

INSPECTION REPORT

**NORTON SUB HAMDON CE PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Stoke sub Hamdon

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123818

Headteacher: Mrs K Foot

Reporting inspector: Rachael Andrew
21460

Dates of inspection: 29th April – 2nd May 2002

Inspection number: 198410

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

© Crown copyright 2002

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	New Road Norton sub Hamdon Stoke sub Hamdon Somerset
Postcode:	TA14 6SF
Telephone number:	01935 881815
Fax number:	01935 881920
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Nigel Gann
Date of previous inspection:	November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Rachael Andrew 21460 Registered Inspector	Foundation Stage Equal opportunities English Information and communication technology Music Physical education Religious education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
Ernest Marshall 14141 Lay Inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Derek Pattinson 19120 Team Inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics Science Art and design Design and technology Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

Schoolhaus Limited
Suite 17
BPS Business Centre
Brake Lane
Walesby
Nottinghamshire
NG22 9HQ

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	18
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	19
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	22
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	23
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the village of Norton sub Hamdon, five miles west of Yeovil. It is a smaller than average voluntary controlled Church of England primary school. There are currently 118 boys and girls on roll. They are taught in four mixed-age classes. There are slightly more boys than girls in most of these. Children are admitted to the first class in the September following their fourth birthday. When they start school their attainment is above average. There are also a small number of Year 1 pupils in the first class. Most pupils are drawn from the village and surrounding rural area. Other pupils travel further because their parents have chosen this school. The proportion eligible for free school meals (three per cent) is below the national average. Very few pupils are of minority ethnic backgrounds and all speak English as their first language. There are ten pupils on the school's special educational needs register (below average). All of these have learning difficulties but none of them has a statement. Although the proportion of pupils moving out of the school earlier than Year 6 is not high, most of those who do leave for middle or private schools in Years 3 or 4. Since the departure of the previous headteacher for another headship in 2000, there have been several changes of staff at senior level. A new permanent headteacher and deputy headteacher were appointed in September 2001.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a sound education for its pupils. Good teaching of basic skills ensures that pupils reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the ages of seven and eleven. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. The achievements of pupils up to the end of Year 2 are good. Thereafter pupils' achievements are satisfactory but the pace and challenge of some lessons need improving if all pupils are to do their best. The main strength of the school lies in the way it develops pupils' personal and social skills. The school provides satisfactory value for money and it is well led and managed. There is a clear view of what needs to be done to improve the school further and this is supported well by the governors.

What the school does well

- The recently appointed headteacher is providing strong leadership and has established a new impetus for school improvement.
- Standards in English, mathematics and science are above average as a result of good teaching of basic skills.
- There is a well-established and successful emphasis on pupils' personal development and as a result pupils behave well, take work seriously and help the school to function as a harmonious community.
- The quality of planning and teaching ensures that children in their reception year have a very good start and provides a firm foundation for future learning.
- The range of work that pupils undertake, outside normal lesson time, enriches their learning and broadens their horizons significantly.
- The care and welfare of pupils are taken seriously and individual needs are catered for well.

What could be improved

- The standards reached by pupils in information and communication technology and in religious education at the end of Year 6.
- The pace and challenge in lessons, in subjects other than English and science, and particularly in Years 3 to 6, to ensure that all pupils make the best possible progress.

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 November 1997. Since that time improvement has been satisfactory, although the pace has been slowed by several changes of senior staff. With regard to the areas of the school's work identified as requiring attention at that time, the teaching of art has improved sufficiently to enable pupils to reach the standards expected. Computer resources, planning for the teaching of information and communication technology (ICT) and teachers' computer skills are much better. The monitoring of teaching and

learning is identifying areas for improvement and plans now show more clearly the skills to be taught and what pupils are to learn. The quality of teaching and learning shows satisfactory improvement but there is still further to go. Academic and personal standards have been maintained where they were high. There is a much clearer view of what the school needs to do to improve further and good systems are now in place to achieve success. These are relatively recent and have not yet had time to make a significant impact but the potential for the future is good.

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	A	A*	D	E
Mathematics	A	B	E	E
Science	A	A	A	B

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The table above shows that the standards in national tests for eleven year olds fell considerably in English and mathematics last year. There is no firm evidence to link the fall in standards with the changes in staffing and leadership at that time. In previous years, results had been high in all three subjects and in English in 2000 they had been in the top five per cent nationally. Variations from year to year are to be expected when year groups are small. The school has compelling evidence why results were not as good as usual in 2001. Several pupils in this year group who did well when they were tested in Year 2 subsequently left the school. Of pupils who joined the class later, several were less able or had special educational needs. Until last year, results compared favourably with other similar schools. The school sets targets based on sound knowledge of each year group. This year's targets are challenging and anticipate a substantial rise in standards. Evidence from the inspection indicates that standards in Year 6 this year are above average in all three subjects. There are no significant differences in the achievements of boys and girls or pupils of ethnic minority backgrounds. The trend in school results is below the national trend, which has seen continuous improvement year on year. National results for seven year olds in 2001 were well above average in reading and writing and in the top five per cent in mathematics, comparing favourably with other similar schools. As expected there have been variations from year to year with lower than usual results in the year 2000 but the trend is an improving one. Throughout the school pupils' achievements are good in English and science and satisfactory in mathematics. Mathematics results have tended to be slightly lower over the years and inspection evidence indicates that higher attaining pupils in particular could do better. Pupils write well for many purposes and in different subjects. They have good research skills. Pupils are good at solving number problems in mathematics. They develop good investigative skills in science. Pupils in Year 6 do not reach the standards expected by Somerset's religious education syllabus. Their understanding of much of the work is superficial as they do not have enough time to cover each topic in sufficient depth. Although pupils in Year 6 are mastering ICT skills well, standards remain below those expected for the age group. There are gaps in their knowledge and understanding from earlier years. Pupils achieve above average standards in singing and playing instruments. The school is known for its sporting achievements. Children's achievements in the reception class are good. Most are on course to meet the early learning goals and many will exceed them. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of the support they receive.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are keen to learn and show interest in all the school has to offer. They accept responsibilities happily.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils respect the school rules, work quietly and move about sensibly. Older pupils take care of younger ones at lunch and playtimes.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils respond well to the relationships built up with them by the staff. Boys and girls of all ages and backgrounds get on well together. By the end of Year 6 they feel confident about moving on to the next school.
Attendance	Very good, and much higher than the national average. Pupils like school and want to be there.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

The quality of teaching in the reception class ensures that children at the Foundation Stage make a very good start to their school lives, become enthusiastic learners and build firm foundations for the next stage. In Years 1 to 6, the teaching of English is good. Basic skills of reading and writing are taught thoroughly and systematically so pupils make good gains in learning from the start. These skills continue to develop well throughout the school. As a result pupils are able to gain information readily from reference books and read widely. They learn to structure their writing carefully and choose vocabulary that brings it to life so that they can write effectively for a wide range of purposes. Numeracy skills are also taught well from the start. Pupils learn to use a range of methods for calculating and become adept at recalling number facts. As pupils get older, the work in mathematics is not always sufficiently demanding. Pupils do not always move on to the next steps fast enough or make the progress they should. Teaching in science is good and pupils' understanding develops well because of the quality of the investigative work that they carry out. Pupils' learning in religious education is not good enough to enable them to reach the expected standards by the end of Year 6 as not enough time is given to enable pupils to cover the work in sufficient depth. The school caters well for the different needs of pupils in English, mathematics and science, and pupils with special educational needs receive the support they need to make good progress. In a few lessons, particularly in Years 3 to 6, teachers do not make it clear what pupils are expected to learn and the pace of work is too slow to enable good progress to be maintained. Teachers establish good relationships with their pupils and maintain an atmosphere where pupils of different backgrounds and aptitudes want to learn and do their best.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good for children in the Foundation Stage – well planned provision for all areas of learning. Satisfactory elsewhere. In a few lessons, where several subjects are linked together, it is not always clear what pupils are learning. The amount of time given to religious education is not enough to enable pupils to reach the standards expected at the end of Year 6.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Work is matched carefully to pupils' needs. Additional support is used well to make sure that pupils make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good. Each aspect is promoted well and shows in pupils' positive attitudes and very good relationships. There are good opportunities for pupils to reflect on important issues, to work together in different groupings and situations and to broaden their cultural horizons.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. There is a systematic approach to pupils' health, well-being and safety. Pupils' personal development and academic progress are followed carefully.

The school has established very strong links with parents and works closely with them to support pupils' learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher has a clear vision for the future development of the school and has established rigorous procedures to bring this about. She is supported well by her deputy who shares her aims and ideals and has complementary expertise. Subject leaders are becoming more effective managers.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governors are well led and strongly supportive of the lead taken by the headteacher towards school improvement. There are many recent appointments and growing expertise but there is further work to be done to procedures to ensure that statutory requirements are met in full. This is in hand.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good systems are now in place to ensure that the school monitors and evaluates planning, teaching, learning and pupils' work. Information from tests is analysed carefully.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses financial resources well to support school improvement. Support staff are deployed well to promote the learning of specific groups of pupils.

The school has an adequate number of teachers and support staff to teach the curriculum required by law. The accommodation is good and learning resources are sufficient and of good quality. When the school considers how well it is doing, it uses the principles of best value to a satisfactory extent.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children like school and behave well.• The teaching is good and children make good progress and behave well.• The school expects children to work hard and helps them to become mature and responsible.• Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school.• The school is well led and managed.• The school works closely with parents and keeps them well informed about how their children are getting on.• The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There were no areas where significant numbers of parents expressed dissatisfaction.

