

INSPECTION REPORT

THORNBURY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Estover, Plymouth

LEA area: City of Plymouth

Unique reference number: 113329

Headteacher: Mrs E A Tarr

Lead inspector: Mr R Sharman

Dates of inspection: 2nd – 4th December 2003

Inspection number: 258189

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	297
School address:	Miller Way Estover Plymouth
Postcode:	PL6 8UL
Telephone number:	01752 302600
Fax number:	01752 302640
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr M Luscombe
Date of previous inspection:	June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is an above average sized primary school with 297 pupils. There are more boys than girls with a considerable imbalance in Year 5 where there are almost twice as many boys as girls. The school serves the local estate where many of the residents are skilled and semi-skilled manual workers. The school makes special provision within its classes for a number of pupils from across Plymouth who have speech and language difficulties. Twenty per cent of the pupils who attend the school locally have been identified as having special educational needs, a proportion that is broadly average. Three pupils have a statement of special educational need. In addition, the six pupils with speech and language difficulties each have a statement. Approximately three per cent of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, with a very small minority at an early stage of learning to speak English. A few pupils are in public care. On entry, pupils show the full range of abilities but overall attainment is below average, particularly for skills in speaking and listening. A small minority of pupils enters and leaves the school other than at the usual time of admission and transfer.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1696	Mr R Sharman	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage English as an additional language Art and design Religious education
9999	Ms R Orme	Lay inspector	
32386	Ms J White	Team inspector	English Geography History
18354	Ms R Onions	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Music
17907	Mr M Bowers	Team inspector	Special educational needs Science Information and communication technology Physical education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school with notable strengths, some of which are outstanding. It provides its pupils with a good education and gives **good value for money**. Standards in English have improved and the average standards seen in mathematics and science show a significant improvement on the results attained in the national tests and assessments in 2003. The very good leadership is ambitious for the achievement of the pupils. Improvement since the last inspection is good.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The standards in art and design that pupils in Year 6 attain are very high and in Year 2 they are well above average.
- The leadership and management are very good and enable pupils to achieve well.
- Teaching is good and pupils make good gains in their learning.
- The curriculum is very good and provides pupils with interesting and relevant opportunities for learning.
- The pupils are very well cared for and this gives them confidence to learn.
- The provision made for pupils with speech and language difficulties is very good and aspects of it are outstanding.
- Although standards are now average in mathematics, the school has rightly recognised that pupils could achieve better.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	E	E	C	C
mathematics	C	D	D	D
science	C	C	D	D

*Key: A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Pupils' achievement is good. In reception, the children's achievement is good. They are on track to meet the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception in their mathematical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Most pupils are on track to meet the expected goals in their communication, language and literacy and in their personal, social and emotional development; a small minority is not. It was not possible to make a secure judgement on children's physical and creative development. The assessment made at the end of the summer term showed that most children in reception last year reached the expected goals in these two areas. In Years 1 and 2, pupils' achievement is good. In Year 2, pupils attain average standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Pupils' achievement in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 is good. The standards attained by pupils in Year 6 are average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' achievement is very good in art and design: in Year 6, they attain very high standards and those attained by pupils in Year 2 are well above average. In Years 1 to 6, pupils' achievement in mathematics is satisfactory. The standards attained by pupils in Years 2 and 6 in religious education are above those required by the Plymouth, Devon and Torbay Agreed Syllabus.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good. Pupils are very keen to learn and enjoy their time at school. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good. Attendance is very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Overall, **teaching is good** and a significant proportion of it is very good. At times, teaching is excellent. Pupils work well independently and collaborate very well when teachers provide opportunities. Teaching in reception is good. A particular strength in the teaching across the school is the very good use of learning support assistants. Lessons are generally well structured to enable pupils to make good gains in their learning. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs, including those with speech and language difficulties, is very good. Teachers are supportive of the few pupils with English as an additional language. The assessment of pupils' standards and progress is very good and teachers use the information very effectively to set targets for pupils to aim for and to keep track of the progress pupils make towards their targets. The curriculum is very good and the care, guidance and support pupils are provided with are very good. Links with parents are very good as are those with other schools.

The provision made for the pupils with speech and language difficulties is very good and aspects of it, such as the integration of the pupils into the school, are outstanding.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The inspiration and very good leadership provided by the headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, ensures that the school strives for excellence. The overall leadership of the school is very good. The governors fulfil their role very well and ensure that the school meets its statutory requirements. They have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school's work and effectively hold the school to account regarding standards of attainment and the quality of education. The school's finances and accommodation are managed very well. The management of the school is very good. Staff with leadership and management positions undertake their responsibilities very effectively.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Overall, parents have positive views of the school. They particularly appreciate that their children like going to school; that the teaching is good; that their children make progress; and that the school is approachable. A minority of parents who replied to the questionnaire were concerned about the information they receive from the school, especially about how to help their children, and about their views being sought. The few parents who attended the meeting prior to the inspection were very supportive of the school. Pupils speak well of their school and feel well supported.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important thing the school should do to improve is to continue to raise pupils' achievement in mathematics.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

1. Achievement throughout the school from reception to Year 6 is good. In art and design, achievement is very good and pupils in Year 6 attain standards that are very high and in Year 2 standards are well above average. These standards are due to the very good provision that is made for the subject. The achievement of boys and girls in other subjects is broadly similar. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well, as they are very well supported. The few pupils with English as an additional language have good support and achieve similarly to their peers. The achievement of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is good. Standards in English, mathematics and science are average. Children in reception are on track to meet the goals children are expected to meet by the end of reception in their mathematical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. A majority of children are on track to reach the expected goals in communication, language and literacy and in their personal, social and emotional development. In these areas of learning, a small minority is not on track to meet the expected goals reflecting the below average standards in speaking and listening on entry to the school. No judgement was made on children's creative and physical development, as there was insufficient evidence. The assessment made at the end of the summer term showed that most children in reception last year reached the expected goals in these two areas.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well in art and design and standards are very high in Year 6 and well above average in Year 2.
- Standards in writing have improved throughout the school, largely due to the introduction by teachers of 'success ladders' that make clear to pupils what they need to do in order to improve their work.
- Standards in science in Year 6 seen during the inspection show an improvement on the results of the national tests in 2003 and reflect the good teaching.
- Inspection evidence shows that standards in mathematics in Years 2 and 6 show an improvement on those attained in the national tests in 2003. However, pupils' achievement is satisfactory rather than good as the teaching is satisfactory overall.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.9 (14.3)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.4 (12.9)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.0 (17.2)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 44 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	National results
English	27.4 (25.7)	26.8 (27)
mathematics	26.1 (25.8)	26.8 (26.7)

