

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **MAPLE RIDGE SCHOOL**

Basingstoke, Hampshire

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116605

Headteacher: Mrs J Martin

Reporting inspector: Mrs J Cook  
2351

Dates of inspection: 30 April – 3 May 2001

Inspection number: 187553

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	For pupils with moderate learning difficulties and pupils with autistic spectrum disorder
School category:	Community special
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Maple Crescent Basingstoke Hants
Postcode:	RG21 5SX
Telephone number:	01256 323639
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D Welton
Date of previous inspection:	11 March 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2351	Jacque Cook	Registered inspector	Art and design Foundation stage	What sort of school is it?  How high are standards?  a) The school's results and achievements  How well are pupils taught?  What should the school do to improve further?
9957	Shirley Watts	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils?  How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23637	Jed Donnelly	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Music	How well is the school led and managed?
14943	Eric Peagam	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Physical education	How high are standards?  b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
27243	Ian Tatchell	Team inspector	Science History Geography Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Maple Ridge is a mixed, day special school designated for 105 pupils aged four to 11, including pupils with moderate learning difficulties and pupils with autism. Currently, there are 73 pupils on roll, including 6 boys of reception age, one of whom is part-time. There are more than twice as many boys (49) as girls (23). All pupils have Statements of Special Educational Needs. The school has funding for 60 pupils with moderate learning difficulties and 15 pupils with autistic spectrum disorder. Although there are 11 fewer pupils in school since the last inspection, the number with autistic spectrum disorder has increased by nine. Overall, many pupils have more complex needs than at the last inspection. Three pupils are of Black Caribbean heritage and there is one Chinese and one Filipino. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language or pupils from travelling families. The number of pupils having free school meals is low at seven (9.7 per cent); however, the school estimates the eligibility for free meals to be at least three times that number, which is about average. Pupils travel to the school largely from Basingstoke and the surrounding area, although one pupil travels from further afield having moved recently. As would be expected, attainment on entry to the school is low. The term 'pupil' is used unless specifically referring to children aged four to five in the reception class.

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

Under the leadership of the new headteacher appointed in 1999, the school is improving significantly. Key staff have been appointed and the quality of teaching is now good. Although, overall, pupils make satisfactory progress, they do not do as well as they should in a number of foundation subjects (subjects other than English, mathematics and science). However, these are scheduled to be improved. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Teaching is good, particularly in English, mathematics, science and personal and social education and pupils are now doing well in these lessons.
- Children have a good start to their education in the early years classes. They make good progress because the quality of teaching is high.
- Pupils with additional special educational needs in the special class make good progress.
- Staff provide good role models and have a positive effect on pupils' moral and social development, partly because they have very good relationships with the pupils.
- Pupils have good attitudes towards their work and behave well.
- The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are implemented effectively and help pupils learn.

#### **What could be improved**

- Pupils' achievements in information and communication technology, design and technology, art and design and music are unsatisfactory.
- In a number of subjects plans showing what is to be taught each year are not developed sufficiently.
- The assessment and recording of pupils' progress is inadequate in many subjects, which leads to unsatisfactory information in annual reports on progress for parents.
- The multi-cultural development of pupils is unsatisfactory.
- The monitoring of the work of the school by the governing body is unsatisfactory.

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the action plan prepared by the appropriate authority.*

The strengths outweigh the weaknesses, which are identified by the school as areas for development.

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in April 1996. Since then, the school has been through a difficult period where initial improvements were not sustained. For example, schemes of work (what is taught each year) were developed but not maintained and were discarded recently because they no longer suited the needs of the pupils or met new curriculum guidelines. Although improvements are being systematically made by the new headteacher, improvement is unsatisfactory in some, or parts, of the key issues identified at the last inspection. Schemes of work are only completed for some subjects, although these

do include English, mathematics, science and personal and social education. Assessment procedures work well for English and mathematics but not for other subjects. The governing body has improved its role in strategic planning but is only just beginning to monitor the work of the school. Multi cultural development of pupils remains unsatisfactory. Transfer arrangements for pupils moving to the secondary school are much improved and work well, but links between staff concerning what is taught are continuing to be developed. This mixed picture is balanced by some significant improvements. Teaching strategies to ensure individual pupils' needs are met have been successfully introduced and this has made a big difference, notably to the learning of pupils with autistic spectrum disorder and those with behaviour difficulties. Appropriate procedures have been established to monitor teaching and this has led to good improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. The large proportion of unsatisfactory teaching has been eliminated. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented effectively and pupils are now learning well in English and mathematics. In the last two years the rate of improvement has accelerated. The new headteacher and deputy have set clear priorities and timescales to achieve them and the school is well placed to improve further.

## STANDARDS

The table summarises inspectors' judgements about how well pupils achieve in relation to their individual targets by the time they leave the school.

Progress in:	by age 5	by age 11	Key	
Speaking and listening	B	C	very good	A
Reading	B	C	good	B
Writing	B	C	satisfactory	C
Mathematics	B	C	unsatisfactory	D
Personal, social and health education	B	B	poor	E
Other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	B	C		

Targets were set for the first time last year in English, mathematics and personal and social development and many pupils, particularly those aged 10 to 11, met the targets or did better than expected. Children in the early years classes do well and all pupils make good progress in personal and social education and science. They make satisfactory progress in English, mathematics, geography, history, physical education and religious education. Progress is unsatisfactory in information and communication technology, design and technology, art and design and music.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Attitudes are positive, pupils enjoy coming to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good. Those with behaviour difficulties make good progress towards meeting targets on their plans and improve their behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is good, particularly for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder. Relationships are good and in some classes they are excellent.
Attendance	Attendance is good - above average for schools of this type



Children in the early years classes make good progress in developing positive attitudes, values and good behaviour, which helps them to learn. Independence skills are fostered effectively throughout the school and pupils become more mature and responsible, as they get older.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5	aged 5-11
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good

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

Teaching is very good in 10 per cent of lessons, good in 61 per cent and satisfactory in 29 per cent.