The inspection team is in broad agreement with parents' positive views.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. When children start school in the reception class, their attainments are above average and many of them have well-developed social skills. As a result of the quality of the teaching programme in the reception class, the children make very good gains in speaking and reading. There is a strong emphasis on conversation, questioning, drama and story telling that develops children's skills particularly well. The teacher also teaches letter sounds thoroughly and helps children to learn the most frequently used words by sight. The children's mathematical skills also develop very well. There are many opportunities to practise counting and ordering numbers, to solve simple problems and to learn about different shapes. Mathematical language is used in classroom talk so that children soon use words such as, 'heavier', 'wider', 'corner' and 'side' confidently. Good gains are made in writing, although not quite as rapidly as in reading because there are fewer opportunities for children to practise their skills. The children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them, including links with the early stages of the National Curriculum for science, geography and history, develop well and the work provides a firm foundation for work in the next class. The children are on course to reach the early learning goals at the end of the reception year in all the areas of learning. Many children will exceed them, particularly in social development, speaking, reading and mathematics.
2. Standards in English, mathematics and science in Year 2 are above average. A few pupils reach particularly high standards in English. Pupils continue to achieve well, although a few higher attaining pupils could do better in number work in mathematics. The standards observed during the inspection reflect the last year's national test results and teachers' assessments to an extent, although this year's are not likely to be quite as high as last year, when there was a particularly strong year group, now in Year 3. Standards have improved steadily over several years and are better than at the time of the last inspection. There are no significant differences in the achievements of boys and girls.
3. Almost all the current Year 2 pupils read fluently enough to enjoy reading to themselves and to gain information from simple reference books. They write well enough to describe their experiences and record ideas in different subjects. A few pupils read with great confidence and expression and their writing uses adventurous vocabulary. Most pupils calculate accurately with numbers up to 100, recall number facts and interpret information in graphs and charts. In science, pupils gain a good understanding of the way forces operate through well-planned investigations and make good gains in knowledge in other areas of science.
4. Standards in Year 6 are also above average in English, mathematics and science. The standards seen during the inspection in pupils' completed work and in lessons is much better than that indicated by last year's national test results for eleven year olds in English and mathematics and similar in science. The school has compelling evidence that explains why last year's results were much worse than usual. The unusually high level of pupil mobility in that year was the biggest factor. Many pupils who did well in Year 2 tests subsequently left the school and others who joined later were not as able. There is no other evidence to explain the differences. The trend in standards up to 2001 was below the national trend. Although in the past boys have done better than girls there is no evidence that this is the case this year. The school ensures that girls take an active part in science and mathematics lessons and that boys' reading preferences are catered for, thus minimising the differences that are found in most schools. Pupils achieve well in English and science. In mathematics, pupils' achievements are satisfactory. They are not as good as in English or science and many could do better.

5. This year's eleven year olds write well for a wide range of purposes. The amount of writing completed during the year is impressive and indicates a good work rate. The way pupils use vocabulary and structure and punctuate their writing, improves substantially, indicating good progress. Pupils whose writing and presentation were poor at the beginning of the year are now writing much more neatly. A few higher attaining pupils write with humour and flair and have developed a distinctive style. Pupils read fluently and expressively. Even lower attaining pupils cope confidently with specialist vocabulary. The most able discuss and categorise their reading diet with understanding, including articles in newspapers and poetry. Pupils' research skills are good so that they can access reference material. Their achievements in mathematics, although sound, are not as good as in English or science and progress through the key stage could be better. The work is not always sufficiently challenging and the pace of lessons or parts of lessons is sometimes slow. This is not the case in science where pupils' achievements are good. There is demanding investigative work in Years 3 to 6 that develops pupils' understanding well and supports good progress through the key stage.
6. In ICT, pupils learn computer skills effectively and are on course to meet the expected standards by the end of Year 2. Older pupils make good gains in learning skills but there are significant gaps in the experiences that they should have received in earlier years and, as a result, their standards are below what is expected of eleven year olds. Pupils' achievements are good.
7. In religious education pupils in Year 2 reach the standards expected by the Somerset Agreed Syllabus but in Year 6 standards fall below what is expected. Not enough time is given to teaching to ensure that pupils study each area in sufficient depth and, as a result, their learning is sketchy. The achievements of pupils in Years 1 and 2 are satisfactory. Most pupils could do better in Years 3 to 6.
8. In all other subjects the standards are broadly in line with what is expected at both seven and eleven. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory. There is some high quality pencil drawing in art at Key Stage 2 and pupils reach high standards in singing and percussion work in music. A few pupils in Years 5 and 6 reach above average standards in instrumental playing as a result of individual and small group work with visiting specialists. Many sing well. The school has a reputation for prowess in sport and a few team game players and swimmers reach particularly high standards. They have gained from work in after-school clubs and other coaching schemes.
9. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them. This is because teachers ensure that most work is carefully matched to their needs and they receive regular help and high levels of commitment from skilled support staff and parent helpers.
10. The school sets targets for pupils at the end of Year 6 based on previous test and assessment information. Published targets indicate the proportion of pupils expected to reach level 4. These are 88 per cent in English and 83 per cent in mathematics. They are sufficiently challenging, much higher than those set last year and reflect a good knowledge of the year group. Pupils are on target to achieve them.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils' attitudes and values are good. Their personal development and relationships are very good.
12. Children in the Foundation Stage enjoy coming to school and take full part in the stimulating activities and lessons provided. They work well together and with older pupils in the class. In the rest of the school, pupils are keen to learn, show an interest in lessons and try hard to please the teaching staff. Their positive attitudes and good behaviour, developed in the early

years, are strengths of the school and continue up through the age groups. The attitudes and behaviour reflect the school's ethos and the way in which the school promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural dimensions of pupils' personal development. The majority of parents confirm their children's liking for school. They feel the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. Pupils work well together in pairs or groups as required and willingly help each other. The very good personal relationships demonstrated between pupils also exist between pupils and the staff, resulting in a warm and friendly community.

13. Pupils respond well to the good provision the school makes for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As a result their personal development is very good. Pupils have a good understanding of the need for rules to help a community to run smoothly and to protect more vulnerable members. They are keen to share their ideas about how to improve the life of the school. Pupils show respect for the equipment and facilities provided. When they represent their school in sporting and other events, they do so with a sense of pride. They express their own feelings confidently and show a mature awareness of the effect of their actions on the feelings of others. Pupils in Year 6 feel confident about moving on to the next school and well prepared for the changes this will bring to their lives. They have a growing understanding of their own culture and of the richness and diversity of other cultures.
14. Pupils are keen to engage visiting adults in conversation and their lively discussions show that, as they get older, they develop an appreciation of the opinions and views of others. They show a good level of initiative and personal responsibility by volunteering for a variety of additional tasks such as register monitors, tidying the library, setting up equipment and organising physical education apparatus. The older pupils organise and operate their own charity sales and other activities such as car washing in the school car park to raise funds. The pupils select their own charity and have given support to a good range of local, national and international good causes. They also raise funds to help meet the transport costs incurred in off-site visits.
15. Pupils with special educational needs have a positive attitude to their work. They are keen to make progress, eager to please and enjoy succeeding. They are well behaved and respond well to the encouragement they receive. This helps to boost their confidence and enables them to take pride in their achievements.
16. Pupils' behaviour is good. Incidents of inappropriate behaviour in class are very few and tend to occur only when teaching fails to hold pupils' full attention. The school rules and expectations are simple and well understood by the pupils. The staff set good examples by their own conduct and their consistent and fair approach to behaviour management. Pupils move about the school between lessons and at lunchtimes in an orderly manner without pushing or obstructing their classmates. They hold doors open for visitors and other adults. There is no evidence whatever of oppressive behaviour or other forms of harassment and there are no recorded exclusions.
17. Pupils' liking for school shows in their very good levels of attendance. The last reported annual attendance is significantly higher than the national average for primary schools and unauthorised absence is lower. Inspection of the current year's figures shows this trend is continuing. There are no patterns of lateness and there is no truancy. The school day starts and finishes on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. It is good in the Foundation Stage (reception) and at Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2). In Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6) it is satisfactory. Examples of good and very good teaching were seen in every class. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed at the Foundation Stage or at Key Stage 1. Unsatisfactory teaching was observed in only one lesson at Key Stage 2. This occurred when there were too many activities going on at

once. The amount of good and very good teaching has improved since the last inspection and there is less unsatisfactory teaching.

19. Many of the strengths identified in the last inspection report have been maintained. There have been improvements in those areas identified as slowing progress. Where there were concerns about levels of challenge in English, particularly for higher attaining pupils in Year 6, there have been substantial improvements. The teaching of English is now good throughout the school. There are still a few occasions when the activities planned for pupils do not focus clearly enough on learning new skills.
20. Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are good in most lessons, and occasionally very good. Whole-class teaching and activities are well planned and structured with new learning in mind. There are good opportunities for children to experiment and investigate and to make choices. There are also good opportunities for children to practise and extend existing skills and try out new ones. The teacher is particularly skilled in engaging children's interest and keeping it. There is an atmosphere of warmth and trust and enjoyment of learning. Children put a lot of effort into their work and, whatever their achievements when they start, they make good progress. Reading progress is particularly strong because of the good emphasis on teaching a wide range of reading skills.
21. Throughout the school basic skills of literacy, numeracy and science are taught well so that pupils make good gains in reading, writing, mathematics and science. In each class, teachers plan work that builds systematically and thoroughly on what has been learnt before. As a result of teachers' high expectations, pupils develop a wide range of vocabulary and use it well in descriptive writing. They are not easily satisfied with the ordinary and use the thesaurus to help them find more adventurous words. Teachers encourage pupils to try out different strategies in number work and, as a result, they persevere with calculations. When teachers place the responsibility on pupils for planning investigations in science, they think hard about what they need to find out, what equipment they will use and how to organise the work.
22. The teaching of English and science is better than the teaching of mathematics. In mathematics, there are variations in the quality from class to class that prevent progress from being uniformly good. Pupils sometimes do work that is too easy before moving on to more challenging activities. The pace of lessons is sometimes too leisurely to ensure that pupils complete as much work as they could. The school is aware of the effect this has on standards at the end of Year 6. In mathematics standards are above average but over years they have been slightly lower than in English and science.
23. There is more good teaching in Key Stage 1 than in Key Stage 2, although the proportion of very good teaching is much the same. The good teaching is linked to greater clarity about what pupils are to learn. In lessons other than English, mathematics and science, at Key Stage 2, the planning for group work does not always help to move the learning on. On the whole, the pace is more lively at Key stage 1 and teachers keep pupils working hard by questioning each group, making suggestions to move the learning on and getting them to think about what they need to do next.
24. The teaching of ICT is better than at the time of the last inspection. It follows a carefully planned scheme, concentrates on teaching pupils new skills and enables them to use computers in a variety of ways to work in other subjects. Pupils are making good progress, although gaps remain in the knowledge and skills of the oldest pupils that prevent them from reaching the standards expected. Teachers miss opportunities to use computers to support the work in other subjects although this is improving slowly as pupils' skills increase. There are some good examples in all classes of pupils using computers to present their work well and to learn how to interpret data. In addition, in the Years 3 and 4 class, pupils have experimented successfully with a graphics program to investigate the style of different artists.
25. Teachers need further guidance in interpreting the requirements of the Somerset Agreed Syllabus for religious education so that lesson planning focuses more sharply on what pupils

need to learn to reach the standards expected at the end of Year 6. Older pupils have gaps in their knowledge and a sketchy understanding of aspects of the work.

26. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good. Teachers value pupils' ideas and contributions, use praise effectively to encourage and reward good work, treat pupils fairly and kindly and trust them to work with minimum supervision when appropriate. Pupils respond well. From their earliest day in school, they develop good attitudes to work, concentrate and usually work hard. They react quickly to instructions, get on quietly and co-operate with others. They are keen to ask and answer questions and share their ideas. There is a purposeful atmosphere in classrooms that enables pupils to work productively because teachers are well prepared and organised and manage pupils well.
27. Learning support assistants play a crucial role in the progress that pupils make. They are skilled, briefed well by teachers and liked by pupils. They know pupils well, pitch work at the right level and judge pace carefully. They provide time for consolidation and a good range of methods and approaches to maintain pupils' interest. Pupils flourish in the smaller teaching groups made possible by the presence of learning assistants and the quantity and quality of adult volunteer support. The school deploys them well. When pupils are withdrawn from lessons the work is closely related to that being undertaken in the class so that when they return they can easily pick up the threads.
28. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is mostly good. This is because their individual education plans are targeted carefully to meet their precise needs. Teachers carefully monitor the progress pupils are making towards achieving their targets. Records are maintained and updated, as appropriate, to enable teachers to carefully track progress.

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

29. The school provides a sound curriculum for its pupils in which all subjects required by the National Curriculum are securely represented. It enables many pupils to reach high standards in English, mathematics and science. Teachers use different methods, such as teaching the whole class, small groups and individuals to make sure that they teach all that is required. There is satisfactory emphasis on the development of knowledge, skills and understanding in most subjects to ensure that work carefully builds on previous learning for most pupils. Pupils' writing is strongly represented across the curriculum, and pupils write well for different purposes in many subjects, such as in history, where Year 2 pupils write good accounts of the Gunpowder Plot, for example. Links across different subjects are given good emphasis to make learning more relevant. For example, in science, there are clear links with mathematics, ICT and English. The provision for religious education follows the Somerset Agreed Syllabus.
30. However, weaknesses still exist in some areas and this slows the progress that pupils make as they move through the school. In some classes there is a legacy of topic-based work, which has an adverse effect on pupils' learning. During those afternoons when many different activities take place at once, the work lacks a clear focus, pace and challenge and prevents pupils making the best possible progress. Some teachers overuse worksheets as resources to aid learning and, in mathematics for example, under-emphasise the importance of 'real-life experiences'. Insufficient time is given to religious education in Years 5 and 6 to enable the subject to be covered in enough depth. Pupils carry out superficial studies of 'children around the world' in geography, which encourages them to hold stereotypical views of aspects of other countries, rather than studying a contrasting world area in depth. ICT is not yet represented well enough in other subjects, although this is developing.
31. The quality and range of learning opportunities for children at the Foundation Stage of learning, in reception, are good, and take account of the early learning goals. Children take part in a

- wide range of planned and carefully structured activities and experiences, which give them a good start to their education.
32. The curriculum is well organised to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs, enabling them to make good gains in learning over time. Work is almost always matched to their particular needs, and where additional support is available, it is carefully targeted to ensure that pupils make the best possible progress.
 33. The curriculum places good emphasis on the development of literacy and numeracy skills. The school has successfully introduced the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. Teachers promote the development of literacy skills in other subjects, and this is helping to improve pupils' knowledge and understanding of written English. The use of numeracy in other subjects is not as well represented but is continuing to develop.
 34. A very good number and range of well-led clubs and activities for a school of this size appeal to the interests of pupils. Most clubs, such as ICT, gymnastics, recorders, and football, are well supported and greatly appreciated by girls and boys of all ages. A good range of educational visits, for example to Yeovil, and an annual residential visit of adventure activities for older pupils, serve to extend pupils' learning opportunities. Visitors, such as musicians, theatre groups, and guest speakers, as well as drama workshops, help to enrich pupils' learning experiences still further. However, there are relatively few visits into the immediate vicinity of the school, where there is a wealth of opportunities, to support work in geography, history and art.
 35. Teachers make every effort in lessons and in activities that support the curriculum to ensure that the contributions of all pupils are celebrated and valued. Pupils with special educational needs take a full part in the life of the school. Most pupils gradually learn to respect one another and support each other's learning. The school successfully provides learning opportunities for all pupils, whatever their ability, age, background or ethnicity, to help them to make good progress.
 36. Teachers give good emphasis to pupils' personal, social and health education within the curriculum. They promote these areas actively and consistently. The programme includes suitable work on the importance of a healthy diet, exercise and the dangers of drug misuse. Sex education, currently in the process of revision, is taught in line with agreed policy. Teachers often give praise to enhance pupils' self-esteem. They use discussion effectively to provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate the views of others. Pupils in most classes have specific tasks to perform, which they carry out conscientiously. Fund raising for local and national charities helps to develop consideration for others.
 37. The community makes a good contribution to pupils' learning. Very good support is provided by parents through a flourishing Parents' and Teachers' Association, which raises large sums of money to support pupils' learning. Pupils benefit from large numbers of committed parents who regularly help to extend learning by leading group activities. However, business links, from which pupils can learn about the world of work, are not so well established.
 38. Links with neighbouring schools are very good. There are firmly established links with the school to which most pupils move at eleven, which help to ensure a smooth transition for pupils at the end of Year 6. The local group of schools work very well together, often arranging joint functions, for example sports tournaments, from which pupils benefit. There are close links with a local special school, which help to support the learning of pupils with learning difficulties.
 39. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall and shows through in the way pupils conduct themselves. Provision for spiritual development is good. Close links with the church and well-organised school assemblies give pupils the opportunity to reflect on the spiritual dimension of life. Assemblies have a 'theme of the week' basis to give the pupils adequate time to understand the human feelings and

emotions that can be involved. Through classroom teaching and off-site visits they are encouraged to learn about the wonders of natural science and gain an insight into different religious beliefs. Pupils are encouraged to put forward their own ideas for improvement in the life of the school. Pupils develop a strong attachment to the school and take pride in representing it. The school rewards their contribution to school life at the end of year leaving ceremony.

40. Provision for moral and social development is good. Teachers and other adults in school set good examples of personal behaviour. Parents support the school in its expectations and promotion of high standards of moral behaviour and attitudes. Pupils are involved in the drawing up of class rules and are expected to abide by them. Pupils of all ages get on well together and Year 6 pupils are often seen helping the younger ones at break and lunchtimes. Any instances of inappropriate behaviour or differences between pupils are identified quickly by the staff and are often resolved by the children themselves in classroom discussion. The school is heavily involved in after-school competitive sport and fair play is emphasised strongly. The high level of pupil involvement and the Year 5/6 annual residential visit give pupils further opportunities to develop personal and social skills by promoting leadership and teamwork.
41. Provision for cultural development is good. The school has a link with the local historical society. Lessons such as the study of Victorian life and life in Britain after World War II give pupils the opportunity to learn about their own cultural environment. Topic work such as "What is it like to be a Muslim?" allows them to appreciate the diversity of cultures other than their own. To compensate for the lack of nearby access to mosques or synagogues, the school provides video recordings that explain other cultures and faiths. A good range of relevant non-fiction books is displayed in the reception hall. Other attractive displays include clay modelling, research into textiles and dyes, the Class 3 'Memory Quilt' and photographic records of the school's active involvement with a drum concert.
42. Pupils listen to different kinds of music, enjoy the benefits of professional tuition and have designed and made their own musical instruments. The school has many good displays of cultural artefacts and examples of art, and arranges off-site visits to the theatre and museums. A travelling theatre group attends on a regular basis, the latest presentation being 'Space Odyssey 2002'.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

43. The school promotes a warm and friendly environment where pupils feel secure. The well-being of its pupils is a high priority of the school and the governing body takes an active role in ensuring the requirements of regular inspection and risk assessment are carried out. The routine testing of fire detection and fire-fighting equipment is systematically organised and checks on electrical and other equipment are arranged and recorded. Fire drills are carried out each term and the evacuation times evaluated for identification of any problems arising or potential improvement. The procedures for child protection are satisfactory.
44. Children entering the Foundation Stage have a well-planned induction programme. This begins with a meeting for new parents and children then progress into short-term and part-time attendance until they have gained the confidence to participate fully in the activities provided. Pupils leaving for the secondary school have the opportunity to meet their new teachers and to join in an induction day full of activities that they can share with new classmates.
45. Attendance monitoring is satisfactorily carried out by the school secretary who checks registers weekly and also makes good use of personal knowledge of the families within the school's community. Unexplained absences are rare, parents being well aware of the need to notify the school in advance of any proposed absence or to notify the school of any sickness on the day in question. The school discourages holidays being taken in term time and issues regular reminders to parents. Pupils achieving 100 per cent attendance over the year are

awarded special certificates at the celebration assembly. However, register completion requires a more consistent approach.

46. The school promotes good behaviour through implementation of its ethos and aims. There is a written policy and sets of classroom rules that the children themselves have discussed and prepared. They understand what is expected of them and respond well as a result. Teachers show respect for pupils as individuals and promote good behaviour through their own attitudes and the implementation of classroom rewards and sanctions systems. Awards for good behaviour, effort or attitudes are presented at school assemblies and all pupils are encouraged to follow the examples set. Pupils are encouraged to draw up their own personal targets and these feature prominently in classroom displays. The school has clear procedures for dealing with bullying, oppressive or racist behaviour.
47. The school's arrangements for monitoring pupils' academic progress are good. Pupils are regularly assessed in English, mathematics and science using a variety of approaches to help them make the best possible progress as they move through the school. These enable teachers to:
 - discover what pupils know and understand and what they need to learn next;
 - place pupils in groups by ability in the mixed-age classes so that work can be more precisely matched to their needs;
 - set targets.
48. Teachers monitor carefully progress towards meeting these targets. Recording systems in English, mathematics and science are thorough and embedded in the school's work. For example, the school increasingly tracks pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science with the help of a computer program specifically designed for this purpose. Writing assessments carried out each term are helping teachers to establish group targets by comparing current performance with expected end-of-year levels. These approaches, which are consistently followed, are helping to improve pupils' performance over time. They are not yet established in other subjects but form a part of future improvement plans in some.
49. Pupils have started to become involved in assessing their own work and setting their own targets to help them improve. This is enabling them to become more involved in, and more responsible for, their own learning. It is helping to give pupils a greater understanding of how they can improve further, but is still at an early stage of development.
50. The work of pupils with special educational needs is carefully monitored and regularly assessed by teachers and support assistants to enable them to make good progress towards meeting precise targets on their individual education plans. The school cares for their needs well. Outside agencies are involved as required.
51. Procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are good overall. An initial assessment undertaken shortly after entry into the reception class begins the process and informal assessments and staff discussions add to the picture in the following years. A summary assessment is included in pupils' annual reports.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

51. Parents hold the school in high regard. Some parents choose to bring their children to this school in preference to others in whose catchment areas they live. Parents speak of a calm atmosphere within the school and of newcomers being made to feel welcome and quickly settled in. The staff, both teaching and non-teaching, are seen as caring, friendly and very approachable. Parents' views are sought on significant issues and the school is seen as being receptive to parents' suggestions and concerns and quick to take action after consultation with parents has taken place.