science	28 (29)	28.6 (28.3)
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There were 55 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. The National Curriculum test results in 2003 showed that compared with schools nationally, pupils in Year 6 attained average standards in English and below average standards in mathematics and science. When compared with schools whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2, standards were similar. The proportion of pupils in Year 6 who attained standards higher than those expected for pupils of this age was above average in English, and below average in mathematics and science when compared with schools nationally and with similar schools.
3. The standards attained by pupils in Year 2 in the national tests in 2003 showed that, compared with schools nationally, standards were average in reading, above average in writing and well below average in mathematics. The proportion of pupils in Year 2 that reached higher standards was below average in reading, average in writing and well below average in mathematics. Teacher assessments in science showed that standards were above average but the proportion that reached higher standards was below average.
4. Pupils' achievement in art and design is very good. The school places considerable emphasis on 'the arts', especially art and design. This commitment has been recognised by the award of a gold artsmark from the design council. The provision for art and design is very good. For example, the residential week in Year 5 is outstanding, and enables pupils to produce work of high quality. The very good teaching enables pupils to succeed.
5. Standards in English are rising as they have been the main focus for improvement and the provision is good. Standards in writing have improved, largely due to the systematic use by teachers of 'success ladders'. In Year 6, the practice of teachers holding an individual 'conference' with pupils to help them improve their writing is outstanding and pupils find the meetings very helpful in assisting them to improve their writing. Teachers pay close attention to the teaching skills needed in reading, punctuation and grammar.
6. The standards seen in science show an improvement on the results of the national tests in 2003. The effective teaching, together with a greater emphasis on practical work, has led to standards rising. Standards have risen in mathematics but not as securely as in English. Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory in mathematics, reflecting the quality of teaching in this subject which is satisfactory overall. The school has recognised the need to raise achievement in mathematics as central to the implementation of its plan for development.
7. Children in reception have settled into school well. The good teaching has enabled them to make a successful start to school. Most children are on track to meet the goals children are expected to meet by the end of reception in their mathematical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. A majority of children are on track to reach the expected goals in communication, language and literacy and in their personal, social and emotional development. Standards on entry to the school are below those usually seen, especially in speaking and listening. Despite making good progress as a result of the good teaching, a small minority is not on track to meet the expected goals in communication, language and literacy and in their personal, social and emotional development. No judgement was made on children's physical and creative development but the assessment made at the end of the summer term showed that most children in reception last year reached these goals.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils speak well of their school and are enthusiastic to take part in all the school has to offer.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are keen to learn.
- Pupils behave very well.
- The school makes very good provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.
- Pupils' personal development is very good.
- Attendance is very good.

Commentary

8. Pupils are keen to come to school and to take part in all the activities offered. More than 90 per cent of parents report that their children like school. Pupils enjoy very good relationships with staff which enhance their learning. Pupils are well motivated to learn and they work hard. They are interested in their work as the teaching is good and the curriculum is very good. Pupils speak to visitors with friendly and polite confidence and talk about their school with pleasure.
9. Pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school. Parents are satisfied that behaviour is good, and that there is very little bullying and the school has developed effective ways of dealing with it, for example the use of 'worry boxes' for pupils to register any concerns they may have. Most pupils consider that behaviour is good and that the other children are friendly.
10. The school makes very good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They are given many opportunities, particularly through collective worship, personal and social education, religious education and art and design, to consider the beliefs, achievements and feelings of other people, and to develop their own values. Acts of collective worship provide well-structured opportunities to reflect. Pupils are carefully taught to distinguish right from wrong. Pupils learn to work in a range of different groups and to think about the needs of other people.
11. The school places great emphasis in the curriculum on art and design, music and drama. Very good opportunities are provided for pupils to participate and excel in the arts, both in school and further afield. The school prepares pupils very well for life in a multicultural society. Issues of racism are openly discussed so that pupils have a mature understanding of the need not to judge people on the basis of race, religious beliefs or nationality.
12. Pupils' personal development is very good. Pupils who have trained as 'peer mediators' talk knowledgeably and sensitively about their role in helping other children to resolve disagreements. They display very good self-awareness and good insight into the needs of other pupils. In the same way, members of the school council explain their role and describe their achievements in a mature way. Pupils are well aware that they are more fortunate than many children in the world and they are eager to raise money for a variety of charitable causes. Nearly all parents consider that the school encourages their children to become more mature.

Attendance

13. Levels of attendance are very good and well above the national average. There is very little unauthorised absence. Punctuality is good. The school has good systems to promote prompt and regular attendance. Registration procedures meet statutory requirements.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.4	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

Exclusions

There have been no exclusions in the last school year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good**. The school takes very good care of its pupils and has very good links with local schools and colleges and good links with the local community. Teaching is good. The curriculum is very good and the accommodation is good. The quality of assessment and the use of the information gained is very good.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of art and design is very good.
- Teaching is particularly strong in Year 6.
- Very good use is made of learning support assistants who work in close collaboration with teachers to the benefit of the pupils.
- Teachers manage lessons effectively.
- Activities are well planned and enhance learning.
- Very good systems are in place for assessment, which are implemented consistently throughout the school.
- Very good use is made of the information from assessment to plan work and set targets for pupils to aim for.
- The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory overall.

Commentary

14. The very good teaching of art and design reported in the last inspection has been maintained. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and encourage them to do as well as they can, with the result that pupils concentrate hard on the work in hand and are keen to do their best. Central to the very good teaching is the attention paid to teaching pupils the necessary skills and techniques required to reach high standards. Teachers show good expertise in the teaching of skills and techniques. Wherever possible, teachers make effective links between pupils' work in art and design and that in other subjects. For example, in an excellent lesson in Year 6, the teacher had linked imaginatively the work in art and design with pupils' work in English where they were looking at the play, Hamlet.
15. Teaching in reception is good. Teachers and teaching assistants work very effectively together. Relationships are very good and children are happy and secure in their work. Planning is detailed and thorough and is drawn effectively from the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception. Teachers and teaching assistants regularly assess children's work to see how well they are doing. The information is used effectively so that activities are well matched to children's learning needs. Very good support is provided for pupils with special educational needs, especially those with difficulties in managing their behaviour.
16. Throughout the school, collaboration between teachers and learning support assistants is very good, especially in the support provided for pupils with special educational needs, particularly those with speech and language difficulties. This effective collaboration ensures that all pupils are fully involved in lessons and make progress. Both teachers and learning support assistants assess carefully how well pupils have got on in lessons and use their findings to plan work and keep track of pupils' standards and progress.

17. In Years 1 to 5, teaching is good and in Year 6 it is very good. Good planning, especially the links made between subjects, ensure that lessons are well paced and capture pupils' interest. Lessons are planned and prepared thoroughly. In conversations with inspectors and in the questionnaire they completed prior to the inspection, pupils commented that they found their lessons interesting and that they had to work hard. Teachers make it clear in their relationships with pupils that they want them to do well. Pupils in Year 6 commented that this was one reason why they thought their school was good. Teachers provide pupils with good opportunities to work independently as well as effective opportunities to collaborate with others on a common task. Homework is set and completed regularly and makes a good contribution to pupils' progress. The support for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Teachers take due account of the individual education plans of those pupils who require them. Teachers ensure that the few pupils with English as an additional language are fully involved in lessons.
18. Overall, the teaching of mathematics is satisfactory. Teaching is at least satisfactory, with a significant proportion where teaching and learning are good or better. A common strength in the teaching is the very positive emphasis teachers place on the development of pupils' confidence. In the better lessons, teachers make it clear to pupils what it is they are going to learn and how they will know if they have been successful. In the satisfactory lessons, teachers identify a focus for the lesson but are much less specific in sharing clearly with pupils what it is they are going to learn. A number of teachers are not confident in their expertise in teaching pupils problem-solving skills.
19. The arrangements for assessing pupils' standards and progress are very good and have improved since the last inspection. Pupils' progress is assessed in all subjects as teachers are provided with detailed guidance as to the standards pupils are expected to reach. Detailed analysis is undertaken of national tests results. The performance and progress of pupils with special educational needs is carefully looked at. Teachers keep a close eye on the performance of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. Very good use is made of non-statutory tests to assess regularly pupils' progress and standards. In lessons, teachers and learning support assistants take careful note of how well pupils' do. Pupils' work is marked regularly and helps pupils to improve.
20. Very good use is made of the information from assessment to plan work and to develop the curriculum. For example, in writing, teachers provide pupils with 'success ladders' that help them to see how to improve their work. Detailed analysis is undertaken each term of pupils' standards and progress. Those pupils who have not made the progress teachers expected of them are identified and action taken to provide them with the help they need to improve.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection 57 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4 (7%)	11 (19%)	31 (54%)	11 (19 %)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

The curriculum

The quality of the curriculum provided for pupils has been maintained since the time of the last inspection and remains **very good**. It is inclusive, meets statutory requirements and provides many worthwhile learning opportunities, as well as effective personal, social and health education. Opportunities for enrichment through extra-curricular provision are good and contribute to pupils' personal development. The quality and quantity of accommodation and resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The range and richness of the school curriculum very successfully encourage pupils to be interested in learning and to be enthusiastic about school. The success of the curriculum is directly related to the enthusiasm and leadership of the headteacher.
- The curriculum provides very well for all pupils, irrespective of their age, background or level of attainment.
- The way the curriculum is organised, linking learning in one subject to that in others, means that pupils understand the relevance of what they learn.
- The school's accommodation and hardworking staff contribute significantly to the quality, range and success of the activities provided for the pupils.
- Although in the main there are good materials and equipment to help pupils learn, there are insufficient non-fiction books in the library for older pupils.
- Lack of easy access to a well-structured outdoor working space for the reception class restricts the experiences provided for these children.

