

INSPECTION REPORT

CHRIST CHURCH CE FIRST SCHOOL

Frome

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123757

Headteacher: Mrs S Bullmore

Reporting inspector: Mr L Lewin
22330

Dates of inspection: 11th March – 14th March 2002

Inspection number: 222271

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	3 – 9 year-olds
Gender of pupils:	mixed
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev Peter Rapsey
Date of previous inspection:	6/3/00

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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22330	Mr L Lewin	Registered inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, design and technology, music, special educational needs and equal opportunities.	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
14324	Mr M Hudson	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 the parents?
31819	Mrs S Duggins	Team inspector	English, art, religious education, Foundation Stage.	
20097	Mr J Griffiths	Team inspector	Science, history, geography, physical education.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities?

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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?	10
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?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	20
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	20
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	23
THE SCHOOL'S NURTURE GROUP (KALEIDOSCOPE CLASS)	24
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	25
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	28

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Christ Church, Church of England Voluntary Controlled First School is located in the Keyford area of Frome. It is an average size school, with 221 boys and girls on roll aged from three to nine years. The pupils are taught in seven classes by seven full-time teachers (including the headteacher) and four part-time teachers. The number of pupils attending the school has remained at around the same level over recent years. Most pupils come from the estates in the immediate locality, which comprise mainly local authority housing. In recent years, the number of pupils entering the school with special educational needs has been increasing. The school has a Nursery attended by 20 children in the morning session and 20 children in the afternoon session. Also, the school has a nurture unit for pupils who experience social and emotional difficulties in the mainstream classrooms. The unit is intended to help these pupils to gain confidence and eventually reintegrate fully with their usual class. At 28 per cent, the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. 38 per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs, which is much higher than the national average (23.7 per cent). All pupils attending the school are of white U.K. heritage with no pupils having English as an additional language. The attainment of children on entry to the nursery is generally well below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. Due to the very good leadership of the headteacher and key staff all members of the school community work together as a strong team and this has helped the school to continue making rapid improvement. Effective management systems have helped the staff create a friendly, secure and caring school atmosphere. Good teaching enables the pupils to achieve well. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The school is very well led and managed and staff work together as a highly effective team.
- Teaching overall is good and learning support assistants and nursery nurses provide very effective support for pupils so that they achieve well by the time they are nine years old.
- The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is a strength of the school.
- Provision for supporting pupils with special educational needs, including pupils who attend the school's nurture group, is very effective.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is very good and the school is very effective at making sure the pupils are well cared for.
- The school has established very good links with the parents and keeps them very well informed.

What could be improved

- Standards in English.
- The use of assessment information to help teachers plan their lessons and the marking of pupils' work.
- Provision for extending the higher attaining pupils in lessons.
- The irregular attendance of a small minority of pupils.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has improved at a very good rate since it was last inspected in March 2000 when standards in English, mathematics and science were highlighted as in need of improvement and the school was noted to be underachieving. This is no longer the case - standards have improved significantly in the subjects mentioned above, although English still remains a weakness. Teaching and assessment were highlighted as in need of improvement and have also improved significantly. Pupils' attitudes to learning, criticised in the last report, are now judged to be good. In addition, the school has built on the previously noted strong provision in the nursery class so that the provision for the whole of the Foundation Stage is now a strength of the school. Since the last inspection, much has been done to improve the building, the school has launched its new nurture group facility and it now provides a greater range of support facilities for parents. The headteacher has introduced a wide range of effective policies and management systems and the governors have upgraded their role in the overall management of the school. There is much enthusiasm and commitment amongst the staff and governors to sustain the current good rate of improvement in the future.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
Reading	E	E	E	D
Writing	E	E*	E	C
Mathematics	E	E	C	A

<i>Key</i>	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
results within the lowest 5 per cent nationally	E*

The table above shows that in the end of Key Stage 1 national tests in 2001 the school's results were well below average in reading and writing and average in mathematics when compared with all schools nationally. The results reflect a better picture when compared to other ¹similar schools, being below average in reading, average in writing and well above average in mathematics. This marks an improvement in standards since the school was last inspected, especially in mathematics. The trend of improvement is in line with the national trend in reading and writing, but results in mathematics are improving at a faster rate than they are nationally. The findings of the inspection show that standards continue to improve, with pupils mostly attaining below average levels in reading and writing, but matching the national expectation in all other subjects apart from music where there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement. Most children start school in the nursery showing attainment that is well below average, but as a result of very effective provision, the children make good progress in their learning in the nursery and reception classes so that standards by the end of the ²Foundation Stage are generally average in most of the areas of learning except in communication, language and literacy where standards are below average. The current cohort of Year 4 pupils have progressed well at Key Stage 2 from a low starting point, so that most pupils now attain below average standards in English, but average standards in all other subjects. Overall, most pupils achieve well by the time they reach the age of nine. Despite the improvements in results, English standards are still not good enough. Also, too few pupils attain the higher levels in most subjects and higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently extended by the work provided. All other groups of pupils including those with special educational needs are well challenged by the work provided and achieve well by the age of nine (Year 4). The standard of singing is good throughout the school. The school is successful in reaching the targets it sets for pupils' performance, but the targets set for higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenging.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are happy to learn and settle quickly into lessons. They respond to challenge, sustain interest and enthusiasm and most remain attentive in classes and assemblies.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The atmosphere across the school is calm, orderly and purposeful. Overall, behaviour in most lessons and assemblies is good, but there are some instances of inappropriate behaviour, which are well managed by the staff.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils enjoy responsibility and carry out the duties they are given with enthusiasm and pride. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff are positive and friendly.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. A small minority of parents do not co-operate with the school by sending their children to school on a regular basis.

¹ Similar schools are banded – for the purposes of comparison of test results - by the number of pupils deemed eligible to receive free school meals.

² The Foundation Stage applies to children from the age of three to the end of the reception year.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 4
Quality of teaching	Good	Satisfactory	Good

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

The quality of teaching is good overall. This is an improvement on the last inspection when it was mainly satisfactory. Teaching is especially effective in nursery and reception and in Years 3 – 4 because work set is particularly challenging for pupils and the pace of learning is consistently good and occasionally very good. In line with the satisfactory teaching in Years 1 - 2, pupils make sound progress with their learning. Throughout the school, teachers establish a strong rapport with all groups of pupils. They have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour and involvement in class activities. Teachers generally show confident subject knowledge, provide clear explanations and also demonstrate tasks well. Literacy and numeracy skills are well taught in nursery and reception and in Years 3 - 4 and satisfactorily taught in Years 1 - 2. Generally teachers meet the needs of all pupils, but on too many occasions, particularly in Years 1 – 2, they do not make sufficient provision for extending the higher attaining pupils. Also, teachers do not currently make sufficient use of the assessment information to inform the next stages in pupils' learning. The teachers and the classroom support staff provide very effective guidance for all of the pupils with special educational needs. The school benefits from having a particularly strong team of nursery nurses and learning support assistants. They work very closely with the teachers, are particularly well briefed and provide very effective guidance for individuals and groups of pupils. In the nurture unit (Kaleidoscope class) the teacher and learning support assistant show a highly skilled approach with helping pupils with severe social and emotional difficulties to learn to cope with everyday classroom situations. The sessions in this class are very well organised and provide a wide range of opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. The school provides a broad, balanced and interesting curriculum. A particularly good range of quality activities is provided for children in the Foundation Stage.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The school has a wide range of effective strategies for supporting pupils with special educational needs. The nurture group unit (Kaleidoscope class) is very effective in helping pupils with social and emotional difficulties learn to cope better with school life.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. There is very good provision for moral and social development whilst spiritual and cultural development are good. The school makes a good effort to include these areas into its curricular planning.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for child protection and pupils' welfare are very good. The school has a strong Christian ethos, staff know pupils very well and pastoral care has a very high priority. The school has introduced very good assessment procedures but does not make sufficient use of information gained from assessing pupils' performance to help improve future lesson plans.
How well the school works in partnership with the parents.	Parents' have a high regard for the work of the school. Very good links have been established with parents and they are kept very well informed. Most parents involve themselves effectively in their children's learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is very well led and managed. The headteacher provides an atmosphere in which staff work very effectively together as a team. She is very ably supported by the deputy headteacher, with whom she works closely and also by other key members of staff and the governing body.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are well informed about and involved in the management of the school. They work closely with the headteacher and staff. The chair of governors provides particularly strong and effective support.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher has established suitable systems to enable her and the staff to monitor the work of the school effectively. Through briefings from the headteacher and co-ordinators, plus the regular visits that many of the governors make to the school, they are in a good position to judge the school's effectiveness.
The strategic use of resources	Finances are very well maintained at the school. The headteacher ensures that all available grants are procured and great care is taken to allocate money available effectively. The governors have a good understanding of the principles of best value and, for example, they carefully consider the value for money of different purchases and contract awards.

The school has an appropriate number of suitably qualified and experienced teaching staff. The number of support staff is very good and they make an important and effective contribution to pupils' progress. The school's commitment to a high level of non-teaching staff is effective in supporting the teaching and learning of its pupils. The administrative and clerical support provided by the school secretary successfully ensures the smooth day-to-day running of the school. The school accommodation is satisfactory. The grounds are attractive and well maintained. The school atmosphere is purposeful, vibrant and friendly. The overall quality and range of resources to support and enhance teaching and learning across the curriculum are sound. The school has identified rightly the need to improve its provision of large outdoor equipment to support the development of physical skills in the reception class of the Foundation Stage.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>Most parents have a high regard for the school. In particular they feel that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school is well led and managed; • staff are very approachable and helpful and work closely with parents; • their children like school and are expected to work hard; • the teaching is good and their children make good progress 	

Forty-one per cent of parents returned the pre-inspection questionnaire and 15 attended the pre-inspection parents' meeting. The inspection team agree with the very positive views expressed by the parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. When children enter the nursery, their levels of attainment are mainly well below average. The overall percentage of pupils having special educational needs is well above the national average. As a result of very effective provision, children make good progress in their learning in the nursery and reception classes so that standards by the end of the ³Foundation Stage, they are generally average in most of the areas of learning except in communication, language and literacy where standards are below average. The pace of learning throughout Key Stage 1 generally slows to a satisfactory level in line with the overall satisfactory teaching at this key stage; so that by the time pupils reach the age of seven they attain average standards in all subjects except reading and writing, which remain below average. The school's clear tracking of pupils' progress shows that the current Year 4 pupils have progressed well from a low starting point at the beginning of Key Stage 2. As a result of good teaching at Key Stage 2, they are now well on course to reach average standards in all subjects by the end of the year, except once again in English where standards remain stubbornly below average. The school recognises that more improvement is needed in English and is working hard to achieve this. Overall, pupils achieve well by the age of nine (Year 4).
2. *As in other inspection reports, the school's end of Key Stage 1 national test results are compared to other schools nationally and other ⁴similar schools. Much research has been carried out locally that shows that the circumstances of the families whose children attend the school (reflected by the number of pupils deemed eligible for free school meals), are much less favourable than indicated by the nationally produced data. The inspection team accept the validity of the research findings. The similar school comparison grades published in the summary section of this report have therefore been raised accordingly. Reading, which was grade E, is now grade D. Writing, which was grade D, is now C and mathematics, which was grade B, is now grade A. These new grades are the ones referred to in the report paragraphs.*
3. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests taken towards the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' results for reading were well below average in comparison with schools nationally and below average when compared to other similar schools. Results for writing were well below average compared to other schools nationally, but average when compared to other similar schools. Notably, the school's results for mathematics were average in comparison with other schools nationally but well above average when compared to other similar schools. These results – particularly those in relation to other similar schools mark significant progress that the school has made in improving standards since the last inspection. Also, the school's results in reading and writing improved in line with the national trend of improvement. In mathematics, the school's results have improved at a faster rate than results nationally.
4. The school has made a significant investment in increasing the number of support staff, improving the overall quality of teaching and further developing the effectiveness of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. There is clear evidence that these strategies are now beginning to impact, but it is also likely that their full impact is yet to be realised. The well above average number of pupils identified with special educational needs at 37 per cent, makes the job of raising standards a relatively slow process.
5. Too often, particularly at Key Stage 1, all of the pupils in one year group, or sometimes one class, work on the same task and therefore at the same level. This means that whilst lower attaining and

³ The Foundation Stage applies to children from the age of three to the end of the reception year.

⁴ Similar schools are banded – for the purposes of comparison of test results - by the number of pupils deemed eligible to receive free school meals.