52. The quality of information provided for parents is very good. Parent evenings are arranged twice each year, in October and March. The autumn meeting is held to allow parents see how the children have settled in and to consider their targets for the year. The spring meeting is used to assess progress. Parents come into school during the summer term to discuss children's annual reports. There is a separate parents' event held in June when prospective parents and children come into school and see the range of facilities offered and meet the staff. Newsletters are issued regularly and are informative. The parent teacher association issues separate letters through the school's system. The school prospectus is comprehensive. The format of the annual report of the governing body is confusing and minor amendments are needed to bring the information into line with legal requirements. Pupils' annual reports cover all subjects and provide information about what pupils do well and where they could improve. They include a helpful assessment of personal development. Parents and pupils are encouraged to write comments in the sections provided. Pupils can enjoy a wide range of after-school clubs and participate in several after-school competitive sports. Parents are kept up to date on the array of weekly events by provision of two prominent notice boards erected near to the entrances. They are also welcomed into school at any time if they wish to discuss matters of concern. The headteacher makes herself available to listen to parents' comments or questions outside school at the end of the school day.
53. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are informed and involved as soon as possible. Communication with them is good. Links between home and school are regular and productive, and this helps to ensure that pupils receive good support.
54. The school has been successful in attracting a high number of parent helpers. There are currently more than 20 parents who attend on a regular rota basis and show a commitment to helping children learn. These helpers are effectively deployed and link in well with the school's classroom assistants and student teachers on placement. Most parents support children's learning at home by helping with homework and topic research.
55. There is an enthusiastic parent teacher association with an active committee membership of some 20 parents and staff. All new parents are invited to become members of the association. There is no difficulty in the recruitment of extra help when required to run the social and fund-raising events that are organised. The school enjoys the support of the community and the association makes very useful contributions to school funds as a result. The association have helped purchase computer hardware and software for the new computer suite, purchased audio and video equipment and sports kit and contributed to the school's fiction library.
56. The parents and school operate a very effective partnership that has a significant and positive impact on pupils' learning both at school and at home.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

57. Both leadership and management are good as reported at the time of the last inspection. The recently appointed headteacher provides strong leadership. She has a clear view of the immediate and future needs of the school and has introduced the systems and procedures necessary to bring about improvements. She has established good relationships with teachers, parents, governors and pupils and enjoys their confidence. She is well supported by her new deputy whose areas of expertise complement her own.
58. Recently the school has undergone a year or more of change and uncertainty after a long period of stability. There have been several changes of senior staff and two other teachers have had lengthy periods of absence for medical reasons. It is to the school's credit that much of its good work continued during this period. This included significant improvements to the art curriculum and to training and resources for ICT. High standards in the behaviour and attitudes of pupils were also upheld. Although academic standards fell sharply at the end of Year 6, there is no evidence to link the fall with changes in staffing and leadership at the time. Pupil mobility was the most important contributing factor.

59. Since September, the school has developed a more robust monitoring and evaluation system. The headteacher has observed teaching in all classes, introduced a more rigorous approach to classroom monitoring and initiated a lively debate about how to improve teaching and learning, encouraging teachers to be more open and critical of their skills and methods as well as sharing good practice. This augurs well for the future.
60. Co-ordinators are now taking more responsibility for improving teaching and learning in their subjects. They monitor the work, identify where action is required and plan methodically for its completion. This work is firmly established and effective in some subjects such as English, mathematics and ICT. There are well-devised plans for the improvement of science and other subjects in 2002 and beyond. This work will take time to show results. In religious education, more urgent attention is required to improve standards. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator leads the development of work in this area well. This is particularly commendable because there were no significant issues arising from the last inspection. Planning for learning outside the classroom has improved, for example, and continues to be a focus for development. Issues relating to special educational needs are also managed well. The special educational needs co-ordinator oversees this important area effectively. Support staff provide good support of pupils with special educational needs. They have clear roles and responsibilities, have some opportunities to improve their skills and are greatly valued. They are well informed about the nature and range of disability, which helps pupils to make good gains in learning. The school is subsidising a perceived shortfall in funding to ensure that pupils with the greatest need are given the best possible chances to succeed.
61. The governing body, under the strong leadership of the recently appointed chairman, carries out its supporting role well. The many new members and others have taken advantage of training and are increasingly knowledgeable about their roles. School monitoring and evaluation systems involve governors more closely, ensuring that they are better informed about the strengths of the school and areas for improvement and can account for them. Individual members have expertise in specific fields and are able to take a lead and give advice. A lot of recent work has been done to ensure that all the statutory duties and responsibilities are carried out properly, especially those relating to school policies. This work is complete although a few policies have not yet been approved by the full body of governors.
62. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors agree on those areas where the school needs to improve. This is arrived at after a period of consultation amongst the staff and governors. The views of parents and pupils are sought and taken into account. In this way there is a sense of investment in the future by all parties and a determination to move the school forward. The current focus is firmly on further improving the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' achievements. Led by the deputy headteacher, the school analyses information from tests and assessments carefully so that there is a sharp focus on where problems lie. This is proving useful in identifying where individual pupils are not making as much progress as they should and also spotting more general strengths and weaknesses. The school is in the process of setting up a computer database so that pupils' progress can be tracked more quickly. This information adds to insights gained from monitoring planning, teaching, learning and sample of pupils' work. At the same time, there is a shared recognition of what the school values and does well, and a commitment to uphold these important strengths, particularly the way the school promotes pupils' personal development. The school improvement plan is an effective document and sets out clearly how improvements are to be measured.
63. The school has established a system of performance management and staff appraisal and development that is closely allied to whole-school improvement and pupils' progress. The headteacher and other teachers have agreed appropriate targets but the full review process is not yet complete. It is too early to judge its effectiveness. Staff training needs have been identified carefully, including those that are necessary to introduce national initiatives and to meet school requirements and individual needs.

64. The way the school uses its resources to underpin teaching and learning and to support improvement is satisfactory. Teachers and support staff are used effectively. There is a good deal of flexibility in the way that they are deployed so that groups of different sizes can be formed to suit subjects or activities. This works particularly well in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. There are several occasions during the week when pupils are grouped into single years or when the split Year 1 group is brought together. This makes good sense for forming smaller groups for music and ICT, for example, and contributes to good progress. It also allows the reception class teacher to concentrate on the needs of the younger children on two afternoons. Where bigger groups are formed in history and science in Years 1 and 2, for example, it is easier to ensure that all the Year 1 pupils are covering the same ground and the work is pitched at the right level. Progress is often good in these larger groups because of careful planning and well-briefed support staff and volunteers. The deployment of part-time staff allows them to use to their subject expertise wherever possible.
65. Learning resources are of good quality, adequate for teaching the required curriculum and used well to develop pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. The ICT suite is in regular use to teach ICT skills and the library is readily accessible and used, by older pupils in particular, for research purposes. Pupils are able to profit from this because they are taught research skills well. The school premises are attractive and well maintained. The building is well designed for the needs of the school, although the library and ICT suite are located in a central circulation area. This inevitably results in interruptions to lessons held there, especially when both areas are in use simultaneously. The outside areas are used to advantage for physical education but the school does not take full advantage of the extensive grounds and wildlife areas to support learning, for example in geography and science. Grants and specific funds are spent appropriately. For example, all teachers have benefited from the New Opportunities Fund which has improved expertise through computer training.
66. The school acknowledges its need for advice in financial matters, particularly as there has been a considerable turnover in senior management, governors and school administrators. High levels of support have been purchased from the local education authority. This has been especially important in ensuring that long-standing weaknesses in financial systems, policies and procedures, including those identified by a recent independent audit, are put right. These are receiving urgent attention. Whereas the school makes sound use of best value principles in some areas, for example in its use of human resources, financial advice is being acted upon to ensure that these apply more rigorously when purchasing supplies and services. Long-term financial planning has been improved. Governors now take a longer view so that variations in pupil related income can be more easily accommodated.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

67. In order to raise standards further, the headteacher, staff and governors should

- (1) Raise standards reached by pupils at the end of Year 6 in ICT by:
- planning more systematically for the use of ICT to support the work in other subjects; and
 - introducing a system to check how well pupils are doing.
(see paragraphs 6,24,124,127)

and in religious education by:

- allocating enough time to enable pupils to cover the work in sufficient depth; and
- ensuring that teachers receive appropriate training to improve their knowledge and understanding of the Somerset Agreed Syllabus.
(see paragraphs 7,25,137,142)

- (2) Ensure that all pupils, especially those in Years 3 to 6, make the best possible progress by:
- improving the pace of lessons, particularly in subjects other than English and science, and intervening more effectively to move the learning on;
 - providing work that pupils in different ability groups find sufficiently demanding;
 - making it clearer to pupils what they are going to learn before the lesson starts, and using time more effectively at the end of lessons to draw the main points together; and
 - introducing a system of assessment (in subjects other than English, mathematics and science where it is already well established) and use it to identify what pupils need to learn next.
(see paragraphs 4,18,19,22,23,30,103,108,115,118,122,131,134)

When formulating the post-inspection action plan, the following minor weakness should be taken into account:

- the governing body needs to establish or complete required policies and procedures in order to fulfil all its statutory duties. (see paragraph 66)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

30

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

23

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	5	12	12	1	0	0
Percentage	0	16	40	40	3	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 three percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	118
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	3
Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	10
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.8
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	*	*	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	16	16	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (94)	100 (94)	100 (88)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	16	16	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (94)	100 (94)	100 (94)
	National	85 (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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	*	*	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	*	*	*
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	57 (100)	57 (90)	93 (100)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	11	11	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (100)	79 (90)	100 (100)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

* Because fewer than ten boys and fewer than ten girls took the tests in 2001, the numbers at each level are omitted from the tables in line with the governors' reporting arrangements to parents.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	116
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.6
Average class size	29.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	113

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000/1
	£
Total income	271,392
Total expenditure	270,802
Expenditure per pupil	2,315
Balance brought forward from previous year	651
Balance carried forward to next year	1241

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	118
Number of questionnaires returned	60

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55	40	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	38	5	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	48	52	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	53	10	3	0
The teaching is good.	62	35	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	53	32	12	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	23	0	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	32	3	3	0
The school works closely with parents.	57	33	5	3	2
The school is well led and managed.	48	52	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	48	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	49	37	10	3	0

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

68. Pupils are admitted to the reception class in the September after their fourth birthday. Many of them will have had previous experience of nursery or other types of pre-school setting. Records are passed on and children make several preparatory visits so that most make a confident start. The class also includes about half the Year 1 pupils. These pupils join the other pupils in Year 1 on two afternoons. This enables the teacher to provide a curriculum, which, over the course of the week, gives children opportunities for experimentation, exploration and choice as well as providing time for direct teaching of the whole class and different groups within the class.
69. The teaching is good. The teacher has a very good understanding of the needs of young children and of the Foundation Stage curriculum. She works very closely with a capable learning support assistant whose quiet and purposeful approach draws out those children needing encouragement and extends their skills and understanding well. There are also several skilled volunteer helpers who provide invaluable extra support for small groups and individuals. As well as contributing their individual skills to the children's learning, all the supporting adults in the room have gained expertise by working closely with the teacher and observing her approach. Parents support the work well by their encouragement for reading at home and their willingness to volunteer to help in the classroom or on visits. The children gain from the open-door approach that enables parents and carers to maintain regular contact with the teacher, to bring their children into school each morning and to talk with them about current and future work. Information is displayed about the areas of learning and class events.
70. The teacher plans with great care for the six areas of learning. The planning is tailored to the needs and interest of both boys and girls and in fine weather there are many opportunities to explore and learn from activities outside, in the patio area, in the school grounds, in the village and further afield. The teaching plans to develop the specific skills identified as 'stepping stones' in national guidance for the age group. These are linked by well-chosen themes that interest the children and form the focus for activities in each area of learning. The current theme is 'toys'. The most outstanding feature of the reception class is the teacher's skill in keeping children interested, keen to learn and bubbling with enthusiasm. As a result, children put a lot of effort into everything they do and make good progress.
71. When children first start school, the teacher carries out individual assessments. The information gained is used to provide for their different needs and as a baseline for the school to judge future progress. Overall, the children's attainment on entry to the school is above average. The teacher and other adults keep running notes about children's progress and difficulties and this enables them to plan the next steps carefully.
72. The accommodation provides adequate space for work inside and out. Resources for learning are of good quality and stored and labelled so that they can be easily found and used by the children. There is a secure patio area where children work with sand, water and paint, grow plants and play with wheeled and other large toys. The outside playhouse provides a setting for role-play. This changes regularly; it is currently a mechanics' workshop.