Commentary

21. The vision and enthusiasm of the headteacher ensures that the school provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to learn, both in class and outside lesson time. Pupils have the benefit of a broad and balanced curriculum that values highly subjects such as music and art and design, in which standards are high. This gives them a good all-round education and contributes positively to their good achievement. Good attention is paid to pupils' personal and social education through activities known as circle time. In Year 5, for example, pupils learn about international children's rights. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good.
22. Experiences are made more 'real' by the very good use of visits and the contribution of visitors, including a visit by some chickens to Year 2! Both of these factors mean that pupils have opportunity to experience things at first hand and this increases their interest and desire to learn, and their memory of past learning. Clubs held outside lesson time are very well attended and contribute significantly to pupils' all-round education, particularly in music and physical education. Pupils speak with enthusiasm about school, often talking about the range of activities they have undertaken.
23. As a result of the active promotion of equality of opportunity by the headteacher and governors, all pupils are fully included in all activities provided for their age group. Careful provision is made for higher attaining pupils; those who are identified as having particular abilities or talents are helped to develop in school and to find additional activities outside school. Pupils from a range of different backgrounds, including those for whom English is not their first language, are equally well provided for. Pupils with special educational needs have very good support. Very good individual education plans are in place for pupils who need them. The support for pupils with a statement of their needs is in line with that required by the statement.
24. Teachers strive to ensure that what is taught and learned in one subject is linked to learning in others. In design and technology, for example, pupils use skills learned in English to write about their work. Books used in English lessons often have content that is linked to the pupils' work in history or geography, and art and design is used very well to complement work in most subjects. These links have been used well where areas of weakness have been identified in a particular subject, for example a weakness in data handling identified in mathematics is now being successfully improved by practising this in subjects such as science and geography. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well in promoting learning in many subjects and was seen to be particularly successfully employed in music. This linking of subjects means that pupils see why they are learning particular skills in different subjects and how this benefits them in others.

25. One of the school's most significant resources is the hardworking staff. Both teachers and learning support assistants are well trained and voluntarily contribute more time and effort than can be reasonably expected of them, in order to provide the quality of education seen.
26. The school's accommodation both inside and outside the building provides a generally spacious and well-presented environment. Displays are used well to demonstrate, for example, the high standard of artwork and to value what pupils have produced. The lack of a purpose-built outdoor area for the children in the Foundation Stage limits their experiences. The school is well equipped and the quality of the equipment in most subjects supports both teaching and learning well. However, there is currently a shortage of books in the library for the older pupils due to a change the school had to make, as part of a budget reduction, in purchasing services from the local education authority. Non-fiction books are particularly in short supply for older pupils. Pupils report, with regret, that because of cataloguing arrangements during the period of the inspection, they could not borrow non-fiction books from the library for their personal reading at school and at home.

Care, guidance and support

Pupils' care, welfare and safety provision is **very good**. The school's provision for support, advice and guidance is **very good**. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good procedures are in place for welfare, health and safety and care, particularly risk assessment.
- Good progress has been made since the last inspection in the promotion of health and safety and procedures have improved.
- Careful monitoring and teaching of pupils' personal development, both at school and through regular contact with parents and carers.
- Good induction arrangements.
- Very good support for pupils with special educational needs.

Commentary

27. The provision for pupils' care, health and safety is very good and gives pupils confidence to learn. Child protection procedures are secure. The policy is implemented effectively and is in line with that of local child protection procedures. Key staff have been identified and all staff are kept up to date with procedures. The small number of pupils in public care is effectively supported and the necessary arrangements with social services are in place.
28. Arrangements for dealing with accidents and injuries are good, with these and the administration of medicines recorded correctly. The school's arrangements for health and safety and risk assessments are regularly checked. This reflects the effective work of the relevant committee of the governing body that directs and oversees all these procedures.
29. Teachers and learning support assistants know their pupils well, and this enables them to keep a watchful eye on them. This knowledge is particularly helpful when pupils have problems. The use of 'worry boxes' provides pupils with opportunities to register their worries, especially if they are being bullied. Older pupils report that bullying is at a low level and that it is taken very seriously. Trained pupil 'peer mediators' ensure that pupils with worries or concerns can quickly make contact with class teachers and other adults. The 'Peer Mediator' role is particularly useful in that these children intervene well to prevent playground disputes from escalating. Pupils have positive relationships with teachers and their responses to the questionnaire completed prior to the inspection showed that just over nine out of ten found them approachable and helpful, prepared to listen and give advice.

30. The school provides effectively for new arrivals and has very good systems in place to keep track of how they are settling in. These arrangements extend to all pupils as they move from year to year and include an ongoing assessment record that enables the school to provide appropriate advice, support and guidance. Pupils in Year 6 follow a smooth transition process to their chosen secondary school.
31. Very good support is provided for all pupils with special educational needs. Effective arrangements are in place to identify and support these pupils. Very good individual education plans, usually with clear and accurate targets, are drawn up in response to their individual needs and consequently pupils make good progress.
32. The school successfully involves pupils in its work by seeking their views through the school council and, where necessary, acting on them. For example, pupils have expressed their opinions through the council on the provision of playground games, the choice of lunches and the involvement in fundraising for charity. The importance placed on the school council is seen by the attendance of the chair of governors at its meeting when possible. The school is aware that it hasn't got full access for pupils with physical difficulties but an accessibility plan has been drawn up and a start has been made on its implementation.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school continues to maintain a **very effective** partnership with parents and carers. It has established **good** links with the local community and **very good** links with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have positive views of the school.
 - Parents receive good information about their children's progress, and very good general information.
 - Very good links have been established with other schools, including the local secondary school.
 - Good community links are in place.
33. Many parents talk about the school with warmth. More than three-quarters of parents who responded to the questionnaire say they feel comfortable to approach the school with concerns, although a third do not feel that the school seeks their views or keeps them well informed about their children. The school does use some questionnaires and surveys to find out what parents think. For example, parents were asked if the current pattern of progress reports and open evenings was effective.
 34. Parents receive good information about their children's progress. In the autumn and spring terms, parents are invited to discuss their children's new learning targets. Annual reports, issued in the summer, are a concise summary of the child's level of attainment and effort. The format for the reports was drawn up after consultation with parents. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are given many opportunities to discuss their children's needs and progress and this reflects the strong partnership in this area. The school provides very good information about events and day-to-day activities. The governors produce a helpful 'Termly Talk' newsletter to tell parents what the governing body has been doing on their behalf. The school prospectus is comprehensive.
 35. Very good links have been established with local schools that benefit pupils. For example, the school is involved in a 'community learning network' to improve arrangements when pupils transfer to other schools in Year 6. Useful links have been made with six other schools for the development of ICT. The good links with the local secondary school help to enrich the curriculum and to give pupils confidence as they move on to the next phase of education. For

example, the joint multicultural festival provided pupils with a wonderful experience of other cultural traditions, and gifted and talented pupils in art and design are given extra specialist support. The school plays its full part in local beacon school partnerships. Good links are in place with a local college of higher education for initial teacher training.

