar schools for these subjects but they were still below average with mathematics relatively better than English or science. Few pupils achieved standards above the expected levels in any of these subjects. The school exceeded its own 2001 targets for 11 year old pupils in mathematics but fell short of its expectations in English. Girls achieved significantly better than boys in 2001.
4. Inspection findings confirm that the improvements seen in 2001 are being sustained for the majority of pupils but the proportion achieving higher than average standards in both key stages is still too low. These improvements are being driven partly by the school's successful implementation of both the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, with additional intensive support from local education authority consultants. Class sizes are also reduced and teaching has improved. However, a few higher attaining pupils underachieve because teachers, subject co-ordinators and other key staff are not yet using all the available information to guide expectations of what these pupils can do, challenge them sufficiently, or focus sufficient attention on their needs when developing the school.

5. Pupils' literacy skills are improving but they are below national expectations in Key Stage 1 and well below in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1, pupils learn basic skills of phonics and handwriting, they are keen to discuss and respond to questions, but many pupils have limited vocabulary for their age. Pupils' experience of books and authors is limited in both key stages. Pupils in Key Stage 1 read simple texts, using a range of strategies to decode difficult words. By the age of 11, many pupils are competent readers but their standards are below the expected level. Pupils' writing improves considerably as they move through the school. They extend their vocabulary and write more creatively, although there are too few opportunities for extended writing. Pupils in both key stages are applying their literacy skills across the curriculum in a variety of subjects, to describe, explain and to present ideas. However, the limited subject vocabulary of some lower attaining pupils constrains their progress in describing and explaining their work to others, for example, in mathematics.
6. Most pupils' numeracy skills are developing appropriately, although higher attaining pupils could achieve more. Pupils acquire mental skills to add, subtract, multiply and divide accurately, and higher attaining and older pupils use formal written methods to calculate where necessary. Pupils apply their numeracy across several subjects to display information graphically, to measure and to estimate, but these opportunities need extending further.
7. Pupils' achievements are good in both key stages in music, design and technology and art. In geography, history, religious education and physical education, pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall. However, their achievements in information and communication technology are unsatisfactory because there are insufficient opportunities provided for them to practise and develop their skills or to apply them sufficiently in some subjects of the curriculum. The number of computers is also too small, although it has improved recently.
8. Pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language make good progress because they are well supported by dedicated learning support assistants and detailed individual education plans are effective in guiding their learning. Pupils with physical disabilities and those on Fresh Starts from other schools are integrated well into lessons. There are no significant differences between the achievements of boys and girls seen in the inspection.

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

9. Throughout the school the majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs have good attitudes to their learning. This is in line with the findings of the previous report. The great majority of pupils enjoy coming to school. They respond well and show interest in the activities provided. For instance, in a Year 3 history lesson pupils were eager to take part in the class discussion on child evacuation in World War 2. Pupils' concentration is appropriate to their abilities and the majority work hard and try to do their best. Parents express strong agreement with the positive attitudes and values promoted by the school.
10. Standards of behaviour are satisfactory overall, although there are a minority of pupils particularly in Years 2, 4 and 5 who display challenging behaviour. In these classes, where teachers' strategies are not always effective, this behaviour hinders the learning of other pupils in the class. Pupils are courteous and treat staff, parents and visitors politely. They demonstrate their acceptance of a clear moral code and show

care for one another, their belongings and school property. They know whom to approach when incidents of bullying occur. There were 17 fixed period exclusions involving 12 pupils with one pupil having been excluded on several occasions during the last reporting year.

11. Relationships between all members of the school community are good. The majority of pupils know that all the adults want what is best for them. This has a positive impact on the way pupils treat each other. They value and accept those members of the school community with special educational needs and respect their contribution to the life of the school. They willingly accept responsibilities when given the opportunity and enjoy helping with the routines of class and school such as register monitors, litter pickers and serving on the school council. Pupils' ability to use their own initiative and take responsibility for their own learning in lessons, and when completing their homework, is satisfactory.
12. At 93 per cent, attendance was well below the national average for the last reporting year as many pupils continue to take holidays during term time. The level of punctuality has improved since the previous inspection and the majority of pupils arrive on time allowing sessions to continue without interruption.

#### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

13. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory with some good features. There is very little unsatisfactory teaching. This represents a considerable improvement since the last inspection when several weaknesses in teaching were identified. Teaching is good in the areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage. Teaching in both Key Stages 1 and 2 is satisfactory but with some good features, for example, in Years 3 and 6. Teaching is also good for pupils in the nurture group and in booster classes for additional literacy and numeracy. Almost half of all lessons are good or better and over a tenth are very good.
14. In the Foundation Stage, pupils' learning is good in most areas because teachers have a good understanding of the curriculum and of how pupils learn. Their planning is thorough and resources and time are used well. Both the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are being implemented throughout the school so that teachers are more confident in drawing on them to plan lessons. As a result, the teaching of literacy and numeracy has improved significantly since the last inspection and standards in both subjects are rising.
15. Teachers have a good knowledge of their subjects and provide stimulating contexts for learning. They plan lessons with clear objectives that are shared with pupils so that lessons have clarity of purpose that pupils understand. In a few lessons however, teachers take insufficient account of pupils' different abilities in planning their lessons so that higher attaining pupils in particular, can sometimes be insufficiently challenged. In the best lessons, teachers have higher expectations of what these pupils can achieve and use open questions and pupil groupings effectively to extend their thinking. For example, Year 3 pupils calculated the difference between two numbers between 20 and 90 in their mathematics lesson. Their teacher encouraged pupils to use and explain a range of strategies and constantly reminded them of appropriate mathematical vocabulary to use. Higher attaining pupils were given more demanding examples, and, with the teacher's guidance for their group, these pupils could successfully calculate quite large differences between numbers

and discuss a range of ways of tackling these problems. This good practice should be disseminated across the school. In the few instances of unsatisfactory teaching, learning objectives are insufficiently clear to guide the lesson and the pace is too slow, partly because pupils become restless.

16. Resources are generally used well in lessons. In one very good design and technology lesson, the teacher used a very good range of photograph frames to stimulate discussion, ideas and creativity in her Year 3 pupils that resulted in some very good initial designs of their own. However, teachers' use of information and communication technology to support teaching in the subjects is patchy and underdeveloped. While pupils do use computers to develop their mathematics, literacy, and some other subjects such as art and music, insufficient use is made and many opportunities are missed because teachers' expertise with information technology varies considerably and access to computers in classrooms is limited, although it has improved recently.
17. Teachers encourage pupils to achieve well and relationships are generally good. They work very effectively with learning support assistants to ensure that their time and expertise are used well. These assistants are dedicated and work very hard in support of their pupils. As a result, pupils with special educational needs generally make good progress in lessons. While pupils are generally managed well, there are isolated occasions when pupils display very challenging behaviour that is difficult to manage even though the school's behaviour policy is applied consistently. This is particularly evident in Years 4 and 5 where there is insufficient additional support available to the teacher at times. On these occasions, pupils' learning throughout the class is adversely affected.
18. The school has, in partnership with the local education authority, established a nurture group in which pupils mainly from Year 2, are given an extra boost to their developing emotional and social experience in a domestic setting so that they are able to sustain relationships. These pupils are progressing well in their skills and in the subjects of the curriculum because their teacher plans carefully for the needs of each child, uses support staff effectively and combines a range of clear learning objectives into rich experiences for these pupils. In one very good mathematics lesson for example, pupils were given real money with carefully chosen amounts, to buy items at the local shop. On the way, pupils practised vocabulary relating to directions and safety near roads, looked for key words around the shop and counted change for their purchases before returning by another route.
19. Almost all classes have a wide range of abilities and wide ranging special educational needs. In the great majority of lessons, teachers engage the full range of pupils in well managed class discussions and other activities. There are no significant differences between the achievements of boys and girls. Teachers and support assistants use their assessments and individual education plans to guide the teaching of pupils with special educational needs well so that they make good progress. However, insufficient use is made of the school's assessments of some higher attaining pupils to guide their teacher's expectations of these pupils and so raise the pace and challenge of some lessons.
20. Homework is generally set in line with the school's policy and is appropriate. Although some teachers' marking is effective, for example, in English, marking is weaker in many subjects because teachers' comments are simply of praise and do not focus sufficiently on the learning objective taught to provide pupils with an indication of how the work might be improved further.



