

INSPECTION REPORT

CHITTLEHAMPTON CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Chittlehampton, Umberleigh

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113449

Headteacher: Mrs J Kyle

Lead inspector: Mr L Lewin

Dates of inspection: 7th – 8th June 2004

Inspection number: 255791

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	5 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	40
School address:	Chittlehampton Umberleigh Devon
Postcode:	EX37 9QW
Telephone number:	01769 540286
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Fiona Gardener
Date of previous inspection:	22 nd April 2002

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Chittlehampton Church of England Voluntary Aided School serves the village of Chittlehampton, in the heart of the North Devon countryside. It is a small school with 40 pupils from the ages of four to eleven. The roll has fallen over the last few years from a peak of 70 in 2000. The decline in numbers is partly due to changes in demographic trends locally, but also, a few dissatisfied parents have removed their children from the school during a period when the school experienced a lot of turbulence in its staffing. The staffing has now been stabilised under the leadership of the new headteacher who has been in post since April 2003. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school, other than at the usual times of admission or leaving, is higher than in most other schools nationally, with 12 pupils leaving and six joining during the last school year. Pupils are taught in two classes by two full-time and two part-time teachers including the headteacher. All of the pupils come from white UK heritage backgrounds and none of them speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is about the same as in most other schools nationally. The proportion of pupils who are identified as having special educational needs, at 30 per cent, is above the national average, and, at five per cent, the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is also above average. In 2002, the school received an award from the Department for Education and Skills to mark the good achievements of its pupils in the national tests, but in a subsequent inspection in the same year, the school was found to have serious weaknesses in its curriculum provision and leadership and management. The children enter the school showing broadly average attainment.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22330	Mr L Lewin	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education
33673	Mr N Gallichan	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
24760	Ms S Barton	<i>Team inspector</i>	Foundation Stage English Geography History

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a sound and rapidly improving school. Very good leadership and management have enabled the school to improve rapidly over the last year, so that pupils now show sound achievement as a result of good teaching and reach average standards in English, mathematics and science. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher provides very good leadership.
- The school has a very inclusive and caring approach.
- The school works hard to involve parents as fully as possible in their children's education.
- Good work is seen in art, music and physical education.
- Good provision is made for supporting pupils with special educational needs.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are below average.
- Although the school has developed sound systems for evaluating pupils' progress in English and mathematics, assessment procedures in other subjects are underdeveloped.
- The school lacks sufficient outdoor play facilities for children in the Foundation Stage.

Since the arrival of the new headteacher in April 2003, substantial upgrades have been made to nearly all areas of the school's provision. All of the areas criticised in the last inspection have been very successfully addressed. The range of initiatives implemented places the school in a strong position to reach its optimum performance in the near future, but time is needed for some of the work done to show its full impact. For example, with new improved facilities only recently installed for ICT, staff have not yet had enough time to improve standards in this area. The headteacher has now stabilised the staffing in the school and improved teaching. Whilst the school recognises that there is still much scope for improving standards further, the very effective work of the headteacher and staff team over the last year has successfully transformed the school from a position of underachievement to a sound position for pupils to reach their full potential from hereon. The school has now entered an exciting phase in its development, with staff, governors and parents enthusiastic and very committed to ensuring high standards and high quality provision in the near future. Overall the rate of improvement is good since the last inspection and very good over the last year.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	D	B	D	E
Mathematics	B	A	E	E
Science	E	E*	E	E*

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average; E indicates pupils performing in the lowest five per cent nationally.*

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

N.B. In small schools like this one, where the number of pupils involved in taking the national tests each year is very small, a great deal of caution is needed when interpreting the information in the above table.

The table above shows that Year 6 pupils attained below average results in English and well below average results in mathematics and science in the 2003 national tests compared to all other schools. Results were well below average in all of these subjects when compared to other similar schools and in the lowest five per cent nationally in science. In Year 2, results were also well below average for reading, writing and mathematics when compared to other schools nationally and other

similar schools. As children usually enter the school showing broadly average attainment, the test results reflected a picture of underachievement by the time pupils reached Year 2 and Year 6. Good teaching and improved curriculum provision instigated over the last year have begun the process of rapidly reversing this situation so that pupils now show **sound achievement** across the school overall. Results of the school's regular testing across the year and samples of work viewed during this inspection confirm that all groups of pupils now make good progress. They are set to attain **average standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2 and average standards in English, mathematics and science in Years 5 and 6**. Children in the Foundation Stage now achieve well and are on course to attain the expected levels in all of the areas of learning. Standards in ICT are generally below average across the school. In all other subjects, not enough evidence was collected to make overall judgements about standards. However, displays of artwork around the school and a small sample of lessons seen indicate that pupils do well in art and some good work was seen in music and physical education sessions.

Pupils show good attitudes and behaviour, and provision for developing their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attendance is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education throughout the school is good. Teaching and learning are good overall. Good curriculum provision, good provision for supporting and guiding pupils and good links with the parents and the community also strongly enhance pupils' learning. Teachers plan work well to ensure pupils have a range of work that interests and motivates them to learn at a good rate. Good relationships between staff and pupils, and lively interaction seen in many lessons, stimulate pupils' thinking and ensure that they all become fully involved in the work. Teaching assistants are deployed very effectively to support pupils and they show a skilful approach towards working with individuals and groups. In particular, they provide a strong boost to the quality of literacy, numeracy and music work across the school. Specialist support teaching for physical education also strongly boosts pupils' skills and learning. However, although good systems have been established to check pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics, no whole-school systems have been established for this purpose in other subjects.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school's leadership and management are very good. The headteacher has led the school very well over the last year to enable a very good rate of improvement. Governors carry out their roles well, are fully involved in the work of the school and ensure all statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Discussions with parents and pupils and their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire issued show that the vast majority have a high regard for the school and its staff.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Improve standards in ICT.
- Using the good examples in English and mathematics, develop and implement systems for checking the attainment and progress of pupils in all other subjects.