Overall, the quality of teaching is good. It is best for early years and Year 6 pupils. This is because of the expertise of the staff and the high standards expected of the pupils. Teaching is also good for Year 5 pupils. The close teamwork of all the staff in a class is an important factor, which leads to consistency. This helps pupils to learn effectively and improve their behaviour. Teaching methods are well chosen so that pupils are interested in what they are asked to do, concentrate and make gains in their knowledge and understanding. There is satisfactory teaching and learning for pupils in Years 2 and 3.

English, mathematics, science and personal and social education are taught well. Communication skills are enhanced through strategies such as the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS). The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are taught well. The teaching of pupils with additional special educational needs in the special class is good. However, overall teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory because there is some inconsistency in a few classes.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality is satisfactory and an appropriate range of subjects is taught. The provision for the early years classes is good. English, mathematics, science and personal and social education are developed well and newly published curriculum guidelines are providing a sound basis for other subjects. However, the provision for information and communication technology, design and technology and music is unsatisfactory. The curriculum for art is too narrow and, as in physical education, pupils' skills, techniques and knowledge are not improved systematically from year to year.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Pupils' moral and social development are good and spiritual development is satisfactory. Cultural development is unsatisfactory because the multicultural element is not sufficiently emphasised.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes good care to ensure the welfare and safety of pupils is maintained. Behaviour and attendance are monitored well and effective procedures lead to high standards. Assessment of pupils' progress is satisfactory in some subjects but not good enough in others.

The school works well in partnership with parents; however, the information for many subjects on pupils' progress in annual reports is unsatisfactory. The curriculum is enriched through a good range of visits and the contribution of the wider community.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the school overall are satisfactory. Progress in addressing the key issues from the last inspection is unsatisfactory, although there have been good, well prioritised improvements in other areas including the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The recent appointment of key staff indicates that the school is now well prepared to improve further but this is only just beginning to raise standards for pupils.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	The governing body is more active in the work of the school but evaluating and monitoring of the school's work, although developing, lacks rigour.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is very aware of its strengths and weaknesses and has set clear targets for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Staffing is appropriately deployed and resources are shared between classes.

There have been considerable changes in teaching staff over the last two years and, although the number of staff overall is adequate, there remain three temporary teachers. Accommodation is satisfactory and good use is made of the school grounds. The principles of best value are applied satisfactorily.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school is easily approachable if there are questions or problems.</li> <li>The school works closely with parents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A number expressed concerns about the amount of homework.</li> <li>A few felt they did not get enough information about the progress their children make.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agree with the positive comments made by parents. They agree that homework is not set consistently. Although reading books are sent home for older children, there are no clear guidelines. The team also agreed that the information in annual reports was not sufficiently clear. There are opportunities during parents' meetings and the annual review process for parents to discuss how well their children are doing with staff.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. *It is inappropriate to judge the standards of the pupils for whom this school caters in relation to the National Curriculum or any other national benchmarks. The report does, however, comment on the achievement of the pupils and on what they know, understand and can do. Judgements about achievement take account of information in their Statements, annual reviews and Individual and Group Education Plans.*
2. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve appropriate standards. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 make consistently better progress in their lessons than other pupils and children in the early years classes make good progress towards achieving the Early Learning Goals of the foundation curriculum. This is because the quality of the teaching is consistently good and, at times, very good for these particular pupils and children. There is no measurable difference between the progress of boys and girls and pupils from ethnic minorities do as well as they should. The progress of pupils with additional special educational needs, including those with autistic spectrum disorder, is satisfactory but those in the special class do well because they are taught effectively and the number of adults working with the pupils is appropriately high. In other classes, they do well where strategies are consistently applied and appropriate work is available. For example, the Treatment and Education of Autistic and Communication Handicapped Children (TEACCH) strategy is very effectively applied in the early years classes and in Year 6 and these pupils make good progress.
3. Last year the school piloted an appropriate means of setting targets for pupils to make progress against 'performance' levels from pre-National Curriculum documents in English, mathematics and personal and social development. Many pupils met targets, particularly at the higher levels, and a significant number of pupils in Years 5 and 6 made greater gains than expected. Progress is not as marked for those aged four to seven. However, this year, many of the youngest pupils are already working at higher levels than last year.
4. Many children join the school with very limited means to communicate and often with significant additional special educational needs, including autistic spectrum disorder. During their time in the early years classes they make good progress in all the areas of learning and towards meeting their targets on their individual and group education plans. Children's communication is significantly improved through the use of the Picture Exchange and Communication System (PECS). They learn to express their needs and wishes effectively. Through looking at books and listening to stories they begin to identify characters. Mathematical skills in counting, sorting and matching items develop and are reinforced through singing number rhymes and exploring shapes in other activities. Children's independence and personal development are enhanced through making choices and working alongside and with other children. The well-organised classroom and activities selected ensure children's knowledge and understanding of the world widens. For example, they investigate materials, explore the school grounds and learn to operate tools such as scissors. Opportunities for creative and physical activities are well structured to ensure they all develop well in these areas.
5. Pupils' achievement and progress in English are satisfactory. As a result of the successful implementation of an appropriate literacy strategy, progress more recently has been good and, for some pupils, very good. Progress in speaking and listening is satisfactory for most pupils but for those who join the school with significant communication difficulties it is good. Younger pupils enjoy listening to stories and retelling familiar events, while older pupils show increasing ability to listen and answer questions. While there are some opportunities for role play and drama, these are insufficient to allow pupils to develop good skills and there is insufficient emphasis on pupils' speaking at any length. Reading skills develop satisfactorily, although few pupils become fluent, independent readers. Through the literacy scheme, pupils make steady progress, reading shared texts with enjoyment and identifying familiar words and sentences. Progress in writing is

satisfactory; younger pupils learn to form letters with reasonable accuracy and combine known words to form simple sentences. By the time they are in Year 6, pupils successfully communicate simple ideas in writing, while the most able write independently in a variety of styles, including writing stories and poetry. Handwriting improves, particularly in Year 6, where a few pupils produce a clear, linked mature style of handwriting but the absence of a school-wide policy for teaching handwriting means that overall progress in this area is inconsistent.