36. The school uses the local community well; for example making visits to the local church and supermarket in support of curriculum studies. Older residents and relatives are invited to share their reminiscences about life in World War Two. The school's strong commitment to the arts involves taking part in a number of community-based events.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Both the leadership and the management of the school are **very good**. The headteacher and key staff provide very good leadership and manage the school very effectively. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities very well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The commitment to shared leadership and collaborative working.
- The headteacher and senior management team share high expectations for the school with a strong commitment to high pupil achievement.
- Effective evaluation of the quality of education and the effective targeting of areas for improvement.
- Well-informed governors who know the strengths and weaknesses of the school and help to shape its vision and direction.
- The school is successful in its pursuit of excellence in the arts.
- Very good leadership and management by subject co-ordinators.

Commentary

37. This is an inclusive school for pupils and staff. The provision for staff development is very good and has been recognised by the award of Investor in People. Discussions with senior staff confirm that there is a commitment to teamwork, shared systems and consistency of practice for the benefit of pupils who achieve well.
38. The governance of the school is very good. The governing body actively seeks to promote the education provided by the school. Governors seek and obtain information about the school and play their part in deciding the focus for school improvement. They face up to difficult decisions that need to be made and challenge as well as support the headteacher and staff. Governors ensure that the school fulfils its statutory duties. Health and safety issues are taken seriously. Good attention is paid to the principles of best value which are applied to all major decisions that are made. The three committees on the governing body have clear terms of reference and they take their responsibilities seriously. The curriculum committee, for example, receives regular presentations from members of staff on their work.
39. The strengths in leadership, management and governance recognised at the last inspection have been maintained. Regular monitoring and evaluation are at the centre of the school's work. All staff are involved in the process of evaluating what the school is doing well and where it needs to improve. Alongside this is a thorough analysis of pupils' standards and progress. Strategic planning to improve identified areas of need is very good. The school improvement plan is detailed and thorough. The governing body ensures that financial management is very good and that financial decisions are made in relation to the priorities for improvement.
40. The leadership is very good. The headteacher provides inspiration, a very clear direction for the work of the school and good support for the senior management team. This is seen in the emphasis placed on the arts. The close and effective partnership between the headteacher

and deputy headteacher provides a very good role model for other leaders in the school. They are equally committed to the involvement of all members of staff in the making of decisions.

41. The management of the school is very good. High standards of consistency of application of school procedures are met so that the seemingly complex web of support systems for pupils' learning operates smoothly. Groups and individual pupils move from one learning experience to the next with confidence and good use of time. Consequently pupils with special educational needs achieve well and those pupils who do not make enough progress are given extra support to help them do better.
42. Heads of departments have created teams that communicate very effectively both within the team and with other teams. This good teamwork is reflected in the consistency of the implementation of school policies and innovations. Overall, both the leadership and management of subject co-ordinators are very good. The very good practice is exemplified by co-ordinators who are ambitious for their subject. They find out what is most and least effective in helping pupils achieve and take steps to support and develop staff in their teaching of the subject. Where subject leadership is less effective, the use of the information from analysis of pupils' standards and progress is satisfactory rather than good. All subject co-ordinators contribute to staff meetings so that all staff are kept fully informed of developments. Currently the majority of staff does not choose to use ICT for their planning.
43. All staff have very clear job descriptions so that everyone knows what to do and when to do it. The work of all staff is effectively supported, monitored and evaluated by the senior staff. With very limited time for their role, leaders monitor the impact of the actions that have been taken to make improvements and find out if they have been successful in raising standards of achievement. The senior management team has rightly identified that more time is needed to spread the very good and excellent teaching practice across the school to ensure that the very good systems and strategies already in place to raise pupils' standards and progress are delivered with equal skill and effect.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	781,399	Balance from previous year	54,292
Total expenditure	771,065	Balance carried forward to the next	10,334
Expenditure per pupil	2,247		

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS PROVISION IN THE ENHANCED SPEECH AND LANGUAGE RESOURCE

Provision for pupils with delayed speech and language acquisition is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils with statements relating to their delayed speech and language development achieve very well.
- These pupils receive an excellent programme of learning, which is fully inclusive and supports their identified special needs.
- All staff are fully aware of the special needs associated with the pupils.
- Pupils are very well supported by skilled and enthusiastic learning support assistants who work alongside them in class.

- Pupils are very much aware of routines and cope with them confidently. They are fully involved in all that happens in school and undertake specific roles of responsibility.
 - The quality of teaching is very good and occasionally excellent.
 - The teaching and learning systems are very effectively underpinned by efficient management strategies.
 - The work of the enhanced speech and language provision is closely monitored and evaluated.
44. Six pupils with statements according to their delay in speech and language are educated full time in the school. Their educational and social development is the responsibility of the school and the extra support received by the school includes an advisory teacher who spends half of her time in the school and has the relevant expertise and day-to-day responsibility for these pupils' overall development. These pupils receive extra support in respect of their statements, which involves individual support from learning support assistants. This support is in place and consists of highly skilled adults who have positive relationships with the pupils and, whilst giving them extra support and attention when required, make good efforts to ensure that they become independent learners when working alongside their peers in mainstream classes.
45. Whilst the achievement of these pupils is well below expected levels for their age because of their considerable delay in the acquisition, their use and understanding of spoken language, their difficulties organising their thoughts and their very short concentration spans, they make very good progress in lessons and achieve very well overall. This is because the leader of the provision has a very good depth of understanding of their needs and has ensured that class teachers and learning support staff have very good insights into the pupils' special educational needs. These staff have received appropriate training to be able to work with these pupils, form very positive relationships with them and help them to develop their self-esteem and a positive attitude to their time in school.
46. Pupils are fully included in all aspects of class teaching in every subject. They usually work in small groups alongside other pupils with a specific learning support assistant who supports the whole group, thereby allowing those pupils with speech and language difficulties the opportunity to be independent, yet be able to receive support when it is required.

Example of outstanding practice

The integration of pupils is outstanding and secures a very good balance between providing necessary support and enabling pupils to be fully involved in the life of the school.

In English and mathematics, carefully written individual education plans identify current targets and further taught time is identified where these pupils work away from the classroom in small groups to achieve their targets. For instance, a group of three pupils worked with a learning support assistant in a designated room, using ICT to develop their sentence-writing skills. Two pupils used picture symbols to create sentences and, with support, were able to locate the actual words to underwrite them. Circle time with the rest of the class is used very effectively to develop these pupils' spoken language and raise their self-esteem. Here they develop their social skills and practise the art of conversation. The adult intervention is of the highest quality, gently challenging pupils to sequence their thoughts before they share them with others through conversation. An example of excellent teaching is the small group comprehension activities within lessons where pupils complete 'mind maps' to order the information contained in the passages they have read and then share it in conversation with other members of the group. The excellent contribution of the teacher challenges pupils to order their sentences and use the most appropriate vocabulary.

47. Small-group enrichment activities are also organised effectively for other pupils with special educational needs to help them achieve the specific targets in their education plans and for pupils who do not have special educational needs to improve their handwriting and reading skills. This management strategy is a key element in the school's development of a fully inclusive curriculum.
48. The daily routine is carefully planned to achieve an appropriate balance between small-group enrichment and whole-class activities. The routines of learning support assistants are

organised effectively to ensure that extra assistance is available, particularly in whole-class teaching situations. Ongoing training is provided to meet the needs of the existing pupils and any new entrants.