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

21. The school's curriculum is broad and relevant, and offers a range of learning opportunities. It meets statutory requirements for all National Curriculum subjects and the provision of religious education. A strong emphasis is placed on the teaching of English and mathematics. Pupils of all levels of attainment can access the full range of subjects. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Satisfactory provision is made for personal, social and health education, including sex education. Links with the community are very good and this contributes well to pupils' learning. Art is used effectively across the curriculum to enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding and contributes well to their overall learning. Satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection on the key issues relating to the curriculum.
22. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. Planning in accordance with the Early Learning Goals provides children with learning opportunities that prepare them for the National Curriculum. Activities are structured and have clear learning objectives.
23. Curriculum provision for pupils in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall. Since the last inspection, schemes of work for all areas of the curriculum have been implemented and a framework for the delivery of the curriculum has been introduced. Both the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have also been implemented. Together these changes are having a positive impact on standards achieved across the curriculum. Opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum have not been fully developed. The teaching of English and mathematics accounts for a significant proportion of teaching time and consideration is now being given to the impact this may have on other curriculum areas. Provision for teaching information and communication technology has improved since the last inspection. All pupils now have access to a computer in their classroom. However, the use of computers as an aid to pupils' learning remains unsatisfactory.
24. Pupils have wide ranging special educational needs in the school, including pupils with physical disabilities and many with emotional and behavioural difficulties for whom only a small proportion have Statements of Special Educational Need. The curricular provision that the school makes for pupils with special educational needs, and for those for whom English is an additional language is good. Teachers and support staff work very hard to meet their needs. Individual plans drawn up for these pupils, detail learning opportunities that are appropriate to their needs. These are regularly reviewed as pupils' progress is assessed. Support staff are well informed and carry out their varied roles very effectively but there are insufficient numbers to support classes in Key Stage 2.
25. The provision for extra-curricular activities is good. The school clubs offered are varied and have a positive impact on pupils' learning. Pupils are encouraged to participate in sporting, environmental and creative activities. Experts from outside the school community organise and run some of the clubs. This provides pupils with additional learning opportunities. They are further supported through the homework club which is run during the lunch break.
26. The school's links with the community are many and varied. Pupils are encouraged to become involved in a range of charity work, and have been successful in raising significant sums of money. They have a good appreciation of the social needs and

interests of the community in which they live and of the wider world. Visits and visitors contribute significantly to pupils' knowledge and understanding of community issues. Other groups regularly use the school's premises in the evenings and pupils are involved in many of these activities.

27. Relationships with partner institutions are very good and a strength of the school. Close links with local playgroups ensures that children settle very quickly into the reception classes. Induction arrangements are very well organised and managed. They include several visits by children and parents. Links with local secondary schools are strong and Year 6 pupils experience good transition arrangements. The school liaises very closely with a wide range of support services. These provide good support for families, and pupils with a diverse range of special educational needs.
28. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. The promotion of their spiritual development occurs mainly through religious education and in collective worship. Across the curriculum spiritual development is incidental rather than coherently planned. However, there are good examples such as in a Year 3 class, when during a religious education lesson, the class teacher asked pupils to share their feelings and reflect on each other's responses. Spiritual awareness across the curriculum also clearly shows in a Year 4 display of artwork and poems with water as the theme linked together by G F Handel's Water Music. Opportunities are provided to study other religions and celebrate festivals of other cultures. The acts of collective worship are widely based with adequate time for prayer although reflection is limited. However care needs to be taken that time for worship is provided on a daily basis.
29. Pupils' moral development is good, driven by the five 'take cares' in the school mission statement. Pupils are clearly taught the principles of right and wrong and care of property and the school environment. The teachers actively promote opportunities for discussion on moral issues encouraging pupils to develop a caring and tolerant attitude.
30. Pupils' social development is good and opportunities are provided such as the nurture group where the development of basic social skills allows pupils to relate effectively to others. Pupils have all been encouraged to contribute to the recent revision of the school behaviour policy. The school works hard to build up pupils' confidence and self-esteem through the many extra-curricular activities provided. Pupils raise money for charity and learn about caring for others less fortunate than themselves.
31. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. The school provides access to a range of experiences in the arts such as theatre visits and dance workshops. Visits have been made to places of educational interest in the locality such as Glastonbury and Lyme Regis, helping pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions. However, opportunities provided to study the diversity of other cultures are more limited although there are good displays of African artwork and some pupils have attended an Indian dance workshop and others have visited places of worship of other faiths.

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

32. The school has maintained its effective care of pupils reported at the time of the previous inspection. It provides a most caring environment where all adults working in the school know the pupils well and value them as individuals. Parents are proud of

the caring ethos of the school and have confidence in the ability of staff to meet the needs of their children.

33. The agreed behaviour policy has been revised since the previous inspection and successfully promotes good behaviour. All staff apply it consistently and it is well supported by the home/school agreement. However there is no procedure for assessing the impact of this policy in dealing with the challenging behaviour of a minority of pupils. Procedures for dealing with incidents of bullying are well known by staff, pupils and parents. Staff deal promptly and effectively with incidents of reported bullying involving parents at an early stage.
34. The school monitors attendance regularly. Teachers call the registers at the beginning of every session. The family advice liaison worker is working closely with some families where there is perceived to be a problem with attendance. However the school has few strategies to promote and reward improved attendance.
35. The school has a clear child protection policy. Procedures comply with those of the area child protection committee and all staff are fully aware of these procedures. Appropriate training is regularly undertaken. The school successfully looks after the health of pupils, their safety and their general well being. Lessons in sex education and drug awareness form part of the school's programme for pupils' personal development that is well supported by outside agencies. The school maintains an accident book for recording incidents. First-aid boxes are appropriately sited and stocked and parents are fully informed of accidents involving their children and of any treatment given. The governors have approved a comprehensive health and safety policy, regular risk assessment is undertaken and all the necessary checks on equipment have been carried out.
36. The school's procedures for monitoring and assessing pupils' academic progress overall are satisfactory. In the Foundation Stage and in some literacy lessons, teachers use assessment information to inform their teaching plans, but this practice is insufficiently developed across the school. The school tracks pupils' progress in English and mathematics at both key stages through the results of a wide range of standardised national tests. This information helps to build a comprehensive picture of each pupil's achievement and progress and represents a significant improvement since the last inspection. However, it is not yet being used effectively to set expectations for pupils' standards at the end of the key stage and to ensure that teachers' plan sufficiently challenging work, especially for higher attaining pupils. Individual and group curriculum targets are not focused sufficiently on what needs to be taught and learned by pupils to enable them to achieve well. The assessment co-ordinator is aware that the information gathered now needs to be carefully analysed and used to provide information on what pupils and groups of pupils know, understand and can do and how this will improve their learning.

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

37. Since the last inspection, the school has continued to develop and improve its positive links with parents so that they are now a strength of the school. Many parents are pleased with the way the school is caring for and educating their children. They find it easy to approach the school and comment that their children like being at school. Parents and carers feel well informed and appreciate the range of extra-curricular activities offered by the school. A few parents would like to see behaviour improved

and inspectors agree. A small minority also expressed concerns about the level of homework and about the level to which the school involves parents, but inspection findings show that both these aspects are appropriately dealt with.

38. The school values its partnership with parents and maintains good relationships with them. The quality of information provided for parents is good and this is acknowledged and appreciated by many parents. Newsletters are used well to inform them about school events and activities. The school's prospectus gives useful information on the curriculum and school organisation. The governing body's annual report to parents is informative. Reports meet statutory requirements, giving a more detailed account of attainment and progress in English and mathematics. There are termly parents' evenings and teachers are available to see parents on most days at the beginning or end of school. This 'open door' policy is much appreciated by parents. The school has been very active in initiatives taken to involve parents including invitations to attend a Creative Arts Week, a mathematics evening, fairs and an open evening to celebrate children's achievements.
39. Parental involvement in the school is good and the contribution to their learning at home and at school is satisfactory. Parents, carers and governors are encouraged to play an active part in the life of the school. For example, parents help in classes, listening to pupils' reading, helping with food technology, swimming and school visits. The Friends' Association is very active and has raised a substantial amount of money towards numeracy resources, curtains, staging, lighting, audio equipment and computers. Numerous events are organised by the committee that are well supported by the wider parent body. Parents of children aged under five speak highly of the pre-school home visits. Once children start school, parents are encouraged to hear their children read at home and support their homework. The school runs a weekly homework club and has an effective home/school agreement.
40. Pupils of parents with special educational needs are encouraged to be involved in termly reviews, while the school works with parents at an early stage where there are concerns about their children's academic and personal welfare.