6. In mathematics, pupils' achievements and progress are satisfactory. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is effective and in many lessons pupils are now learning well. By the age of seven, pupils use number lines to help them count forwards and some more able pupils add on one by moving along the number line by one numeral. Pupils learn effectively because they are taught in appropriate groups and the work is at the right level of difficulty. By the age of 11, many more able pupils can tell the time using an analogue clock. Many can identify the identical digital equivalent. Pupils with additional special educational needs in classes benefit from the range of specialist teaching strategies used and make at least satisfactory progress. In some classes they make good progress but this is not consistent. Pupils in the designated class with additional special educational needs make good progress in their ability to learn and work on basic mathematical activities. Good displays of key mathematical vocabulary in classes supports pupils' learning and the use of numeracy across the curriculum is good, for example, at registration time and in many "change-over" activities.
7. Pupils' achievements and progress are satisfactory in science by the time they are seven. They know about sources of light and how to care for plants. Facial and body parts are named accurately and they have explored a range of materials discovering their properties. The quality of teaching improves for older pupils and, as a result, they make good progress and achieve well by the time they are 11. They have learnt to make electrical circuits and developed their knowledge of plants further. Their ability to make predictions improves. The more able make predictions about the strength, hardness and flexibility of materials and about which materials will conduct electricity. They construct simple tests to check their predictions.
8. Pupils make good progress towards meeting their targets on their Individual Education Plans for personal and social development, which contributes to the good progress they make in personal and social education. Although, currently, the quality of teaching is good overall, many of the staff are relatively recent appointments. Additionally, the curriculum is still being developed for a number of subjects. As a consequence, pupils make satisfactory progress in geography, history and religious education. They make satisfactory and sometimes good progress in art and design and physical education lessons but they do not build systematically on knowledge, understanding and skills so their progress overall is unsatisfactory. It is also unsatisfactory in music and design and technology because what is taught is too limited, and in information and communication technology because it is not taught sufficiently.

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

9. As at the time of the previous inspection, pupils show positive attitudes, behave well and make good progress in their personal development. Parents report that their children enjoy school and this is reflected in pupils' responses when they arrive and the way they apply themselves to work when they are in class. Pupils arrive in school with a range of difficulties but as they get older they approach their work with commitment and enthusiasm as shown by Year 6 pupils when they take part in group work in literacy sessions. When teachers begin lessons with a review of what they have done previously pupils show confidence in their prior learning and enjoy recalling the content of previous lessons. Much of the reason for the school's success in this area is because pupils model their behaviour on a consistent and patient staff.
10. Behaviour in class is good overall and often very good. Pupils listen carefully and follow instructions well. When lessons take place outside the classroom, as in the Year 6 tour of the school in search of water points, they move sensibly as a group and show consideration for other classes working. Where pupils with additional special educational needs have difficulties with their behaviour, other pupils do not join in, but continue to concentrate on their task. Around the school and in the playground, pupils are polite and friendly and show increasing maturity in their dealings

with adults and each other. When wet weather means they are unable to play outdoors, they behave very well in classrooms, relating successfully to each other and sharing toys and equipment sensibly. During the week of the inspection, pupils showed a good level of commitment to the theme of the week, which was 'sharing'. Pupils respond well to the behaviour management structures in the school and there is little recourse to exclusion as a sanction. When this occurs it is part of an agreed programme for a few pupils when behaviour is presenting difficulties that temporarily cannot be managed within the school.

11. The school succeeds in fostering good relationships that support work in classrooms very well. In some classes, relationships are excellent, reflecting attitudes of mutual respect that enable pupils to be confident and assured when answering questions or undertaking difficult tasks. Pupils enthusiastically work together to achieve a common purpose. For example, Year 6 pupils combine to help another pupil to complete an alphabet jigsaw that is proving troublesome and a Year 5 pupil spontaneously offers to tie another's shoelace. They form and sustain appropriate friendships. They are tolerant of the difficulties that other pupils experience and allow these to be dealt with by adults even when they personally have reason to be aggrieved. This contributes very well to the harmonious atmosphere in classes and enables the severe difficulties that some pupils have to be successfully worked with.
12. Pupils develop well in terms of their maturity and ability to take responsibility. From an early age they show enthusiasm for carrying out routine tasks such as delivering registers to the office and, in a number of classes, pupils take turns to be responsible for other tasks. The school's code encourages them to reflect on how their actions affect others and they show awareness and sensitivity.
13. Attendance is good overall and is above that for similar schools. It is well above when part-time arrangements agreed with the local education authority for some pupils are taken into account. Pupils arrive punctually in the morning and arrangements both for the start of the school day and at other times ensure that lessons begin on time.