49. Very good systems are in place for monitoring and checking pupils' progress. All staff have access to the personal records of these pupils and diaries are kept to record the tasks they were given to complete and the levels of attainment they achieved.
50. Key staff from the local education authority and other outside agencies regularly advise and support this provision. The school manages the adequate standards of staffing extremely well to ensure that these pupils receive the necessary teaching and learning to meet the identified provision recorded on their statements. The very good quality of the provision reported in the last inspection has been maintained.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

51. The good provision for children in the Foundation Stage, reported in the previous inspection, has been maintained. Children enter reception in September for those whose fifth birthday falls before the end of December and in January for those who will be five before the end of August. They show a wide range of attainment. A good number of children have less well-developed skills in speaking and listening and in their literacy and language development. Overall, attainment on entry is below average. Teaching pays special attention to the development of language and social skills and this has enabled children to make a successful start to their time in school. Children achieve well because the teaching is good and the information from assessment is used effectively to plan work. The curriculum is carefully planned to provide children with a wide range of interesting and relevant activities. The provision is well managed and adults work effectively as a team and provide very good role models for children. The accommodation inside is good but the outside facilities lack the necessary resources to extend learning opportunities for the children.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships between adults and between adults and children are good.
- Children are interested and motivated to learn.
- Good opportunities are provided for children to collaborate.

Commentary

52. Children are made aware of the teacher's high expectations and of the impact of their actions on others. The good teaching encourages children to take turns, share resources, listen to each other and to work with a partner. Most children make good progress and their achievement is good. They are on track to meet the expected standards. Relationships between the adults and the children are good and this enhances children's personal development. Good provision is made for the development of children's independence by providing activities that children readily select for themselves. Fewer opportunities are provided for children to plan what they are going to do. Good use is made by the teacher of an activity known as circle time. For example, children were encouraged to think about what is fair as they sat in a circle and were invited to share an odd number of sweets between a doll and a teddy bear. They made good suggestions for what to do with the extra sweet and showed that they were successfully developing an understanding of fairness. A small minority of children, mainly boys, is not making as good progress as most children.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers pay good attention to teaching children about the links between sounds and letters.
- Books are well used and reading is positively encouraged.
- Good attention is given to developing skills in speaking and listening.

Commentary

53. The good teaching places considerable emphasis on teaching children about the links between sounds and letters and children achieve well. Most children are on track to meet the expected standards at the end of reception. Each day, children have a short but effective session where they learn new sounds or consolidate sounds learnt earlier. For example, they played a game with the teacher where they selected an object from a number on a tray and correctly identified the initial and final sounds in the object they had chosen, such as the 'h' and 't' in hat. Children enjoy these sessions and join in enthusiastically. They make good progress in learning letter sounds. The teacher and teaching assistant model carefully the sound a letter makes, showing the children how to shape their mouth to make the sound. Good opportunities are provided to develop children's vocabulary, for example they learn words such as 'kneading' and 'rising' as they bake bread.
54. Reading is given emphasis and is taught skilfully. Books are well displayed and teachers and adults regularly read stories out loud, for example to a group of children in the role-play area before they use the carefully prepared costumes to enact the story they have just heard. Children take home books regularly to share with parents or carers and this support consolidates what they have done in school. Children with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. Teachers regularly show children how to write and provide useful opportunities for children to write for themselves. At the start of the day the teacher, with help from the children, writes a sentence often referring to something the class has done. On one day children, with help from the teacher, wrote that they had made a visit to the local bakery to see bread being baked. Most children completed one sentence and the more able children then added a further sentence of their own. Conversation is encouraged by the adults when children sit together as a class and when they work in small groups. Children are reminded to keep to the rules of looking at the person they are listening to and to take turns when speaking. A small minority of pupils has difficulty with this and is not on track to reach the expected goals by the end of reception.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers provide a good range of mathematical activities.
- Good opportunities are provided for mathematical development in other areas of learning.
- The use of mathematical language is encouraged.

Commentary

55. Children's achievement is good and they are on track to meet the expected goals by the end of reception. The good teaching provides a wide range of opportunities for children's mathematical development. The teacher takes every opportunity to use mathematics in everyday situations, for example counting how many children are present and how many pieces of fruit are needed at snack time. Children count successfully as the register is taken. They learn about zero when the teacher uses balance scales when they bake bread. When asked by children how long the bread would need to bake, the teacher answered 'as long as you will be out at play'. Children have made a good start with addition as they count how many objects there are in two groups using large equipment that places numbers in order. They successfully dictate 'number sentences' to the teacher who records their ideas on a whiteboard, using numerals and mathematical symbols such as '+'. Good opportunities are provided by the teacher for children to develop their mathematical vocabulary, for example words such as 'square', 'rectangle' and 'equals'.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Interesting activities are planned carefully, with good links being made with other areas of learning.
- Good use is made of practical activities.
- Good attention is paid to introducing children to the use of ICT.

Commentary

56. The good teaching is imaginative and children's achievement is good. Children are well on track to meet the expected standards. A visit to a local bakery enabled children to see how bread was made commercially before they made their own in school on the following day. The journey to the bakery was used imaginatively by the teacher in an introduction to the use of a program in ICT where children designed their own streets and open places. Children make good use of a large three-dimensional map made with the teacher and based on the theme of characters in stories and nursery rhymes. They carefully make their own 'maps' to show the journeys they make, for example to Old Mother Hubbard's House through the woods and across the river. Children use computers confidently. They show the good skills they have been taught when using a mouse to operate a program and to move images from one part of the screen to another, for example when they design a street that changes direction and when they place houses and other features alongside the street. Children successfully find out what happens to the growth of plants when they are not provided with light or water. One strength in the good teaching is the teacher's use of questions to provide good opportunities for children to predict what they think will happen in given situations.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

57. It was not possible to make an overall judgement on provision or standards. Children have regular and frequent opportunities to develop their manipulative skills through handling scissors, brushes and small construction equipment. Children have access to the hall and to an outside play area, but this area lacks the necessary resources to extend learning opportunities. A suitable area has been identified and plans are being drawn up for its development. The assessment made at the end of the summer term showed that most children in reception last year reached the expected goals in their physical development.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

58. It was not possible to make an overall judgement on provision or standards but the work on display indicates that standards are at least in line with those expected by the end of reception. Role-play was used well, often with an adult working with the children to develop their play based on characters from stories or nursery rhymes. A specialist music teacher works with the children each week. The assessment made at the end of the summer term showed that most children in reception last year reached the expected goals in their creative development.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English are improving.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good and pupils achieve well.
- Effective innovations have been successfully implemented and have led to an improvement in standards.
- There is very good assessment of pupils' standards and progress and use of the information to set targets for learning, measure pupils' progress and identify groups needing support.
- The quality of pupils' handwriting is satisfactory overall, but the quality is variable between classes.

Commentary

59. Standards in English are rising due to the school's focus on improvement in reading and writing. The results of the national tests in 2003 showed that the standards attained by pupils at the end of Year 6 were average, having been well below average for the two previous years. In Year 2, standards attained in the national tests were average in reading and above average in writing. As in Year 6, standards had been well below average previously. In Year 6, the proportion of pupils who attained standards higher than those expected for pupils of this age was above average in English. The proportion of pupils in Year 2 that reached higher standards was below average in reading and average in writing. Overall, the attainment of boys and girls is broadly similar.
60. Standards seen during the inspection in Years 2 and 6 were broadly average. Pupils, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds, achieve well as the teaching is good. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers and the learning support assistants and they make very good progress, as reflected in the levels those in Year 6 attained in the national tests in 2003. The few pupils with English as an additional language achieve similarly to their peers.
61. Overall, standards in speaking and listening are broadly average in Years 2 and 6. Pupils listen to adults and each other with respect and attention. For example, two classes of pupils from Years 1 and 2 listened with rapt attention to their teacher who was reading the next instalment of their storybook, with audible gasps of anticipation at what might happen next. Most pupils speak confidently. A particular strength in the teaching of speaking and listening is the frequent use by teachers of opportunities for pupils to work in pairs and in groups.
62. Pupils achieve well in reading and standards have risen as a result of hard work and extra attention on the part of the staff. Good attention is paid to phonics, the teaching of the sounds letters make. Pupils make good progress in learning these skills which they use confidently to read unfamiliar words. Two innovations have contributed significantly to the improvement in reading:
 - A daily session is held at the start of the afternoon where pupils throughout the school consolidate and learn important reading skills.
 - Those pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3, who need extra support with reading, start each day with a concentrated session with an adult in a small group with a focus on improving their understanding of what they read.