¹ Only one pupil currently in Year 6, so reference here is broadened to include the oldest pupils in the junior part of the school.

- Consider all possible ways for improving outdoor play facilities for children in the Foundation Stage.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils show satisfactory achievement, and standards have improved since the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Much recent improvement in pupils' achievement across the school, but the school recognises that there is still scope for further improvement of standards.
- Some good work seen in art, music and physical education.
- Pupils with special educational needs progress well.
- Standards in ICT are below average.
- Occasionally, higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently extended by the work provided.

Commentary

1. Children enter the school showing average attainment. They achieve well in the Foundation Stage, working well alongside pupils in Years 1 and 2, and are currently on course to attain the expected levels in all areas of learning.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	14.6 (13.0)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	13.6 (11.0)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.8 (13.4)	16.3 (16.5)

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

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results 2003	National results 2003
English	25.8 (27.9)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	24.6 (28.7)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	25.8 (24.4)	28.6 (28.3)

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

With such low numbers of pupils in the cohorts tested, much caution is needed in interpreting these results.

2. In the 2003 Year 2 national tests, the school's results were well below average for reading, writing and mathematics when compared to other schools nationally and other similar schools. Year 6 pupils attained below average results in English and well below average results in mathematics and science. Their results were well below average in all of these subjects when compared to other similar schools. With children coming into the school showing broadly average attainment, these results reflected a picture of pupils not progressing enough and showing below average achievement. The headteacher, appointed in April 2003, has worked very effectively with staff to improve the quality of teaching and learning and curriculum provision. As a result, standards have improved so that pupils now show sound achievement across the school. Good procedures have been established to check pupils' attainment and progress on a regular basis in English and mathematics, and the information gained shows that pupils now make good progress. This good progress is also verified through the improving quality of work in

pupils' books. Good teaching, skilful use of sessions to boost individuals and groups and strong guidance for all pupils mean that the trend of declining standards in the school has now been reversed. Pupils are now set to attain average standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2 and average standards in English, mathematics and science in Years 5 and 6². The school has set itself some exacting targets for the pupils' future performance and, while it has failed to meet these targets in the past, recent improvements mean it is well on course to reach its targets in the future.

3. In English, speaking and listening skills are satisfactory throughout the school. Pupils explain themselves using an appropriate range of vocabulary and most speak clearly. Most pupils read confidently aloud. The standards in writing are average. Handwriting is consistently well formed, joined and legible. Years 5 and 6 pupils use an appropriately wide range of vocabulary in their writing and have a sound awareness of sentence structure and punctuation. Year 2 pupils gain a sound understanding of working with tens and units in the practical mathematics activities they do and, by Years 5 and 6, pupils use a good range of techniques to carry out calculations using two- and three-digit numbers. Throughout the school pupils learn to extend their number skills through using and applying their knowledge in problem solving situations. Pupils gain a satisfactory range of knowledge through the science investigations they carry out, with Year 2 pupils, for example, learning about senses of the human body and comparing themselves to other animals. Year 5 and Year 6 pupils cover a good range of science topics in appropriate depth, for example, through investigating such areas as the absorbency of different types of paper. They have a sound understanding of the principle of fair testing.

4. Due to equipment difficulties pupils have not had enough chances to make use of computers in the past and lack experience in using computers to support their work. As a result, standards are below average across the school. However, with the recent arrival and installation of new equipment in the computer suite, pupils and teachers are keen to rectify this imbalance. They are now starting to make far more use of the computers, with older pupils embarking on projects, for example, to present their ideas through the use of PowerPoint facilities.

5. In all other subjects, not enough evidence was collected to make overall judgements about pupils' attainment. However, good quality work was noted in one music lesson seen for pupils in Years 1 and 2 – with pupils developing good knowledge of musical vocabulary and ideas to create musical performances. In the games lessons seen for infant and junior age pupils, good co-ordination skills were noted with pupils working hard with the tasks provided. Throughout the school, the wide range of two-dimensional and three-dimensional work on display indicates pupils have lots of good experiences with working in art and design and produce some good quality work.

6. Pupils with special educational needs progress well as they move through the school because of the strong support they receive from teachers and teaching assistants. This support enables them to cover the same areas of work as their classmates and develop a confident approach.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to school are good; they are enthusiastic about their work. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and, as a result, their behaviour is good and they get on well with each other. Attendance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attitudes and behaviour of pupils in the Foundation Stage are very good.
- Pupils with behavioural needs are very well supported.
- Incidents of bullying and harassment are very rare.

² Currently only one pupil in Year 6.

- Occasionally, older pupils shout out in class.

Commentary

7. The youngest children engage in activities very well. They settle to tasks without fuss and behave very sensibly. They listen attentively to adults, are quick to follow instructions and are eager to learn with the older pupils in their class. Well trained teaching assistants provide valuable support for pupils with special educational needs, ensuring that all pupils derive maximum benefit from lessons.