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

41. The headteacher is well liked, respected and supported by the staff, governors and parents. The core management team, which consists of the headteacher, three assistant headteachers and the co-ordinator for special educational needs, along with representatives from the teaching and support staff, have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. There is an obvious team spirit throughout the school. Appropriate lines of communication ensure that every adult in this large community feels valued. The school promotes an enlightened approach to an inclusive policy that is largely successful in providing equality of opportunity for all pupils. The good systems in place to track pupils with special educational needs should now be extended to all pupils to ensure that everyone makes good progress.
42. The school improvement plan identifies appropriate priorities, which reflect the school's aims and values. The process by which the plan is produced involves all staff in the school. However, the current plan is limited in its scope in that it does not clearly articulate the school's long-term strategic development. As a result, the school risks having to react to situations rather than determining its own future needs. Monitoring of the plan is also limited and there is little evidence presented to the governing body of whether actions are working effectively.

43. Recent improvements have taken place in the role of the mathematics co-ordinator and the team responsible for literacy. With effective support from the local education authority, clear strategies, including the monitoring of teaching, have been put in place, resulting in improved standards. Co-ordinators generally have improved aspects of their role, for example, all have action plans outlining what they would like to see changed. Even so, some co-ordinators are not as influential in raising standards in their subjects because their use of assessments of pupils' achievements is very limited. In particular, there is no cohesive policy on the use of information on pupils' achievements and the monitoring of teaching by co-ordinators to help guide developments in their subjects with a focus on raising standards.
44. The co-ordinator for special educational needs is very effective in ensuring that pupils with additional educational needs make good progress. The individual education plans reflect the needs of pupils, providing appropriate targets. Pupils' progress towards these targets is monitored carefully. Over recent years the proportion of pupils with additional educational needs has increased. The school has a high reputation for supporting pupils with severe and multiple difficulties, including physical, emotional and behavioural problems. Success in this area is being driven by a high level of commitment from a team of skilled support staff, despite limitations in their numbers and the inadequacy of the accommodation to meet the needs of all pupils. Teachers and support staff are successful but are working at the limits of their capacity in coping with the diverse range and numbers involved.
45. The governing body has established an effective committee structure, through which it discharges its duties. The chair of governors has a high profile and he is very aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governors know the school well but they understand that they still have further roles to play alongside the senior staff in shaping the longer term future of the school. All statutory requirements of the governing body are being met except for gaps in the governors' annual report relating to arrangements for electing parent governors and arrangements for taking disabled pupils to school.
46. Although the principles of best value have been embraced, the governors have yet to apply them rigorously to help the school raise standards further. Taking account of the socio-economically disadvantaged context of the school, the satisfactory quality of education provided, including teaching and its relatively high expenditure per pupil, the school provides satisfactory value for money.
47. Each subject has a budget allocation. Money allocated to the school for specific purposes is used appropriately. The school secretary and finance officer efficiently deal with the day-to-day administration and financial management. The school office is welcoming and reflects the caring ethos found throughout the school. Effective use is made of computers within the office.
48. The school has a good number of well-qualified teaching and support staff. There is an appropriate balance of experience and expertise and those teachers who have taught in the school for a number of years know the families of the pupils well. The governing body has approved the school's performance management policy, but the first cycle of setting of targets for the teaching staff and reviews are not yet in place. The staff handbook is helpful and of particular benefit to new staff joining the school. There is an effective induction process for newly qualified teachers who are well supported by their tutor and mentors.

49. The school has retained its 'Investors in People' Award for several years. It also provides initial teacher training, welcomes trainee teachers and recognises the benefits of having students teaching alongside experienced teachers. The commitment of teaching and support staff is high. Skilled teacher assistants provide very effective support for pupils with special educational needs. This is a considerable strength of the school. Teaching assistants feel part of a well supported and managed team with appraisal procedures and a staff development programme that identifies individual and group needs firmly in place.
50. Overall the accommodation is good with sufficient space for the number of pupils on roll. There are attractive displays celebrating pupils' achievement in classrooms and public areas of the school. The site manager and his staff work hard to provide a clean, tidy and well maintained site. However, the school has insufficient appropriate accommodation to meet the diverse needs of physically disabled pupils and much specialist equipment has to be stored in corridors posing a potential health and safety risk. Plans have been agreed which will allow the school to address these weaknesses in the future. The grounds are spacious with well marked out playgrounds, a coppice, a football pitch, playing field and flowerbeds.
51. The quality and range of resources to support learning are satisfactory overall. Since the last inspection, resources have been improved for the teaching of mathematics, design and technology, geography and particularly music. The need to increase the provision of outdoor play equipment for children in the Foundation Stage continues to be a priority. The school has improved the provision of reading books to raise further pupils' attainment and progress in English. The library is satisfactorily resourced. The school has recently improved resources for information technology. However, the number and quality of computers still remains a weakness. In addition, the provision of software has not kept pace and is inadequate in some subjects; for example, in geography and science. Good use is made of the community to enrich pupils' experiences through residential visits, visiting speakers and day visits.

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

52. In order to raise standards further, the headteacher, staff and governors should (*paragraphs referring to these issues are listed in brackets*):
- (1) make effective use of their knowledge of pupils' standards and achievements to:
    - set challenging targets for all pupils' achievements; (36)
    - use assessments to guide planning of sequences of work and to raise teachers' expectations particularly for higher attaining pupils; (15,19)
    - ensure subject co-ordinators focus on standards throughout the school to help shape the development of their subjects; (43, 78, 86, 92, 99, 106, 117, 124, 130, 136, 140)
    - undertake thorough analyses of the school's achievements to help shape priorities in the school's improvement plan and to monitor progress. (42)
  - (2) Improve the school's provision for information and communication technology by:
    - providing better access to computers and associated resources; (51, 121)

- improving teachers' confidence in teaching the skills and in using information and communication technology effectively across the curriculum; (16, 23, 122)
  - removing some gaps in the school's curriculum. (121)
- (3) continue to work with the local education authority to ensure that there are sufficient resources to support the increasing proportion and diverse range of pupils with special educational needs. (17, 24, 44)

53. In addition, governors may wish to address the following minor issues (*paragraphs referring to these issues are listed in brackets*):

- The quality of marking (20, 76)
- Provide more opportunities for extended writing across the curriculum and in English (5, 71)
- Encourage pupils to apply their numeracy skills further across subjects (6, 83)
- Promote better attendance (12, 34)
- Remove minor gaps in the governors' annual report (45)
- Implement the school's performance management policy fully for teaching staff (48)
- Improve outdoor play facilities for the Foundation Stage (51, 57)
- Improve pupils' achievements in their scientific enquiry skills (87, 91, 92)
- Improve pupils' achievements in their evaluation skills in design and technology (100, 103, 106)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	76
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	10	24	39	3	0	0
Percentage	0	13	32	51	4	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	300
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	112

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	100

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	29
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	19

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.0
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.0
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 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	27	27	54

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	23	24
	Girls	22	26	23
	Total	43	49	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (53)	91 (59)	87 (80)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	24	25
	Girls	24	23	24
	Total	46	47	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (61)	87 (60)	91 (78)
	National	84 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	23	37	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	14	16
	Girls	24	18	31
	Total	34	32	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	57 (47)	53 (38)	78 (49)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	12	9
	Girls	22	19	17
	Total	29	31	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	48 (34)	52 (37)	43 (48)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	4
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	278
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	12	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: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.0
Average class size	29.3

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

Total number of education support staff	23.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	607

*FTE means full-time equivalent*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000
	£
Total income	720,270
Total expenditure	754,346
Expenditure per pupil	2,181
Balance brought forward from previous year	54,063
Balance carried forward to next year	19,987

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.9
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3.9
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*



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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	331
Number of questionnaires returned	137

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	37	4	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	51	42	5	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	28	58	10	1	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	24	50	10	4	11
The teaching is good.	50	44	4	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	45	9	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	26	2	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	34	1	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	47	37	12	2	1
The school is well led and managed.	55	41	3	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	47	46	4	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	45	45	5	0	5