- average attaining pupils are usually well challenged by the activities provided, higher attaining pupils in particular are not always sufficiently extended by the tasks provided.
6. Taken altogether, the end of Key Stage 1 national test results over the last few years indicate that girls perform better than boys and to a slightly greater extent than noted nationally. The school is aware of these differences and monitors each pupil's progress very carefully, setting individual targets for improvement. There was no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls seen during the inspection. Inspection evidence shows that standards attained by pupils at the age of seven have continued to improve since the end of key stage tests last year and are now below average in reading and writing (rather than well below average) and average in mathematics.
 7. Teachers place a strong emphasis upon speaking and listening, and pupils at both key stages are set to reach above the expected level in listening but are well below average with their speaking skills. At both key stages, pupils concentrate well and listen carefully to their teachers and each other. They generally progress well as a result of the strong support of the teachers and learning support assistants. However, they currently display limited spoken vocabulary for their ages. Key Stage 1 pupils respond suitably to questions, but their answers are often monosyllabic and unclear. At Key Stage 2, pupils contribute to and follow class discussions but most lack confidence with speaking out and need much encouragement.
 8. Standards are currently below average in reading for pupils at the ages of seven and nine. While many Year 2 pupils are becoming more fluent readers, many do not have a good understanding of the text they read. They often use only a limited range of strategies to help them move through the text. A few higher attaining and average attaining Year 4 pupils read fluently and accurately, with appropriate use of expression. However, most pupils read mechanically and with limited comprehension of the text. Many pupils are unsure of how to retrieve a book from the library or how a library is organised.
 9. Pupils' attainment in writing is below average at the ages of seven and nine. A few higher attaining Year 2 pupils rewrite a story they have been told with correct sequencing of the facts, but for most pupils, although they manage the work, there is little detail in the writing and sentences are not often punctuated. At Key Stage 2, a few pupils show the ability to write sequences of sentences confidently, and successfully develop their skills of creative writing, with logical construction and correct grammatical structure. However, most pupils tend to use simple sentence constructions rather than more complex, interesting sentences and require much support from the teacher or learning support assistants. Many examples of written work are brief with sparsely developed points. Lower attaining pupils make a good effort and with good support complete their work. Handwriting has improved significantly since the last inspection at both key stages, and pupils generally present their work neatly and at an appropriate standard for their ages.
 10. Although using and applying work in mathematics has improved since the last inspection, it remains the weaker area of mathematics, mainly because pupils throughout the school experience difficulties in articulating their mathematical thinking. Year 2 pupils manage simple written problems and use the vocabulary they know correctly, with help. Year 4 pupils try different approaches to solve written problems, but many find this difficult and show only a restricted range of ideas. Year 2 pupils are competent with number bonds to 20 and a few work beyond this level. They show an appropriate basic understanding of place value. They show a competent approach to carrying out a range of simple calculations using the four rules of number and manage 'doubling' and 'halving' of numbers. Key Stage 2 pupils show an appropriate knowledge of multiplication tables for their ages. Year 4 pupils count to 50 and back in different interval steps efficiently, and also carry out written addition and subtraction calculations that involve two sets of three digit numbers. Year 2 pupils know the common names for a variety of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes and competently draw pictograms to represent information they have collected. Year 4 pupils correctly classify three-dimensional shapes. They record information accurately on frequency charts and explore the different ways to present the information as a bar chart graph.

11. In the last inspection the teaching of experimental and investigative science was criticised. This area has improved to a satisfactory level and generally pupils have an appropriate range of experiences to help them acquire the necessary skills knowledge and understanding. Pupils now show an appropriate knowledge of testing procedures although a lack of vocabulary sometimes hampers their ability to discuss the work that they do. At the age of seven, pupils understand simple sorting and classifying systems for the animal kingdom. They know facts about a wide range of animals. Pupils acquire an appropriate basic knowledge of 'push' and 'pull' forces. By Year 4 pupils have developed this knowledge further and investigate and measure a range of different forces. They understand the working of a simple electrical circuit. They have studied simple phenomena such as magnetism and have made suitable measurements to check the strength of different magnets.
12. Pupils have an appropriate range of experience with information and communication technology (ICT). Year 2 pupils successfully program a floor robot. They use word processing facilities regularly, draw attractive pictures using an art program, support their work in literacy and numeracy and have used the Internet to research for information about beaches. Pupils know how to print their work, correct mistakes and use the space bar, delete and enter keys. Year 4 pupils have acquired appropriate knowledge of how to enter data into a program. They know how to save, retrieve and print items and have used ICT extensively to edit and draft their writing. Pupils use programs to support their work in literacy, numeracy, science, geography, art and music. In discussion pupils show that they have an appropriate knowledge and understanding in most areas, their skills with using the Internet and with control are not as good as they should be. The lack of a computer suite means that pupils have a low amount of 'hands on' time with the computers compared to other school that have such facilities.
13. In line with the locally agreed syllabus, pupils acquire appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding in religious education both through their lessons and during assembly. Pupils learn about their own and other faiths. For example, Year 2 pupils consider the Christian story of the creation and they are familiar with the Jewish tradition of Shabbat. Pupils usefully put Bible stories into an everyday context. For example, in devising school and class rules, Key Stage 2 pupils consider the rules laid down in the Ten Commandments. Pupils are familiar with stories Jesus told, such as the Good Samaritan. Year 4 pupils also further expand their understanding of world faiths, for example, gaining an appropriate knowledge and understanding about Hindu rituals and traditions.
14. In all other subjects most pupils attain standards that match the national expectation by the ages of seven and nine. Pupils sing well and with much enthusiasm.
15. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the high level of support they receive. The school's deliberate policy of employing extra learning support assistants is a successful strategy that helps these pupils to progress well throughout the school. In addition, the school's Kaleidoscope class (nurture group) is very effective in helping pupils with behavioural and emotional problems learn to cope better in the classroom. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the specific targets in their individual education plans.
16. Teachers set appropriate targets for the performance of lower and average attaining pupils, but targets set for higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenging. The school was successful in reaching the targets set for the national tests in 2001. Generally, all groups of pupils achieve well, but there is clear potential for improving the achievement of higher attaining pupils, particularly at Key Stage 1.
17. Since the last inspection, standards overall have improved, especially when compared with the results of similar schools. Overall, the rate of progress of pupils as they move through the school is better than that reported previously. However, the school has itself identified the need for further specific improvement in English and has already put in place initiatives to help bring about this improvement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

18. Since the last inspection pupils' attitudes have improved and are now good. Pupils are happy to learn and settle quickly into lessons. They respond to challenge, sustain interest and enthusiasm, and most remain attentive in classes and assemblies. Pupils are well motivated, show a high degree of commitment and stay focussed on the tasks set. They enjoy learning activities such as making models and using computers. Pupils work effectively both on their own as in programmed reading before registration in Year 3 and in paired and group activities, for example performing actions to music in Year 1. They take pride in their efforts and are keen to share their pleasure in achievement. Pupils usually listen carefully to what others have to say, and try hard to contribute to discussions, although their contributions are often quite limited. Parents confirm their children like school and work hard. Pupils' positive attitudes enhance their learning.
19. Pupils' behaviour is good, as it was at the last inspection. There have been no exclusions. The behaviour policy and code of conduct are well understood by pupils and properly applied by staff. On entering school pupils are taught to exercise self-discipline and they respond willingly to what is expected of them. The atmosphere across the school is calm, orderly and purposeful. Behaviour in most lessons and assemblies is good. There are some instances of inappropriate behaviour, but these are always well managed by the staff. At playtimes and around the school pupils behave well and they respect property such as computers and displays. At lunch, pupils are nicely mannered and friendly, making it an enjoyable social occasion. Pupils are pleasantly inquisitive with visitors. During the inspection there were no signs of harassment or aggression. Pupils' good behaviour supports their efforts to make progress in lessons.
20. Pupils' personal development has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Pupils are self-assured, have personal esteem and the ability to organise themselves effectively. Those who lack confidence or are socially insecure profit from the personal advice and support they receive, especially within the nurture unit (Kaleidoscope Class). Although opportunities for independent learning in lessons are sometimes missed, when pupils work on their own, for example in topic research, they show good initiative. Pupils enjoy responsibility and carry out the duties they are given with enthusiasm and pride. Discussions of important issues like bullying improve pupils' social awareness. Pupils appreciate the purpose of charities, benefit from visits and local events and have a growing sense of citizenship. Pupils noticeably mature as they move through the school.
21. Since the last inspection relationships have continued to be good. Pupils are treated with respect and good relationships flourish under the consistent and sensitive approach of staff. Pupils trust and have affinity with their teachers and confide in them when they are worried or upset. Relationships between pupils are positive and friendly, and boys and girls interact well. Pupils are caring and considerate and they show genuine concern if other pupils are injured or upset. They have noticeable respect for the values and beliefs of others and a good understanding of peer group feelings. There are many constructive and harmonious relationships. Playtimes are lively but congenial and pupils cooperate successfully. At lunchtime pupils sit happily together at mixed tables. Relationships are strengthened during extra curricular activities and educational visits. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into the school community.
22. Attendance is unsatisfactory and a small minority of pupils do not attend school as regularly as they should. In the last school year attendance was below the national average while unauthorised absence in the same year was above the average. Despite its full and conscientious actions to remedy the situation, the school has not been successful in engaging the co-operation of the parents concerned. Punctuality is satisfactory and lessons begin on time. Registration is prompt and efficient, pupils answer politely and there is an orderly start to the daily sessions. Pupils' unsatisfactory attendance disrupts the learning of those involved.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

23. The quality of teaching is good overall. In the lessons observed, 98 per cent of teaching was at least satisfactory of which 65 per cent was good or better, 18 per cent was very good and only one lesson was unsatisfactory. The teaching has improved significantly since the school's last inspection when only a third of teaching was noted as being good or better and six per cent was reported as unsatisfactory.
24. At the Foundation Stage all of the teaching was at least good and 36 percent was very good. Class teachers and classroom support staff work closely together. The teachers ensure that nursery nurses and learning support assistants are fully briefed for all activities. Classrooms have a secure, friendly and happy atmosphere in which the children enjoy learning and therefore grow in confidence. Teachers' planning is comprehensive and gives a clear picture of the learning objectives for each session. The work planned relates closely to the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals. Teachers make full use of assessment information to help refine future planning and to ensure that plenty of challenging activities are provided for pupils in all sessions. A strength of the teaching is the intensive input that staff make in guiding and discussing work with the children. They keep a running dialogue going with children, interspersed with questions designed to encourage the children to talk about what they see or are doing. For example, in one nursery session seen the teacher successfully developed children's confidence through this approach so that eventually they began to independently describe items with words such as 'bigger than' and 'longer than'. Teachers show confident subject knowledge and a particularly clear knowledge of how children learn at this stage. For example, in a reception class literacy session, the teacher gauged very carefully how well children could sustain their concentration while sitting on the carpet and moved them on to the next activity at precisely the right moment to prevent them from losing their concentration. Teachers and support staff manage children's behaviour very well with a blend of firmness, and sensitivity, as required, based on a thorough knowledge of the children's individual needs. They use different strategies and resources well to help pupils concentrate, such as the kangaroo puppet used in a reception numeracy session that motivated the children and made number work very enjoyable for the class. There is high quality interaction between staff and pupils and teachers are especially skilled at drawing the best from the children by the appropriate use of praise and encouragement.
25. At Key Stage 2, teaching is good. Seventy-six per cent was at least good and 24 percent was very good. At Key Stage 1 teaching is satisfactory overall. Thirty-eight per cent of lessons seen were good, five per cent were very good and 57 per cent of lessons seen were satisfactory.
26. At both key stages teachers establish a strong rapport with their pupils and have a clear insight into their individual needs. In particular, teachers have very high expectations of children's behaviour and involvement in classroom activities. As a result, children generally behave well and most of them, including those with special educational needs, feel confident to join in and therefore progress well with their learning.
27. Lessons generally run at a good pace. Teachers judge the pace well in terms of sustaining pupils' interest and moving discussion along; for example, before pupils have a chance to get bored. In addition, teachers usually give pupils a clear indication of how much time they have to complete a task.
28. In the best lessons seen teachers made a clear point of introducing pupils to the main objectives at the start of a session and reviewed these again at the end of the session to check on understanding and set future targets. However, in many of the satisfactory lessons seen this process was not clear and pupils were not always given a clear understanding of what was expected from them in the session.
29. Teachers generally show confident subject knowledge in all of the areas they teach. They generally provide clear explanations and also demonstrate tasks well where this is needed. Teachers' planning

is comprehensive and usually gives a detailed picture of what they hope to achieve in sessions. The school has thoroughly implemented the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and planning for these areas is especially detailed. Some teachers review their own planning on a regular basis, but not all teachers consistently carry out this process. Preparation for lessons is very good and many sessions were seen where the teacher and learning support assistant went to much trouble to organise worksheets and resources carefully prior to the lesson to ensure that all items were readily available and so prevented any hindrance to the flow of the work. However, on too many occasions, particularly at Key Stage 1, all pupils in a class carry out work at the same level and, although teachers successfully extend the lower and average attaining pupils, higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently extended. This is one of the main factors that prevent pupils from doing as well as they should in English. Linked to this area, teachers do not currently make sufficient use of the assessment information available to inform the next stages in their planning and help them to set precise targets for pupils' future performance. For example, conversations with teachers showed that refinements that they *do* make to their planning are usually based on informal assessment of how successful their lessons were. No formal systematic approach is currently adopted to guide an approach to utilising assessment information.