8. Behaviour in and around the school is good. When walking between the school and village hall for lunch and physical education lessons, pupils behave sensibly and are mindful of the hazards posed by traffic. Adults are good role models for pupils, who respond by treating each other with respect. They show sensitivity and support and celebrate one another's successes, for example, in physical education. Occasionally, a few older pupils do not comply with the usual code of conduct established and, at these times, they shout out answers to the teacher without bothering to put their hands up. This behaviour tends to slightly disrupt the flow of the lessons.

9. The good attendance rate confirms pupils' enthusiasm and enjoyment of school. Pupils are interested in their lessons and feel they have to work hard. They consider that they are well supported and encouraged by their teachers. When working in pairs and groups, pupils co-operate well, achieve desired results and complete tasks.

10. Two pupils have received periods of fixed term exclusions during the current academic year. Both have been re-introduced to the school and none are currently excluded.

11. Pupils' personal development is fostered well. Assemblies are seen as valuable occasions and promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. During the inspection, one such assembly challenged pupils in Years 3 to 6 to consider persistence and courage through the story of St Boniface. Pupils and parents report that incidents of bullying or harassment at the school are very rare. Pupils are confident in conversation with adults and express their opinions clearly. The school council provides an opportunity for pupils to take part in decision-making within the school; recent proposals include changes to school meals arrangements and the introduction of fish into the school pond.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.8
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.6
National data	0.4

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll
40

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
2	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education throughout the school is **good**. Teaching and learning are good overall. Good curriculum provision, good provision for supporting and guiding pupils, and good links with the parents and the community also strongly enhance pupils' learning.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good and has improved since the previous inspection. The school has established good assessment procedures in English and mathematics, but systems for checking pupils' attainment and progress are underdeveloped in other subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are well planned.
- Staff have good relationships with pupils that strongly enhance learning.
- Teachers show good subject knowledge.
- Teaching assistants provide very effective support for teachers and pupils.
- Good use is made of staff specialist teaching skills.
- Occasionally, higher attaining pupils are not fully extended by the work provided.
- Occasionally, parameters for what is acceptable behaviour are not set clearly enough for older pupils.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 15 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	4	8	3	0	0	0

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

12. Teaching is good for all of the age groups in the school. Teachers plan their lessons to ensure that work is interesting for the pupils. For example, well prepared work for science lessons gains an enthusiastic response from pupils, with work on 'how materials change' introduced by a project to make some bread in a lesson for Foundation Stage/Year 1/Year 2. Teachers are skilled at presenting work in a practical format, wherever possible, so that much of the pupils' learning is developed through investigation and exploration. For instance, in mathematics lessons the teachers provide pupils with good quality activities that involve effective use of very good resources for learning. This was seen in lessons with the teachers using a giant size 'bead bar' to help demonstrate different counting techniques and the very good use of mini white boards, number fans and place value cards to help pupils explore concepts such as learning about hundreds, tens and units. A good range of topics, such as work on the Egyptians by junior pupils, is used well as a springboard to encourage pupils to produce good quality models and detailed written accounts. The good planning also ensures that work provided usually extends all groups of pupils – including those with special educational needs. For example, in a guided reading session, careful matching of reading levels for the junior class meant that pupils progressed well in developing their reading fluency and comprehension skills. Teachers are also good at questioning pupils in discussions so that higher attaining pupils are extended. For example, in a junior class mathematics lesson, the teacher's strategy of getting a higher attaining pupil to explain how he had completed an extension task strongly encouraged the pupil and usefully extended the understanding of all other pupils in the class. Occasionally, work for older junior pupils is given that does not cater fully for the higher attaining individuals. This was noted in some of the samples of the previously carried out science and mathematics work, where higher attaining pupils covered exactly the same pieces of work as the others and reached exactly the same outcomes.

13. All staff have developed good relationships with pupils. They have a good knowledge of each pupil's individual needs so that they respond quickly to provide precise assistance and encouragement where appropriate. The strongly supportive atmosphere that results means that pupils are keen to improve, develop confidence in their own abilities and feel fully included in activities. The good relationships also inspire a good level of interaction during discussions and ensure full engagement of pupils.

14. Teachers' good subject knowledge is apparent in the good quality explanations and directions they give to pupils. This ensures that most lessons flow at a good pace and that pupils' interest and enthusiasm are maintained.

15. Teaching assistants provide very effective support for teachers and pupils. They are very skilled and often give good, precise guidance for individuals and groups of pupils during lessons. In particular, they work very effectively with pupils who have special educational needs, ensuring that these individuals stay well focused. The teaching assistants have a good understanding of when to apply precise guidance and when to withdraw and allow pupils to develop their skills independently. They work very effectively with pupils who have particular behavioural difficulties and, as a result, these pupils are given the help they need to stay involved in classroom activities. The school is very fortunate to have teaching assistants with particular talents. This enables the school to provide strong boosting to work in drama, literacy and music through the good teaching of groups of pupils by the teaching assistants. Pupils' learning is also well enhanced through the school's deployment of a specialist sports teacher who visits the school to provide very good teaching in games sessions.

16. Occasionally, the class code of conduct is not sufficiently well reinforced for older pupils and, as a result, they do not listen properly and shout out during discussions. This has the effect of spoiling the usually good classroom atmosphere and slowing the pace of learning.

17. The school has worked hard to establish good assessment procedures in English and mathematics, and the performance information for these subjects and the analysis of how well pupils get on in different tests are used well to inform future planning. However, systems for checking pupils' attainment and progress are underdeveloped in all other subjects.