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

14. The quality of teaching and learning are now good overall, which is an improvement on the last inspection. This reflects a priority of the headteacher to raise the standards of teaching, which has been successful, particularly over the last year. In contrast to the last inspection, where in 20 per cent of the lessons teaching was recorded as less than satisfactory, there is now no unsatisfactory teaching. There are, however, differences in the quality of teaching throughout the school. The best teaching is in the early years classes, where children and pupils are often taught together, and in the two classes for the oldest pupils in the school. Here, teaching is consistently good and, occasionally, very good. This is partly due to the expertise of the staff, which ensures that work is at a suitably difficult level. Notably, teaching is also good in class five, which has two part-time teachers, who ensure their organisation and procedures are coherent and, as a result, pupils learn well. In classes for pupils in Years 2 and 3, teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, although there is also some good teaching for these pupils.
15. The teaching of pupils with additional special educational needs is satisfactory overall. It is good in the special class where the high adult to pupil ratio is used effectively to ensure well-planned lessons help each pupil to learn. Most staff have developed a clear understanding of the needs of pupils with autistic spectrum disorder and use elements of the TEACCH strategy effectively. Pupils respond well to requests to 'check schedule' and the necessary structure and routine provided enable them to get down to work. Children in the early years class already understand the concept of 'work' and now go through their tasks in their special working areas with a minimum of adult supervision. The Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) is used well and is very effective in enabling pupils to express their needs. It opens the door to communication successfully for a number of pupils. There are occasional instances where these procedures are not systematically followed and pupils are, for example, expected to change activities without appropriate support. As a result they take too long to settle down. Makaton signing is used effectively, particularly for younger pupils, where this is appropriate.

16. Teaching and learning are good in English, mathematics, science and personal and social education. In history, physical education and religious education teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teaching is also satisfactory in art and design, although pupils do not make satisfactory progress because the curriculum is narrow and is not planned to ensure skills and techniques are systematically learnt. It was not possible to make clear judgements on teaching in other subjects because too few lessons were observed.
17. Support staff make a major contribution to the success of teaching and pupils' learning. They work effectively as part of a team, know what they are expected to do and are very aware of the needs of the pupils. They are well briefed by teachers and follow instructions to teach groups or individuals and also support pupils to maintain their concentration and interest during class sessions. Good teamwork between support staff and teachers ensures the same routines and methods are used and children know what to expect. This is one of the reasons why pupils' behaviour improves. All the adults in the classroom adhere to strategies established in plans to improve behaviour and use praise and encouragement whenever they can. Pupils feel pleased about what they are doing when they hear comments such as 'good sharing', 'good waiting' and 'that was very well spotted'. Their positive behaviour and use of initiative are highlighted well. Staff take time to build strong relationships with the pupils, who learn to trust them. Pupils want to learn to please the adults they work with and they also use them as models, in some instances directly copying their actions. For example, they learn nursery rhymes and songs by listening to and following the actions of the staff. The theme of sharing was acted out by staff refusing to share fruit in one class and sweets in another. This was a very effective strategy; the pupils did not believe that the adults were acting so out of character.
18. English, mathematics and science lessons are planned well. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are suitably adapted and a scheme of work, a plan showing what is to be taught from year to year, has been developed for science. This ensures teachers have a good basis from which to plan and ensure that what they teach is at appropriate levels for their pupils. One of the reasons for the difference between the good overall teaching and the satisfactory progress made by pupils in some subjects is the lack of schemes of work for teachers to build on what pupils have learnt in previous years.
19. Teachers are good in identifying activities and resources that will capture the pupils' interest. Pupils count soft toy piglets and investigate how old some of the toys they are shown in history are. Their learning of the names of parts of a bulb is good because the uncovering and labelling of each part on a flannel and magnetic board shows them exactly what it looks like inside and it is easily repeated for those who are not sure. Pupils in the special class reinforced their subtraction skills by becoming involved in the game of a teddy bear taking a cake. Pupils thoroughly enjoy and benefit greatly from the expert use of the school grounds by staff in their lessons. For example, one class searched for different habitats of animals and another listened carefully for particular sounds. The school's water supply was traced round the building by a group of Year 6 pupils. A weakness in the use of resources is the insufficient use of information and communication technology as a means of helping pupils learn in other subjects. Opportunities are missed to gain pupils' interest and concentration and importantly to improve their skills and knowledge in information and communication technology.
20. In the most successful teaching, routines have been well established. In the early years class, children know what to expect and what is expected of them. They learn the pattern of the day and how lessons are organised, which helps them to be confident. As pupils get older they become used to the initial sessions together and to the way literacy and numeracy lessons are planned to include class and group work. In consequence, they become more independent and prepared to investigate and find solutions for themselves. For example, in a numeracy session a group working on their own made patterns of numbers in different ways. In a physical education activity kicking a ball through a series of cones, noting the slope on the ground, two boys shortened the distance the ball travelled on the downhill part to keep better control. Careful questioning by staff is effective in helping pupils to think about what they are doing, such as 'why did you choose that number?' when identifying an even number and 'how did you get this effect?' when looking at patterns in art. However, there is insufficient analysis with pupils to help them

improve their work. A notable exception was seen when a pupil was helped to throw underarm and then to improve his throw.

21. The organisation of the classroom and the children is good in most classrooms and very good in the early years. There are a few weaknesses in teaching. In one class, for example, organisation was not always sufficiently clear and as a result some pupils wasted time. This was because one group did not make a prompt start and pupils that finished the activity had to wait whilst others completed their work. This was also an instance when more able pupils were not given sufficiently difficult work to do. The school is aware there are gaps in expertise, for example, in design and technology, art and design, information and communication technology and music. This sometimes restricts what pupils are able to learn.