Personal, social and emotional development

73. Most children make a confident start because they have been well prepared by pre-school experiences elsewhere and/or because of this school's induction procedures for new children. There are a few who are not yet used to being part of a large group when they start but their individual needs are catered for well. The teacher uses a skilful combination of encouragement, warmth, praise and direction so that children are clear about what they are

supposed to do and quickly become familiar with classroom routines. The teacher has devised a 'buddy system' whereby Year 1 pupils in the class each befriend and look after a new entrant and show them, by example and guidance, what is expected at each stage of the day. Children learn to sit quietly while the register is taken and the activities are explained. They are encouraged by adults' suggestions and questions to persevere with tasks. As a result, they concentrate for long periods and persevere with tasks rather than flitting between activities. For example, when children played in the 'workshop', they first put on overalls and used tools to mend things. There then followed a pause in activity so the learning support assistant suggested that they might set out cones to protect other children from straying into the working area. This set them off again with renewed enthusiasm and involved them in discussions about the shape of cones and the need for safety in the work place.

74. There are good opportunities for children to make decisions about where they are going to work or play, what they are going to do and what equipment they will need. They learn to get things out, use them sensibly and put them away carefully. At these times they mark their individual record cards with a red spot to show which activities they have undertaken. There is plenty of praise when children are helpful and the teacher's comment, "I love these good manners", when children say "please" and "thank you" develop politeness and consideration for others. Numerous opportunities for helping children to discuss their thoughts and feelings arising naturally from work and play are sensitively exploited. This helps children to consider how their actions affect others. A pupil from Year 6 came to the class at the start of the afternoon to commend the fact that one of the children had spontaneously apologised when he had hurt another on the playground. Such expectations are clearly embedded throughout the school, beginning with the very youngest. Children are also encouraged to write about their hopes for the New Year and do so thoughtfully.
75. The teacher values children's ideas and uses praise effectively to build self-confidence. At the same time she is firm in dealing with the very few instances of inappropriate behaviour. Children are clear about what is acceptable in the classroom and playground setting and learn how to distinguish right from wrong. Skilful teaching ensures that they develop good attitudes to work, constructive relationships and growing independence. Almost all the children are on course to reach the early learning goals by the end of the reception year and most will exceed them.

Communication, language and literacy

76. The children's speaking and listening skills are developed well through good teaching in many areas of the curriculum. Music, drama, story time and many play situations provide potential for good progress and teachers and other adults make the most of them. For example, the children quickly learned the recurring phrase in a story "I looked through my window and what did I see. I saw ----looking at me". As well as joining in as a group, individual children were invited to repeat the phrase and suggest which animal might fill the gap. At this point lots of slithering snakes, mischievous monkeys and terrible tigers put in appearances! One group followed this up by making up a puppet show to perform to the class and adding their own variations to the story, encouraged by the learning support assistant. There was lots of discussion about how the characters might feel if some of the animals in the story came to visit.
77. A wide range of reading skills is taught systematically. Children learn letter sounds and names. They memorise a list of most frequently used words (busy bee words), including those like 'said' and 'was' that do not follow a regular spelling pattern (mean bee words!). When the teacher reads, she shares the story by using a big book so that children can follow the text or pick out words they know. Each child chooses books to read at home and reads or shares books with the teacher and other adults in school. The dedicated reading area with its comfortable seating and attractive books provides a quiet place for children to read alone. Reading games help children to become familiar with spelling patterns. During the inspection, children held up big letters that made the word 'shop'. They changed one sound at a time to

make different words called out by the teacher. They continued until the original word came round again so that they progressed through 'ship, tip, tap, tack, back, bat, cat, cap, cop' until 'shop' was called to complete the game. A Year 1 'teacher' acted as scribe at the blackboard to recall the chain of words. The children's reading achievements are very good. Almost all of them read phrases under pictures, many read simple sentences that build into a story and about a quarter read very well, reaching the standards expected by seven year olds.

78. Writing activities are well structured and spring naturally from other work. This ensures that children have something to write about and the words to make it interesting. For example, following a drama activity, the teacher and children went through the actions together. As a result of this one boy went on to write, "They made a ark They chopd and they sord and they hamd Noah set the anomus on the Ark". He used a sound card to help him. Another boy wrote quickly and fluently "1 day god said I am going to send a flud so you got to get redee then they dilt a ark then the ran cam for 40 days and 40 nits. 1 day the flud went and the famuli got out". He recalled the story and some of the words accurately, worked out some almost accurately by sounding out himself and others by referring to the 'busy bee' words displayed. The teacher helped the children to think how they might improve their writing by using the word prompts and by thinking how to 'stroke' the letters in the air. All the children can write their names easily and attempt sentences. The most able write five or six sentences and are beginning to punctuate. Children can try out words on individual white boards and alter them.
79. Many children are on course to exceed the early learning goals in speaking and reading by the end of the reception year. A few will do so in writing. Progress in writing, although good, is not as good as in reading. There are a few opportunities for children to write informally in play situations, for example there is a note pad by the telephone in the 'shop'. There are not as many or as wide a range of opportunities for children to try out their writing skills, however, as there are for speaking and reading.

Mathematical development

80. Whole-class and group teaching develop children's understanding well. Almost all the children are on course to reach the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Many of them will progress further. All the pupils gain a good grasp of recognising, writing and ordering numbers to ten through the wide variety of games, number rhymes and songs and everyday situations in the classroom. Many of the children count to 20 and beyond, recognise coins of different value and two and three-dimensional shapes. They know and understand the use of first, second, third etc and order objects by size. Higher attaining children can sequence numbers to 100, do simple addition and subtraction, make up their own sums and use coins accurately to buy things.
81. The work is matched well to the needs of individual children. It offers plenty of time for consolidation and repetition, for those that need it, and enough challenge for those that are ready to move on. In a lesson observed, good teaching thoroughly developed children's understanding of the names and properties of shapes. Most children were able to find different shapes in the classroom and name them. A few were able to describe shapes accurately, including the number of sides and corners and whether or not the sides were the same length. The range of activities provided after whole-class teaching gave children opportunities to handle shapes and consolidate what they had learnt. They nailed shapes to a board to make a picture, made shapes on a pegboard and sewed shapes on a card with punched holes. Groups working with the teacher and other adults were able to develop other mathematical skills as well as revising the language of shapes. For example, some were playing a matching game that required them to place shapes on a five by four grid, at the same time, learning about co-ordinates. The work prepares children very well for the next stage.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

82. Numerous, carefully planned activities and effective teaching extend the children's knowledge and skills in a wide range of areas. Most children are likely to reach the early learning goals by the end of the year. Many have already done so and will exceed them. Children develop an understanding of the passage of time when they bring toys into school and arrange them in chronological order, starting with the ones they played with as babies and ending with those they play with now. They have already visited a toy museum to look at old toys and studied them in the classroom. With the teacher's help they investigated how different toys move; whether they roll, slide, swing or wobble. They baked biscuits for the toys' party and noted how ingredients change when they are mixed and heated. A group of children set out a teddy bears' picnic unaided, giving each bear a cup and plate and noting that, "This big bear will need a big space to sit in". Another group worked on a simple computer program with a volunteer helper, gaining control of the mouse and learning how to use the tool bar. Children are learning how to program instructions into a robotic toy and to estimate how far it will travel, adjusting their instructions in a trial and improvement sequence. Later in the summer term the children will walk around the village, looking at different buildings, visiting gardens and ponds. They will climb the church tower to get a bird's eye view of the village before examining the church treasures.
83. The activities provide the children with plenty of opportunities to appreciate the natural world, to wonder at how things grow from small seeds when they germinate in their patio garden and to watch birds visit bird feeders. The work is planned to lead naturally into the early stages of history, geography and science in the National Curriculum so that higher attaining children move on rapidly and share ideas with the Year 1 pupils in the same class. The teacher follows the guidance provided by the Somerset Agreed Syllabus to provide good grounding in religious education. Children consider the story of Noah and, as well as having wonderful fun setting out all the animals on the ark, they think about what they can learn about trust and obedience from the story.

Physical development

84. The children are on course to reach the early learning goals by the end of their reception year. The teacher's planning makes effective use of the large hall and indoor gymnastic equipment, and small apparatus such as bats and balls, as well as opportunities to use the adventure play equipment in the soft surface area outside. The patio area also allows children to play safely with large toys, including wheeled vehicles. There is sufficient emphasis on developing skills such as aiming and receiving balls, and moving in different ways, at different speeds and changing direction. Children use the large space energetically and confidently, avoid collisions and respond quickly to instructions.
85. In the classroom setting the teacher provides many worthwhile activities to enable children to develop manipulative skills. Sometimes specific skills are taught; for example when children made coconut biscuits for the toys' party, a volunteer showed them how to sieve flour and beat a mixture of margarine and sugar. At another time, when they made a toy for a baby, the children developed their skills of joining and fixing in different ways. Regular opportunities during the week involve cutting, spreading, using brushes and crayons, threading, sewing and weaving and using a range of construction kits. They provide a good introduction to design and technology.