The curriculum

The school provides a good curriculum, which is broad and balanced and provides good opportunities for enrichment.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good emphasis is placed upon pupils' learning through first hand experiences.
- Specialist teaching is well deployed for physical education and music.
- The many opportunities provided through extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors to the school help to further enhance the curriculum.
- The curriculum is well enriched by the very good use of teaching assistants' expertise to teach literacy and music.
- Good provision is made for supporting pupils with special educational needs.
- The school is very good at ensuring that all groups of pupils are fully involved in all curriculum activities.
- The school has insufficient outside play resources for children in the Foundation Stage.

Commentary

18. The school works hard to provide a rich and stimulating curriculum that fulfils statutory requirements. Since the last inspection when the curriculum was deemed to be unsatisfactory, the school has ensured that lesson time is sufficient to provide a broad and balanced curriculum

throughout the year. There are many good links made between literacy and numeracy across the curriculum. The revised curriculum planning reflects current requirements in all subjects, and has been well adapted to meet the needs of a two-class school, ensuring pupils build on their learning in a progressive way as they move through the school.

19. The school is proactive in bringing local visitors in to support pupils' learning. For example, visitors shared their memories of the 1950s with older pupils who were studying this period in history. Also, termly planned visits within the locality and to such places as Exeter Museum extend pupils' learning well. The good quality of pupils' work displayed around the school exemplifies their many opportunities for participation in art. A good range of extra-curricular activities provided at lunchtime and after school by teaching staff and teaching assistants further enhances pupils' learning and helps to develop their enthusiasm.

20. Teachers and teaching assistants are well inducted to the school, with very good training opportunities provided to ensure that their expertise is fully utilised to support the raising of standards across the curriculum. Teaching assistants are very effectively deployed to broaden the range of opportunities pupils have; for example, by their involvement in teaching music, literacy and drama to groups of pupils. Curriculum provision is widened further through guitar tuition provided by a visiting teacher, and by a visiting sports specialist teacher who comes to the school each week.

21. Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for. Teachers are very good at ensuring that these pupils are fully catered for within lesson activities and discussions. Individual education plans are carefully drawn up with sharply focused targets that are regularly reviewed and updated. Teaching assistants work especially well in support of these pupils, prompting, guiding and helping them develop a confident approach. A fully inclusive atmosphere exists in both classrooms and all staff work very hard – often with much patience and persistence – to ensure that all individuals participate fully in all activities. Individuals with specific problems are nurtured well within this very positive atmosphere and eased through any difficult phases they experience.

22. Lack of suitable equipment for ICT has meant pupils have not had enough opportunities to develop their skills in this area. However, with newly installed equipment in the school's ICT suite, the school is set to make rapid improvements in this area. The use of the village hall and field provides appropriate facilities for physical activity to take place. However, use is limited with the distance to walk involved. The Foundation Stage is well resourced but lacks suitable outdoor play equipment.

Care, guidance and support

Care for pupils is good. Pupils' access to guidance about their work is good, and they are involved effectively in the life and development of the school. These areas have all been strengthened since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All members of staff know pupils well and provide a high level of care for them.
- Pupils' views are actively canvassed and taken seriously.
- Procedures to ensure health and safety and child protection are effective.
- Formal training in child protection issues is required.

Commentary

23. Pupils of all ages are happy in school and they say there is little they would change. This is because all members of staff establish good relationships with them from their earliest days at school. Staff are mindful of the welfare needs of pupils and ensure they are well supervised

and safe at all times; for example, during the inspection, in particularly hot weather, pupils were encouraged to wear hats, apply sunscreen lotion and take bottles of water to physical education lessons. Pupils are aware of their personal targets through good monitoring by staff, and are confident to approach staff if they need help with their work.

24. All staff members are first aid trained, and although key staff are awaiting formal training in child protection issues, the school adheres to the guidance provided by the local education authority and has dealt with issues effectively. A close working relationship has been developed with the education welfare officer in all matters relating to care and attendance.

25. Pupils are represented by elected school councillors, and their views, suggestions and concerns are regularly aired through the school council, class discussion times and personal, social and health education (PSHE) work.

26. Health and safety procedures comply fully with legal requirements. There are regular fire drills, and tests of alarms and equipment are conducted during each half term. Risk assessments and security arrangements are good and are reviewed regularly. Procedures to deal with accidents and emergencies are thorough.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents, the community and local schools are good and have improved significantly in recent times.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has developed a very good exchange of views and information with parents.
- Links with the local play school are developing well.
- Visits by members of the community enhance pupils' learning experiences.

Commentary

27. The school makes every effort to involve parents in their child's education. It gives them good quality information by way of newsletters, formal consultations, curricular information, open forums and workshops. The school frequently seeks and responds to the views of parents through questionnaires. The relationship between the school and parents has improved since the last inspection, but the school would benefit from increased membership of the parents, teachers and friends association. Pupils' end of year reports are personal, detailed and helpful for parents. Parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting and replied to the pre-inspection questionnaire said they felt well informed and consulted by the school, and consider it to be making very good efforts to communicate with them. Parents consulted during the inspection were happy with the ready access to staff and headteacher afforded at the school.

28. A good link with the local playgroup has been established. Playgroup children and their parents come into school on a regular basis and work alongside the Foundation Stage children and staff. This good school and community link is strengthened further through Foundation Stage staff and playgroup staff planning activities for the sessions together. Links with the local secondary school are satisfactory. Pupils moving on to their next phase of education attend two induction days at the secondary school, and later spend a day in class at the school. Their future tutors visit pupils in school and liaise with their current teaching staff. The school links with neighbouring primary schools, and staff of these schools meet once a term in an academic council.