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

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

54. Children start in the reception classes in September in accordance with locally agreed procedures. They are admitted in small groups on a part-time basis during the first five weeks of term, and then all children attend full time. Before starting school most children attend local pre-schools. The school has a good relationship with the pre-schools and a comprehensive programme of home and school visits provides a good induction process for the children and their parents. Children are assessed on entry to find out what they can do. The results of these assessments show that the range of attainment is broad, but overall it is below average. Only a small minority of children reach the nationally expected goals by the end of their reception year, although most make satisfactory progress overall. Children with special educational needs make good progress in some areas of learning. Some activities lack challenge for the more able children. The reception classes are stimulating and caring places where children feel safe and secure. The provision for information and communication technology has improved since the last inspection.
55. Teaching is good with some very good features. Teachers have a good understanding of the foundation curriculum and are knowledgeable about how young children learn. They are competent in the teaching of phonics and other basic skills. Lessons move at a good pace. Most activities are well matched to the interest levels of the children and as a result most make at least satisfactory progress. Teachers plan for all areas of learning and progress towards the Early Learning Goals is identifiable. Teachers' ongoing assessments are used to monitor children's progress and they identify clearly what children can and cannot do. However, insufficient use is made of these assessments to inform planning.
56. The co-ordinator provides strong leadership. She is knowledgeable and manages the provision for children in the Foundation Stage effectively. She provides good support for other teachers and they work together well to provide a stimulating environment for the children in their care.
57. Classrooms are effectively organised to provide areas for quiet activities, for play and to meet together. Resources overall are appropriate and used well to support the children's learning. However, resources to support learning through outdoor play which were identified as requiring improvement in the last inspection, remain unsatisfactory. Children do have access to an outdoor area but it is not secure and cannot be used by children safely without an adult being present. Classroom assistants make a valuable contribution to children's learning. Parents help their children with reading at home and have a good relationship with the school.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

58. Children's skills in this area develop well because teaching is good. Relationships are good and teachers' expectations are high. A strong emphasis is placed on developing the social skills of sharing, taking turns and being polite. Overall children behave well and work hard. They have a positive attitude to learning and work well individually and in small groups. Opportunities for working and playing together encourage co-operation and give children the chance to talk purposefully with each other and their teachers. Children's self help skills are developing well. All, but a

small minority are able to change themselves into shorts and tee-shirts for physical education sessions. Children are able to make decisions about what to do next, from the range of activities they are offered, although some need significant input from adults to ensure that their play is purposeful.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

59. Children's attainment in this area of learning is variable and most do not reach the expected goals by the end of their reception year. Teaching is good and overall most children make satisfactory progress in all aspects of this area of learning. Children with special educational needs make good progress, but more able pupils are insufficiently challenged, particularly in writing. Children communicate effectively. They interact and talk with each other and to adults. They speak clearly and show a developing awareness of the listener. They listen to and respond with enjoyment to stories, songs and rhymes. In whole-class sessions they listen attentively and show respect for each other's views. Children enjoy listening to stories and talking about books. They know the way a book is organised and handle them with care.
60. The majority, are developing the understanding that print carries meaning, and know that it is read from left to right. A minority of children can retell a very familiar story in simple terms. Good use is made of registration time to help children recognise their own names. For the majority of children, writing is at a very early stage of development. Opportunities for writing are provided. For example, in the role-play area children make lists, and they write invitations to their teddy bears to attend a planned picnic. They are taught the names and sounds of letters. However, by the end of the year, most children are unable to write simple sentences and captions unaided. Written work seen in books does not reflect the oral ability of the more able children. Good use is made of traditional stories, rhymes, and book-making to support children's knowledge and understanding of the written word and story structure.

### **Mathematical development**

61. Attainment in this area is variable. Most children make satisfactory progress, but the majority do not reach the expected goal by the end of the reception year. Children with special educational needs make good progress. More able children are insufficiently challenged and make less than expected progress. Teaching overall is good. A variety of activities support the development of counting, comparing and matching skills. When sorting teddy bears by colour and size, the skilful questioning by the teacher helped children to learn, and use, appropriate mathematical vocabulary. Children's counting skills are developed through practical activities. Most count confidently to ten, but do not consistently recognise the numerals when written. More able pupils can complete simple addition and subtraction problems. Creative activities are used well to support children's mathematical knowledge and understanding. For example, they sort materials by texture, and develop an understanding of shape and pattern through printing activities.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

62. Teachers plan a good range of topics that interest children in the world around them. Teaching is good, and children's learning is satisfactory. However, most do not reach the expected goals in all aspects of this area of learning, by the end of their reception year. The local environment is used well to support learning. Photographs are used

effectively after a class walk, to help children talk about and identify features in their locality. Children are encouraged to use their senses to observe and investigate natural and made objects. For example, when handling horse-chestnuts they talk about how they look, feel and smell. Children learn about the life-cycle of frogs, and make books about mini-beasts. They build models using a range of construction materials. Opportunities for children to build and construct using found materials, and to independently select appropriate resources are limited. Children are learning to use the computer to support their learning. They have access to appropriate programs and most have learned how to control the mouse to select items from the screen. Their understanding of their own culture and beliefs and those of other people, is fostered through stories from around the world and topics taken from the locally agreed syllabus.

### **Physical development**

63. The teaching of physical development is good. Children's attainment is satisfactory and they are likely to reach the expected goals by the end of their reception year. Teachers plan structured physical education lessons that allow children to use their imagination and build on skills they have already learned. Lessons move at a good pace, and expectations are high which results in all children achieving well. Children enjoy these lessons. They respond positively and behave very well. Children move confidently, and have good control over their bodies. They run, hop and change direction. They are aware of space, and each other, and work safely. Children handle a range of tools, construction and malleable materials with appropriate control. Provision for children's outdoor play is unsatisfactory. They do not have access to a secure outdoor play area that can be used without full adult supervision. Consequently, children do not have the opportunity to create and develop their own imaginative play situations in an outdoor setting.

### **Creative development**

64. Attainment in this area of learning is satisfactory, and the majority of children are likely to reach the expected goals by the end of their reception year. Teaching is good because activities are varied and well matched to children's interest and ability levels. Teachers make good use of demonstration, and give clear instructions. Before a painting activity, a very good demonstration of how to mix paint to achieve shades of brown was given. Children then very successfully mixed the paints themselves to complete observational paintings of horse chestnuts. Children explore shape, form and texture in two and three dimensions. They use their senses in a variety of ways and communicate their ideas using a range of materials. When handling natural objects they talk about how they feel and look. They work confidently and imaginatively with malleable materials. Small toys and the role-play area are used to support children's imaginative development. Children join in enthusiastically with songs and rhymes. They co-operate in circle games and learn the actions to songs. For example they learn the song 'Teddy Bears Picnic' and sing and act out 'Wind the bobbin' and 'The Farmer's in his Den'.

## **ENGLISH**

65. In 2001, pupils' standards in national tests were below the national average for seven year olds in reading and well below in writing. Pupils' standards were also well below the national average for 11 year olds. However, results in the national tests at both

key stages have shown signs of improvement over the last four years and particularly in 2001. By the age of seven there is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls. However, by the age of 11, girls have achieved significantly better than boys and few pupils achieved standards above the expected levels. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they are well supported by the special educational needs teacher and learning support assistants. The trend in reading and writing over the past four years show that standards at both key stages are improving. Inspection findings broadly reflect these test results.

66. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is below the levels expected. At Key Stage 1, pupils' build on what they have learned during the Foundation Stage. They learn basic skills such as phonics and handwriting and they write for a variety of purposes. Their knowledge of sounds is not as secure as it should be and this hinders progress in both their spelling and the quality of their writing. Pupils' progress, although satisfactory, could be even better if more were expected of them. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, pupils of all abilities did not write as much as could have been expected of them. There are few pupils working at the nationally expected level in this class and none at the higher level.
67. By the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils can listen carefully to instructions and directions given. In small groups they talk about their learning and listen to each other well. Whilst most are eager to take part in oral discussions and to answer questions, many do not have a wide enough range of vocabulary to successfully develop their answers. At the end Key Stage 2, pupils are encouraged to share what they have learnt with each other at the end of the lesson and most are keen to take part. Pupils do not always speak clearly during this session and this inhibits them from making better progress in speaking. There are too few planned opportunities provided for drama and role play in lessons to enable pupils to make better progress in their speaking skills. However, there is an after school drama club that is well attended by the pupils.
68. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support, make good progress in learning to listen to others and begin to express their ideas in speech. Some pupils at both key stages are admirably supported in their development of language by signing and technical aids.
69. Standards in reading are below the national average and are slowly improving at both key stages. By the age of seven, pupils use a range of reading strategies including whole word recognition, picture and context cues. Pupils' use of phonic skills is underdeveloped and some find it difficult to sound out words. Older pupils are developing strategies for word building and higher attaining pupils can split words up and recognize letter strings at the end of words. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards in reading are below average. Average and below average pupils do have a good grasp of letter sounds but are not able to blend sounds together successfully and so find tackling unfamiliar words difficult. Many pupils have a limited experience of books and authors at both key stages, a difficulty identified in the last inspection. Although a minority of pupils are able to talk confidently about fiction and non-fiction, pupils' study skills are not sufficiently developed. For example, their acquisition of library skills to study independently is not developed systematically as they move through the school. Some of the older pupils however do belong to the local library. Although most pupils can talk briefly about their reading, they lack involvement with the characters and the way books are presented and written. Too few pupils are able

to discuss books written by their favourite author or to discuss different types of books and why they are read.