63. Subject leaders and teachers have emphasised the development of writing, so that standards of writing have improved. They are now aware that more time should be spent on developing pupils' more advanced reading skills.
64. Standards in writing have improved and pupils' achievement is good. Overall, the standard of handwriting is satisfactory, but the quality between classes is variable and inconsistent. Three developments, one of which is outstanding, have been at the heart of the improvement:
- Teachers have introduced 'success ladders'. These list the features of good writing in different styles. Pupils have them in their books and on the wall. By looking at the ladder, pupils know what will make their work successful. They assess their work for themselves and they identify what they need to work on next to improve their writing.
 - Throughout the school, teachers plan work in a number of subjects around a fiction book. This approach enables pupils to learn in a way that develops a wide range of skills and knowledge, especially in writing.

Example of outstanding practice

In Year 6, teachers have individual weekly conferences with pupils when they discuss how a piece of writing might be improved. The pupils then work on the improvements ready for the next week.

Once a week, pupils are given 45 minutes to produce a piece of writing that is always closely linked to current work. The success criteria for a good description of a character are included on the instructions. The teacher meets with pupils individually to discuss their piece of writing. Pupils have positive feedback from the teacher on the good features of the work and what makes them good. Praise is very specific to the work 'I like the way you wrote for the reader there'. Pupils are asked to choose improvements they have suggested. Together teacher and pupil go over the writing to identify selected passages for improvement. The target for improvement is identified and recorded by the teacher, and written in the teacher's file. The pupil's next task is to work at home to make the improvements, which can then be discussed at the next 'conference'. The session finishes with a review of the last target and whether a new one is set or the previous one maintained. Pupils then work on the improvement as their homework. Pupils like having time to improve the same piece of work and not always move on to a different piece of writing.

65. Overall, teaching and learning are good throughout the school. At times teaching is very good or excellent and it is never less than satisfactory. Teachers have good subject knowledge and teaching is imaginative, especially in the better lessons. For example, teachers sometimes appear in the role of another character, and work in English is often linked to work in other subjects. Where teaching is satisfactory, teachers spend more time than is necessary talking to the class so that pupils have insufficient opportunity to practise or apply their learning by themselves or in groups. The relationship between teachers and pupils is very good and gives pupils the confidence to learn and try things out. Lessons are well paced and pupils are fully involved. They learn well and behaviour is very good. Teachers effectively show pupils what is expected and this enhances learning. Pupils' work is carefully marked so that pupils know why they have done well and what they need to do again or learn next. The assessment of pupils' learning in English is very good throughout the school as is the use of the information to plan work and keep track of pupils' progress.
66. English is led and managed very well by two subject leaders. They regularly check pupils' progress and, if this is insufficient, pupils are provided with a variety of support strategies. The library for the older pupils does not have enough non-fiction books and older pupils could not borrow such books for their personal reading during the period of the inspection due to re-cataloguing arrangements.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

67. Pupils use their language and literacy skills well in other subjects. There are well-planned links so that subjects are taught and learned together.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although their achievement is satisfactory overall, pupils find difficulty in applying what they have learned in mathematics to new or problem-solving situations.
- The good leadership and management of mathematics mean that the school has already identified where there are relative weaknesses in the provision and has begun to address these.
- Teachers understand the importance of raising pupils' confidence in their own ability in mathematics and help them to increase this.
- The quality of teaching in mathematics varies because not all teachers make clear to pupils at the start of lessons what it is they should have learnt by the end, and not all teachers are sure of the best ways to teach pupils how to use their mathematics when solving problems.
- Good opportunities are provided for pupils to understand the relevance of mathematics as teachers plan for its use in other subjects.

Commentary

68. Standards in mathematics in Years 2 and 6 are currently average. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, but they achieve better in some aspects of mathematics, for example in simple computation and in space and measures, than they do when they are solving problems. Variations in the quality of teaching lead to pupils achieving better in some classes than they do in others. Standards have risen since the time of the last inspection in line with the way they have nationally. In 2003, there was a dip in results of the national tests in Years 2 and 6 due, in part, to an unusual movement of pupils in and out of the school and, in part, to the increased emphasis in these tests on the problem-solving aspect of mathematics. As a result of good leadership and management, the school has already identified areas of weakness in mathematics. Useful action to improve these has begun and its effect is already beginning to show in the standards seen. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and their achievement is satisfactory.
69. Teaching and learning in mathematics are satisfactory overall, which means they are not as consistently good as at the time of the last inspection. There are, however, a significant number of lessons in which teaching and learning are good or better. The differences in teaching and learning observed in lessons are reflected in the quality of work seen in pupils' books. A common strength in the teaching is the teachers' very positive emphasis on the development of pupils' confidence in their own ability. This means that pupils are happy to 'have a go' at more challenging work. Teachers are all careful to link mathematics to work in other subjects and this too has a positive effect on learning by providing pupils with opportunities to practise what they have learned. Overall, there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.
70. A less consistent aspect of mathematics teaching is teachers' planning. Although this is conscientiously completed, using nationally provided materials, it is not always used effectively by teachers to provide a clear focus for the lesson. Where the teaching is very good, teachers use their planning to assist them to very clearly identify and share precisely with the pupils what is to be learnt in the lesson. This is not the case in less effective lessons because these lack the precision of the better teaching, and pupils' learning is not as good as it could be. In these lessons, pupils are not always told what they will have learned or what they will be able to do by the end of the lesson and this leaves them unsure and unable to target their effort to maximum effect.

71. Detailed analysis of national test results by the school has shown that the teaching of skills in solving mathematical problems is an area for improvement which is a current focus for attention. A number of teachers are not as confident in teaching skills in solving mathematical problems as they are in teaching the other aspects of mathematics. There is a tendency to see problem solving as a skill additional to the learning of other aspects of mathematics, rather than being an essential part of all mathematics. Consequently, there is too little demonstration of problem solving throughout a mathematics lesson, resulting in pupils having less opportunity to learn.

Mathematics across the curriculum

72. Effective links are made between mathematics and other subjects, for example pupils practise measuring skills in design and technology and improve their knowledge of co-ordinates in geography. Another result of good leadership and management is the successful move to improve an identified weakness in data-handling skills though their use in other subjects.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Standards achieved by pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are **average**. Pupils' achievement is **good**. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because they have the necessary support.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good overall and some teaching is very good or excellent.
- There is an effective link between the development of investigations and the gathering of scientific knowledge and understanding.
- Scientific investigations are supported well through the use of ICT and data handling in mathematics.
- Pupils have good opportunities to devise their own tests and to use scientific instruments accurately.
- The scheme of work gives clear subject guidance.
- The subject benefits from very good leadership and management.