29. Pupils benefit from good use made of the village hall and its sports field for lunches and physical education. Older residents of the village occasionally join pupils at lunchtimes when pupils wait on their guests. This is a useful social time that assists in the development of pupils. A local potter works with pupils, assisting the development of their creativity and supporting their

understanding of materials. The school, with the permission of parents, has established a link with a local factory that, by way of a questionnaire, seeks the views of pupils to inform its marketing strategy. This activity provides an insight into marketing for pupils and generates a useful small income for the school. The school has a close relationship with the village church that is situated next door. The minister is a frequent visitor to the school and often leads assemblies.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are very good. These areas have shown particular improvement since the last inspection. The governors fulfil their roles well and ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides inspirational leadership and has helped the school move forward rapidly over the last year.
- The headteacher manages and deploys the staff very well to ensure the best use is made of their expertise.
- Governors are fully involved in the work of the school.

Commentary

30. The headteacher arrived at the school amidst difficult times when standards had been falling and the quality of provision had been deemed unsatisfactory in some areas by the previous inspection. In a relatively short period of time, she has stabilised the staffing situation and created a climate in which staff, governors and parents all work together with an enthusiastic commitment to move the school rapidly forward. The main touchstone of success is the strongly positive and clear communication she has established with all members of the school community, so that all of those involved with the school feel valued. The atmosphere within the school is now a very positive one and this has been picked up by the pupils who thereby generally show an enthusiastic and motivated approach to school life. In particular, rigorous monitoring of the teaching throughout the school accompanied, where needed, by appropriate training and guidance for staff has resulted in improvements in the quality of teaching and a reversal in the previously declining standards of pupils' work. In addition, over the last year, amongst the many tasks she has performed, the headteacher has successfully:

- improved the visual impact and attractiveness of the school;
- made sure that a balanced curriculum has been restored;
- put clear lesson planning systems in place;
- introduced proper performance management systems for all staff;
- introduced clear school development planning systems so that the school now has a clear educational direction;
- upgraded the provision for special educational needs;
- improved communication with all parents.

31. The headteacher has worked very well in deploying staff effectively to make the most of their skills. Reassignment of teaching assistants now ensures that they maximise their skills to boost pupils' performance. For example, effective use of the teaching assistant in the junior classroom has especially helped with enabling better quality teaching provision for literacy groups. Similarly, good use of another teaching assistant to work with groups of pupils in music sessions helps pupils produce good quality work. Through these areas, and the many other areas of work in which they are involved, the teaching assistants are now established as a fully integrated part of the teaching team.

32. Governors are now fully informed about, and involved in, the work of the school. They work closely with the staff. Good systems are established for them to monitor lessons on a regular basis. There is now a strong working relationship established between the governors and the school staff. Governors have a clear overview of the strengths and the weaknesses within the school's provision. There is a recognised need for them to improve their critical friendship role through being sure to fully question all new development initiatives and, in this way, further help the headteacher to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of any new proposals.

33. The headteacher and governors ensure that the school finances are used in the best way. The budget is well managed and the well qualified school administrative officer gives the headteacher and governors strong support in this area to make sure that all matters related to spending are organised efficiently.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	192,388
Total expenditure	179,742
Expenditure per pupil	4,494

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	5,500
Balance carried forward to the next	12,646

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

As noted during the last inspection, the overall quality of education in the Foundation Stage is good. Children are achieving well in all areas of learning and this year will achieve the learning goals expected before the end of the Reception year. In some aspects of their work they will exceed these levels.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good in each area of learning, with a significant amount of very good teaching.
- Teaching assistants make a very good contribution to the children's learning.
- Good arrangements for introducing children to the school make starting school a positive experience for each new intake.
- Children's personal, social and emotional development is well promoted.

Commentary

34. The children in the Foundation Stage share their class with the Year 1 and 2 pupils. Whilst planning suitably covers all areas of learning prescribed for this age group, class teaching covers the National Curriculum programmes of study. Children make good progress in all aspects of their learning and very quickly benefit from being in close contact with older pupils and from the very good support provided. The well resourced indoor activities provide a wide range of activities. However, facilities do not readily aid children in their independent structured play.

35. The attainment of the current intake is broadly average or better. Attainment in personal, social and emotional development on entry is often below that which is expected. Good arrangements for settling children into school when they first start are enhanced by the joint playgroup and Foundation Stage sessions each month. Good, and very good, teaching ensures that all children achieve well and the planned curriculum is well matched to their needs. The teachers and teaching assistant form a cohesive team, planning together and carefully monitoring the children's progress.

36. Arrangements for promoting children's **personal, social and emotional development** are good and they make the progress necessary to achieve what is expected by the end of the Reception year. Staff are very effective in encouraging children to develop good relationships. Classroom routines, such as the start of the day, are very well used as a means of helping children to gain confidence and learn how to live and work in a community. Children respond well to responsibility and quickly gain independence.

37. The provision for **communication, language and literacy** is good. Children listen to adults and other children and respond quickly to instructions. They successfully recall the stories that have been told. They develop speaking skills through practical activities and the staff interact very well with them. They talk together, mostly using full sentences and an appropriate range of vocabulary. Children achieve well, gaining confidence, and they will at the least meet the learning goals. The children are acquiring **literacy skills** well, writing their own names, and sounding out and copying words. Children gain a great deal from working alongside their Year 1 classmates who provide very good role models with writing.