30. Teachers manage the behaviour of their pupils very well. They set high expectations for behaviour and, where necessary, rightly stop the work to remind pupils about what is acceptable or unacceptable behaviour. The approach to this area is consistent across the school and results in well-behaved pupils who work well with each other and with staff. It also results in a purposeful atmosphere in most sessions and helps all pupils to maintain their concentration on the areas being taught. Teachers use a good range of strategies to support pupils' behaviour and aid their concentration. For example in many lessons the teachers pause activities frequently and check that all pupils are fully focused on what they have to do. In the best lessons, teachers show a persistent and sensitive approach towards dealing with difficult behaviour. They manage to balance firmness with the need to make the learning enjoyable. This was seen clearly in a Year 4 music lesson, where the teacher needed to stop the singing to ensure behaviour met with her high expectations, but she maintained the momentum of the work with good humour so that pupils remained enthusiastic and interested.
31. The relationships between teachers and pupils are good. Teachers make full use of the strong rapport they have with pupils to work in an interactive way with them wherever possible. For example in a Year 3 numeracy lesson, the teacher promoted pupils' interest and understanding well by getting them to help her cut up a cake for sharing later as part of the problem solving work with fractions. On another occasion in a Year 4 religious education lesson, the teacher helped pupils gain an insight into life in a Hindu community by getting all pupils to remove their shoes before entering the room. Similarly, teachers are good at involving pupils in discussions and use a wide range of strategies to help them to gain confidence with talking. For example in a Year 2/3 geography session, the teacher not only used good questioning to promote the discussion, but also set pupils to work with partners – asking each other questions about the topic. This successfully stimulated a range of good ideas amongst pupils.
32. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The tasks provided for pupils with special educational needs very closely match their needs and this helps them make good progress with their learning. Individual education plans are thorough and provide clear targets for future performance. The teachers and the classroom support staff provide very effective guidance for all of the pupils with special educational needs. Overall, the staff know these pupils well and cater sensitively for their needs.
33. The school benefits from having a particularly strong team of nursery nurses and learning support assistants. It has been a deliberate strategy by the school to increase their number and deployment to help support the teachers and pupils and, in particular, to support the large number of pupils in the school who experience difficulties with learning. This strategy has been, and is, very successful.

They work very closely with the teachers, are particularly well briefed and provide very effective guidance for individuals and groups of pupils. Many of them have received training and therefore usefully provide extra expertise and guidance within the school. They are particularly skilled at supporting pupils during whole class teaching sessions. For example, in the majority of lessons where the teachers teach all of the pupils together, for instance, at the start of literacy and numeracy sessions, the learning support assistants sit near or next to individual pupils or groups, quietly prompting pupils to ensure they understand and remained focused on the work. Similarly, in follow-up activities, they carefully monitor and guide pupils allotted to them. The nursery nurses and learning support assistants show a particularly sensitive understanding of when to intervene and when to let pupils work independently.

34. Throughout the school, all subjects are effectively taught and, in particular, teachers focus well on providing pupils with the basic skills they need. The school is acutely aware of the need to further improve standards in English and has already put significant actions in place, such as increasing the number of learning support assistants, to aid this improvement.

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

35. As at the time of the last inspection the curriculum provision in the nursery class is very good, but this has now been extended to the reception classes where provision was sound previously. The quality and range of activities provided for nursery and reception children are very good and the recommended Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage is fully in place. Well-planned activities make a positive contribution to the good progress that the children make. Activities and experiences are planned very thoroughly and based on the national Early Learning Goals recommended for children at these ages.
36. The curriculum provided for Key Stages 1 and 2 is broad and includes all subjects of the National Curriculum including religious education. In the recent past the school has reviewed its curriculum provision. Significant improvements have taken place since the last inspection and the school now provides a satisfactory balance in all aspects of the curriculum. There is an appropriate bias towards the core subjects of English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology and religious education.
37. The school has a rolling programme of topics to take account of the wide age and ability range in each class and care is taken to ensure that pupils do not repeat topics in each subject. Liaison between the school and the middle school has resulted in a good choice of topics so that the junior pupils have their full entitlement to the National Curriculum by the time they reach the end of Year 6 in the middle school. Teachers plan work in detail for each term using the rolling programme. The school has sensibly adapted and supplemented the guidance provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority to ensure coverage of the statutory curriculum. The co-ordinators of subjects monitor the planning of lessons to ensure the coverage of the curriculum.
38. The school works hard to ensure, as far as possible, that there is equality of access, opportunity and inclusion of all pupils to the curriculum regardless of ability and background. The support provided for pupils with special educational needs ensures that they generally have access to the full curriculum. A few pupils with severe social and emotional problems are withdrawn from classrooms to work in the nurture unit (Kaleidoscope class) and therefore miss some of the areas of work undertaken by their peers. However, through an intensive programme of training in social skills, the nurture group helps these pupils to learn to cope better in the classroom and therefore eventually gain better access to the curriculum (see paragraphs 73 – 75). This initiative is one of a wide range of different strategies employed by the school to successfully support pupils, and the school adopts a very proactive and imaginative approach towards seeking ways of enhancing the support provision. In addition, to the Kaleidoscope class, the school runs a range of projects such as the Step Ahead

Scheme, the SHARE scheme, play to learn sessions and other parenting sessions designed to support parents. These schemes represent a significant effort made by the school to help parents to deal with the difficulties that impede their children's learning. Supported by the special educational needs co-ordinator, teachers provide special educational needs pupils with clear individual education plans that contain sharply focused targets. The school has deliberately increased the number of learning support assistants and nursery nurses working in the school. These staff provide strong support for special educational needs pupils and make a significant impact upon helping the pupils to succeed, grow in confidence and make good progress.

39. The extra-curricular activities provided by the school are satisfactory. There is a range of sporting and other activities that pupils can attend. An example is the after-school club that meets regularly on a Tuesday and Thursday. This club is particularly well attended and because numbers for the club are limited there is a waiting list. Lessons in French and playing musical instruments are available and football training is run seasonally. There is a country-dancing club and suitable opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their netball skills at lunchtime. In preparation for music festivals the choir meets after school. The school makes good use of visits and visitors to enhance the curriculum. For example, children from the nursery and reception classes visit a farm as well as travelling on the East Somerset Railway as part of their journeys project. Years 1 and 2 have visited Bristol Art Gallery in connection with their work in art. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have visited Radstock museum as part of their history project on the Victorians. Year 4 pupils take part in a residential summer camp at Kilve Court where they and learn a variety of skills based on outward-bound activities. In addition, the Kaleidoscope (nurture) group that caters for Year 1 through to Year 4 make visits to various places to enhance their learning in Frome, such as the library, supermarkets and the park.
40. The provision for personal, social and health education is good. Health education, sex education and teaching about drug misuse are an appropriate part of science topics and circle time. Teachers take the opportunity to develop aspects of personal, social and health education whenever appropriate occasions arise. For example, in a large class of Year 4 pupils in the hall for a games lesson, the teacher pointed out the correct way to move in order to avoid pupils bumping into one another. All classes engage in 'circle time' when many aspects of this important area are brought up and discussed.
41. The school has continued its good links with the community and pupils have a proper understanding of local interests and social needs. There is a good range of links that have a positive impact on the quality of education in the school. For example the school has very close links with the church, with the vicar taking assemblies and through the holding of Harvest Festival and Christingle services at the school. Additionally, pupils take part in music festivals and sporting events, the local football club provides after-school coaching, local businesses help with resources and support school occasions, local artists, musicians and officers from the emergency services come into classes to talk to pupils and support their learning, pupils visit day centres and residential homes for the elderly and donate to local appeals and national charities such as Red Nose Day.
42. Relationships with partner institutions are good. Links with partner middle schools are well founded and academic, pastoral and social links are strong. Staff, pupils and parents are fully involved in the transfer arrangements and pupils' education benefits accordingly. College students regularly undertake work experience attachments at the school.
43. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. There is very good provision for moral and social development whilst spiritual and cultural development are good. Most schemes of work include spiritual, moral, social and cultural links. As schemes are being reviewed this element is included. The school has recognised that to make it more precise sufficient detail needs to be itemised in short term planning.

44. Spiritual development is successfully fostered across most subjects of the curriculum, in particular in art, religious education, music, science and history. Acts of collective worship are mainly Christian in nature and make a strong contribution to pupils' personal development, such as when individual pupils and classes are praised for achievement and listen well to the achievements of others. Pupils are helped to an understanding of themselves and their place in the world by the way teachers listen to them and value their ideas. Pupils are encouraged to share their thoughts and ideas and respect the views of others, their values and beliefs. This was evident in a lesson comparing the beliefs of the Hindu and Christian faiths. Opportunities are used well for pupils to reflect and have discussions about things that are beautiful and important. Before listening to music pupils close their eyes and reflect on how they would feel, then listen to the music's interpretation. Pupils' spiritual growth is encouraged by the warm and caring attitudes that permeate the ethos of the school.
45. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. This is largely due to the very good role models offered by all adults in the school and the very good relationships between pupils and all adults. The school has a very effective behaviour policy that is consistently applied throughout the school. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons and around the school are generally good. They are polite and helpful to visitors and most are keen to share their work and achievements. Pupils work well together and listen to the opinions of others. For example, in a design and technology lesson pupils sensitively evaluated the work of their partners and gave suitable ideas for improvement. Pupils display a very good sense of right and wrong that is constantly reinforced by the staff. They are well aware of the school's code of behaviour and of the expectations of teachers and other staff from being involved in setting and reviewing the 'Golden Rules'. This encourages pupils and staff to think positively. Teachers sympathetically encourage pupils to take responsibility for their actions and deal sensitively with incidents of misbehaviour.
46. The spiritual and moral aspects help create a very good level of provision for social development. Relationships throughout the school are positive and amicable; pupils work and play together constructively. The school works hard from the nursery onwards to develop pupils' social skills. Pupils are encouraged well to collaborate in lessons and work co-operatively in pairs, and they respond accordingly. Built into school life there are opportunities for discussions and mixing with others, such as lunch times when groupings consist of different aged pupils. Kaleidoscope (the school's nurture group) is a very successful group that sensitively supports pupils with difficulties. The way in which pupils are supported in withdrawal sessions and times when they are integrated into mainstream classes is very beneficial to their development. Social development is successfully enhanced by the school's strong links with the church, visits into the community and residential visits for older pupils. Very good use is made of visitors to the school such as theatre groups and artists to enhance curricular provision as well as develop social understanding. Pupils develop an understanding of the needs of those less fortunate than themselves through fund raising events for charitable causes. Older pupils act as play leaders for younger pupils during breaks and lunchtimes. Pupils return registers to the office and are involved in general duties within their classes. However, not all opportunities are taken to develop pupils' awareness of responsibility or independent learning.
47. Cultural development is good. Through visits in their own locality, museums and art galleries, pupils are successfully developing an understanding of English culture. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is good and successfully broadens the curriculum. Strong links with the church and regular visits of the vicar effectively develops the Christian culture. Studies in religious education are effective in developing an awareness of beliefs, values and cultures of other people. Art and music successfully promote an awareness of cultures from around the World – for example the use of African songs. Through a study of India, that effectively encompasses many curriculum areas, pupils develop their awareness and a growing understanding of the culture, beliefs and values of people in this country. The library and other means provide a suitable range of different cultural resources to support pupils' learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