70. At the end of Key Stage 1 attainment in writing is below expected levels. Standards in writing have been erratic since the last inspection but pupils' achievements are satisfactory at both key stages. They write simple questions and statements and often use capital letters, full stops and question marks correctly. They are beginning to use phonic strategies for spelling but still rely heavily on asking for help or using word lists. Many lack confidence in attempting to word build themselves. Some pupils take insufficient pride in their written work and their books are untidy.
71. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils can use a wide range of writing including poems, accounts, instructions, newspaper reports and note taking. All classes produce interesting writing in class published books covering a wide variety of different topics. For example, poems we enjoy, books about visits to places of interest in the local area and books giving pupils' own version of traditional tales. Their sentence structure is often limited, for example, the range of connectives used is too narrow despite teachers' marking pointing this out for pupils. An analysis of pupils' previously completed work shows that, although teachers place an appropriate emphasis on extending pupils' vocabulary, they have insufficient opportunities to write imaginatively or extensively and the work of higher attaining pupils sometimes lacks depth. This is evident in some of the class anthologies.
72. Pupils are applying their literacy skills across the subjects of the curriculum but more could be done. For example in a Year 4 lesson, pupils consider factual writing about the sinking of the Mary Rose, and in a Year 5 lesson, link work on a visit to Coldharbour Mill with that of writing a recount of a personal experience. In a Year 3 religious education lesson, the pupils consolidated their speaking skills by discussing the beliefs and practices of another faith community.
73. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by classroom assistants and their teachers. They ensure that these pupils have full access to the curriculum where possible and that targets in their individual education plans are addressed. Good teamwork ensures that all teachers and support staff know what they want these pupils to learn. As a result, they make good progress.
74. The school has sensibly concentrated its efforts on implementing the National Literacy Strategy effectively so that teachers are now confident in their use of the strategy. Their planning is satisfactory, although some lessons lack sufficient challenge where teachers do not take account of pupils' different abilities and what they are capable of achieving. Learning objectives for lessons are clear and understood by pupils and there is a sense of purpose to lessons.
75. Big books or extracts from books are used well by most teachers. This is evident in most lessons where pupils share the big book with the teacher and are given an opportunity to apply their knowledge of word and sentence level work to the text. This was illustrated in a Year 3 lesson where pupils were asked to express their views about a text giving reasons to support their viewpoint.
76. Teaching is satisfactory overall with some good features in Years 1, 3 and 6. In the good lessons, teachers demonstrate writing sentences and scribe pupils' contributions. In these better lessons, teachers tell pupils exactly what they need to do, using statements such as "I am looking for the interesting dialogue.... or to see if

you are able to use paragraphs in the report...". Pupils rise to the challenge, especially when lessons are well paced and both teacher and pupil highlight new learning at the end of the session. The results of less effective teaching are seen in workbooks and folders containing low-level activities that do not show sufficient challenge or a match of task to the ability of the pupil. On the few occasions when teaching is unsatisfactory, teachers are not clear about the lesson's focus and the pace is slow because there are frequent stops to comment on pupils' inattention, interrupting the flow of the lesson. Teachers plan conscientiously and many make assessments about what pupils have learnt and the difficulties they have encountered to plan the next lesson or series of lessons. This is an improvement since the last inspection. However, teachers sometimes do not use plenary sessions effectively at the end of lessons to consolidate what pupils have learned. Marking quality varies and some is good. The best is effective because it guides pupils on ways of improving but some teachers' marking tends to focus mainly on giving praise.

77. The majority of pupils at both key stages are interested in their work and want to please their teachers. Relationships between pupils and teachers and other adults are good. All adults encourage pupils 'to have a go' and not to fear mistakes. At the start of the day and during registration time, pupils settle well to reading activities, choosing books from class libraries to read independently or to the teacher or other adults.
78. For most of this year and during the inspection, assistant headteachers have shared the role of English co-ordinator in her absence and a new co-ordinator is now being appointed. During this period, new initiatives in the literacy strategy have been introduced and some progress made. Local education advisory staff, who have assisted in introducing new initiatives to the school, have observed teachers in the classroom using the strategy. However, the monitoring of literacy across the school remains a weakness. The impact of literacy support in the school is not being evaluated sufficiently to guide its development. In particular, assessments of pupils' achievements, for example, in reading and writing, are not used sufficiently to guide teachers' planning and expectations or to shape the development of the subject.
79. The school is well resourced for English; an improvement since the last inspection. Class libraries are well stocked with attractive books both fiction and non-fiction. There are plenty of big books for both key stages and these are attractively displayed and stored for easy access in the library. The reading scheme has been updated and the pupils enjoy reading these books. Pupils are encouraged to take books home and parents hear their children read regularly. The use of information and communication technology to support the teaching of literacy remains limited. Computers are used for group and independent work in some classes but this is at a low level.

## **MATHEMATICS**

80. Results in the 2001 national tests for seven and 11 year olds show that attainment in mathematics is well below that found nationally. They have improved over the last four years, especially this year, but they are still not as high as they could be, particularly for higher attaining pupils. This pattern is similar to that found in the last inspection. Pupils in many classes work within appropriate levels outlined in the National Numeracy Strategy but too often their knowledge and recall of basic number facts slows their progress. Teachers are aware of this deficiency and they continue to

work hard to improve. Sometimes, however, they concentrate on ensuring that pupils record their work instead of giving them opportunities to consolidate their understanding of number work through other activities such as games.

81. There is a wide range of abilities within Key Stage 1. Some younger pupils are only able to count to ten and unable to recognise the associated numbers, whilst others in the same age group are able to add and subtract up to ten. By the age of seven many pupils are subtracting tens and units, using coins to make amounts, telling the time and measuring using centimetres. The attainment of this age group is below that expected nationally.
82. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are grouped according to their ability. Some classes have developed their knowledge and skills to handle work in line with most pupils of the same age and they achieve appropriately. The best practice in challenging pupils is in Year 6, by the mathematics co-ordinator who is a leading mathematics teacher. However, in some classes, higher attaining pupils are not challenged enough in lessons because teachers do not use all the information they have about these pupils to set high enough expectations of them.
83. In one lesson with Year 6 pupils, the work on converting improper to mixed fractions was appropriate but too many were unable to recall tables facts quickly and this hindered their progress. Some pupils also have limited mathematical vocabulary and, therefore, they lack the confidence to explain what they have done or how they carried out a mathematical operation. In one mixed Year 3 and 4 class pupils were able to add two amounts of money but they did not fully understand the concept of giving change. Teachers provide too few opportunities for pupils to explore numeracy in other subjects. In some classes computers are used to support mathematics, often to consolidate previous learning. For example, in one Year 6 lesson, two pupils use a program on equal fractions during the lesson on mixed fractions.
84. Most pupils are enthusiastic about mathematics, they settle quickly at the start of the lesson. Many teachers use effective strategies to settle pupils by giving them an activity to consolidate basic skills. In all lessons, the pupils' interest and concentration ensure that they produce a suitable quantity of work.
85. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory throughout the school, better than at the last inspection. There are examples of good and very good teaching of younger pupils in Key Stage 2, Year 6 and groups of pupils with special educational needs. All lessons have a clear structure and planning is effective in setting out explicit learning intentions. In the best lessons these objectives are shared with pupils and previous learning is recalled and built on. In all lessons teachers and support staff work well together, often sharing the teaching during the main activity. This was particularly effective in mixed Year 3 and 4 lessons where pupils in the two age groups had different activities and the teaching was led either by the teacher or learning support assistant, ensuring that effective learning took place. On many occasions support staff are particularly focused on pupils with learning and behavioural difficulties. In these circumstances the pupils achieve well. However, not all pupils who need it are supported in this way and sometimes their behaviour is inappropriate, affecting their progress. In the best lessons, questioning is clearly used to challenge pupils' thinking and develop their learning. This is not apparent in all lessons and sometimes the achievement of a small number of higher attaining pupils is not as good as it could be.