They form letters well and are successfully learning to join their handwriting, which is neat and legible. Reading is encouraged through a structured reading programme as well as guided reading sessions. Shared reading and guided writing encourage children to learn words that they can use. Reading is well supported by parents.

38. **Mathematical development** is well promoted through specific teaching and through exposure to activities that encourage mathematical thinking, for example, counting dinner numbers. Children are well on the way across the 'stepping stones' to the Early Learning Goals, counting to 20 and more, recognising and writing the numerals and beginning to add by counting. In the lesson observed, children were counting in tens and making two-digit numbers with adult support and practical resources. They make and recognise patterns and know the names of some shapes.

39. Provision for children's **knowledge and understanding of the world** is satisfactory. Children talked about their family and where they lived. They are aware of how they have changed in their lifetime. They have an awareness of living creatures and have explored the seaside.

40. Related activities promote **creative development** well. New skills are introduced and taught in art, and malleable materials are used to model with, enabling children to produce pots and have new experiences. They play imaginatively in the sand. No construction activities or role play were observed during the inspection. However, staff indicated that such experiences are suitably used to enhance creative learning, with adults being involved, modelling how to play. Children enjoyed and fully participated in a music lesson, listening to music and recording how the music sounded to them, and being aware of pitch, dynamics and texture. They played percussion instruments and were involved with 'conducting' the 'sound picture' constructed by the class. The children are well on the way to achieving the Early Learning Goals before the end of the year.

41. Through their involvement with class physical education lessons, the children develop appropriate overall skills in their **physical development**. However, there is no access to large wheeled toys or play equipment to help staff ensure the children have a full range of experiences specific to this age group. Pupils take part in weekly physical education lessons in the village hall and on the field, as well as swimming during one term each year. They move with confidence and are aware of each other and the space around. They are engaged in throwing activities. There are good opportunities for children to work with their hands, developing their fine motor skills as they handle small tools such as pencils, crayons and paintbrushes. They work with construction materials and other tabletop equipment, and play musical instruments. When writing, they show very good pencil control.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have risen by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- The strong leadership has enabled standards to rise.
- In all lessons observed teaching is good or better.
- Teaching assistants are very well used and are a valuable asset.
- The strategy of getting pupils to frequently work with a partner in discussing ideas has a positive impact on improving their speaking and listening skills.
- The marking of pupils' work does not always guide them in how to make improvements.

Commentary

42. Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards in Years 2, 5 and 6 are average, which is an improvement on the 2003 national test results. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are satisfactory throughout the school. Pupils mostly listen well to each other. However, a significant number of older pupils find listening in the afternoons more difficult, which hinders their progress. Pupils are encouraged to turn to their talking partners to help formulate ideas and opinions and this is an effective strategy in helping them to develop a wider vocabulary and to develop the confidence to become involved in discussions. The strategy is particularly well used in the infant class. As a result of this kind of approach, pupils are eager to contribute to lessons by sharing their ideas and answering questions. They describe their thoughts using an appropriate range of vocabulary and most speak clearly. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 study poetry and learn how to read it aloud expressively.

43. The development of pupils' reading skills is given a high profile throughout the school. As a result, most pupils read aloud confidently. Good quality sessions where the teachers guide groups of pupils in their reading are especially successful in helping to improve standards in this area. Pupils work conscientiously in such sessions. In conjunction with this work, they take home a range of books to read on a regular basis.

44. Standards in writing are average. Infant and junior pupils produce handwriting that is consistently well formed, joined and legible and standards of presentation are good. Teachers have placed a strong emphasis on this area in recent times and pupils now take much pride in the quality of their work. By the end of Year 2, pupils show a confident approach with story writing and write their ideas in proper sentences. They generally spell accurately for their age and make good attempts at spelling new words. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 use a wide range of vocabulary in their writing and have an appropriate awareness of the rules of sentence structure and punctuation. They develop satisfactory skills of planning, drafting and editing their work, but do not have enough chances to develop these skills through working with a computer.

45. Teaching is good overall. In particular, teachers organise their planning well so that work is precisely matched to the wide age range of pupils in each class. Very good relationships between adults and pupils result in individuals receiving much encouragement and thereby gaining confidence. This also results in pupils enjoying lessons. Skilful questioning guides pupils carefully through new steps in their learning and helps them to produce thoughtful responses during discussion work. Teaching assistants provide very good support for individuals and groups of pupils. They are carefully briefed by teachers and the clear guidance they give to individuals helps pupils to make good progress through the tasks provided.

The good teaching skills of the teaching assistant in the junior class and the strong partnership she has with the class teacher make a significant and positive impact upon improving the rate of progress of the pupils' learning. Although teachers mark pupils' work on a regular basis, not enough comments are made to show pupils how they can improve.

46. The subject is well led and managed and this has enabled standards and the quality of provision to improve at a good rate since the last inspection. These improvements have been facilitated through a clear and detailed action plan. As part of this plan, teaching assistants have received training in the teaching of English and this has given them good confidence and skills to carry out their work. Standards are monitored regularly through assessment tasks and good systems have been implemented to track the progress of pupils as they move through the school.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

47. Literacy is planned and used well across the curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to develop their speaking and listening skills in PSHE and to put forward ideas and opinions in the school council. Research skills are effectively enhanced through the use of non-fiction books and the Internet. Good opportunities are seized to expand pupils' writing skills in other areas of the curriculum. For example, pupils wrote letters to a local councillor in connection with a topic they studied in geography.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**. Standards have improved since the school's last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject is well managed.
- Pupils' achievement has improved over the last year.
- Teaching is good.
- Teaching assistants provide valuable support for teachers and pupils.