Creative development

86. The many strands that make up children's creative development are considered carefully in planning. As well as whole lessons devoted to music and drama, there are many opportunities for children to use their imagination and express their ideas through role-play in the indoor 'shop', outdoor 'mechanics' workshop' or when they use the puppet theatre. They sing rhymes and songs as an everyday part of classroom life, for example when the calendar changes from April to May. Some children confidently take a solo part when they sing the toy box song

and all children join in the chorus with enthusiasm. In drama lessons they take turns to act out the 'Through my window story' and respond to music to show how monkeys move mischievously and snakes slither. In music lessons, they have opportunities to sing and play instruments and come together with older children at the end of the morning so that they can all perform what they have learned. These aspects are taught well and children are on course to reach the early learning goals.

87. There are many activities that encourage children to draw, make patterns, weave and sew. The children design settings for the ark, the animals and Noah's family. Painting easels are set up outside so that in fine weather the children can choose to use them. Children have used a range of materials to design and make toys for a baby. There was not enough evidence of these elements during the week of the inspection to be able to make secure judgements about pupils' progress through the stepping stones.

ENGLISH

88. Teaching is good. The thorough and systematic teaching of skills in reading and writing enables pupils to make good progress and reach above average standards at the ages of seven and eleven. Pupils of different ability, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. This is confirmed by the school's careful tracking of progress through tests and assessments of pupils' work.
89. Teachers build on the very good start that pupils have in the reception class. This continues throughout the school so that, at the age of seven, almost all pupils read well enough to enjoy stories and find out information for themselves. In Years 1 and 2, teachers practise letter sounds with pupils and teach them how to build words so that they are able to work out for themselves most words new to them. At the same time pupils increase their knowledge of the most frequently used words and learn to recognise these at sight, especially those that do not have a regular spelling pattern. They have a good understanding of different types of story and the language used in them. They know how information is set out in simple reference books and how to use the index and contents page. All these skills and their increasing knowledge about books help pupils to read fluently. Although pupils understand how punctuation works and recognise, for example, exclamation and question marks, most do not use them well enough to add expression to their reading. This is an area for development.
90. Those pupils who need extra help are identified early and good use is made of trained learning support assistants who use a catch-up course with small groups. Individual reading with an adult is also maintained by encouraging parents and other volunteers to talk to pupils about their reading and to listen to them read. Group reading takes place each week. Because of the many parents and volunteers, each group is allocated an adult so that the particular needs of the group can be pursued. Volunteers are well briefed and the pupils make good progress. Reading diaries indicate good support from parents at home and a useful dialogue between school and home identifies what pupils do well and how they could improve.
91. In Years 3 to 6, teachers choose a wide range of texts to extend pupils' knowledge and skills further. In the whole-class part of the lesson, pupils almost always read the chosen text together, or groups and individuals take turns to read different parts. Teachers refer frequently to the text to check understanding, to discuss the choice of vocabulary, to identify descriptive language and to explain how devices such as similes work. They involve pupils by careful questioning, drawing in those who may be reluctant to answer, challenging those who need it, for example by asking, "Does this question expect an answer?" When the pupil answer that it does not, the teacher presses on further to ask, "Why not?" and then moves the learning on further to explain the use of rhetorical questions. In Years 5 and 6, pupils consider how to distinguish fact from opinion. They are taught how to skim the text to get an overall view and how to scan for particular bits of information. They know about different devices that help them

to find their way around reference books. Higher attaining pupils use this knowledge of sub-headings, labels and italic print confidently to speed up the scanning process.

92. Given the fluency with which most pupils read it is surprising to find that their enthusiasm for reading is somewhat lacking. There is no universal love of books evident amongst the pupils. They are interested in talking about their likes and dislikes and are happy to read to adults but eager readers are very much in the minority. Teachers have been particularly concerned about boys' attitudes to reading and have bought new books with their interests in mind. This has been more successful for older boys but there is further to go to engage younger boys in the reading process. The range and quality of fiction and non-fiction as a whole are adequate but not yet appealing enough to captivate pupils' interests sufficiently.
93. Reading, writing and speaking are very closely linked in the teaching process. Pupils' skills in all these areas are developed well side by side and many achieve above average standards in speaking. Pupils are actively involved in discussion and in asking and answering questions in many lessons. There are examples of speaking being used effectively as a precursor to writing. There are examples of pupils talking about what they read, discussing different views, comparing places and characters, evaluating their work, recounting events, describing what they see and experience, predicting what might happen next and explaining what they found out. There is no overall policy or scheme, however, to develop pupils' skills systematically as they move through the school. There is no assurance that all pupils have the opportunity, for example, to speak to an audience, to take part in debate and to extend their skills to the full. Drama techniques are not used routinely to develop confidence and speaking skills or to develop through role-play an understanding of how characters might react.
94. Reading and writing are used extensively to further pupils' work in many subjects and examples of good quality writing can be seen in all classes, especially in history. This works both ways, as teaching and learning in other subjects contribute to pupils' progress in writing and reading. There are some particularly telling examples in Years 3 and 4 of where these curriculum links work well to promote writing. Pupils write poetry and letters inspired by their study of World War II and use vivid language such as "The last goodbye", "I feel as if I am drowning", "The world is closing in on my heart" as they describe leaving home for the war.
95. There are many other examples of good quality writing throughout the school. Although the range of writing is narrow in Year 1, it widens rapidly from Year 2 onwards as pupils master the technical skills of spelling and punctuation. Teachers are particularly good at extending pupils' vocabulary. When pupils in Years 1 and 2 write about what they have been doing or recount stories, they begin to use a wider range of words so that, eventually, they are able to introduce or join sentences, adding variety and interest to their writing. In a lesson observed in this class, the teacher used the story of the Rainbow Fish skilfully to show pupils how to recognise when a character was speaking and how to use speech marks. The pupils suggested 20 different ways of replacing the word 'said' in a conversation between characters. They then went on to use direct speech in their own writing. A few higher attaining pupils were able to incorporate the new vocabulary as well as using speech marks accurately. Pupils learn how to join their writing at this stage and, although in their handwriting books they show they can do this well, most pupils do not use it elsewhere. This slows progress in using a fluent joined style.
96. Good attention is given to a wide range of writing for different purposes and audiences in Years 3 to 6. The range and quality of the texts teachers use contribute strongly to the good progress pupils make in their own writing in a range of forms. Pupils respond with interest, concentrate on their writing, are keen to improve it and generally know their own strengths and where they could do better. There are some opportunities for them to use the computer to draft and edit their work but these are insufficient in frequency. They write letters, poetry, reports, instructions, persuasive writing and information leaflets, structuring their writing competently. Imaginative and descriptive writing develops particularly well so that pupils, even those who find the technical skills of writing difficult, use adventurous language. Pupils are

taught to use the thesaurus to help this process. Examples of lively writing are not confined to the most able pupils. Many pupils in Years 3 and 4 handle descriptive writing well. For example, they write "he tiptoed forwards about an inch and sniffed the air" and "his hair was long and straggling and blew in the wind like the branches of a tree". Pupils in Years 5 and 6 begin to use humour effectively, for example "The clock stared back. Well, they do have faces don't they!" They write persuasively in favour of an argument and use inference and deduction when they interpret poetry. There are good examples of longer pieces of writing but nothing extensive such as stories structured in chapters or diaries, added to over a period of time.

97. Teachers provide helpful comments in their marking to increase pupils' understanding and identify where pupils can improve. Pupils learn from them. For example, a pupil's writing improves when a teacher's marking explains where to use commas to structure speech. Important spelling areas are not always identified, including where they occur in a title, and as a consequence they are repeated. Many pupils take care with their writing and set out their work neatly. A few pupils still find the writing process laborious and have not yet mastered a fluent joined style. In contrast, there are other examples of pupils starting Year 6 with very untidy work and making good progress in response to the teacher's expectations, regular reminders and careful use of praise.
98. The subject leader is improving the quality of teaching, learning and pupils' achievement effectively, by evaluating samples of writing at regular intervals and discussing with other teachers what pupils need to do next. She has formulated an effective action plan for the year in response to the information gained from this process and from classroom observations. Teaching has improved, particularly in Year 6 where unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the last inspection. There is a much sharper focus to lessons, pupils' learning is more challenging and standards of work, including presentation, have improved.

MATHEMATICS

99. Standards in mathematics are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. Progress for most pupils is at least satisfactory as they move through the school. It was good in a few lessons.
100. Most pupils achieve at least soundly in their understanding of number, shape, space, measures and handling data because:
- teachers match most work carefully to pupils' different needs and provide work at the right level;
 - well-focused planning enables teachers to build carefully on previous learning in all areas of the subject;
 - teachers encourage them to succeed through conscientious marking, which celebrates success but also helps to develop better understanding;
 - there is good emphasis on number skills and on encouraging pupils to solve number problems in ways that extend their thinking;
 - teachers provide increasing opportunities for investigative approaches and encourage pupils to explain their methods. As a result, pupils learn to think for themselves and develop logical reasoning;
 - they are becoming increasingly involved in assessing their own work, which gives them greater understanding of their own learning; and,
 - support staff are deployed effectively to help pupils with special educational needs.
101. Most pupils achieve well in the development of understanding of number. For example, Year 2 pupils start to understand place value of numbers beyond 100, communicate data through bar charts, and recognise number sequences, such as odd and even numbers. By the end of Year 6, they employ efficient methods of multiplying and dividing, show recognition of approximate proportions by using fractions to describe them, and identify multiples, factors and square numbers. Standards of presentation vary considerably.

102. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Examples of good teaching were observed in both key stages during the inspection. Where teaching was good, teachers' high expectations resulted in challenging work, and pupils put more effort into getting it right. Purposeful questioning developed clear understanding of new knowledge. Practical investigations enabled pupils to learn through 'first-hand' experiences. A good choice and use of resources ensured that learning was effective. High levels of enthusiasm from the teacher, good relationships and a brisk pace helped to keep pupils motivated and involved.
103. Although strengths in teaching outnumber weaknesses, indicating why most pupils respond well to mathematics lessons, there are variations in the quality of teaching that adversely affect pupils' progress. Higher attaining pupils do not always make the best possible gains in developing their computation skills because they are sometimes given work which is too easy for them before they move on to more challenging tasks. The pace of work is sometimes slow, particularly in the opening 'mental' session and teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are sometimes not high enough. Teachers do not always use the end of the lesson well enough to enable pupils to consider and share problems and move the learning forward. Worksheets are sometimes used where 'real-life' problems would be more effective. Computers are used effectively to help pupils consolidate number skills, to learn how to interrogate databases, to interpret graphs and charts and to learn about angles. They are not used regularly enough for pupils to make the most of their skills.
104. The subject is well led and there are clear plans for its continued development. The regular monitoring of teaching and learning, and the good arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, including the analysis of test data, are helping to raise standards and improve achievement. Homework is regularly undertaken to help consolidate learning. The profile of the subject is being further raised through the increasing promotion of numeracy through other subjects, such as science, geography and history. The development of mental skills is given more emphasis than at the time of the last inspection.