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

22. The curriculum is now satisfactory overall. Although there are strengths, there are also some significant weaknesses. However, areas have improved since the last inspection. The curriculum for children under five to age six in classes one and two is good and very relevant. It is planned carefully and appropriately, based on the six areas of learning in the curriculum for the Foundation Stage. Good opportunities are included for children to learn through play and to make effective use of the outdoor area. The school has rightly prioritised the development of the curriculum for the older pupils, concentrating on English, mathematics and science and personal and social education. Particularly effective is the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, which have been suitably adapted and have improved pupils' progress in English and mathematics. The curriculum for science and personal and social education has been well thought through and aspects such as sex education and education on drug misuse are sensibly incorporated. Teaching of religious education is appropriately based on the Locally Agreed Syllabus. However, the weaknesses reported at the last inspection about curricular planning to ensure pupils make progress from one year group to the next have yet to be completely overcome. What is taught for music, design and technology and information and communication technology is too narrow. The provision for information and communication technology through other subjects is not well established. The scheme of work fails to provide teachers with effective guidance on how to use information and communication technology in their teaching. As a result, statutory requirements are not met for this subject. Schemes of work for design and technology and music have yet to be developed and what is currently taught concentrates on some areas at the cost of others. The school cannot ensure that pupils do not repeat the same experiences within and across the two key stages in these subjects. Art and design, history and geography are in the early stages of planning what is to be taught and when. Although units of work have been selected from the new Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) schemes of work, the Programmes of Study are insufficiently developed to provide a complete scheme of work. For example, in art and design, the range of skills and techniques is narrow and not systematically developed. Insufficient guidance is in place to meet the needs of pupils remaining in the same class for more than one year, who need progressively more difficult work as they enter the second cycle of a scheme. The programme of work for history and geography follows the National Curriculum requirements but its implementation is not supported by clear subject guidelines. The school is aware of the need to develop and review schemes of work for all subjects and has outlined clearly its intentions to make improvements in the present school development plan.
23. The use of the TEACCH system supports the learning of those with additional special educational needs well, particularly those with autistic spectrum disorder. PECS also works well improving communication skills. Individual programmes and activities in the new sensory room help pupils become more aware of their senses and to investigate and explore different effects. It is also used well as a calming area for pupils who are distressed. Individual and Group Education Plans are used effectively to plan what pupils are to learn.
24. The school makes good use of the local community to enrich pupils' experiences with a wide range of visits for all pupils and is extending the range of extra-curricular activities especially for pupils aged seven to 11. A number of parents expressed concern about the lack of extra-

curricular activities. However, when opportunities have been offered, because of transport difficulties, take-up has been low. In response to a key issue on the last inspection report good arrangements have been made to ensure pupils have an appropriate induction to the local secondary school where most transfer at age 11. Links between senior managers and curriculum leaders of the secondary school are developing, particularly in the area of special educational needs. Occasional inter-school sporting fixtures and a weekly after school club run by local college students promote pupils' physical development and make a good contribution to their personal and social development through competitions and friendly matches. Although pupils have joined mainstream schools for some of their lessons in the past and a number have transferred to other schools, there are none at present ready for this experience.

25. The provision for social and moral education is good and a strength of the school. Pupils are firmly taught what is right and what is wrong. There are clear and frequent reminders of what is appropriate and adults deliberately notice and praise pupils who are behaving well. Adults provide very good role models and also encourage pupils to do the same for younger children, or those who find it more difficult. Space and time is allowed for pupils to 'put things right' so that many have the confidence to say that they are sorry when they have not behaved well. Pupils are taught to respect other people's property and the fabric of the building; there is no sign of any graffiti or recent deliberate damage.
26. There are high expectations of good manners in and around the school. Pupils learn to hold open doors not only for adults and visitors but also for each other. They are taught to ask and answer politely and take turns. The very good teamwork and pride in the school community shown by all adults are communicated to pupils. They in turn are clearly proud of their school and their own contribution to the school community. The programme of personal and social education permeates teaching throughout the day. Similarly, opportunities for taking increasing responsibility are relatively informal but examples range from the youngest class where each child takes a turn at using the computers etc. to older pupils helping with assemblies and looking after younger pupils during playtimes. Children in the early years classes are encouraged to develop the ability to work independently. Staff offer clear choices that interest the children and prompt them if attention begins to wander too soon. Residential visits are effective in helping pupils to become more independent. Pupils' social development continues during the summer holiday due to participation in a two-week holiday scheme run by the school in partnership with 'Helping Hands', a local support group for parents.
27. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual development. All pupils have weekly religious education lessons and learn about Christianity and other world faiths. In many lessons teachers encourage pupils' feeling of wonder through the reverent manner in which resources and artefacts are passed around the class for handling and exploration. For example, in history lessons there is an atmosphere of awe and appreciation among pupils when they handle old toys, games and teddies that have been brought in by staff and pupils. Daily collective worship for all pupils is well planned and provides regular opportunities for quiet reflection on carefully chosen themes. For example, during the inspection week the theme of sharing allowed pupils to identify with people who are special to them and to celebrate their shared achievements.
28. Pupils are given experiences to appreciate music representing British and other European cultures and there is a wide range of education visits, including residential activities, and visits from theatre groups, which make a significant contribution to pupils' social and cultural development. However, the school is aware that opportunities for pupils to experience the diversity and richness of other cultures is unsatisfactory. This area is not identified and included when lessons are planned and many opportunities are missed. Pupils are not effectively prepared for living in a culturally diverse society. This was a key issue at the last inspection and remains one for this inspection.

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

29. The pupils are well cared for and the arrangements for ensuring their health and safety, protection and well-being are good. There is a designated person responsible for child protection, who has



been suitably trained, and the staff are well briefed regarding the procedures to be followed. Pupils receive guidance on how to take care of themselves and this is incorporated in personal and social education. There is effective liaison with other professionals to enable pupils to receive the support and help needed. Appropriate policies for health and safety to promote a safe environment for the pupils are followed and risk assessments are carried out. A governor has responsibility together with a member of staff for regularly inspecting the premises and regular fire drills take place. Teachers make pupils aware of safety issues where appropriate: for example, in an art lesson warning was given to use sharp tools for making patterns carefully. However, the kitchen door is not locked when the kitchen is not in use.