Commentary

48. Annual national test results show that standards have been in decline over recent years with the trend in results being below the national trend. Comparison of the results pupils attained in Year 6 compared to what they attained in Year 2 shows that they were not making enough progress. Over the last year, much work has gone into improving the quality of teaching, revising lesson planning methods, upgrading the deployment of teaching assistants and ensuring that the maximum benefit is gained from using extra support groups to boost the performance of pupils. The impact of all of this work is now clear to see, with the school's new assessment systems showing that pupils now make good progress in mathematics so that their overall achievement has been improved to a satisfactory level. This is clear in the pupils' books, where good progress across the current year can be seen. Most pupils at Year 2 and in Years 5 and 6 now show average attainment and the school improvement looks well set to raise standards further. Pupils in Year 2 now show a sound basic knowledge of working with number. They add and subtract two-digit numbers and show satisfactory skills with the recall of simple addition facts. By Years 5 and 6, different methods of working with numbers are fully ingrained and pupils use and apply their mathematical knowledge in a suitable range of problem solving situations. They learn to manipulate numbers. For example, in one lesson seen they became confident in working out the answers for division sums by using the known associated multiplication facts.

49. The recent improvement in standards is a direct result of the improved teaching in this subject, which is now good across the school, and occasionally very good. Lessons are well planned. Learning objectives are usually made clear at the outset of the lessons and reviewed carefully at the end. A notable feature in all lessons seen was the good use of practical learning resources such as a giant bead bar for counting practice demonstrations and a wide range of counting apparatus and supporting work cards for pupils to use during their activities. This strongly visual and 'hands on' approach helped all pupils develop a full understanding of the ideas being taught. Occasionally, older pupils lose their focus on activities in the junior class and are prone to shout out in discussions when the rules for their behaviour are not sufficiently well reinforced. Previous work in pupils' books shows that, occasionally, activities are provided that do not provide enough challenge for higher attaining pupils. However, in one lesson seen, the teacher made a good effort to provide challenging work for one particularly good mathematician – usefully getting him to explain his work to the rest of the class.

50. Teaching assistants work very effectively with pupils and teachers because they are very well briefed and have a clear understanding about the needs of individuals and what they are expected to achieve in lessons. For example, in a very good lesson in the infant classroom, following the teacher's well paced demonstration to help pupils understand ideas about tens and units, the teaching assistants supported their own groups very well using similar very good teaching strategies to those of the teacher. In this way pupils with special educational needs are given strong support that enables them to cover fully the same areas of work as their classmates, albeit sometimes at a slightly lower level.

51. The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator. She maintains a clear overview of the planning and liaises very closely with colleagues to discuss the success/weaknesses of various areas of the schemes of work. Good systems for assessment and target setting have been installed so that teachers have a good range of information about pupils' progress, which they use well to inform their future planning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

52. Appropriate opportunities are seized to extend and make use of pupils' mathematical skills in other subjects. Particularly clear examples of these were noted in science, with pupils carefully recording the angles of reflected light beams, and graphing and recording the results of investigations.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**. Standards have improved since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good.
- Good opportunities are provided for pupils to investigate.
- Occasionally, work set does not fully extend the higher attaining pupils.
- Systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are underdeveloped.

Commentary

53. In Year 2 and in Years 5 and 6, pupils now reach average standards and show sound achievement. This is an improvement in recent times upon previously declining standards. Year 2 pupils have carried out a wide range of in-depth work on their 'Ourselves' topic in which they have explored and learned about how the body's different senses work and they have compared themselves in this way to other animals. They have investigated the sense of smell in particular – surveying the smells of different materials. They have learned about plant growth and looked at

how different materials can be changed through the application of different forces such as twisting, squashing and squeezing. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 cover a good range of activities in all areas of the science curriculum. For example, they gain a sound knowledge about the way light reacts; compare and contrast man-made and natural material; learn how to draw and trouble shoot electrical circuit diagrams and unravel the mysteries of the working of the human skeleton and how microbes are important in everyday life.

54. Samples of previous work and the lessons seen show that pupils are well taught and provided with well prepared work that stimulates their interests and promotes their sense of scientific enquiry. For example, although only a part of the science lesson for the infant class was observed, it was clear that the teacher had gone to a good deal of trouble to prepare a practical session on making bread, which linked up very well with the ideas of pupils learning about how materials change. The practical nature of the work was very much enjoyed by the pupils and stimulated a good level of discussion between them and their teacher. Similarly, in the junior class the teacher's good approach towards getting pupils to discuss their current knowledge about plants got them working in an enthusiastic way. This set the scene well for an interesting practical investigation to examine the features of a wide range of different plants. The work usefully involved pupils in dissecting different fruits and got them thinking in depth about the features of different plant seeds. Through this work pupils gained a very solid foundation to their learning and were keen to follow up and find out more information. Also, the use of projects, such as the seashore theme across the school, and the associated environmental field work and trips are a very good way of encouraging and enhancing pupils' learning.

55. The school has rightly recognised the need to fully develop systems for assessing pupils' attainment and putting procedures in place that enable the teachers to check pupils' acquisition of skills in a consistent way as they move through the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are currently below average.
- New equipment now installed puts the school in a strong position to improve provision.
- Assessment systems are underdeveloped.