SCIENCE

105. Standards in science are above average at the end of Years 2 and 6, with some pupils performing well above national expectations. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. Progress for most pupils is good in most areas of the subject as they move through the school because:
- teaching is good which helps pupils learn effectively;
 - all areas of the subject are given sufficient emphasis;
 - more investigative work is undertaken than at the time of the last inspection, enabling pupils to develop many of the skills of scientific enquiry;
 - pupils are keen to learn and most take a pride in their work; and,
 - regular assessments of pupils' work provide reliable information that enables teachers to chart progress, identify weaknesses and plan the next steps for pupils of different ability, including those with special educational needs.
106. By the end of Year 2, pupils recognise that living things grow and reproduce, identify the properties of different types of paper, and study changes when making bread. Investigative work on forces is being undertaken particularly well in this class and pupils are developing a thorough understanding of different aspects. For example, they know that pushes and pulls can cause objects to move and change speed and direction. They discover that forces change an object's shape and that objects can move because of natural forces, such as the wind. In Year 6, records of scientific investigations become more precise and analytical as pupils move through their final year. By the end of Year 6, pupils learn how the sun's position apparently changes during the day and about the resulting effect on a shadow's length and direction. They begin to appreciate how day and night are linked to the earth's spinning on its

axis. Higher attaining pupils confidently explain condensation, evaporation and solidification to describe changes of state.

107. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers provide a good range of opportunities for pupils to undertake scientific investigations. This helps them to acquire and retain knowledge and develop a thorough understanding. Some very good teaching was seen in both key stages during the inspection. Teachers are enthusiastic and inspire pupils to work hard. They use praise to enhance self-esteem. They pass on their good subject knowledge effectively so that pupils make good gains in learning. Well-chosen resources keep pupils interested and involved and purposeful questioning extends pupils' thinking further. A good match of tasks to pupils' needs provides appropriate levels of challenge. Where teachers give pupils responsibility to plan, implement and evaluate investigations for themselves, lessons are especially successful, because this approach contributes to their personal and social development as well as to their learning. For example, in a Years 3 and 4 lesson, pupils considered how to stop ice from melting by using different materials as thermal insulators. The strong attributes, described above, helped to ensure that pupils make at least good gains in learning. They also ensured that pupils were actively involved in developing scientific knowledge and understanding. As a direct result, pupils responded with enthusiasm and took pride in their work.
108. However, the work scrutiny revealed that pupils do not always make the best possible progress, and there are a number of reasons for this. When pupils carry out scientific investigations, they are sometimes too tightly structured by the teacher, and recording frameworks are the same for all pupils. In Years 1 and 2, too much time is spent by pupils colouring in pictures that record the work undertaken and improve presentation rather than moving on to the next steps. Teachers miss opportunities to use computers to develop understanding further or to consolidate new learning.
109. The high status afforded to science is evident in its many links with other subjects, such as with mathematics, food technology and English. For example, in a good contribution to the development of speaking and listening skills, pupils gave group presentations explaining why day and night occur. They used a range of different approaches, which showed inventiveness. There are good links in science with the school to which most pupils transfer.
110. The subject is well led, and there are plans for its continued development. The co-ordinator has analysed test data and identified where there are common strengths and particular weaknesses. Her action plans address these areas and focus effectively on improving achievement. There have been no opportunities to date to monitor teaching and learning, other than through pupils' completed work. This is an area for improvement identified by the school.

ART AND DESIGN and DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

111. Standards are in line with national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6 in art and design. This represents a significant improvement when compared to the findings of the last inspection, which indicated that standards were below national levels at the end of Year 6. The quality of some observational drawings completed by pupils exceeds national expectations, providing evidence that pupils achieve well in this area. Art is now more strongly represented than design and technology in the school's curriculum. Pupils make sound progress in art as they move through the school, and sketchbooks are used well to practise ideas. They are given many opportunities to explore and develop, investigate and make use of a wide range of tools, techniques and resources. However, they have fewer opportunities to evaluate the work of different artists. Art is used quite widely to support and bring to life work in other subjects.
112. By the end of Year 2 and 6, standards in design and technology are broadly in line with expected levels. The quality of pupils' learning in design and technology is sound in a small number of projects that enable them to apply and improve their skills of designing, making,

evaluating and changing the things that they make. However, as 'designing' is given less emphasis than 'making', standards are less secure in this component.

113. In art and design, pupils in Year 1 mix coloured paints to produce their own shades for paintings of fruit and vegetables. By the end of Year 2, pupils print their own designs on Christmas cards using polystyrene, complete observational drawings of buildings, and in a good link with science, record the growth of plants through careful drawings. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 explore skin and hair colour by mixing paint, illustrate stories after discussing possible techniques, use a variety of media in self-portraits, and study and re-create the work of Hans Holbein. By the end of Year 6, pupils make paint in the ways of the ancient Greeks by grinding ham stone, chalk and charcoal to a powder and adding oil. They produce darker and lighter effects through shading and the use of smudging techniques in detailed observational drawings of buildings in Yeovil, and design and make a ceramic tile mural.
114. In design and technology, by the end of Year 2, pupils use words and pictures to show how they intend to make hinges using cardboard. They design a meal using fruit and vegetables and design, make, test and evaluate a wheeled toy that can carry ten cubes. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 design and make photograph frames in work linked to science about 'structures', and design a garden with a wigwam and a scarecrow, in work linked to geography. By the end of Year 6, pupils design, make and evaluate their own musical instruments, including percussion and string and a wind instrument. They design original and individual leaflets to encourage pupils to wear school uniform.
115. Only one lesson was seen in each subject. The Years 1 and 2 design and technology lesson was good, and the art lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4 was sound. However, both teachers showed a good grasp of the subjects' requirements. Lessons were pitched at an appropriate level to enable all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make at least satisfactory progress. Pupils enjoyed the lessons and worked carefully. Resources contributed well to learning. There was good emphasis in both lessons on the development of important skills. However, in the art lesson, the teacher asked too few questions to develop understanding thoroughly enough. She did not often intervene purposefully to help pupils to move forward by sharing good practice, passing on her knowledge, giving advice or teaching specific skills.
116. The leadership of both subjects is sound. The art co-ordinator has clearly improved the status of art substantially since the last inspection. However, design and technology is not strongly enough represented as a separate subject. There are no consistent approaches to recording pupils' progress as they move through the school in either subject, although teachers use sketchbooks to track pupils' progress in art. Links with ICT, while evident, are under-represented at present.

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

117. Pupils make satisfactory gains in learning in both subjects as they move through the school and reach standards which are broadly typical of national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6. This is a similar picture to the findings of the last inspection. There are examples of higher attaining pupils reaching above average standards in geography at the end of both key stages. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well in lessons. This enables them to make satisfactory progress. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory in both subjects because:
- teachers place emphasis on developing skills of enquiry through the use of visits, such as to the immediate area, Ham Hill, and Yeovil, and using different sources of information, such as books, photographs, videos and the Internet;
 - both are soundly led and there are clear plans for their further development;
 - teachers use other subjects well to teach important geographical and historical skills; and,

- teachers give appropriate emphasis to the acquisition of a suitable vocabulary in both subjects. For example, in geography in work about the 'water cycle', pupils learn about erosion, deposition and evaporation.
118. There are reasons why pupils do not always make the best possible gains in learning in all areas of both subjects as they move through the school. Some chosen geographical topics, such as 'Children around the world', lack depth and promote stereotypical views. Work is not always matched to pupils' different abilities in Years 1 and 2, especially when worksheets are used. Links with ICT, although evident, are not sufficiently well developed throughout the school to help pupils acquire knowledge and understanding in either subject. Some areas are not taught in sufficient depth, for example the study of a locality in a less economically developed country in geography and an appreciation that history may be interpreted in different ways. There are no consistent approaches to assessing pupils' progress as they move through the school, which slows the rate at which pupils learn.
119. In geography, by the end of Year 2, pupils have acquired limited and superficial knowledge of places outside the United Kingdom, such as Japan and India. A study of the way of life of residents of the Caribbean is to a greater depth and of a higher standard. Research undertaken by pupils about a particular European country, such as Italy, is of an above average standard, and some is completed at home. By the end of Year 6, pupils understand the importance of location for the growth of settlements. They consider shopping patterns and trends as part of a detailed study of Middle Street in Yeovil, learn about the surrounding landscape, economic activity and leisure activities, and begin to appreciate how connections make places inter-dependent.
120. In history, by the end of Year 2, pupils start to distinguish between past lives and their own through a study of homes. By the end of Year 6, in a study of ancient Greece, pupils compare the way of life in Sparta with that of Athens, and learn about the history of the Olympic Games. They learn about changes in aspects of British life since 1948, and study the decades from 1950 to the present time, identifying each decade's main characteristics.
121. Number skills are given satisfactory emphasis in both subjects. For example, Year 6 pupils complete a timeline showing the main events during the Saxon era, and carry out traffic surveys at two locations in Yeovil. Literacy skills are soundly represented in both subjects. For example, Year 6 pupils carry out research to discover why ancient settlements were sited in specific locations, and write about the history of the Olympic Games, while Year 2 pupils compare, through their written work, modern and Victorian kitchens.
122. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in both subjects. Effective teaching was seen in history, in Years 1 and 2, when pupils compared old and new teddy bears. Careful questioning of pupils and a clear emphasis on promoting enquiry skills ensured rapid gains in learning. Other good features included brisk pace and very good resources, which contributed to learning and increased motivation. As a result of lessons like these, pupils enjoy history and develop good attitudes to work. A visit to a rural life museum for pupils in Years 1 and 2 helps to enrich their learning experiences and bring history to life. However, weaknesses in teaching in the one geography lesson observed in Years 3 and 4 resulted in unsatisfactory progress. In this lesson there were too many different activities going on at once and a lack of clarity about what pupils were supposed to learn. This resulted in pupils becoming bored, although they still behaved well. The pace of learning was slow and the lack of challenge inhibited progress.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

123. There have been significant improvements to the provision for ICT since the last inspection. New computers have been purchased and a computer suite has been set up so that large groups can be taught skills at the same time. All teachers have undergone training through the New Opportunities Fund so that they are now confident about teaching basic skills. The

subject leaders are training to a higher level to ensure that the school has competence in all aspects of the ICT curriculum. The school has developed a scheme of work that sets out what is to be taught to each class so that the work builds systematically. This is having a marked impact on the quality of teaching and learning and on the standards achieved.