30. Since the last inspection, arrangements for transporting pupils to and from school have improved and journeys are now shorter and punctuality improved. There were, however, instances of pupils leaving in transport without wearing seatbelts during the inspection.
31. The school has effective methods for promoting good behaviour, as at the last inspection. The use of rewards, including praise and encouragement, stickers and smiley faces on charts, works well. A 'traffic light' warning system reminds a pupil that he needs to conform. The children in the early years class understand that when the sands have run through the timer they, for example, will have had time to calm down, or must change an activity. Individual behaviour plans are applied consistently, discussed with parents and updated as necessary. Incidents of difficult behaviour are recorded in bound books kept in each classroom. These are monitored by the headteacher each week, who keeps track of behaviour ensuring appropriate advice and help is made available for teachers. Any incidents of aggressive behaviour are dealt with quickly and effectively, which confirms views expressed by parents.
32. The school together with the education welfare officer promote good attendance effectively. There is a good monitoring system to deal with absences as they occur. The arrangements to familiarise parents with the school before admission are welcoming and procedures have improved for pupils in Year 6 to visit the secondary school to help them make a smooth transfer.
33. Procedures for assessing and recording pupils' achievements and progress are unsatisfactory because they are not effective for all subjects. A new policy for assessing and monitoring the academic progress of pupils was developed in the autumn term last year. This built on existing procedures, for example the recording for literacy and the Individual Education Plans. Good use has been made of the Individual Education Plans to set targets for pupils' personal and social development. Progress against these targets is recorded and reviewed each term. Group Education Plans are written for literacy and numeracy and pupils' progress recorded in a similar way to the Individual Education Plans. They are reviewed and summarised on a half termly basis. This information is building up to provide a clear record of how well pupils are doing in these subjects. For other subjects, however, broad targets are set for the work and statements are recorded at the bottom to fit three levels of achievement. At its best this requires detail to enable useful assessment of progress to be recorded. In many instances targets are too broad and information is not sufficient or suitably clear to provide an adequate record. The school is well aware of the deficiencies and plans to make improvements to the unsatisfactory areas. Assessment of progress is made difficult through the lack of clear schemes of work so that teachers can plan what they will assess. However, the new individual progress folders provide a good basis for future work. At present, evidence of work is not kept, apart from in the early years classes, where it provides good evidence of children's progress. Annual reviews are conducted appropriately.

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

34. Overall, the parents' views, taken from both the parents' meeting and the questionnaire, are positive. The majority of parents feel the school works closely with them and is approachable if there are any problems. Links with parents are good. The school tries hard to involve parents. For example, to enable parents to express their views if they were unable to attend the annual parents' meeting governors sent a questionnaire with the agenda. Parents are invited to attend a

variety of social occasions arranged by the School Association. The school is well supported by local businesses that contribute donations.

35. The quality of information provided for parents regarding the progress of their children is unsatisfactory because reports do not always include comments on what pupils know, understand and can do but refer to what has been experienced. Additionally, because the assessment of progress in a number of subjects is inadequate, the same, or very similar comments are written for a number of children. Other information to parents is good. There is an informative, half-termly newsletter and home/school diaries are used well by both school and parents for the younger children and as appropriate for the older pupils. There is good contact through the telephone system and parents are welcome to come into the school. A good link has been established between the parents and the school and the escorts on the buses, who often bring messages if children are unwell.
36. A few parents were concerned over homework. Some thought homework should be set for the older pupils; others felt their children were tired enough when they got home. Inspectors found that homework was not set on a regular basis but books went home to be read with parents. However, there is no homework policy to inform parents who may, for example, wish to have homework set for their children. Since the last inspection the school has maintained the quality of its links with parents.

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

37. The leadership and management of the school, following the appointment of the current headteacher in 1999, are satisfactory. Since this appointment, there has been a successful focus on implementing the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies, improving teaching and pupils' behaviour and ensuring staff have sufficient skills to teach the rising number of pupils with autistic spectrum disorder. However, since the last inspection in 1996, progress in addressing the weaknesses and key issues is unsatisfactory overall.
38. There has been a high turnover in the number of teaching staff since the last inspection. On appointment, the current headteacher immediately set up clear strategies for the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning. This revealed some serious weaknesses, in that 50 per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory. This became a clear focus for development and the school was also recognised by the local educational authority to be in need of intensive support. Together with a successful bid from the Standards Fund, the headteacher implemented a comprehensive plan for improvement. This targeted school improvement grant has been used well. The additional support from the local education authority inspectors for English, mathematics and special educational needs in delivering training and support to subject co-ordinators and the monitoring of teaching and learning has been successful as the current inspection identifies teaching as good overall. The school has made good progress towards the objectives set out in the school improvement plan (2000-2001). The current school improvement plan (2001-2002) recognises there is still much work that needs to be done, particularly in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.
39. The headteacher acknowledges that the first year of her headship was one of turbulence in terms of staffing and she was without a deputy headteacher for nine months. This difficult situation was managed well. In May 2000, the current deputy headteacher was appointed and has added a good deal of rigour and pace to the development of the school, particularly regarding the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and in improving pupils' behaviour. Following this key appointment two other permanent members of staff were appointed in September 2000. However, currently, one class has two part-time teachers employed on temporary contracts. There are two teachers on long-term sick leave, one of whom is a senior management team member; two teachers are currently filling this management post on a temporary basis. During the week of the inspection, of the 9.8 full-time equivalent teachers, only three members of staff, two full-time, including the headteacher, and one part-time, had taught in the school for more than five terms. Despite these difficulties, the headteacher has steered the school towards meeting its priorities effectively. A great deal has been achieved in a short time

by a hard-working staff. The improvement work is ongoing but has yet to make a substantial difference to pupils' achievements in all areas of the school.