Commentary

56. The school has experienced difficulties with a lack of up-to-date computer equipment, previously slow running machines and lack of opportunities to access them. This situation has now been rectified with the recent provision of a small ICT suite equipped with new computers. Even with this equipment there are initial teething problems so that, to date, pupils have not had sufficient opportunities to develop their ICT skills and standards are therefore below average by Year 5 and 6. Year 2 pupils have used some basic facilities, such as the paint program and opportunities to word-process their writing, and they have some knowledge about how to save and print with guidance and support from staff. Year 5 and 6 pupils are beginning to learn to use PowerPoint and have some knowledge of programs associated with control. Some work has been done to research projects using the Internet, but overall, pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are at a fairly basic and superficial level.

57. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection, so it is not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching and learning. In the lesson seen for the group of junior age pupils, teaching was satisfactory, with suitable material chosen that meant the pupils were interested in exploring the tasks provided.

58. The co-ordinator is working hard with all staff at the present time to bring the ICT facilities fully on line and there is much enthusiasm amongst the staff and pupils to make the best use of the new computers. The school is aware of the need to introduce systems for checking the attainment and progress of pupils as they move through the school.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

59. Use of ICT across the curriculum is at a fairly embryonic stage at present, although good use of computers has been made on occasions to complement pupils' art and design skills and to help them to chart and graph results in science and mathematics.

HUMANITIES

60. Work was sampled in history and geography and no lessons were seen. It is therefore not possible to form an overall judgement about provision in these subjects. More time has been provided since the last report for the study of both subjects and the reviewed planning ensures a suitable coverage. Visits made locally to carry out research in history and geography topics strongly enhance pupils' learning.

61. In discussion about **history**, pupils show enthusiasm for the activities in which they participate. For example, they clearly enjoyed their visit to Morwellham Quay as part of their study of the Victorians. The visits they make enable pupils to demonstrate factual knowledge and understanding of some of the historical events and the studies help them to compare and contrast between the past and the present. The older pupils show knowledge about life in the time of the Ancient Egyptians. They realise that there are different sources of information. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their own research into the various topics from books, the Internet and recent work at Exeter Museum. Within history, effective links are made to other subjects such as art, literacy and ICT.

62. From the analyses of pupils' work in **geography** and discussion with them, work and coverage for the National Curriculum programmes of study are adequate. Pupils are familiar with their local environment and have observed features within Chittlehampton. Field trips enhance opportunities for firsthand learning through the gathering of relevant data. Older pupils begin to look at and study physical features of landscapes and their formation. They learn about India and are able to compare and contrast it with the UK. Good links are made to other areas of the curriculum, with, for example, good opportunities provided for pupils to expand their literacy skills in writing factual accounts in geography topics.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

63. Art and design, design and technology and physical education were not the areas of focus for this inspection and too little evidence was collected to enable overall judgements to be made about provision in these areas.

64. Although **art and design work** was not in focus for this inspection, it is difficult to walk around the school without being impressed by the wide range of attractive artwork that has been produced during the last year, which not only indicates that pupils are being given a wide range of rich experiences, but also serves to make the school very attractive, with something interesting to look at in all directions. It is made more attractive by the good selection of reproductions by famous artists that are displayed in and amongst the pupils' work as useful points of inspiration. For example, in the infant classroom pupils have produced good quality seascape pictures in the style of a famous artist and made their 'Wild and Scary Things' collage pictures in an imaginative way, using a wide range of materials. Amusing, interesting and attractive large portraits which pupils have made of each other adorn the walls and show good

drawing skills for the ages of the pupils concerned. Older pupils have been involved in making large scale paintings as part of their Egyptian project and, throughout the school, pupils have good experiences of working with clay modelling that has been done in association with a local potter.

65. **Design and technology** work is scheduled appropriately across the school and is often suitably interwoven with the artwork. For example, the model making of Egyptian artefacts in a junior class project clearly involved many aspects of designing and making as they built large models of an Egyptian mummy and sarcophagus. Pupils in the infant class gain suitable knowledge about simple mechanisms as they make their 'moving picture' models, complete with sliders and pivots to make items move.

66. The school places a strong emphasis upon developing pupils' **musical skills** and this is in good part accomplished by the deployment of one of the teaching assistants, who is a musician, to work with groups of pupils. In one lesson seen in the infant class, this enabled pupils to gain good knowledge of making 'sound pictures' and helped them master the use of much new music vocabulary.

67. The school similarly places a high priority on helping pupils to have a full programme of **physical education**, and the deployment of a sports specialist to teach pupils provides strong enhancement for this area of the curriculum. In the games lessons seen during the inspection, the teacher provided very good teaching. This ensured that all groups of infant and junior age pupils were fully involved in the lesson activities and enabled them to develop good levels of co-ordination and athleticism.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

68. There was not sufficient opportunity to watch lessons in this area of the school's provision during the inspection, so no judgements are made concerning teaching and pupils' attainment in PSHE. Nevertheless, the school makes full provision for covering these areas within its curriculum planning, and assemblies are sometime used well to highlight particular areas of concern or development. The school incorporates all the necessary facets of drugs and sex education into its provision for the appropriate age ranges and science work also features ideas about healthy eating. The school council is used well as a means of developing pupils' sense of social awareness and pupils spoken to took their roles as councillors seriously. The initiative for them to meet and to discuss ideas with the school governors is a very good system of raising the profile of pupils' ideas and showing that they are valued, and also serves to involve the governors in a very profitable way with pupils across the school.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	2

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).