124. By the end of Year 2 standards are broadly in line with national expectations but at the end of Year 6, although standards have improved since the last inspection, they remain below those expected of pupils of this age. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress but older pupils have not yet covered all the work thoroughly enough to ensure that they are sufficiently competent and some areas have not yet been attempted. There are gaps to be filled in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding, resulting from slow progress in years gone by when teachers lacked confidence and expertise, and planning was unsatisfactory. Taking into account pupils' previous attainment, pupils' achievements are good.
125. In Years 1 and 2, pupils know how to operate the keyboard and mouse, to access programs and to find their way around them. They use computers to practise reading, spelling and mathematics' skills. They write short stories and reports and use graphics programs to try out their ideas in art. When they use the robotic toy, they can enter instructions so that it will follow the route they planned. During the inspection, they entered numerical information into a database and displayed these in table and graphical forms. They know how to interpret the information shown. Higher attaining pupils consider the relative merits of different types of graph and say which one gives the best picture and why.
126. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 use the computer to draft and edit their writing. They can combine text and pictures in different lay-outs and alter print size and style. Pupils are familiar with spreadsheets and use them to manipulate numerical data. They can write a program to control the movement of an object on screen, building on earlier work with the robotic toy. Teaching currently concentrates on developing skills in working with an increasingly wide range of programs, explaining what each will do and investigating some of the possibilities for using them to support the work in other subjects. There are some good examples of this in geography where pupils have used databases in graphs to enter and display information gained in their study of Yeovil. This builds well on the work undertaken in science in Years 3 and 4 where pupils record the length of shadows at different times of the day. Pupils in this class have developed the computer graphic skills they learned in Years 1 and 2 to use to 'paint' flowers in the style of famous artists.
127. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Skills are taught well, pupils are learning quickly and the work builds systematically, but teachers do not plan for pupils to use computers often enough to support work in other subjects. There is some catching up still to be done to familiarise pupils with using the intranet, email facilities, sound, sensing equipment and problem-solving programs. They will then be in a better position to use the computers more regularly to develop aspects of the work in other subjects. Teachers and pupils are enthusiastic. There are usually two pupils to each computer and this leads to good levels of discussion and co-operation. Pupils are keen to help each other, to make suggestions and sort out problems. This helps to maintain a good pace as they do not rely too much on the teacher.
128. The co-ordinators are leading the development of work in ICT competently. There are clear plans for what needs to be done in the future and the expertise in now in place to ensure that this is accomplished.

MUSIC

129. A part-time specialist is employed by the school to teach all classes. This works well and has enabled standards to be maintained since the last inspection. Lessons are long enough to enable a range of skills to be taught and frequent enough for pupils to be able to recall what

they learned before. The teaching is good and the teacher uses her expertise effectively to develop pupils' skills. As a result, at the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils' standards in performing, both voice and instrument, are better than expected for their age group. Pupils make good progress in these aspects. There is insufficient evidence to comment on pupils' composition, listening and appraising skills. There is little evidence of pupils using computers to aid composition.

130. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use their voices expressively and tunefully. In the lesson observed, they responded promptly to musical signs to sing quietly or more loudly. Recorder players quickly learned a four-note, rising accompaniment to a familiar song and another group on xylophones practised a different accompaniment to add another layer. Percussion players joined in with a contrasting rhythm and the whole was performed with precision and fluency. The teacher held things together well by playing the tune on the piano. The teacher's lively approach kept pupils interested and working hard and they improved their performance well during the lesson. All had a part to play and did so with enthusiasm and enjoyment. One or two who had difficulty sustaining a rhythm made good progress in the lesson because the teacher gave them extra help, while the others sang the tune.
131. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 did not make quite so much progress in their lesson. The teacher's plans were ambitious and showed high expectations of pupils. The first part of the lesson involved part-singing. Most pupils worked hard at their parts but found it difficult to sustain different tunes when they came together. Together with the teacher they put in a lot of work and achieved success when she supported one group. In the second part of the lesson pupils accompanied a tune with a wide range of instruments. There was a large group of pupils who were clearly keen to do well, enjoyed the lesson and worked very hard to improve. These included pupils who learn instruments with visiting tutors and whose standard of musical skills is much higher than others'. There were some organisational difficulties in the lesson because of the large class and the number of different instruments involved. The pace of the lesson dropped and a few pupils began to lose interest. Eventually, the teacher re-established a good momentum and the final performance came together very well. The ensemble playing, involving all pupils, included recorders, trumpets, keyboard, guitar, flutes and percussion. Many pupils follow standard musical scores. A high standard of performance was reached and pupils were pleased with their efforts. The acoustics in the hall are poor and this affects pupils' listening skills and makes it hard for them and the teacher to achieve a balance when they play and sing together. The teacher involves them well in evaluating their own work and suggesting changes that might improve it.
132. A large group of pupils benefit from instrumental tuition from visiting specialists or from joining recorder groups and a band out of normal class lessons. This extends their skills and contributes to the overall standards achieved. Older pupils have also benefited from courses they have attended with pupils from other local schools at the local secondary school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

133. The programme for physical education includes gymnastics, games and dance in Years 1 and 2 and, in addition, swimming and athletics in Years 3 to 6. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The work is organised so that, in any one term, the pupils are engaged in two of these activities. It was possible to observe only a small sample of this programme during the course of the inspection. Based on this evidence, the quality of teaching and pupils' progress is satisfactory and standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly in line with what is expected for pupils of this age. Swimming records confirm that the majority of pupils reach the standards set in distance achieved in front and back crawl and in personal survival skills. Once pupils have achieved these basic standards they go on to develop a range of strokes and work towards more advanced awards. A minority reach very high standards.

134. In Years 1 and 2 teachers rely on pre-recorded programmes to teach dance. These taped programmes allow pupils to respond to well-chosen music and to practise a wide enough range of skills. In the lessons observed teaching and learning were satisfactory but there are several reasons why pupils could do better. These include:
- teachers do not work away from the tape long enough to improve particular skills such as rhythm, speed, levels, direction, shape or facial expression, or remind pupils which particular skills they should be concentrating on;
 - they tend not to ask individuals or groups to demonstrate when they do things particularly well so that pupils can learn from each other. When teachers do comment on good work, for example, a striking starting position, it has an immediate positive impact on the quality of other pupils' work; and,
 - although pupils behave well and listen with reasonable attention, the acoustics in the hall are unhelpful and the noise made by feet, even bare feet, tends to drown the music. Because of this, pupils do not always respond quickly enough to signals to stop and time is wasted as a result of this.
135. In the lesson observed in Years 5 and 6, games skills were taught well. An enjoyable game gained pupils' attention and they used it well to warm up. Boys and girls worked co-operatively to maintain energetic activity. Pupils maintained their enthusiasm and concentration throughout the lesson and made good progress in co-ordinating hand and eye and in teamwork because:
- the teacher concentrated on improving throwing and catching skills and provided effective advice about achieving greater accuracy;
 - a good pace was maintained and pupils worked hard in a small-sided, competitive game to improve accuracy and speed;
 - the teacher developed the lesson further so that larger groups worked together and pupils needed to modify tactics; and,
 - the teacher gave pupils the opportunity to evaluate their work so they recognised where they needed to improve and the importance of particular skills in a games situation.
- The two pupils not able to participate were involved well as referees.
136. The school provides very good opportunities for enthusiastic and more physically able pupils to take part in competitive sports. This enables a good number to develop their aptitudes and skills further. A minority of the pupils reach high standards in ball games and swimming. The school is well known locally for its sporting prowess. Awards and tournament successes testify to this. Acknowledgements, including letters from other participating schools, provide evidence of pupils' behaviour, sportsmanship and good manners. Parents confirm that it is a pleasure to accompany pupils on these occasions and value, above all, the attitudes developed by the school. In discussions with pupils they indicate that representing their school gives them a great sense of pride. The residential visit undertaken by pupils in Years 5 and 6 enables them to participate in a range of adventurous activities to widen their experiences further.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

137. Pupils at the end of Year 2 reach the standards expected by the Somerset Agreed Syllabus for religious education but pupils at the end of Year 6 do not. This syllabus sets out clearly what pupils are expected to learn about religion and what they should understand about human experience and the impact of religion on people's lives. It is a demanding syllabus, especially for pupils in Years 3 to 6, that requires skill to interpret it well and time to teach it in sufficient depth. National guidance is helping teachers to develop an effective teaching plan but this has not been running long enough for pupils to develop skills, knowledge and understanding over the four years in Key Stage 2. As a result there are gaps in their learning. At Key Stage 1, the work for Years 1 and 2 is covered in one class and so the impact of the changes to planning has been seen more quickly. Teachers need more support in the form of training to help them

improve planning and pupils' progress. Standards have deteriorated since the last inspection when they were described as good.

138. Progress in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. Pupils' completed work shows that they have thought about people, belongings and occasions that are special to them and considered why this is so. This is of immediate interest to them and something that pupils can relate to well. It provides a good foundation for considering the special books, places and festivals that are important to Christians. They know about some key events in the Bible, for example the Christmas and Easter stories. They know about some of the links between secular and religious life such as Pancake Day and Lent. The work planned also gives pupils the opportunity to learn about Judaism. They know about the Torah and that this is a special book for Jews, containing stories that are important to their beliefs. This part of the work is covered rather thinly and there is little evidence in pupils' books that there have been opportunities to learn about Jewish festivals or practices. As a result pupils can make few useful comparisons about the similarities and differences.
139. Through thinking about feelings and rules, pupils in Years 1 and 2 begin to realise the importance of relationships and the need to consider the effect of their actions on others, and learn to value and respect each other's views.
140. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have learnt about the life and teachings of Jesus, especially in terms of loving your neighbour. They know that Jesus taught through parables. When they learn about some of them, such as the 'Good Samaritan', they relate this to their own lives. There are good opportunities to learn that religious beliefs can affect the way people live their lives when, in Years 3 and 4, they learn about St. Francis of Assisi, Martin Luther King and Mother Teresa.
141. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 learn about the different types of story that make up the Bible. When they learn about the Biblical account of the creation of the world, they compare it with other accounts including creation myths and scientific theory. They look for evidence in the Bible for Jesus as a loving saviour, a ruler and a judge. Pupils know that Christians pray in order to focus on a problem, to ask for guidance and to deal with situations. They have talked to the local vicar about his beliefs and about a priest's clothes. A few basic facts about Islam in terms of belief, religious practices and prayer life are secure but pupils have little knowledge of other faiths included in the syllabus.
142. Progress in Years 3 to 6 is unsatisfactory. The work undertaken does not yet build into a coherent whole. It is not clear how the work in Years 1 and 2 is developed further as pupils get older. In discussion with pupils in Year 6, they recalled much of the work undertaken in previous years in outline only. They take the work seriously and are interested to talk about it but they do not have a wide enough range of knowledge or sufficient depth of understanding to be able to express their views confidently about different aspects. For example, they find it difficult to draw useful comparisons about what different religions hold in common or identify where there are distinct differences. The amount of time given to the subject is not enough and the effects of the fairly recent changes to planning have yet to improve progress over years. It is not possible to make secure judgements about the quality of teaching and learning on the basis of evidence gained from planning, past work and the observation of only one lesson. However, there is evidence that pupils of different ages and ability in the same class often do the same work and this presents little challenge to older and more able pupils.