Commentary

73. Pupils achieve well in science because of the well-organised curriculum that incorporates investigations alongside the acquisition of knowledge and understanding. Teaching is good with an emphasis on practical activities. As a result there has been an improvement since the previous inspection and in the results of the national tests in 2003. More pupils are now achieving higher levels in both Year 2 and Year 6 and standards are now average.
74. The emphasis on practical activities to enhance knowledge and skills was evident in lessons about the properties of materials, when pupils in Year 4 devised their own tests to identify the materials that had the best insulation properties. They successfully responded when challenged to set up fair tests and to use thermometers to record the drop in temperature of hot water and the rise in temperature of cold water. Pupils carefully assembled tables of results and used ICT data-handling applications well to analyse their results. Pupils in Year 2 successfully applied their scientific knowledge of battery powered circuits to assemble a pressure switch to catch 'Mr Fox' as he entered the farmyard to steal the chickens, by setting off the alarm and warning the farmer.
75. Pupils are keen to learn about science and to be involved with practical activities. They are interested in their lessons, achieving well and making good strides in their learning. Pupils quickly engage in the tasks provided and teachers use questions effectively to encourage

learning. In an excellent lesson in Year 6, a group of more able pupils studying the effects of forces on objects had designed their own investigations. They used force-meters accurately to measure the effort required to pull a brick over different surfaces, carefully measuring the number of Newtons required to make the brick move, and recording the effect of the friction cause by the contact of the brick with different surfaces. The data collected during the experiment was carefully entered onto an ICT database to be examined through the use of bar graphs. This work was of a high standard. Discussions with other pupils in Year 6 indicated that they have a good practical knowledge of investigations.

76. Overall, teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers are secure in their knowledge of science and this is seen in the emphasis placed on practical activities. Lessons are well planned and very good use is made of the skilful learning support assistants, especially to support pupils with special educational needs. A recent improvement is the improved use of data handling and of mathematics and ICT. This improvement is the result of the school's current emphasis on improving pupils' skills in data handling in mathematics and reflects the very effective management of the school. Pupils record their work in a scientific way and use scientific vocabulary accurately.
77. The subject is led and managed very well, ensuring that pupils gain in knowledge, understanding and skills as they move through the school. Detailed assessment and analysis are undertaken of pupils' standards and progress and the information is used to good effect as seen in the rising standards. For example, the more able pupils in Year 6 have been identified and now have lessons taught by the subject co-ordinator who provides them with very challenging work. Pupils respond very well to this challenge and already are attaining standards higher than those expected for pupils of this age.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **good**.

The standards attained by pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are **average**. Pupils' achievement is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and are rapidly gaining ICT skills in all applications of the subject.
- Good use is made of ICT in other subjects.
- The quality of teaching is good overall. Although ICT suites are not completely set up and there are problems in 'logging on' due to a recent refurbishment, they are used well.
- All staff are confident and well trained in the use of ICT.
- Very good use is made of digital projectors to teach large groups of pupils.
- Where teaching is very good or better, ICT is used well to involve pupils in investigations to identify patterns of results and to display information graphically.
- Improvement since the last inspection has been maintained.

Commentary

78. Pupils in Year 6 work with competence and confidence to compose a background melody on an electronic music keyboard and accompany it with a variety of percussion instruments. Good links with English are seen when Year 6 pupils show higher than expected skills to create a 'PowerPoint' presentation relating to Shakespeare's Hamlet and the character of Ophelia. Good use is made of a digital camera to collect pictures of pupils enacting the play. Pupils choose and add text to the presentation as they prepare it for showing to the class. Other pupils show a sound working knowledge of 'PowerPoint' as they create their own presentations based on a recent art study week. Their skills in applying data-handling techniques to scientific investigations to organise, display and using information also show

good levels of achievement, and enhance their ICT skills which are at the levels expected for pupils of this age. Pupils achieve well in the applications of control and simulation.

79. Pupils in Year 2 achieve well and reach average standards. They use ICT competently in English and mathematics where they extend their vocabulary and develop their writing expertise by practising their word processing skills, embellishing their work with decorations and borders and combining text with graphics. They use the mouse effectively to operate the software and move the programs forward. They confidently use 'Art' software, painting in a variety of styles showing good levels of competence in the use of tool bar skills. Recently, pupils have gained good expertise in the use of data-handling programs to create pictograms and bar charts of information they have input onto the computer.
80. The quality of teaching is good overall and leads to pupils achieving well and quickly gaining new skills. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. Planning is good. In Years 3 to 6, very good use is made of ICT in other subjects, for example in music and science. In English, ICT is used effectively when the pupils with special educational needs are taught in small groups. Here the quality of teaching is generally very good and occasionally is excellent. Where teaching is satisfactory, the potential of the subject as a positive tool for learning is not fully developed.
81. Teachers are confident and appropriately skilled. Very good use is made of the recently installed digital projectors; in spite of the fact that these still have teething problems this technology is used well and is beginning to have a positive effect on standards. This is because large numbers of pupils can be taught new skills and techniques efficiently, and immediately be given good opportunities to practise them.
82. The management of pupils is good. Teachers explain practical tasks clearly and skilled learning support assistants ensure that pupils receive advice and support where they are required. Pupils enjoy their ICT lessons; they work hard and collaborate well with a partner to complete the tasks. They are proud of their achievements and are keen to share them with others.
83. The subject is very well led and managed. A clear scheme of work is available which directs and guides teaching and an effective and practical assessment system includes a record of achievement and monitors and evaluates pupils' progress. Occasionally imaginative teaching does not result in appropriate learning because insufficient time is available to enable the learning programme to be completed.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

84. Good use is made of ICT across the curriculum. Pupils use 'PowerPoint' extensively to publish their work. Information books of high quality have been created by older pupils using a variety of ICT techniques and include index and glossary pages. Good and developing links are being created between ICT and many other subjects, including mathematics, design and technology, science and music. The recent initiative to involve data-handling applications in science and mathematical investigations is developing successfully. The present temporary position, where the whole school network was being upgraded, limited the use of some programs and access to the Internet.

HUMANITIES

85. In humanities, work was sampled in history and geography with only one lesson seen in geography. It is therefore not possible to form an overall judgement about provision in these subjects. There is every indication from pupils' work that standards are broadly average in both subjects. There is sufficient coverage of the National Curriculum requirements for both history and geography. Good-quality pupils' work is valued and presented in high-quality displays around the school.

86. In **history** and **geography**, the regular visits made and meetings with visitors make the work interesting and relevant. Pupils spoke confidently and with enthusiasm about their visit to Dartmoor and of the contrasts between this area and their own. Teachers make history vivid for pupils, for example by appearing in role as a historical character and by visits to historical sites.
87. Very good links are made in the planning and teaching of **history** and **geography** through, and with, other subjects. Examples were seen of good links between history and art and design, and with English. In Years 1 and 2, the subjects are linked effectively with others in a theme based on a fiction book. This arrangement enhances learning as it helps pupils to learn a wide range of skills and knowledge in an integrated way. Both subjects provide useful opportunities for pupils to learn about cultures that are different from their own.
88. **History** and **geography** are very well managed by the two co-ordinators who, with different levels of experience, are set the same high expectations for their role. They both monitor and evaluate the provision of their subjects and are beginning to have a clearer picture of the standards of work achieved across the school. With very little time allocated, they carry out the full range of work expected of subject co-ordinators and this ensures that **history** and **geography** maintain a high status in the school curriculum.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 2 and 6 attain standards above those expected by the Plymouth, Devon and Torbay Agreed Syllabus.
- Pupils' understanding about religions is better than their learning from religions.
- Teaching is good.