48. Procedures for child protection and pupils' welfare have improved since the last inspection and are now very good and a strength of the school. The school has a strong Christian ethos. Staff know pupils very well and pastoral care has a very high priority. Pupils generally feel happy and secure. Procedures for accidents, illnesses and medicines are good and sufficient staff have current first aid qualifications. There is a suitable medical room. The child protection arrangements are very good. The child protection coordinator is designated, procedures are clear and appropriate and good links are established with the requisite agencies.
49. Health and safety procedures are good. Health and safety and related policies are well structured and staff have a good awareness of health and safety matters. Road safety is stressed and pupils are carefully supervised as they cross the road outside the school. Cleanliness and hygiene within the school is very good and hazardous substances are properly managed. All equipment and appliance inspections are in-date. Risk inspections are carried out, security is regularly reviewed and emergency evacuations are practised regularly.
50. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. Circle time, during which pupils express themselves freely, is used appropriately to develop confidence and self-image, while class and assembly discussions on topics such as equal opportunities broaden their wider understanding of the world. Pupils' efforts and achievements are recognised at celebratory assemblies and in golden time when they have a choice of activities. Staff suitably identify and then monitor pupils with personal or social difficulties as they move through the school. The nurture group works very effectively in providing more focussed support for pupils experiencing social and emotional difficulties. To help younger pupils become more mature and self assured they undertake classroom duties like tidying books and sharpening pencils, however older pupils have few challenging or whole-school tasks to exercise personal and collective responsibility.
51. Since the last inspection the school's procedures for monitoring and improving attendance have continued to be good. The school actively promotes good attendance and pupils' absences and punctuality are closely checked. Most parents observe the absence procedure and ensure their children arrive at school on time. The school immediately contacts with parents when unexplained absences occur and the education social worker is informed of any consistent attendance problems. However, the school recognises that still more needs to be done to convince some families that their child/children must attend school on all occasions except when they are genuinely ill. The educational disadvantages of pupils taking holidays in term time are clearly stated in the prospectus and applications for such holidays have to be approved by the school. Attendance registers are accurately maintained and meet statutory requirements.
52. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good, as they were at the last inspection. The behaviour policy defines standards and expectations and properly reinforces the importance of positive behaviour. There is a balanced range of rewards and sanctions which staff implement with consistency and common sense. The policy is supplemented by golden rules and class codes of conduct, which are prominently displayed. Instances of unacceptable behaviour are closely monitored. Playtimes are very well supervised and wet weather arrangements are good. The school's procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good and no groups or individuals are unfairly treated or disadvantaged. Clear procedures for deterring bullying are included in the behaviour policy and the good equal opportunities and anti-racist policies suitably cover inclusion. Any signs of abuse, harassment or aggression are dealt with firmly.
53. Establishing effective assessment procedures was an issue in the last inspection report and the school has taken steps to address this. These are now very good and there are comprehensive systems in place. All teachers have extensive files for assessment not only for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science but for most of the foundation subjects as well. They are kept up to date by assessing a pupils' attainment against the national statements of what pupils should achieve. The use

of colour for highlighting statements in the records helps to give a clear picture of pupils' progress. However, the colour coding is not always dated, making it difficult to judge the rate of pupils' progress. The school is fully aware that it must continue to develop and refine its recording and assessment procedures. All teachers and other adults such as learning support assistants know the children very well. The well-briefed learning support assistants make notes of the performance of individuals in small group sessions and when they are withdrawn from the main lesson.

54. Assessment procedures have been, and are, still developing at a good rate. At the Foundation Stage information gained from assessment is used effectively to guide the future planning of work for the children. However, throughout the rest of the school, information gathered via assessment is not sufficiently well used to influence the planning of future lessons and target individual needs. In addition, the school has identified rightly that the quality of marking of pupils' work is inconsistent. Within their marking, teachers do not always provide an accurate assessment of the quality of an individual's work or provide a clear idea of what a pupil should do to improve.
55. Pupils with special educational needs are identified at an early stage when they enter the school. Members of staff make good use of their close and ongoing observation to ascertain each pupil's development of skills, knowledge and understanding. The full knowledge they acquire of their pupils in this way helps teachers to ensure that good learning takes place for all pupils, whatever their backgrounds and needs. Learning support assistants as well as teachers monitor the progress of pupils with special educational needs very closely. Individual pupils with special educational needs have carefully designed individual education plans that contain sharply focused targets to define the small steps in learning that these pupils need to make in order to enhance their progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

56. Parents' have a high regard for the work of the school. Opinions expressed at the parents' meeting, through the parents' questionnaires and during the inspection indicate that parents strongly support the school's provision for their children. Parents say that the school is well led and managed, teaching is good, and their children work hard and make good progress. Parents confirm that their children enjoy school, are becoming more responsible and mature and that pupils' behaviour is good. Parents are happy with home-school links and the information they receive about their children's progress. They find it easy to approach staff with questions and problems. Parents support the amount of homework their children are given and are content with the range of school activities outside lessons.
57. Since the last inspection the school has worked hard to improve its partnership with parents and has succeeded in doing so. The effectiveness of its links are now very good and a strength of the school. The school shares a family advice and liaison worker with another Frome school and has developed effective links with the local family centre. Both these initiatives further help the school to offer help, support and advice to parents.
58. The quality of information provided for parents, including about their children's progress, is very good. Parents are invited to curriculum workshops and topic reviews and they receive regular newsletters that keep them up-to-date with school activities. The part parents can play in helping their children settle into school is very well explained. Staff are always readily available to speak to parents. There are two annual parents' evenings with a third on request. School reports provide a very full commentary on pupils' efforts and achievements, both generally and by subjects. The reports include clear targets for improvement and provide space for pupils' and parents' comments. The prospectus is well structured and provides very useful information. The governors' annual report is written in a friendly tone and is an informative document. The complaints procedure is appropriate and known to parents.
59. The impact of parents' involvement in the work of the school is satisfactory. The school greatly values the part parents play in pupils' education and encourages their interest in all aspects of school life. Parents assist in classes, accompany educational visits and support learning projects like the

'arts week'. They attend school occasions such as assemblies and concerts and some are involved in extra-curricular activities. Many parents help their children with homework. Staff liaise closely with the parents of pupils with special educational needs. They involve the parents closely in drawing up a programme of development for the pupils concerned. The parent-friends association is active in fund raising. Most parents fully support the school. However, despite the wide range of strategies that it has set up to work with parents, the school is not always successful in getting the support and co-operation of a small minority of parents – for example, in supporting their child/children's learning at home or ensuring the regular attendance of their children at school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

60. As at the time of the last inspection, the school is very well led and managed. The headteacher provides an atmosphere in which staff work very effectively together as a team. She has a clear view of the direction in which she wants the school to move and, over the last four years, has enabled rapid progress in improving standards and the quality of education. She is very ably supported by the deputy headteacher, with whom she works closely and also by other key members of staff and the governing body. The chair of governors provides particularly strong and effective support. The staff and governors are successful in establishing a warm, secure and friendly atmosphere in the school, in which all pupils including the large proportion of those with special educational needs achieve well.
61. As well as ensuring that the points for improvement in the last inspection report were dealt with as fully as possible, the headteacher leads the school to directly confront the main areas that are obstacles to raising standards. For example, the initiative to provide a nurture group, the priority set in maximising available support from teaching assistants and the focus on increasing the support for and liaison with the parents and the community all serve to enhance the provision for pupils' learning. Although clear improvement is already evident as a result of these initiatives – their impact on raising standards is yet to be fully realised.
62. The headteacher has also instigated comprehensive procedures to improve the management of the school. She ensures that the governors are fully informed through her comprehensive reports. The headteacher and deputy headteacher carefully monitor the quality of work throughout the school. Clear systems have been established to help the teachers monitor the working of the curriculum and the quality of teaching. Schemes of work to support teachers' planning have been reviewed and revised where necessary. In addition, very good procedures have been established to track pupils' progress and all of the data from testing the pupils is now analysed in detail so that staff and governors have a very clear overview about how well the pupils are doing as they move through the school. An established programme is in place for teachers to visit each other's classrooms to share good practice and engage in professional dialogue.
63. Following the national directive, the school has established thorough procedures to regularly review the work of all teachers and set targets for their future performance. The school has also very usefully broadened the system to incorporate all non-teaching staff within this review/target setting structure.
64. Through close liaison, teachers carry out their responsibilities as co-ordinators enthusiastically and efficiently, so that all curriculum areas are well managed. Special educational needs provision is very well managed so that all of the pupils concerned are catered for sensitively. In particular, the support staff are deployed very effectively to support individuals or groups of pupils throughout the school. Equality of opportunity and the principles of educational inclusion are well ingrained in all of the policies created by co-ordinators and there is a strong awareness amongst staff to support and develop the philosophy involved in these areas.
65. The school improvement plan is a comprehensive and realistic document that paints a clear picture of the areas that the school regards as priorities for improvement. The plan shows clearly how areas

will be developed and by whom. Although costs are included for current initiatives, there is not enough detail about the impact of future initiatives on the school's budget. A strength of the school's improvement planning is the full involvement of staff and governors in its construction and progress. The fact that care has been taken to incorporate the views of parents and pupils into this process is another indication of the conscientious and thorough approach by the school.

66. Governors are fully involved in the management of the school and have a clear overview of its progress and effectiveness. Through briefings from the headteacher and co-ordinators, plus the regular visits that many of the governors make to the school, they are in a good position to judge what works and what does not work so well. Since the last inspection the chair of governors has been especially proactive in producing a range of highly detailed policies to advise governors on how their roles can be carried out best. Governors fulfil all of their statutory responsibilities. They have been usefully paired with teachers in recent times and recognise that this initiative needs further development in order to increase their insight into the working of the curriculum at the school.
67. The school has an appropriate number of suitably qualified and experienced teaching staff. The number of support staff is very good and through their qualifications and experience, they make an important and effective contribution to pupils' progress. Teachers are suitably deployed across the classes. The school has a well-structured system to support the processes of setting performance management targets and establishing staff career development. Support staff are well trained by the school and outside agencies. The school's commitment to a high level of support staff is effective in supporting the teaching and learning of its pupils. Induction procedures for new staff ensure continuity in pupils' learning through a whole-school approach to planning. A member of staff is nominated to give help and guidance to newly qualified and newly appointed staff to the school. In-service training sessions are well attended over a range of subjects and initiatives that support the school improvement plan. Clear strategies are in place to enable staff to develop their professional skills as well as addressing the school's needs.
68. The administrative and clerical support provided by the school secretary successfully ensures the smooth day-to-day running of the school. The working environment is kept suitably maintained by regular hard work of the premises staff. School meals support assistants make a positive contribution to the social ethos of the school.
69. The accommodation is satisfactory and assists the effective delivery of the curriculum. The grounds are attractive and well maintained and there are suitable hard and grassed areas for physical education and games. The adventure play area, quiet corner and garden enhance pupils' opportunities during break-times. The nursery has a separate play area that is safe and well marked for play activities. The interior of the main building is airy, bright and cheerful, but apart from the large hall and medical room, its facilities are limited. The library is small for the numbers using it, resource areas are insufficient and there is no computer suite. The school atmosphere is purposeful, vibrant and friendly. Classrooms are colourful and there are imaginative displays, mobiles and paintings, some of them with a multi-cultural theme. The balance between teaching aids, topic materials and the celebration of pupils' work is good.
70. The overall quality and range of resources to support and enhance teaching and learning across the curriculum are sound and all the demands of the curriculum are being met. The school has identified the need to improve its provision of large outdoor equipment to support the development of physical skills in the reception class of the Foundation Stage. At present, suitable use is made of the hall and timetabled use of the nursery equipment. The level of resources for information and communication technology is satisfactory and they are all used well. The library has a suitable range of books and is a valuable space that is not used sufficiently by pupils to research information.
71. Finances are very well maintained at the school. Governors maintain a clear oversight of budget matters and the headteacher and school secretary work closely together to review the ongoing budget on a regular basis. The headteacher ensures that all available grants are procured and great care is

taken to allocate money available. The most recent audit of the school's financial control mechanisms raised minor points – all of which have been suitably dealt with by appropriate modifications to the systems. The school's balance to be carried forward to next year's budget is slightly on the high side (8.5 per cent), but this amounts to prudent budgeting with all funds carefully earmarked and the projected carry forward for next year dropping down to a much lower figure. The governors have a good understanding of the principles of best value and, for example, seek to check that bids for work by outside contractors are reasonable and of good quality. They compare prices very carefully and consider the value for money of different purchases. Governors closely scrutinise test results to compare the school's performance with that of other similar schools and they check that the deployment of school resources is fully focused on enhancing the quality of education and improving standards

72. The expenditure per pupil is high. Nonetheless, considering the very low baseline from which pupils start, the overall good teaching that results in pupils achieving well by the time they leave and the many significant strengths in the school's provision that successfully boost pupils' confidence, self esteem and well being – the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to continue the school's very good rate of improvement, the governors, headteacher and staff should now:

1. Raise standards in English by:
 - ensuring that work is planned that challenges pupils of all attainment levels and, in particular provides appropriate challenge to extend higher attaining pupils;
 - sustaining and developing further the actions the school has already put in place to address this area. (*Paragraphs 1,17, 29, 34 and 92 –103*)
2. Improve the provision for extending higher attaining pupils by:
 - clearly identifying higher attaining pupils in each year group and ensuring that, where appropriate, separate work is planned and provided for them that matches precisely with their level of attainment and provides them with sufficient challenge. (*Paragraphs 5, 16, 29, 101,108, 112, 121 and 137*)
3. Improve the use of assessment throughout the school by:
 - ensuring that teachers use assessment information to a greater extent to inform future planning and to help them set more precise targets for pupils' future performance. (*Paragraphs 24, 29, 54 and 112*)
4. Improve the quality and consistency of the marking of pupils' work in all classes so that it provides and accurate assessment of the quality of pupils' work and, where relevant, gives pupils a clear indication of how they can improve their work. (*Paragraphs 54, 101, 112 and 142*)
5. Improve attendance, by continuing to rigorously pursue current procedures and by seeking to build new strategies to encourage those families concerned to cooperate with the school by ensuring the full attendance their children. (*Paragraphs 22, 51 and 59*)

In addition to the areas identified above the school should consider the following less important areas of development for inclusion in its action plan:

- o Provide pupils with tasks designed to promote their sense of responsibility and initiative more fully. (*Paragraphs 46 and 50*)
- o Make better use of library resources to enhance pupils' learning skills. (*Paragraphs 8, 70, 97 and 102*)
- o Fully develop the system that has been started for pairing the governors with different teachers, so as to fully enhance governors' ability to gain an overview of the working of the curriculum. (*Paragraph 66*)
- o The school has identified rightly the need to improve its provision of large outdoor equipment to support the development of physical skills in the reception class of the Foundation Stage. (*Paragraph 70*)

The school's nurture group unit (known as Kaleidoscope)

73. The school established this unit at the start of the school year to provide support for pupils experiencing social and emotional difficulties that make it difficult for them to integrate with their peers or benefit from work in their usual class group. At the beginning of this term a new purpose-designed classroom was opened in which the unit now operates with one teacher and one learning support assistant. The unit provides a very pleasant environment for the pupils and has a good range of resources and equipment to support the learning of the pupils who attend. Currently, 10 pupils attend the unit, some for most of the day and a few for a part of the day. Very clear parameters are set, and much careful deliberation goes in to identifying pupils from across the school who would most benefit from this facility. The unit is highly successful in providing a structured, safe and predictable environment where pupils can develop self-esteem and social skills to facilitate their academic learning and to help them to integrate back into the full class situation.

74. Several sessions were observed in the unit, during which the teacher and the learning support assistant showed a highly skilled approach to helping pupils learn to cope with everyday classroom situations. The sessions are very well organised prepared and structured. For example, the organisation of the 'daily breakfast' is a well established routine, where all of the pupils take turns in the various responsibilities of preparing and clearing up, helping each other and relating to each other and the staff properly during the meal. Not only do the pupils enjoy this session, but they also gain significantly in their social awareness and personal development. The staff also make full use of the time to encourage pupils to speak clearly and confidently and listen carefully to one another. During the session observed pupils behaved very well. In contrast, during a very well run music/story time session observed towards the end of the day, a few of the pupils experienced difficulty with coping with the situation and showed emotions of frustration and even anger at times. The staff worked very well together, so that while one of them dealt with the situation, the other sustained the momentum of the work that was going on. Very clear strategies are utilised to help pupils cope during such difficulties. The teacher indicates very clearly to the pupils experiencing difficulty, that certain types of behaviour are unacceptable and, on occasions, individuals were sent to an adjacent room close by for some 'time out' in which to 'cool down'. It was particularly interesting to note that these individuals were very eager to rejoin the group and were keen for the sand timer time to pass so that they could return.

75. Staff report that the individuals attending the unit have made much progress in improving their behaviour and it was noted that they join in with whole school assemblies without difficulty. During the sessions observed it was possible to perceive progress and improvement by the individuals in gaining confidence, understanding and self-esteem. Although the pupils are withdrawn from class and clearly not *currently* receiving full access to the curriculum, the work of the unit is an important step in promoting the social skills and understanding of these pupils so that they can be fully integrated back into the usual classroom situation working alongside their peers. The work of the unit is therefore very strongly promoting the future educational inclusion of pupils who would otherwise not be in a position to learn properly in the classroom and who would potentially cause severe disruption to lessons.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	49
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	36

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	8	23	16	1	0	0
Percentage	2	16.3	46.9	32.6	2	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 two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	*20	181
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	-	55

FTE means full-time equivalent.

* 20 in the morning and 20 in the afternoon – 40 on roll.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	7	67

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.2
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	14	24	38

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	12
	Girls	17	21	23
	Total	27	31	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	71 (56)	82 (53)	92 (79)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	12	9
	Girls	17	23	15
	Total	26	35	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	68 (65)	92 (79)	63 (74)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	162
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.63
Average class size	25.86

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	15
Total aggregate hours worked per week	327

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	75
Number of pupils per FTE adult	5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	455290
Total expenditure	436770
Expenditure per pupil	*2287
Balance brought forward from previous year	20172
Balance carried forward to next year	38692

* calculated based on roll of 191 for last budget year

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3.2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	199
Number of questionnaires returned	82

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	27	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	38	1	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	44	50	2	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	43	6	0	11
The teaching is good.	68	32	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	59	37	5	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	82	16	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	34	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	70	28	2	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	79	20	1	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	61	38	0	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	45	35	6	4	10

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

76. In the last inspection the provision for children in the nursery was noted as being very good and satisfactory in the reception classes. There is clear improvement since the last improvement, with very good provision now evident throughout the Foundation Stage – this is a strength of the school. Children enter the nursery at the beginning of the school year in which they are four and transfer to a reception class at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. The school currently has one class for reception children only and one class for reception age group children and Year 1 pupils. Children enter the nursery with overall standards of attainment well below the average and most, including those with special educational needs, make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage. Although most remain below the average in their communication, language and literacy skills, many are on line to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they transfer to Key Stage 1 in the remaining areas of learning of personal, social and emotional development, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development.
77. The quality of teaching is consistently good and occasionally very good in all areas of learning. Teachers and support staff work very closely together in support of each other. Children are made to feel happy and secure and they settle well into school routines. Planning is based on effective, practical learning experiences. The objectives of learning are generally specific, even for the non-directed activities, and are closely related to the Early Learning Goals recommended for children of this age. Assessment procedures are well established and very well used to support and inform future planning and the setting of targets for individual children.

Personal, social and emotional development

78. Clear guidance and sensitive support ensure that almost all children leave the nursery and then the reception classes with a secure measure of confidence. Members of staff work very well together and provide good role models for children, treating each other and the children with courtesy and respect. Teaching is good and children progress well, especially in the nursery, so that after a very low starting point, they reach the expected level with their personal development by the end of the Foundation Stage. The perceptive use of praise and encouragement gives the children a positive feeling and pride in their achievements. The children are keen, interested and want to be involved. They quickly learn to take turns and, by the time they leave the reception class, they concentrate for quite long periods of time, raising their hands to ask questions and sharing and clearing away equipment sensibly. Milk and fruit time in the nursery is a well-established social event. Children quickly learn to say please and thank you and enjoy the discussions that ensue. During these sessions adults effectively use opportunities to reinforce and extend children's learning in number, language, knowledge and understanding of the world. Children in the reception classes are increasingly prepared to share resources, take turns and support each other well. They share assemblies and playtimes with the rest of the school and are therefore well prepared socially for their transfer to Key Stage 1.

Communication, language and literacy

79. Overall, children show below average attainment in this area of learning. However, while children's skills of speaking and writing are below average, because of the strong support they receive most children are on course to meet the Early Learning Goal in reading by the time they transfer into Year 1. Many children enter the nursery with very poor conversational skills, limited vocabulary and poor hand control for writing. Teaching is good and staff take every opportunity to engage children in discussion, for example during milk time the teacher promoted an interesting discussion on twins that

led to a child thinking of children who have the same name. They also provide opportunities for imaginative role-play and, as a result, the spoken language is developed and children's vocabulary increased. From the outset they are encouraged to listen carefully to stories and adults. Children enjoy story time and are encouraged to ask questions that are followed with very clear explanations, extending the children's vocabulary still further as a result.

80. Reception children are beginning to recognise some initial letter sounds and match these to pictures and objects. The teaching programme introduced recently is helping children to recognise sounds. They are at the early stages of using this knowledge effectively to help them read and write. Very well planned, motivating and interesting sessions ensure that all reception children are fully attentive and learn well. Children enjoy sharing books. They point to the title and name the characters of the adopted reading scheme. The majority of children make good progress and the most able children identify simple key words. Most children use pictures well to tell what is happening in the story and are beginning to predict the outcome. The extra support that the school has put in place to support reading is having a very positive effect. Children are eager to share their books and achievements. A sound basis is in place on which children build their reading skills.
81. Writing skills are well targeted in the nursery. Opportunities are always available for children to make independent marks and try pre-writing skills that successfully develop their pencil control. In the reception classes children develop their writing skills successfully; the more able children produce clear, well-formed letters and attempts at spelling are plausible. However, overall, children are at the very early stages of writing independently.

Mathematical development

82. Attainment in the mathematical area of learning is satisfactory overall. Children are well taught and achieve well from a very low starting point. In the nursery some children recognise 0 to 5 on the number line and, through good interaction with their teacher, begin to understand the terms 'bigger than' and 'longer than'. Throughout the day, through play, adults reinforce children's understanding of number and its associated vocabulary. The children know a suitable range of number rhymes and jingles to support their learning. Good opportunities are given to children to develop their spatial awareness through building with large blocks.
83. Reception children thoroughly enjoy working with a kangaroo puppet to count up to 59 with help. Most children count reliably up to 20. Through a wide range of suitable games and activities children successfully reinforce their counting skills to 12. Good use is made of the computer to strengthen number recognition and counting skills. Due to the strong guidance and support they are given a significant minority of children demonstrate appropriate number formation for numbers to 20 and gain a sound understanding of simple addition. Work with shapes is good; children match objects to their outline shape and recognise common shapes, such as circles, squares, triangles and rectangles. Structured play in their wet area encourages children to develop practical methods of learning about volume and measurements.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

84. Through good teaching and the introduction of a very wide range of activities teachers both in nursery and reception classes successfully stimulate children's interest in the world about them. In the nursery, children plant bean and sunflower seeds and show interest as the root develops and the leaves grow. They successfully grow cress and make egg and cress sandwiches. Practical activities such as making fruit salad is effective in promoting children's knowledge of a range of fruits and understanding of hygiene routines when preparing food.
85. Reception children help to dig the school garden and plant bulbs. They take out stones to 'look for treasure' and find many worms. Through good quality continuous dialogue children see many items

of interest. They successfully learn to become observant and are beginning to see the relationships between creatures outdoors. For example a robin close by in the hedge and the worms the children have found, on the ground. Children show much interest in the range of seeds they have planted in the classroom; grass for potato heads, sweet peas, beans, cress and pansies in small papier-mâché pots made by them for an Easter present. The school environment is used well to stimulate their interest in how things change over time. Children are familiar with naming parts of their body.

86. Children use computers confidently to support their learning. In nursery many children create pictures and successfully move them by clicking and dragging. The more able reception children confidently find their way around familiar ICT programs and try different choices. They type their name and successfully move pictures and words. Most children confidently experiment with a paint programme to draw pictures and make patterns. The range of experiences available to the children gives them a firm foundation on which to build their knowledge and understanding of the world. Many children are on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning.

Physical development

87. Children are well taught in this area of learning and make good progress so that by the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage, their attainment is in line with expectations. Through daily opportunities to use pencils, crayons, paints and scissors most children's fine motor skills develop well. Outside the nursery is a large play area where children are able to run, use wheeled vehicles, play in the house or just sit and chat. Due to the planned extension of the nursery accommodation there is no fixed equipment available. Good use is made of the school hall on a regular basis to use large equipment. When using this, children demonstrate confidence and enjoyment. They climb over, under and through the equipment and sit quietly when listening to instructions or watching a demonstration of good practice. Children are very agile and make good efforts to improve their movements.
88. The reception class, at present, share the nursery outdoor area on a regular basis. Plans are being processed to develop their own area adjacent to the classroom. Regular use is made of the school hall to develop children's physical skills. Following clear instructions children develop their skills well using the well-organised equipment. Most make good progress with developing safely executed forward rolls and move across the equipment with good curled and stretching shapes. Children watch each other well and learn how to develop and improve their skills. Many children demonstrate good co-ordination in their movements.