86. The mathematical curriculum is broad and balanced, covering all areas within the national strategy. This is an improvement since the last inspection when too much emphasis was placed on number work. There are few stimulating mathematics displays around the school. The co-ordinator has held the post for two years. Along with colleagues from the local education authority, she has effectively supported the introduction of the national strategy. Improvements in teaching have been sustained through careful monitoring. This monitoring now needs to focus more closely on pupils' achievements to help shape improvements, especially for higher attaining pupils.

## SCIENCE

87. The national test results for 11 year old pupils in 2000 were low compared to standards nationally but standards improved significantly in 2001, although they were still well below the national average. In the standards seen during the inspection, this improvement has been maintained. Pupils' achievements in their developing scientific knowledge and understanding are satisfactory in both key stages. However, pupils' investigative skills are underdeveloped because they have insufficient opportunities to make decisions for themselves in planning and carrying out investigations and because these skills are not developed systematically as pupils mature.
88. By the age of seven, pupils have an appropriate knowledge and understanding of electricity. They are able to sort materials by properties using everyday terms such as 'stretchy', 'hard' etc. They know the difference between a 'push' and a 'pull' in the work on forces. Pupils can identify parts of flowering plants such as leaves, stems and roots, labelling their drawings correctly. Pupils in a Year 1 lesson are beginning to use scientific vocabulary appropriately in exploring their sense of touch. They ask whether the hidden object is 'hard', 'slippery' etc. However, some worksheets are too closed in their questions so that pupils' are rather constrained in writing about what they have found out.
89. By the age of 11, pupils know about some properties of electrical circuits and are able to draw circuit diagrams to represent their work. They know more about the parts of the flower where the words 'stamen', 'sepal' and 'pistil' are used in the labelling of accurately drawn diagrams. Pupils record their work in a variety of ways but there is too much emphasis placed on copying of notes that restrict pupils' ability to convey what they have learned for themselves. The work of higher attaining pupils is well presented whilst that of average and below average attaining pupils is usually neat and legible. However, pupils rarely use information and communication technology to communicate information and they do not use sensors linked to computers to gather and process information from experiments. Pupils observe, record and draw conclusions from experiments but their procedural skills in deciding on the variables to alter, keep the same, and measure, are underdeveloped.
90. Teaching is satisfactory overall in both key stages and there is some good teaching. The more effective teaching is founded on good subject knowledge, a brisk pace in lessons, high expectations of pupils and effective use of resources including the support staff. In a Year 2 lesson about the importance of exercise to staying healthy, teaching assistants effectively supported groups of pupils with special educational needs with relevant questions and encouragement to complete tasks with growing independence. Year 3 pupils enthusiastically posed questions of their own about aspects of the human body, modelled on good examples provided by their teacher.

The teacher used praise and guidance well to encourage and support different groups of pupils. In a Year 6 lesson, a group of pupils investigated shadows thrown when a card puppet was placed between a light source and a screen. Their teacher made good use of probing questions to promote and consolidate pupils' learning and skilfully reorganised the task to clarify pupils' thinking about how to measure accurately. She also identified and took account of weaknesses in pupils' ability to record accurately.

91. Where teaching is less effective, tasks are undemanding, for example, colouring in illustrations of the human eye and direct copying of text that pupils do not understand fully. Pupils sometimes make insufficient progress in their enquiry skills where the question being investigated has not been sufficiently clarified with pupils and misconceptions have not been addressed, for example, when Year 5 pupils investigated what affects the evaporation of water under different conditions, many were unsure of the variable being altered by putting the water in different locations. Although the majority of science work is marked, teachers provide insufficient constructive feedback about how pupils' learning can be improved.
92. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and is implementing a nationally available scheme of work throughout the school. Her monitoring role is underdeveloped. There are few opportunities to monitor teaching and little focus on the assessment of pupils' standards to guide developments in the subject. While pupils' knowledge and understanding are developing well, too little structure is provided for teaching pupils enquiry skills as they move through the school, especially in manipulating and controlling variables to devise a fair test. Resources for the delivery of the National Curriculum continue to be adequate.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

93. On the basis of work seen in lessons, samples of work and displays around the school standards overall are in line with those expected nationally for pupils aged seven and 11. Since the last inspection the overall provision has been improved and standards have been maintained. The range of art and design activities within aspects of the subject has been expanded and the profile of the subject has been raised. Overall, pupils' achievement is good in both key stages.
94. By the age of seven, pupils are able to make observational drawings to a good standard. Year 1 pupils use digital camera images as a stimulus for self-portraits. They pay close attention to the shape of their faces and the position of the main features. When studying the work of Van Gogh, Year 2 pupils make drawings of chairs using pastel and crayon. They show a developing awareness of form, proportion and perspective. Pupils demonstrate a developing ability to mix their own colours when painting. They use a range of printing methods and media, and work with a variety of collage materials.
95. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are confident when mixing and applying paint for a range of purposes. They are particularly skilled in the use of watercolours. Year 6 pupils use their skills well to produce paintings of 'water bearers' after studying paintings of African life by Dina Cuthbertson. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils continue to develop their skills in observational drawing. They draw natural and man-made objects, paying increasing attention to shape, form and detail. They begin to use shading effectively to improve and enhance the quality of their work. Pupils use textiles for weaving and to create pictures. They study textiles and buildings to produce designs

which they complete using pastels and wax resist. They are becoming confident in the use of computer programs to design their own pictures. Opportunities for pupils to work in three dimensions are limited.

96. Pupils throughout the school enjoy art and design lessons. They talk enthusiastically about their work and concentrate well. They work hard in lessons. They use a range of media with care and handle all tools with increasing skill. They are proud of their work and the subject makes a good contribution to the raising of pupils' self-esteem, and the development of their social skills.
97. Good use is made of visits and visiting artists to enhance pupils' experiences. The recently held 'Arts Week' involving the whole school, achieved a great deal in raising the profile of the creative curriculum and showing what pupils can achieve. Pupils and staff had the opportunity to work with a very wide range of materials and the completed pieces are of good quality. All pupils' work is valued and the displays around the school contribute much to the creation of a stimulating learning environment.
98. The teaching of art is satisfactory overall with some good features. Teachers are knowledgeable and give clear guidance to pupils. They work with individuals and small groups of pupils making suggestions as to how they might improve their work. While pupils are beginning to learn to critically appraise the work of famous artists, they have not yet developed the skills of appraising their own work or the work of other pupils. The implementation of a new scheme of work is ensuring that teachers plan lessons that enable pupils to systematically develop their skills. Assessment in art is underdeveloped as a tool to aid teachers' planning. Art is used very effectively to support other areas of the curriculum. Pupils in Year 5 made sketches of the Victorian buildings in Taunton to support their work in history. Links to work in geography resulted in the production of pieces of batik and watercolour paintings of Lyme Regis. Pupils use printing blocks to support their work on symmetry in mathematics.
99. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and provides good leadership. She has a clear vision for the development of the subject. She has successfully raised the profile of the subject across the school and provides effective support for other teachers. The monitoring of art across the school, and the assessment of pupils' work by teachers to inform their planning are areas for improvement. Resources for art and design are good and are used effectively.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

100. By the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils' standards are satisfactory and many achieve well overall. While pupils' skills in joining and making products are developing well, their skills of evaluation are underdeveloped by the end of Key Stage 2 and they rarely use information and communication technology in the subject.
101. At Key Stage 1, pupils learn to cut, shape and assemble products in a variety of ways, for example, when they construct wheeled vehicles for different purposes such as chariots and carts to investigate axles and to practise joining and cutting. The best examples seen closely resemble intentions and are securely assembled. Design and make activities are often linked well with other subjects such as science as when pupils in Year 2 made a sports figure with hinged joints as part of a theme on healthy

living and fitness. Pupils used split pins and card to make figures that reflected their plans, and talked about features of their finished work.