Commentary

89. Standards of attainment seen during the inspection are above those expected in the locally agreed syllabus, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Only two lessons were observed, and a considerable amount of work in religious education lessons involves discussion, so there was a limited amount of written work to examine. Scrutiny of the available work, observation of pupils answering questions in assemblies and discussions with pupils indicate that standards are above average and pupils' achievement is good.
90. In the lessons seen, the teaching was good and pupils made good progress. In Year 6, pupils show a good knowledge of the Bible and readily refer to the New and Old Testaments as they compare the accounts of the Nativity in different gospels. They show a good knowledge of the events of the Nativity and of Easter. Pupils' completed work shows that they have a good knowledge of Hindu beliefs, for example they know about the religious artefacts that are used in Hindu worship. In a good lesson in Year 4, the teacher made good use of Hindu religious artefacts to extend pupils' understanding about Hindu deities. In discussion with pupils in Year 2, pupils know that light is central to festivals in a number of religions. They competently describe the Hindu festival of Divali and the Jewish festival of Hanukah. Pupils are keen to explain the significance of the orange in a Christian Christingle service and the importance of an advent wreath to Christians.
91. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to discuss the aspects of the religions they are finding out about. In Year 6, pupils readily discuss why the accounts of the Nativity in the gospels are different. In Year 4, the good discussion initiated by the teacher enabled a pupil to

comment that the idea of a trinity occurred both in Hinduism and Christianity. Overall, pupils are stronger in their knowledge about religions than in their learning from religions. The curriculum is effectively planned and the very good leadership and management of the co-ordinator ensure that it is implemented consistently. Good links are made with art and design. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development and is implementing a good action plan for further improvement. Pupils' work is effectively assessed.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

92. The quality of the school's provision and commitment to arts education has been recognised by the award of a gold arts mark. Only one lesson was seen in each of design and technology, music and physical education. It is not possible therefore to make a firm judgement about their provision. In addition to observing lessons, inspectors spoke to co-ordinators about their work, spoke to pupils and looked at pupils' completed work.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is very good. They attain very high standards in Year 6 and well above average standards in Year 2.
- The very good teaching is imaginative with teachers having good expertise in the subject.
- The specialist teaching of ceramics enriches the curriculum.
- Effective links are made between pupils' work in art and design and that in other subjects to the benefit of pupils' learning.
- The residential arts week in Year 5 is outstanding.
- Very good links are made with arts groups in the community.
- Leadership and management are excellent.

Commentary

93. Pupils' achievement in art and design is very good and is seen in the high standards attained. The standards reported in the last inspection have been maintained. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well as they are fully included and well supported. The very good teaching of art and design reported in the last inspection has been maintained. A real strength in the provision is that pupils achieve very well across a wide range of media, including pencil, pastel, paint, printing, textiles, ceramics and sculpture. In Year 6, pupils paint detailed and imaginative pictures of Medusa. Very good use of colour, together with intricate detail, lead to paintings that are haunting and of high quality. Pupils produce ceramics of high quality. For example, they carefully experiment with small tiles to produce a texture they are pleased with. One pupil finally decided on a texture created with a broken lino-cutter. Work with textiles is of high quality and is seen in the batiks and tapestries that have been made. A recent collaborative tapestry 'The countryside in June' is about to go on a world tour along with other tapestries from the United Kingdom. In Year 2, pupils reach well above average standards as seen in their paintings of hens that had been brought into school as part of their work in literacy. They make closely observed drawings and designs based on the work of Clarice Cliff.
94. Central to the very good teaching are teachers' high expectations of pupils who in turn try to do as well as they can, with the result that pupils concentrate hard on the work in hand. Teachers show good expertise in the teaching of skills and techniques. The teaching makes a very good balance between teaching pupils the necessary skills and techniques required to reach high standards and providing them with very good opportunities to use these skills. Very good and imaginative links are made with other subjects. In religious education, pupils look closely at the way Christ has been represented and make their own paintings using ideas from other artists.

In English, paintings and drawings enhance pupils' work about Hamlet. Often pupils will be photographed in costume and the photographs used for paintings. This happened in Year 5, where pupils were studying the Victorian Age and in Year 2 where pupils dressed as characters from stories. Very good resources are used to good effect. Teachers regularly assess and record pupils' work and successfully use the information to help pupils improve. Good provision is made for more able pupils.

Example of outstanding practice

Each year all pupils in Year 5 have the opportunity to spend a week at a centre that specialises in the arts. Pupils who do not go follow a similar week in school.

The week enables pupils to have long periods of time to develop their work. The most recent visit took 'form and structure' as its theme. Pupils chose natural objects such as plants, pebbles and shells as their starting points. Having started with close and detailed drawings, the work was extended during the week to large paintings on canvas, pattern and printmaking, textiles and ceramics. The work produced by pupils was of outstanding quality. A well-mounted exhibition back in school with high-quality invitations, celebrated pupils' achievements.

95. The leadership and management by the co-ordinator are excellent and result in the high standards attained and the very good range of experiences provided for pupils. Pupils have very positive attitudes to the subject. They approach their work in a very 'professional' way. The school has established very good links with arts groups in the community that enhance pupils' learning in art and design. Pupils participate in the Plymouth Arts Education Festival. In 2002, they created a giant 'Picasso' in the local football stadium where the whole school was involved. The school has hosted a major festival of the arts, effectively using an educational grant. Artists regularly visit the school to work with the pupils.
96. In **design and technology**, pupils are provided with a wide range of purposeful activities that help them to learn how to investigate, plan, make and evaluate a wide range of products. Very good, enthusiastic leadership ensures that design and technology maintains a high profile in the school and contributes well to the rich, balanced curriculum.
97. High priority is given to **music** and this emphasis has a very positive effect on pupils' musical knowledge and competence. Pupils have the benefit of a very well structured programme of work that affords them wide-ranging opportunities to undertake musical activities. Very successful promotion of cultural understanding gives pupils good knowledge of the musical traditions of a number of different cultures. Pupils enjoy music making, from the use of computer programs for composition, through listening to music and singing, to playing in the school's junk band. The quality of work seen and completed is directly related to very strong, enthusiastic subject leadership and management.
98. In **physical education**, all strands of the subject, including outdoor and adventurous activities, are regularly taught during the course of a year. This is a position similar to that found in the last inspection. The standards in swimming by Year 6 are satisfactory and younger pupils benefit from weekly sessions at the local swimming baths.
99. In the lesson seen, pupils in Year 6 made sound progress in developing their gymnastics skills. They successfully built up their repertoire of movements, including jumping, stretching and changing direction. They concentrated on their landings to provide controlled completion of a jump and stretch routine, with more advanced pupils extending this repertoire into rolling and curling routines. Pupils achieve satisfactorily because some of the gymnastic equipment is old and does not inspire or challenge them. It is not used to its full potential, for instance to provide opportunities for pupils to jump, create a stretch or curl movement whilst in the air, before they control their landing. A typical range of school clubs develops skills in physical education further and pupils have opportunities to take part in inter-school sports competitions. Opportunities are provided for gifted and talented pupils to attend courses to extend their skills. The school is fully involved in 'Top Sport' initiatives.

100. The subject leadership is both enthusiastic and effective, provision is regularly monitored and skilled parents add to the expertise through regular games coaching.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

101. Only two lessons were seen in this area of the school's work and so no judgements can be made about overall provision. The school sees pupils' personal, social and health education as being central to its aims and ethos. It has been given a healthy schools award. A co-ordinator is responsible for this aspect of its work, with an additional responsibility for developing citizenship. A comprehensive policy is in place that provides useful guidance for teachers as they implement a nationally suggested scheme of work. This policy has recently been reviewed and supported by governors. The programme includes work on diet, sex and relationships, drugs and personal safety. In Year 5, pupils consider the important rights children should have and draw up their own charter. Activities known as circle time provide pupils with good opportunities to discuss a wide range of issues. For example, pupils in Year 2 brought their 'treasures' into school and explained to the rest of the class the reasons why these objects were so important to them.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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