Creative development

89. Children use a suitable range of techniques and media throughout the Foundation Stage to increase their confidence and skills. Good use is made of all opportunities in the nursery to reinforce and extend children's recognition of colours. Children are well taught, for instance during painting and making mirror images, good questioning develops children's knowledge of colours. For some children there is difficulty with their manipulative skills; they tend to scrub when using a paintbrush and experience difficulty when trying to fit pieces of Lego for a train. Children show increasing control when colouring, drawing and writing. This was evident on children's T-shirt designs. As part of the school's art week, children designed a picture for a T-shirt and successfully used fabric crayons to transfer their design onto a T-shirt resulting in good quality work. Very good experiences ensure that children have the opportunity to develop their skills to their full potential. For example, working with an artist in residence, children successfully contributed to very effective clay work based on the story of The Three Little Pigs.
90. The good progress continued in the reception classes ensures that many are on line to meet the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. The wide ranges of opportunities, including those that support other areas of the curriculum, are successful in ensuring children get plenty of practice

and quality experiences. They use a range of materials to make collages of flowers, such as a matchstick flower or flowers with a variety of seeds as the centres. Children have experience with bubble printing; paint blowing and using paint, pastels and chalks.

91. Children have a good repertoire of songs that they sing tunefully and action songs that they thoroughly enjoy performing. Reception children make good progress in identifying high and low sounds. They sing a range of notes that go higher but have difficulty with singing a descending note scale. One child remarked that it was like climbing the stairs. Children are confident to try. They enjoy the creative development sessions.

ENGLISH

92. The results of the 2001 national tests for seven-year-olds, when compared with all schools, show that they attain standards that are well below the national averages in reading and writing. However, when compared with similar schools, results are better, with below average results in reading and average results in writing. Of particular note is the fact that the number of pupils attaining the higher levels is very low. Scrutiny of results over the last four years shows a steady improvement in reading attainment, in line with the national trend of improvement. Writing results have varied a lot in recent years but have also improved overall in line with the national picture.
93. Standards have continued to improve since the end of Key Stage 1 national tests last year and, overall, Year 2 pupils are now on course to attain below average levels in reading and writing at the age of seven (as opposed to well below average standards last year). The school's tracking data of pupils' progress shows that the current Year 4 pupils have progressed well from a particularly low baseline at the beginning of Key Stage 2, and inspection observations show that they are on course to attain below average levels by the age of nine (Year 4). Whilst overall standards are about the same as those reported at the time of the last inspection, there are clear indications that effective implementation of the literacy strategies, use of support staff and an improvement in the amount of good teaching are beginning to have a positive effect on the standards of attainment. The school recognises the need to remain focused on raising standards in English and in particular to increase the number of pupils attaining the higher levels.
94. Since the last inspection handwriting and presentation have made significant improvement. However, although pupils have experience of writing for a range of purposes the ability to write independently is below expectations at both key stages. The school recognises this and has put in good quality support to sustain the good progress most pupils are making.
95. Comparison of the results of boys and girls in the end of Key Stage 1 national tests over the last few years indicates that girls perform better than boys and to a greater extent than that noted nationally. However, during the inspection observations, no specific difference between the performance of boys and girls was noted.
96. At the ages of seven and nine, pupils' listening skills are good but their speaking skills are well below those expected. At both key stages, pupils practise and develop their speaking and listening skills suitably across the curriculum. They generally focus well and concentrate in lessons, but many have to be encouraged to participate orally and lack confidence. Throughout the school, pupils make good progress from a low starting point. Pupils with special educational needs are included well, especially when they are well supported by the learning support assistants. Many instances were seen where these pupils were well supported to help them join in with the lesson, by quiet prompting from a learning support assistant while the teacher taught the whole class. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 classes generally listen very carefully in lessons, but often their speech is not especially clear and they often rely on support and help from the teacher or learning support assistant to finish a statement. Year 2 pupils often make suitable short responses to questions, but the majority of pupils show a limited range of vocabulary for their age. Year 3 and 4 pupils usually show a suitable understanding

of the main points in a discussion, but once again their contributions and use of vocabulary are mostly limited. Teachers work hard to enrich pupils' vocabulary; for example, Year 3 considered and understood the use of adjectives in the poem 'The Spider and the Fly' and the use of synonyms. The literacy hour is used well to provide opportunities for pupils to concentrate on what is being said and is enhanced further when teachers articulate words clearly, maintain a brisk pace and hold pupils' attention. Good relationships between pupils and staff also give pupils the confidence to 'have a go,' as in a Year 4 lesson where pupils, after being encouraged, confidently voiced their ideas to describe the moon. Teachers make concerted efforts to involve all pupils in discussion work and question and answer sessions. Overall, pupils have difficulty in articulating their thoughts and many answer in short phrases. Teachers do not always provide enough chances for pupils to give extended answers.

97. Attainment in reading is just below the national expectations at the age of seven. A few higher attaining pupils read with fluency and are developing appropriate expression in their interpretation, demonstrating a growing understanding of what they read. The majority of pupils read suitable texts accurately, though their reading is often hesitant and lacking expression. While many Year 2 pupils are becoming more fluent, many do not have a good understanding of the text they read. They often use only a limited range of strategies to help them move through the text. Pupils are aware of and understand the associated vocabulary of 'author', and 'title' and some pupils know what an illustrator does. By the end of Key Stage 2, reading standards are generally below those expected for pupils at the age of nine. The school's tracking information shows that, working from a low baseline, pupils have mainly made good progress. A few higher attaining pupils and some of the average attaining pupils read fluently and accurately with appropriate use of expression. Also, the below average pupils make very good progress as a result of the quality support they receive from teachers and support assistants. The successful implementation of the literacy strategy together with the additional literacy support is having a positive impact on raising reading standards. However, despite thoughtful well-focused questions by class teachers, limited language restricts many pupils' comprehension skills. A significant number of pupils do not develop their reading tastes and interests by reading a wider range of both fiction and non-fiction texts, in order to develop their skills and gain more pleasure from reading. Library skills are underdeveloped; many pupils are unsure of how to retrieve a book from the library or how a library is organised. Parents are encouraged to become involved with their child's reading progress through the reading diary system and this is a positive means of sharing information and building up meaningful home-school dialogue.
98. Pupils' attainment in writing is below average at the ages of seven and nine. Pupils have appropriate opportunities to develop their writing skills in most areas of the curriculum and are challenged to write in different styles and for a range of purposes and audiences. At Key Stage 1, pupils write simple sentences and a few higher attaining pupils have some knowledge of using full stops, but most other pupils do not. A few higher attaining Year 2 pupils rewrite a story they have been told with correct sequencing of the facts, but for most pupils, although they manage the work, there is little detail in the writing and sentences are not often punctuated. Pupils of all abilities make progress in writing descriptions. For example, after some support, many Year 2 pupils made good attempts at writing a character profile of a 'Wicked Witch', successfully extracting suitable words from a given passage. A few pupils develop sound standards of spelling and most pupils give plausible attempts at spelling words in their stories. Overall, handwriting and presentation are sound and an improvement on the previous inspection. However, many pupils are slow to develop a fluent joined script.
99. At Key Stage 2, pupils generally make good progress. A few pupils show the ability to write sequences of sentences confidently, with logical construction and correct grammatical structure. However, for most, such work is still too difficult and requires much support from the teacher or learning support assistants. Good progress is apparent and, in the lessons seen, through the teacher's and learning support assistants' intervention, many pupils were clearly beginning to raise the standard of their work to the expected level. For example, in a Year 4 lesson when pupils considered different similes to describe the moon, pupils' responses illustrated quality thought and concentration with ideas such as 'shines like a twinkling star woven between the planets' or 'fades like a yellow gum drop.'

Good emphasis on word level and sentence level work helps pupils learn to structure their work appropriately and to develop their vocabulary skills. A few pupils successfully develop their skills of creative writing in response to a given story line, but most pupils tend to use simple sentence constructions rather than more complex, interesting sentences. Many examples of written work are brief with sparsely developed points. Below average attaining pupils make effort and with good support complete their work. Work set is well matched to the abilities of these pupils.

100. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their oral work at both key stages. Reading skills are developing well with the quality support of class teachers and non-teaching support staff. Progress in writing is good overall for the average and below average pupils. There are times when the more able pupils would benefit from more challenging work and this was highlighted in particular with the samples of work scrutinised, where with most of the work, pupils were noted to be working on tasks that were aimed at one level of attainment.
101. Overall, teaching in English is good at both key stages. In particular, teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well so that in most lessons pupils remain focused, attentive and often enthusiastic. Explanations are usually clear, teachers display confident subject knowledge and they ensure that resources are carefully prepared to enable lessons to flow smoothly. Lessons run at an appropriate pace. Pupils are made aware of the learning objectives although occasionally some of these objectives tend to be too general. Teachers use a range of good strategies and lively and interesting activities to sustain pupils' concentration. At times, the work planned does not give enough opportunities for pupils to learn to work independently and, at Key Stage 1 in particular, does not provide enough specific challenge for higher attaining pupils. Teachers question pupils well and their good subject knowledge is effectively used to reinforce and consolidate learning. Marking of pupils work lacks sufficient rigour and detail to inform pupils what they need to do in order to raise their standards of attainment.
102. Resources for learning are of satisfactory quality and quantity. Appropriate materials have been purchased to deliver the literacy scheme. The school has usefully invested in 'story sacks' that contain materials to promote reading, speaking and listening. The programme of guided reading has suitable resources at both key stages with fiction and non-fiction material available. There is an appropriate supply of resource materials to promote the teaching of phonics across the school. Library resources are satisfactory but insufficient use is made of this resource to support pupils' library skills.
103. Overall, the subject is well managed. Suitable monitoring procedures are in place and include the scrutiny of teachers' planning and of pupils' written work. Regular observations of the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom identify strengths and weaknesses that need to be addressed. The need to further improve the standards pupils attain in English has been identified and a range of appropriate strategies has been put in place. These are already having a positive effect on teaching and learning and pupils' attainment.

MATHEMATICS

104. Since the school's last inspection in 2000, there has been a significant improvement in mathematics standards. Inspection findings now show that the levels of attainment for pupils at the ages of seven and nine are in line with national expectations and good teaching is helping pupils achieve well by the end of Year 4. This compares favourably with the last inspection where attainment was reported as below average.
105. The improvement since the last inspection is underlined by the results attained by Year 2 pupils in the 2001 end of Key Stage 1 national tests where pupils attained average results compared to all schools nationally, but well above average results when compared to other similar schools. Furthermore, the trend in the school's results is improving at a faster rate than the national trend. The school's results,

taken over the last few years, show that girls do better than boys and to a greater extent than noted nationally. No differences, however, were noted in boy/girl performances during lesson observations in this inspection.

106. The school has fully embraced the principles of the National Numeracy Strategy. Staff have undertaken useful training and particular emphasis has been placed rightly upon the need to improve the teaching of using and applying mathematics.
107. Teachers provide pupils with a wide range of opportunities to use and apply mathematics. Pupils make sound progress with their learning at Key Stage 1 and good progress at Key Stage 2. Work is in line with expectations at the age of seven and nine, but overall, this remains the weaker area of mathematics, chiefly because pupils throughout the school experience difficulties in articulating their mathematical thinking. Key Stage 1 pupils acquire appropriate mathematical vocabulary. Teachers and learning support assistants prompt and guide pupils well with the vocabulary, but many pupils lack the confidence to use the vocabulary they have acquired. Year 1 pupils explain how they arrive at answers to their calculations, but often they make very basic responses such as 'I knew it in my head' or 'I used my fingers (to work it out)'. Year 2 pupils manage simple written problems and use the vocabulary they know correctly, with help. At Key Stage 2, pupils carry out suitable mathematical investigations carefully. For example, Year 4 pupils investigate the properties of three-dimensional shapes and record ideas in charts. They try different approaches to solve written problems but many find this difficult and show only a restricted range of ideas. Pupils mainly succeed in this area of work through the intensive support with which they are provided by teachers and learning support assistants during the practical investigation activities.
108. Pupils progress well with their number work at both key stages and are provided with a good range of opportunities to consolidate and practise their skills. Year 1 pupils show appropriate ability to recall number bonds to 10 and Year 2 pupils are competent with number bonds to 20 and a few work beyond this level. Pupils are helped at both key stages by teachers using resources well in mental/oral sessions, so that often number work is presented to them in a very visual way that assists their ability to grasp and remember the facts. However, too often in these sessions teachers do not provide questions that give sufficient challenge to the more able pupils. Year 2 pupils show an appropriate basic understanding of place value. Using counting apparatus, they successfully split numbers into fractional quantities such as a half and a quarter. They show a competent approach to carrying out a range of simple calculations using the four rules of number and manage 'doubling' and 'halving' of numbers. Key Stage 2 pupils show an appropriate knowledge of multiplication tables for their ages. Year 4 pupils count to 50 and back in different interval steps efficiently. They add simple fractions correctly and also carry out written addition and subtraction calculations that involve two sets of 3 digit numbers.
109. In shape, space and measure and data handling, pupils make sound progress at Key Stage 1 and good progress at Key Stage 2. Teachers plan appropriate tasks for pupils with shape space and measure so that Year 2 pupils know the common names for a variety of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. Year 4 pupils correctly classify three-dimensional shapes and competently draw diagrams to help them work out the areas of different shapes by counting the squares. Year 2 pupils draw pictograms to represent information they have collected and show an appropriate ability to interpret simple batches of data. Key Stage 2 teachers show a particularly confident approach towards helping pupils investigate graph work. As a result, Year 4 pupils record information accurately on frequency charts and explore the different ways to present the information as a bar chart graph. They also interpret the data properly and learn to use correct vocabulary such as 'interval' and 'axes' when talking about their work.
110. Generally pupils present their work in an organised way in their workbooks, although in some classes they have not been given sufficient guidance about writing numbers in the squares provided. This

leads to inconsistent size of number writing, which sometimes results in a lack of clarity in the way calculations are written and worked out.