102. At Key Stage 2, pupils develop their skills in designing and making further through a stimulating range of activities. For example, Year 3 pupils design and make picture frames and Year 4 pupils disassemble various designs of torch before making their own lamps. The best designs are imaginative and take account of factors such as the easy change of batteries and access to switches. In one very good lesson, Year 3 pupils carried out initial designs to a good standard for their own picture frames. Their teacher provided a very good range of finished products to examine and to stimulate ideas that pupils translated into thoughtful designs of their own. Pupils compared their initial attempts to see which stood up the best and they considered other factors such as shape and access to the picture. They constantly evaluated their ideas and compared them to others in the class because their teacher provided clear guidance and stimulated discussion in a very well conducted plenary at the end of the lesson.
103. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 model artefacts such as Greek pots and masks well as part of their history studies and Year 6 pupils have made a model of an Almshouse to a good standard from an 1890 picture. A range of materials and joining techniques are evident. Year 5 and 6 pupils have also made designs for outdoor play frames for the school's playground. The best examples are very thoughtful, taking account of the needs of physically disabled pupils' access well. While pupils are acquiring skills in designing and using tools safely to cut and assemble finished products, their skills in evaluating their work as they go along are insufficiently built on and developed by the end of Key Stage 2 because teachers do not challenge pupils sufficiently in their questioning about this skill. This affects the progress of higher attaining pupils particularly. For example, Year 5 pupils making their own paper and card from different raw materials, learn about the processes well but do not evaluate aspects such as paper quality in relation to the product's likely uses or the value of recycling the raw materials.
104. Pupils enjoy design and technology activities. They co-operate well in grouped activities, discuss and exchange ideas readily and are keen to improve their designs. They work sensibly and safely with tools and consider others around them as they work. Relationships with teachers and other pupils are good and pupils are keen to talk about their work.
105. Insufficient teaching was seen to make a rounded judgement, but that which was seen is at least satisfactory and the best, in Year 3 by the co-ordinator, is very good. Lessons have clear objectives and resources are planned for well. Teachers use learning support assistants effectively so that pupils with special educational needs progress well. However, lesson plans sometimes do not take sufficient account of the needs of higher attaining pupils, even though guidance is provided in the published scheme. Opportunities to use information and communication technology in design and technology are also missed.
106. Progress on the main issues in the last inspection report is satisfactory. There is now an effective scheme of work, pupils' planning and making skills have improved and access to resources for teaching food technology are better. The co-ordinator is new but has already made a very positive impact on the subject. She is well qualified, and is providing a clear educational direction for the subject through her thorough audit of the school's current provision and additional guidance for teaching in each year. However, pupils' achievements are not yet assessed sufficiently to guide teachers'

planning or to help shape the development of the subject and its impact on standards. Long and medium-term curriculum plans, based on a national scheme, are being implemented well although there are still some gaps that the co-ordinator is addressing. For example, there is insufficient guidance provided on how pupils' skills in making and in evaluating should develop as they move from year to year. Resources are adequate, but they require linking in more closely to teaching units to help teachers in their planning.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

107. Pupils' achievement in geography is broadly satisfactory, although the number of examples seen is limited. Pupils' work from last year was seen and two Year 6 lessons observed.
108. Comparisons with the pupils' immediate locality are successfully explored. The pupils have carried out field work comparing Taunton with Glastonbury and exploring rivers, using appropriate vocabulary such as 'current', 'meander' and 'estuary'. Pupils in Year 6 are comparing their home locality with Kenya. The two lessons observed on this subject made use of video and photographs to extend the pupils' use of vocabulary and questioning skills. Both lessons were planned satisfactorily. The production of the finished outcome is sometimes hindered by unsatisfactory presentation and limited literacy skills. The school has recognised the need to develop pupils' progress in mapping skills; this was a weakness at the time of the last inspection and remains so.
109. There are two co-ordinators who share responsibility for both geography and history. They work well as a team and are enthusiastic about their roles. The school has adopted a nationally available scheme of work effectively. Although this sets out the work to be covered by pupils, insufficient assessments are carried out to enable the co-ordinators to understand strengths and weakness in pupils' achievements to guide developments. Information and communication technology still contributes too little to the subject.
110. Progress since the last inspection has been slow but this is a result of the emphasis placed by the school on literacy and numeracy.

## **HISTORY**

111. There were no opportunities to observe history lessons at Key Stage 1 during the inspection. There was also insufficient evidence from scrutiny of pupils' past and present work to enable an overall judgement on pupils' attainment and achievements.
112. Attainment by the age of 11 is broadly in line with that expected nationally. Overall, pupils' achievements are satisfactory but pupils' skills in historical enquiry are developing well because teachers are placing more emphasis on pupils acquiring these skills. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. Standards at Key Stage 2 are better now than they were at the time of the last inspection. This is largely due to developments in planning the curriculum with an effective scheme of work now in place.

113. By the age of 11, pupils have developed their ideas and interpretations of the past as they study a range of periods in time. They understand the impact that the past has had upon the present day and acquire a range of historical vocabulary. Pupils also know how to use different sources of evidence to learn about change and continuity in their own locality, in Britain and in other parts of the world.
114. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall at Key Stage 2. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement at Key Stage 1. In the better teaching, teachers plan interesting contexts for lessons and stimulating activities that engage and motivate pupils well. Some good teaching in Year 5, provided pupils with rich opportunities to study information about the locality during Victorian times and to look at differences and similarities between then and the present day. The use of census materials provided, enabled the pupils to explore and exchange ideas with each other. In Year 3, pupils study aspects of World War II. An effective use of photographs and discussion with the teacher helped pupils to understand what it was really like to be an evacuee. Pupils with special educational needs made good progress, for example, in selecting items to put in a suitcase for evacuation and were well supported by the teaching assistant.
115. Teachers have a sound understanding of the subject. For example, they place a strong emphasis on pupils' learning through investigation and looking at sources of information. However, pupils are given too few opportunities to organise their own work and record their findings for themselves so that their literacy and study skills are practised.
116. The school has adopted a nationally available scheme of work and has adjusted the curriculum content to focus more on the development of historical skills. Pupils' achievements in history are not yet assessed. The subject makes a valuable contribution to the pupils' cultural development through a range of experiences and visits. For example, a study unit on Victorians involved Year 5 pupils taking part in a 'washing day' at a local museum. The use of information and communication technology by pupils to research information, develop their knowledge of history and communicate what they have learned from a range of sources is underdeveloped.
117. The co-ordinators are enthusiastic and keen to develop the subject. Teachers' plans are monitored informally in phase meetings but the co-ordinators have not yet monitored standards of pupils' work to help shape developments in the subject.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

118. By the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils reach standards below those expected nationally. While pupils in both key stages are developing their skills in using computers and other information technology systems, they are not yet achieving enough. Neither are they using information and communication technology sufficiently in many subjects to aid their learning.
119. At Key Stage 1, pupils know that computers and other systems such as video and tapes can store information and they learn about their use in everyday situations. They develop their skills in using a mouse and keyboard, and in using basic commands to store and retrieve information. They manipulate text and images to develop and show their ideas. For example, a Year 1 class used a graphics programme to dress a teddy in different clothing. At the same time, a learning

support assistant helped dress a real teddy to bring out the idea of modelling and designing with the computer. Pupils also use a digital camera to create self-portraits, comparing images and using mirrors to check features such as eye colour. Year 2 pupils start to combine text with images when designing a jumper using a graphics application.