40. The governing body has a good range of committees to support its work and meetings are well conducted and appropriate. Most recently, the link governors for literacy and numeracy have spent some time in classes monitoring the effect of these national initiatives and key staff have provided governors with a presentation about these and other curricular initiatives. The chair of governors recognises that recent developments have moved the school forward. However, although the role of the governing body has improved, partly through participating in a range of appropriate training, the monitoring of the work of the school by the governors since the last inspection is unsatisfactory and lacks rigour. In particular, they have not ensured that key issues from the last inspection have been satisfactorily met.
41. The current school improvement plan clearly identifies what needs to be done next. Subject action plans are in place but lack detail and some timescales as identified in the curriculum planning cycle are too long. A more rigorous approach to self-evaluation is necessary to drive the school forward at the appropriate pace.
42. The programme of lesson observation has been effective in raising the quality of teaching and learning. Performance management targets have been agreed with all teachers related to pupils' progress and drawn from the school improvement plan as appropriate.
43. The school is staffed with an appropriate number of teachers. Although some lack experience of pupils with complex special educational needs, most have a breadth of relevant teaching experience in mainstream education. Recently, an effective planned induction was introduced for new teachers and non-teaching staff. Good training opportunities, particularly in literacy and numeracy and autistic spectrum disorder, have had a positive impact on the achievements of pupils in lessons. Teachers' subject knowledge, however, is not sufficient in the foundation curriculum, particularly in information and communication technology, design and technology, art and design and music. There are an adequate number of non-teaching staff, who make a positive contribution to pupils' achievements.
44. Co-ordinators responsible for literacy and numeracy have been effective in ensuring these areas have improved. Many subject co-ordinators have not been in post long enough to fully make an impact on the co-ordination of their subjects. However, the impetus in the past year to develop medium-term plans of significant detail to meet the wide range of needs in the school and to ensure work is not repeated is not fully realised in some foundation subjects.
45. The principle of best value is applied satisfactorily. However, the governing body does not yet fully evaluate the outcomes of the expenditure on pupils' progress. The efficiency of financial control and administration in the school office is good and effective systems are in place. A recent audit report identified some areas for development, which have been satisfactorily addressed. The governing body does not ensure statutory requirements are met with regard to what is taught in information and communication technology.
46. The school had made good use of specific funding to improve the quality of teaching and learning and to continue to improve the quality of the accommodation through refurbishment. Overall, the accommodation is satisfactory; however, there is no covered outdoor area for children in the Foundation Stage and this restricts the progress they can make in physical development during inclement weather. Overall, resources are satisfactory.

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

47. In order to raise standards further, the headteacher, deputy headteacher, staff and governing body should:
  - (1) improve pupils' progress in information and communication technology, design and technology, art and design and music; (Paragraphs 18, 43, 76, 80, 93, 98)

- (2) ensure schemes of work are completed for all subjects and kept up to date; (Paragraphs 8, 22, 33, 41, 44, 79, 83, 96, 100, 106)
- (3) improve the assessment and recording of pupils' progress and what is written in reports where it is currently unsatisfactory; (Paragraphs 33, 35, 75, 79, 83, 87, 91, 97, 100, 103, 106)
- (4) develop the multi cultural elements of pupils' work through all subjects; (Paragraphs 28, 29, 83, 100)
- (5) improve the monitoring of the work of the school by the governing body. (Paragraphs 40, 45)

The above issues are identified by the school in the school development plan.

48. The governors, in drawing up their action plan, may wish to consider the following minor weaknesses identified in the report:
  - there is no homework policy; (Paragraph 36)
  - literacy across the curriculum is not well promoted and there are insufficient opportunities for drama or role-play to extend speaking and listening skills; (Paragraphs 5, 59, 63)
  - there is occasional inconsistency in working with pupils with additional special educational needs; (Paragraphs 2, 16, 66, 78)
  - liaison between staff at Maple Ridge and the main secondary school where pupils transfer at age 11 regarding links in pupils' learning and the curriculum at each stage is not yet sufficiently developed; (Paragraph 24)
  - the kitchen door is not secured safely; (Paragraph 30)
  - statutory requirements are not met for information and communication technology; (Paragraphs 22, 41, 96)
  - there is some lack of staff expertise in information and communication technology, design and technology, art and design and music. (Paragraphs 21,43, 78, 82, 83, 100).

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	59
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	39

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	10	61	29	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	73
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	7

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	73
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	73

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.9
National comparative data	N/A

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	2.3
National comparative data	N/A

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

### ***Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1***

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11 pupils all assessed as working towards level 1 in English, mathematics and science.

### ***Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2***

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20 pupils

	Working towards level 1	Level 1	Level 2
English	50	45	5
Mathematics	55	45	0
Science	0	5	95

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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	3
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	68
Any other minority ethnic group	1

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	5	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	7.4
Average class size	9

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

Total number of education support staff	18
Total aggregate hours worked per week	492

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	99/2000
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	£
Total income	580478
Total expenditure	574224
Expenditure per pupil	7362
Balance brought forward from previous year	13480
Balance carried forward to next year	19734

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	73
Number of questionnaires returned	27

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	30	7	4	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	30	7	4	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	38	54	8	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	8	46	21	17	8
The teaching is good.	65	23	8	4	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	74	15	11	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	22	4	0	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	26	4	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	70	22	4	4	0
The school is well led and managed.	63	26	0	4	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	26	7	7	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	41	15	7	12

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

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

49. Children make good progress in the early years classes. They gain a good start to their education partly because they are well taught and also because what they are taught is well thought through. Judgements on children's progress are based on lessons observed of the reception class one, for children aged four to five, and also of records and observations of pupils now in Year 1, aged five to six who continue to follow the curriculum for the Foundation Stage. The last inspection report does not comment on the progress of these children, but the quality of teaching and the curriculum has improved from satisfactory to good.