111. Overall, pupils make sound progress with their learning at Key Stage 1, but with good progress in number work. Progress at Key Stage 2 is good in all areas. The better progress at Key Stage 2 is related to the teaching, with the lessons at Key Stage 2 running at a brisker pace and the work set providing a greater degree of challenge for the pupils. Throughout the school, pupils remain well focused during lessons and work hard – especially when the expectations are made clear for them. Pupils generally behave well although at the end of sessions and when they change from one task to another a few pupils display inappropriate behaviour. This was noted particularly in the Year 3 and 4 classes where the teachers used very good strategies to ensure pupils corrected this sort of behaviour quickly. Pupils with special educational needs are given very good support in lessons and are closely monitored by the teacher and learning support assistants. As a result, they make good progress in all classes.
112. Teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. In the best lessons teachers show confident subject knowledge and provide succinct explanations so that work progresses rapidly. Teachers also question pupils well and use discussions effectively to promote opportunities for pupils to discuss mathematical ideas. They show patience and sensitivity in trying to encourage pupils in this respect. Planning is detailed and activities are well organised and prepared to minimise any time wastage. At both key stages, but to a greater extent at Key Stage 1, insufficient attention is paid to ensuring that tasks set in lessons provide enough challenge for higher attaining pupils. Also, a scrutiny of pupils' work showed that too often all pupils in a year group carry out work at the same level. Teachers assess pupils' work on a regular basis, but currently they do not make enough use of the assessment information to help them plan future work. Learning support assistants are generally very well briefed and provide strong support for pupils. However, very occasionally, when they are deployed to work with groups of pupils, they show a lack of confidence in explaining mathematical ideas and concepts. Marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and sometimes unsatisfactory. Pupils are generally not given an indication of how they could improve their work and occasionally pieces of work are left unmarked.
113. The school has an adequate range of resources and teachers use these well – including ICT – to support pupils' learning. The subject is well managed and the co-ordinator has an appropriate awareness of standards across the school.

SCIENCE

114. The results of teacher assessments in 2001 show that by the age of 7, standards in science were well below the national average. However, inspection evidence shows that the current cohort of Year 2 pupils have made good progress and are on course to attain standards that match the national expectation by the age of seven. This marks improvement not only since the last inspection but also since last year's results and indicates that pupils have been well taught during the year. Inspection evidence also shows that as a result of good teaching, pupils have made good progress at Key Stage 2, working from a low baseline at the start of Key Stage 2, so that by the age of 9 (Year 4), they attain standards that are in line with the national expectations. Overall, standards have therefore improved at both key stages since the last inspection when they were noted as being below average for pupils at the ages of seven and nine.
115. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school as a result of strong support they receive from teachers and learning support assistants.
116. At the last inspection criticism was made that insufficient work in experimental and investigative science was carried out. The school has worked hard to improve pupils' experiences and learning in this area. The provision of opportunities in this area is now satisfactory. Most pupils now show a

- confident approach so that by Year 4, they have the ability to devise and set up science investigations. For example, they work in small groups that independently devise tests to find out the conditions that best suit woodlice. In many lessons observed, it was noted that pupils' limited vocabulary restricted their ability to articulate their understanding of the tasks carried out. Teachers provide clear guidance and demonstrations to help pupils understand how to best write about their science tasks. As a result, pupils make suitable recordings of results through the effective use of diagrams and pictures, but their written accounts generally tend to lack detail.
117. The school operates a two-year rolling programme for science. This works effectively and ensures all pupils cover the appropriate areas of the curriculum in sufficient depth.
 118. In one lesson seen, a class of Year 1 pupils satisfactorily recorded the colour of eyes from photographs as part of an investigation to find out which eye colour is the most common. The teacher instructed them well on how to construct the graph on the computer to record the results of their investigation. The same class identified similarities and differences between themselves and a friend. Through their careful observations they noticed that there are differences between themselves and the friend in the shape and colour of various facial features. In other work seen, Year 1 pupils show that they have grasped a basic understanding of forces and they correctly identify push and pull forces when exploring toys and pictures of events.
 119. In another session observed, a class of Year 1 and 2 pupils classified animals using pictures. In the question and answer session they demonstrated knowledge of a wide range of animals. Although pupils made satisfactory suggestions about how they can carry out the task they are given, their answers and suggestions were hampered by a lack of vocabulary to explain what they meant. Pupils suggested correctly that some animals could fit in to more than one group. In other work seen, Year 2 pupils explore forces and know, for instance, that squashing and twisting are also examples of force being exerted. They record what happens when various balls are dropped to see which bounce the highest. Their recordings show they satisfactorily predict the outcome before commencing a test and write statements such as 'I think this one will bounce the best'.
 120. Year 3 and Year 4 pupils also investigate forces. They use a force meter and successfully measure units of force in Newtons when objects are pulled over different surfaces such as the carpet or smooth floor. These pupils also investigate circuits and magnets. They join bulbs and batteries to form a circuit, but their drawings in books do not always link the components of the circuit together in the correct way. More able pupils draw pictures to show how they could make a torch as an application of their knowledge of circuit. Pupils successfully measure the strength of a magnet by hanging paper clips on it to see how many it will hold.
 121. Overall, teaching in the lessons seen at Key Stage 1 was satisfactory, but evidence from work sampling indicates that pupils in Year 2 have been taught well during the year – enabling them to progress well in this year group. Teaching at Key Stage 2 is good. Throughout the school, teachers plan their work well. They generally provide suitable tasks for average and lower attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs. However, they do not always provide tasks that sufficiently extend the higher attaining pupils – this is especially evident at Key Stage 1. At the beginning of their lessons teachers clearly identify and share with pupils what is to be learned and then suitably review these objectives at the end of the lesson. For example, Year 4 pupils investigating woodlice, successfully reviewed what they had done and what they had learned at the end of the lesson. Teachers manage behaviour well to ensure that all pupils get the most out of the lessons. As a result, most pupils behave well, concentrate and work enthusiastically.
 122. Pupils enjoy science. Teachers emphasise health and safety issues well, such as the need for washing hands after handling snails in Year 3. Teachers diligently mark work but there is little indication provided in the books of older pupils to suggest how they can improve their work. Whilst there are two computers in each classroom they are not used sufficiently in science to collect and

interpret data or word process reports. The subject is well managed and the co-ordinator maintains a clear overview of the quality of work across the school. Resources for science are adequate and well used.

ART AND DESIGN

123. During the inspection, it was only possible to observe lessons in one class at Key Stage 1 and one at Key Stage 2. However, from the displays seen around the school, looking at teachers' planning and talking to pupils about their work, it is clear that standards at the age of seven and nine are in line with those normally found among pupils of a similar age, with some examples of good standards at Key Stage 2. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs make generally make good progress. No judgement was made on standards in the previous inspection due to insufficient recorded evidence – it is not therefore possible to judge the extent to which standards have improved.
124. At both key stages, pupils work with a range of media and study the work of different artists. Key Stage 1 pupils benefit from a suitable range of experiences, such as observational drawings, stretch patterns, free painting, clay masks and drawing with pen and pencils. Very effective drawings of horses illustrate pupils' confidence to attempt to portray movement. Pupils have experimented with using pattern for texture and printed repeat patterns using a range of objects. Younger pupils choose materials from a range of items provided and cut and stick items carefully in the right places to make a collage of the seaside.
125. Art and design at Key stage 2 successfully builds on pupils' skills and experiences. Experimentation with pen illustrates good concentration and detail. Good cross-curricular links exist and art and design supports other subjects well. For example, very effective pattern work on papier-mâché pots in Year 3 reflects their study of India. Sketchbooks are used to good effect to record design ideas based on evaluations of Indian pots. Pupils successfully transfer these to their pots resulting in some good quality artwork.
126. An art week in the school gave all pupils the opportunity of working with an artist in residence. The work produced during this week shows the variety of experiences on offer. Based on fairy tales and with support, pupils in Year 4 produced very effective life images in charcoal and chalk. Information and communication technology is used appropriately throughout the school to effectively make colourful pictures and patterns. Pupils' illustrative skills are used well to support other areas of the curriculum.
127. Pupils make good progress as they learn a range of skills throughout the school. They respond well to art and enjoy experimenting with different mediums. Most pay attention to detail and talk about their work with relative confidence.
128. It was not possible to observe sufficient lessons during the inspection to make a valid judgement upon the quality of teaching. It is clear from the scheme of work, teachers' planning and scrutiny of pupils' work that pupils effectively develop skills and techniques using a range of media and quality experiences.
129. The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator who has successfully established art throughout the school. The scheme of work is well written showing the expertise of the co-ordinator and properly incorporates the National Curriculum programmes of study. It is a very good guide for teachers' planning. Regular assessments identify individual pupils' progress particularly in skills and techniques. Pupils' artwork is displayed well and creates a stimulating learning environment. Resources for the subject are adequate.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

130. At the ages of seven and nine, as noted at the time of the last inspection, pupils attain standards in design and technology that match the national expectations. Work seen and lessons observed indicate that pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 and good progress at Key stage 2. The scheme of work has been reviewed and rewritten and this is a specific improvement since the last inspection.
131. Year 1 pupils learn to generate appropriate designs. In one lesson observed they made suitable designs for pop-up mechanisms. Through clear instructions from their teacher they learned how to use the design process to complete their work. The teacher and support staff provided good support and guidance so that the pupils learned to modify and improve their designs. In another lesson for Year 2/3 pupils, the teacher's clear explanations and demonstrations meant pupils acquired a sound knowledge of how to construct a hinge mechanism using masking tape and card. In making models of houses, pupils learned to join different materials in a range of ways. However the work was hampered as the teacher did not give out pupils' original designs for them to work from, so pupils were not necessarily following the design with which they had started. Other work carried out previously shows that pupils have designed and made a model car and carried out a suitable evaluation to decide ways that their models could be improved. Year 3 pupils design different sorts of food packages and have also (with help) successfully cooked sweets to go in their packages. In a very good Year 4 lesson, pupils used mechanisms to make pop-up books. These included the design and construction of levers and folded paper 'springs'. The teacher set high expectations so that pupils worked conscientiously and were proud of the end result of their efforts. They showed a sound knowledge of how to incorporate the mechanisms within their designs and evaluated the work very carefully to seek ways of improving their designs
132. Pupils enjoy the work in this subject and collaborate effectively with one another. They listen attentively and follow instructions carefully. Two lessons were seen at Key Stage 1 and the teaching was satisfactory overall. At Key Stage 2, one lesson was seen in which the teaching was very good. Teachers provide clear explanations and give the pupils an interesting range of projects that stimulate their interest. Work is well organised and prepared so that no time is wasted in lessons.
133. Considering that this subject is not a priority area on the school improvement plan, teachers are making a good effort to sustain the momentum in teaching this subject – the evidence of work samples seen indicates that pupils are provided with an interesting range of work across the year. The subject is well managed. The co-ordinator has worked effectively to produce a new scheme of work to support teachers' planning. The school has an adequate range of resources but there is very little space to store design and technology equipment and resources in a convenient and easily accessible way.