120. At Key Stage 2, pupils in Years 3 and 4 can programme devices to move in a sequence of directions. They are beginning to take account of audience when presenting information and images, for example, when creating celebration cards or writing stories and poems. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 store and process numerical information in a spreadsheet to a satisfactory standard; for example, to work out the price of meals having entered the costs of a number of possibilities in a menu and using simple formulas to arrive at a total cost. Pupils also use the internet and other sources to gather information; for example, in their history. They progress in their skills using text and images to convey their ideas, but many pupils do not take sufficient account of their intended audience when deciding how best to communicate information.
121. The pace of pupils' acquisition of skills in information and communication technology is being constrained by their limited access to computers in classrooms to practise new skills and develop their ideas. There are also a few gaps in the school's provision. For example, pupils cannot yet use sensors to gather information such as temperature and light levels in the course of their science investigations.
122. Pupils' use of information and communication technology in subjects is insufficient both in frequency and range. They write stories, newsletters and poems for display in English and are improving their numeracy skills. They use graphics applications to create and modify images for art and use the computer to aid composition in music. However, there is insufficient use made in some other subjects such as in design and technology and science, partly through a lack of resources and partly through gaps in teachers' training.
123. Insufficient lessons were seen for a rounded judgement on the quality of teaching to be made. However, the three lessons seen were at least satisfactory. Teachers demonstrated skills and techniques confidently with the class and successfully engaged many pupils in discussion about what to do next, for example; in modelling a picture by Matisse in a Year 6 class. While some teachers are confident in their own skills, others require more training, particularly in making the best use of information and communication technology to raise standards across the various subjects of the curriculum.
124. The co-ordinator is aware of strengths and weaknesses in the subject and improvements have been made in the school's provision since the last inspection. There are still gaps in the curriculum, for example, in using sensors for science investigations. The co-ordinator has led the introduction of a nationally available scheme of work, but there is still work to be done in linking in the school's available software to adapt and exemplify each unit. The action plan cites training needs for teachers and support staff and the school recognises the need to improve access to computers and increase their number to improve pupils' skills. Pupils' achievements are not yet formally assessed to guide their progress or to help shape the direction of development in the subject and to raise standards. The recent acquisition of networked computers in some classrooms has already had a very positive impact on

standards. However, limited access to technical help when faults occur occasionally slows the pace of work and undermines teachers' confidence.

## **MUSIC**

125. Pupils throughout the school attain the standards expected for their age at the end of both key stages and enjoy their music making activities. The school has done much to improve music since the last inspection when attainment was well below national expectations. At both key stages, pupils achieve well in developing their skills in singing and music making. At Key Stage 2 pupils also develop an appreciation of music from other cultures. This is evident when they discuss the pulse and rhythm involved in an African song.
126. Too few lessons were observed during the inspection to make a judgement about the quality of teaching at Key Stage 1. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. The co-ordinator for music is a classroom assistant who is a music specialist. She plans lessons with all teachers and this has enhanced their own subject knowledge. The instruction and demonstration provided, enables all pupils, including those with additional needs, to make satisfactory gains in their knowledge, understanding and skills in the subject. Pupils explore and make sounds using an appropriate range of un-tuned percussion instruments which they play with enthusiasm, either alone or to accompany other pupils' singing. Pupils can describe the sounds they make and successfully compose their own short sequence of music that they practise and repeat.
127. Teachers uses a variety of strategies to develop the pupils' interest and to involve them as much as possible in the playing of instruments. Pupils can identify long and short notes in music and they are encouraged to use musical terms such as rhythm, pulse and dynamics. The majority of pupils join in all activities with interest and commitment, and are well behaved. A small minority, however, find difficulty in maintaining their interest and become restless and inattentive. Pupils enjoy singing in lessons and sing enthusiastically in assemblies. Their teacher leads singing by example but does not necessarily stop to teach points that need addressing such as lack of variation to dynamics or tempo or to improve tonal quality and poor diction by pupils.
128. The school makes good provision for extra-curricular music activities. These include clubs for singing, recorder and music technology held at lunchtime, and a guitar club after school. Pupils from Key Stage 2 are encouraged to attend these clubs. The music technology club has just started and encourages the use of software to make music. Support is provided for parents in meeting the cost of instruments if required. The recorder club enables pupils to learn musical notation and they quickly assimilate these in their discussion.
129. Music is now given a more prominent place in the curriculum. High quality instruments are now available, both tuned and untuned, and the co-ordinator has rightly identified further resources such as a variety of CDs and tapes that need to be purchased. Literacy skills are used to enhance music further. This is evident in a Year 4 class where Handel's Water Music is used to inspire pupils in their painting and poetry. Numeracy skills are also used well in counting the beats in a bar and interpreting pulse and rhythm.

130. The co-ordinator is new to the role and is aware that further work in developing music needs to be done. This includes giving more attention to skills in listening to and appraising different types of music. There is an effective scheme of work for music but pupils' progress from one year to another is not yet assessed sufficiently to enable teachers to build on what pupils have learned.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

131. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. Achievement within lessons is satisfactory overall in both key stages. Since the last inspection the provision for physical education across the school has improved.
132. In a Year 1 gymnastics lesson individual pupils developed a variety of ways to travel on the floor and on apparatus. They made good use of space. During a dance lesson in Year 2, pupils responded well to music and were able to link a sequence of movements, which represented different activities. In a Year 4 games lesson, pupils worked sensibly and safely in pairs, to practise stopping, controlling and passing a ball with their feet. In Year 5 pupils were able to perform sequences of balances on the floor and apparatus. In a Year 6 dance lesson pupils responded well to music, and explored mime to retell an African folk tale. Overall, pupils listen well to instructions, are keen to share their work and closely observe demonstrations. They work hard to improve their performance and skills. The school's provision for swimming at a nearby public pool meets statutory requirements.
133. Pupils enjoy physical education lessons. They take part with enthusiasm and work hard. The majority of pupils co-operate, and work well individually, in pairs and in small groups. Pupils, including those with special educational needs have equal access to the subject.
134. Teaching is satisfactory with some good features. The implementation of a structured, whole-school scheme of work is supporting teachers well in planning a comprehensive programme of activities. All aspects of the physical education curriculum now receive an appropriate time allocation. Teachers' knowledge and confidence have improved since the last inspection and teaching is now consistently satisfactory in both key stages. Lessons are well structured and build on pupils' previous experiences. Learning objectives are clearly communicated to pupils by teachers, activities are purposeful, and resources are used effectively. Lessons proceed at an appropriate pace. Good use is made of pupil demonstrations to enhance learning. Health and safety issues are clearly communicated to pupils who respond positively. However, teachers sometimes do not take sufficient account of pupils' abilities to ensure that activities reflect the range in the class. This results in a lack of challenge for some pupils, particularly the more able.
135. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities that enhances pupils' experiences. Some of the activities are organised by specialists; for example, basketball. These activities make a good contribution to the school's overall provision.
136. The co-ordinator has been in post for a very short time. She has good subject knowledge and provides satisfactory leadership. She has a vision for the development of the subject and has drawn up a short-term action plan. Resources

are adequate and used appropriately. Monitoring standards and the use of these assessments to inform teachers' and the co-ordinator's planning are a priority for the subject.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

137. At the end of both key stages, pupils' knowledge and understanding of religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. During the inspection, insufficient lessons were observed to enable a rounded judgement to be made on the quality of teaching. However, on the basis of the two lessons observed, displays around the school, photographs, teachers' planning and discussion with the co-ordinator, pupils are adjudged to be making satisfactory progress in religious education. At both key stages, pupils are developing an appreciation of caring and respect for one another, friendship and trust. This is supported further by the 'Five Take Cares' policy of the school that encourages pupils to develop a respect for their fellow pupils and for the school as a whole.
138. Pupils are introduced to features of other religions, such as the festival of Diwali in Hinduism and the importance of the Torah in the Jewish religion. They learn that people who share the same religious beliefs have rules that govern their religious practice and lives. Artefacts are used to draw out what pupils already know, for example, about the Jewish faith and discussion with pupils deepens their understanding of this faith. Religious education is also enhanced by visits the pupils make to different places of worship such as the Trinity C of E, Methodist and Roman Catholic churches and Wells Cathedral. Pupils are encouraged to discuss the similarities and differences between these places of worship. The school's involvement in the 'Kathakali Project October 2000' also encourages tolerance of other sacred stories and adds to the school's provision for cultural and religious diversity.
139. Pupils with additional educational needs are fully involved in all religious activities and make good progress. Classroom assistants work hard to address pupils' needs and an appropriate curriculum is provided for these pupils. This was evident in the 'Kathakali Project' photograph album. Teachers make effective links with literacy, reading stories, showing pictures and encouraging pupils to write independently. Workbooks seen were mainly of a satisfactory standard but some pupils do not take sufficient pride in the presentation of their work.
140. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has good subject knowledge. The agreed syllabus has been updated since the last inspection and the co-ordinator has responded well to managing the new framework. An updated policy has been drafted to provide much greater detail about how religious education is taught in the school. It includes the contents of the programme, what is taught, links with other subjects and resources available. It also incorporates the new agreed syllabus and how this is implemented in the school. A simplified version of the new agreed syllabus has been prepared for each key stage by the co-ordinator, in which a rolling programme has been developed to avoid repetition and omissions. The co-ordinator is not yet assessing pupils' standards in the subject to help shape priorities for development but understands the importance of doing so. Resources for the subject are satisfactory and books about other faiths are now available in the library. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