GEOGRAPHY

134. Overall, pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs have made satisfactory progress and, by the ages of seven and nine, as was noted at the time of the previous inspection, they attain standards that match the national expectation.
135. Year 1 and Year 2 pupils learn about the Isle of Struay and study a seaside locality. They satisfactorily write and address postcards to a friend from the perspective of someone living in one of these regions. The pupils look at pictures of the seaside and satisfactorily suggest the types of jobs people do that make seaside visits enjoyable and safe. For example, they mention a lifeguard and someone involved with the lifeboat. They also mention the candyfloss and the ice-cream seller. In one lesson seen Year 2 pupils competently compared the features of a seaside town with that of Frome. However, a number of these pupils struggled with finding differences and posing questions about the two areas. The pupils did not appreciate that the two areas would be different beyond the occurrence of sea and sand. They also had difficulty in articulating their ideas and showed limited vocabulary. because of insufficient development in their speaking skills. In this lesson the class

teacher made good use of information and communications technology by word processing the questions that pupils raised. These were usefully printed out for the class to use later.

136. In a Year 3 lesson about school life in Chembakolli village in India, pupils began to appreciate what it must feel like for a Hindu speaking pupil having to speak Tamil. This was brought about in the lesson with the pupils writing numbers in Indian script and then learning how to say them. In a Year 4 lesson pupils compared life in the Chembakolli village with their own. They researched leaflets and printed matter given to them and gained sufficient information to make the comparisons. In the plenary session pupils listened well to one another. They wrote satisfactory accounts about this subject.
137. Overall, teaching is sound at both key stages. Teachers plan work effectively in geography adapting nationally produced guidelines to suit the needs of the pupils in the school. Tasks are generally set to suit the wide range of age and ability in each class, with the exception that too few extension tasks are provided for higher attaining pupils. Work is marked regularly, but little indication is provided to show pupils how they can improve.
138. The subject is well managed, with the co-ordinator maintaining a clear view of work across the school. Visits are made to enhance geography. For example Year 3 have visited Weymouth by train in connection with a seaside project and Year 4 visited Bath to make a contrast with Frome.

HISTORY

139. It was not possible to observe lessons in history during the inspection. However, recent work in pupils' books shows that by the ages of seven and nine, standards are in line with national expectations. This shows that standards have been maintained since the last inspection and that pupils make at least satisfactory progress.
140. Year 2 pupils look at pictures of a Victorian washday and compare it to the present day. In their writing they try to imagine what it would be like without washing machines and running water taps. They also satisfactorily compare types of transport used in Victorian times with that of the present day. Year 3 pupils gain a sense of chronology, creating time lines to sequence events. Similarly, Year 4 pupils gain a sense of historic events taking place over time through making a time line to show the occurrence of significant events in English history. Pupils also study the economic factors that affected the lives of people during different periods of history and the differences for people living in towns or the countryside during these times.
141. History has been enhanced with visits such as the visit to Radstock Museum, where through activities such as dressing up in the costumes of the time, pupils gained an insight into a day in the school life of a Victorian child.
142. The subject is well managed. Topics in history as well as geography have been worked out in conjunction with the middle school in order that unnecessary repetition does not take place. Marking is diligently carried out but work is insufficiently dated and there is little indication provided to show pupils how they can improve their work. The school has identified rightly that current assessment procedures for this subject are not good enough and in need of a review and upgrade. The school has a satisfactory range of resources to support teaching and learning in history.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

143. At the ages of seven and nine, as noted at the last inspection, pupils attain levels in this subject that match the national expectation. At both key stages pupils make satisfactory progress. Since the last inspection, the school has upgraded its resources, networked the computers, introduced a new scheme of work, introduced a new system of assessment booklets and involved the staff in suitable training to upgrade their skills.
144. In a Year 1/2 lesson the teacher provided a clear demonstration so that pupils learned how to classify information onto a grid on the computer and they also compared this with carrying out a similar paper-based task to classify items. They experienced some difficulty as the demonstration was carried out on one small screen in the corner of the room, and those at the back of the group struggled to see. In another lesson seen Year 2 pupils learned to program a floor robot to draw a square. The teacher provided good opportunities for pupils to learn independently, giving them the chance to try out ideas and learn by their mistakes. Most pupils successfully managed the task. Other work scrutinised shows that pupils have suitable opportunities to practice word processing and they draw attractive firework pictures using an art program. Discussions with individual pupils show that they use ICT to support their work in literacy and numeracy and they have used the Internet to research for information about beaches. Pupils know how to print their work, correct mistakes and use the space bar, delete and enter keys.
145. In a Year 3 lesson the teacher gave a very clear demonstration so that pupils gained a clear understanding of how computer records are compiled. Year 4 pupils have acquired appropriate knowledge of how to enter data into a program in order to create a graph. Pupils explain clearly how this is done. They know how to save, retrieve and print items and have used ICT extensively to edit and draft their writing. Pupils use programs to support their work in literacy, numeracy, science, geography, art and music. They have some limited experience of working with programs where they

learn to control the movement of items on the screen through applying specific instructions and they also have limited experience of using the Internet to research for information. In discussion, pupils show that they have an appropriate knowledge and understanding in most areas, but clearly their skills with using the Internet and with control are not as good as they should be.

146. Only two full ICT lessons were observed during the inspection and so there is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching. However, in these lessons the teaching was good. Additionally, several occasions were observed where pupils used ICT appropriately to support learning in other subjects. In the two lessons seen teachers planned and prepared the activities well to maximise pupils' experience in the time available. Instructions and explanations were clear and pupils were well managed so that they progressed well through the tasks. Pupils spoken to and observed, clearly enjoy working with computers and showed enthusiasm in describing their experiences. The extent to which individual teachers use the computers to support class work across the school varies and some teachers make much greater use of the equipment than others. As a result, there is currently some variation in the breadth of experience that pupils acquire as they move through the school.
147. The subject is well managed and the co-ordinator has usefully monitored the quality of teaching and learning across the school. The running of a 'more able pupil ICT day' was clearly a successful initiative in promoting higher-level skills and resulted in some attractive and interesting desktop publishing. The ICT logbooks, which have been recently introduced, are a valuable tool in helping to assess and track pupils' progress. Although much has been done to ensure that there is an adequate range of hardware and software to support teaching and learning, the lack of a computer suite severely restricts the amount of 'hands on' access pupils have with the computers and restricts the clarity of teacher demonstrations when compared to what is currently possible in schools that possess such facilities.

MUSIC

148. During this inspection, it was only possible to observe two music lessons – one at each key stage. There is therefore insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching or the attainment of pupils at Key Stage 1. As one of the lessons observed was at Year 4 and pupils' singing was observed in assembly, there is sufficient evidence to indicate that standards at age nine are in line with the national expectations although pupils singing exceeds this expectation. Insufficient evidence was available at the last inspection for judgements to be made – it is not therefore possible to judge how much improvement has taken place since that time. However, the school has made a significant effort to improve pupils' singing and the impact of this work is now clear in the good quality singing seen during this inspection.
149. In the Year 1 lesson seen pupils listened carefully to a selection of recorded songs and joined in with the singing, showing an appropriate level of ability for their age. The teacher explained ideas carefully so that they gained an understanding of the difference between a chorus, with a group of people singing, and a solo. A good lesson for Year 4 pupils involved an extensive warm-up session during which the teacher skilfully accentuated different dynamics and musical terms as the pupils practised a rhythmic verbal recital, echoing the lines spoken and sung by the teacher. Through the work pupils gained a clear understanding of terms such as fortissimo, legato and staccato. Pupils listened carefully to a song from 'The Sound of Music' and from the teachers very clear explanation, pupils understood that the music involved duets, solos and chorus parts. The teacher used her own good singing voice well to demonstrate and teach the pupils. Her high expectations of their singing and behaviour resulted in good quality singing with nearly all of the pupils holding the melody and sustaining the rhythm well. This good quality singing was also noted in the assemblies seen, with pupils singing with enthusiasm and in a very tuneful manner

150. The subject is well managed. The co-ordinator is currently creating a new scheme of work to support teachers' planning. The school's initiative to invite an outside trust organisation to help train the pupils in singing and also to provide training for the staff and interested parents has been most effective in raising the standard of singing. The school also usefully involves pupils in local musical events and the co-ordinator runs a choir club to provide practice for pupils at times of the year when special musical events are forthcoming. The school has an adequate range of musical instruments. The use of music from other countries such as the African songs learned in Year 4, make a valuable contribution to pupils' cultural awareness. In addition, moments of reflection provided while pupils listen to music also make a useful contribution to promoting their spiritual awareness.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

151. As reported at the last inspection pupils attain standards that match the national expectation in physical education at the ages of seven and nine. All aspects of the curriculum are planned for, but during the inspection, the main focus of lessons was on games, gymnastics and dance work. The older pupils are taught to swim at a nearby pool and, by the time they leave the school, almost all attain an appropriate level for their age. There is a suitable range of extra-curricular sports activities including football, and, at certain times of the year, a country-dancing club. All clubs are well attended by boys and girls.
152. In a Year 2/3 lesson observed pupils worked on a theme for a performance. During the lesson they showed satisfactory skills of balance and movement when following a line as if it were a tightrope. Pupils worked well with one another and, when demonstrating to the class, they did so with confidence. Pupils carefully appraised each other's work and showed appreciation of the efforts of others. A class of Year 3 pupils practised a traditional Indian bonfire festival dance in connection with their geography project. The teacher provided a good role model when demonstrating the gesture and dance movements. Pupils made some imaginative movements in time with the music and with an appropriate level of co-ordination. A Year 4 class practised passing and catching skills and showed appropriate skills for their age. The teacher intervened at appropriate times to emphasise teamwork and got pupils to usefully identify the skills they were using.
153. The standard of behaviour in lessons is generally good, although a minority of pupils show that they have not developed satisfactory listening and concentration skills.
154. At Key Stage 1, pupils make sound progress with their learning and teaching is satisfactory. At Key Stage 2, pupils progress well and teaching is good. Lessons are well planned using the school's scheme of work alongside nationally produced guidelines. Lessons run at an appropriate pace and provide suitably challenging work. Pupils in Year 4 were especially well challenged by the work provided for them. Pupils change into suitable clothing for physical education lessons. Teachers provide clear instructions. They are clear about what they want pupils to learn and they explain these intentions carefully at the beginning of the lesson. Pupils with special educational needs are well included in all sessions and make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Good attention is given to health and safety matters and equipment is upgraded periodically. The subject is well managed – with the co-ordinator having a clear overview of the quality of work across the school. Resources and equipment for this subject are satisfactory and well used.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

155. Pupils' standards of attainment are broadly in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Key Stage 1 and with those expected of Year 4 pupils. It is not possible to compare standards with the last inspection, as there was insufficient evidence last time to allow judgements on attainment and progress to be made. During their time at the school, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress overall. Pupils' limited writing skills hinder their progress in religious education.

156. Year 1 pupils are knowledgeable about Christian festivals of Christmas and Harvest. They develop their knowledge of the importance of Easter in the church calendar. Many can recall their visit to the church and a Christening. They extend their learning of other faith traditions as they simplistically consider a Christian and Hindu wedding. Year 2 pupils consider the Christian story of the creation. They think about special people in their lives, special times and how people care for each other. They are familiar with the Jewish tradition of Shabbat.
157. At Key Stage 2, pupils consider the need for rules. They help in devising school and class rules and consider the rules laid down in the Ten Commandments. Pupils are familiar with stories Jesus told, such as the Good Samaritan. On occasions, good links are made with other subjects. For example, Year 3 and Year 4 pupils' study of India effectively incorporated the life and work of Mother Teresa.
158. During the inspection most classes were studying the Hindu faith. Key Stage 1 pupils heard the story of the Mango Tree and its significance to the Hindu faith. They also learnt about the Hindu festival of Holi and related some practices to their own experiences. Year 4 pupils make good progress in understanding how Hindu people show their faith and develop their knowledge of Hindu rituals. They know that the Hindus have one God but see him in different ways, and that a mantra is a prayer that is repeated over and over again. Following a period of reflection pupils repeat the Gayatri Mantra.
159. Pupils respond positively to these lessons. They show genuine interest in different faiths compared to their own. As is shown in their questions to clarify understanding.
160. Overall the quality of teaching in the three lessons observed, which ranged from unsatisfactory to good, was satisfactory. Most teachers have sound knowledge of the subject and make effective use of resources. In the good lesson, the classroom was appropriately prepared, using suitable artefacts, to promote a calming ethos and through role-play pupils successfully enacted rituals of the Hindu faith. Sometimes, pupils are given times for quiet reflection and to share their feelings. For example, Year 4 were asked to 'think about what they would say to welcome the day on waking up.' This resulted in thoughtful prayers to welcome the day. Religious education also makes a good contribution to pupils' moral and cultural development, as they are encouraged to learn about faith traditions, and gain insight into their ways of life and belief systems.
161. The subject is well managed. Since the last inspection a scheme of work has been well established closely linked to the locally agreed syllabus. Resource levels are adequate and well organised to support teaching. Assessments are made at half-term intervals and cover the objectives from the scheme of work.