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

50. Children's personal, social and emotional development is particularly good. Often children are very withdrawn when they join the school but gradually they form very good relationships with the staff that work with them and in consequence become more outgoing. One such child was observed playing a pretend bear game with a support assistant growling in bear-like fashion and laughing animatedly as she growled back and giving her full attention. Children learn to take turns, for example, in working the torch, but some continue to find sharing difficult without adult guidance. Those with autistic spectrum disorder gradually begin to tolerate working near other children and to play with the same activity. Other children become able to work and play co-operatively, for example, chasing each other around the play area on tricycles and sitting in a large group for classes one and two's assembly. Children's behaviour improves because the staff are consistent and persistent in dealing with any incidents. Outbursts and tantrums become less as individual behaviour plans are successfully followed. The use of the TEACCH approach to give security and structure for children with autistic spectrum disorder is very effective in developing the period of time they will spend in activities chosen by the teacher. All children become more independent choosing tasks.

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

51. The introduction of PECS has, in a very short time, proved very effective in improving children's communication skills. They become increasingly able to express their wants and needs and make choices independently; additionally their understanding of language increases. Their communication, language and literacy skills develop well. They listen to stories and share books with adults and, by the time they join class two, many children name characters in stories or can point to them when asked in pictures. Where appropriate, they use signing effectively. They look at photographs of their families and, for example, point to and say 'mummy' and will study pictures intently. A few, through careful questioning, recall parts of a story. During registration time, children select their printed names, some assisted by photographs of themselves. They enjoy nursery rhymes. In the early years classes children and pupils are taught to form letters correctly and they overwrite and then copy their names.

#### **Mathematical development**

52. This area of learning is well taught. Children listen to, and join in, number songs such as 'Five Speckled Frogs' or 'Five Fat Sausages', which helps them to learn to count to five. One child is already counting to seven. They begin to match numerals and copy patterns of two colours. More able children create and continue patterns of colours accurately. The 'three bears' house' set up in the role play area last term successfully helped children to understand differences in size, for example, to compare small, medium and large spoons and make judgements about bigger and smaller. Most children can accurately name a square and some a triangle and a circle. They sort items by shape and some can also sort by colour. Children continue to learn the names of colours when they are in Year 1.



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

53. The good organisation of the 'play' session each day makes a strong contribution to children's learning in this area. They work at the sand tray exploring the texture and experimenting with making and moulding structures and decorating them. Through playing with the large construction equipment, children work out how to join and make a wheeled model. Their understanding of the passage of time and change is developed as they look at photographs of babies, children and adults. Naming of the main body parts is reinforced through songs and through everyday activities. Children use a tape recorder with headphones to listen to a story and use a mouse to make changes on the computer screen when using a paint program. The range of tools they use is gradually widened: for example, they make bear shaped biscuits with assistance. The school grounds are used well to extend children's knowledge. They listened for specific sounds in different parts of the grounds and then spent time in the sensory playground exploring the effects of the new equipment.

## **Physical development**

54. Children make steady and, at times, good progress in improving their physical skills. The easy access to a safe play area is very helpful in encouraging children to develop their skills using the large play equipment. They learn to pedal a tricycle, some at speed, and push and pull dolls' prams and carts. Most quickly learn to hop and jump and stop and start when requested. Their sense of balance is improved through balancing on equipment and, for example, balancing bean bags on their heads. Children crawl through tunnels and tents with confidence during indoor activities. Their hand to eye co-ordination is improved through learning to accurately throw a bean bag into a hoop and through such activities as stacking, building, fitting together and threading items. Two children successfully operated scissors for the first time during the inspection and cut out shapes and used paste to stick them in the right place on the page.

## **Creative development**

55. Children's creative development is good and is greatly enhanced through role-play. In one corner of the classroom a 'bus' has been set up with seats, driving wheel and place where tickets are bought. With the help of an adult asking probing questions children purchase tickets and decide where they are going: 'to MacDonal'd's, to get something to eat', 'to the park', 'to the shops' were favourite destinations. Toys, such as teddies and dolls, are put on the bus to travel as well. In another instance, some children and pupils participated in acting out the story 'Let's Go Home, Little Bear', which had been read earlier. They particularly enjoyed the 'cave' made of blankets and lay down to sleep after their adventure. Action songs such as 'Row, Row, Row the Boat' are enjoyed by the children and records show they are familiar with a number of nursery rhymes and songs by the time they move into class two. Children are encouraged to make patterns, for example using printing blocks for the 'Hungry Caterpillar's' body in a large poster and to explore the effects of different materials when making collage pictures.
56. The quality of the teaching is consistently good largely because the organisation and planning is so well done. All the support staff are well briefed and work as a coherent team. Classes one and two are often together, which enables a broader range of activities or allows more adult support. For example, making footprints with bare feet needed at least two and at times three members of staff, to support children with paint on their feet, ensure they kept to the paper and keep an eye on the paint to ensure unplanned investigation did not take place! This was a very successful activity as children looked behind them at the patterns their feet were making. Time is used well; children work through their boxes of work with staff individually and learn to work independently. It is noticeable that children with autistic spectrum disorder are already able to complete a series of tasks in their special areas without being closely supervised. The level of expertise is high. The TEACCH system and PECS are used very effectively. Children's behaviour is improved through the consistent application of behaviour plans and strategies. The egg timer, for example, shows the length of time visually for the child to calm down when they are 'cross'. Aggressive behaviour is not tolerated and good manners are modelled by staff and copied by children. Expectations of what the pupils will achieve are suitably high and care is taken to ensure they rise to the challenge. In one instance a boy was engrossed in studying the pictures

on the open pages of a big book. Although responding to questions to locate characters, he was unwilling to turn the page. On this occasion pages were turned and, although the child reverted to the initial pages this was a step further.

57. The co-ordination of the early years provision is very good. The co-ordinator has been in post for less than a year and has made significant and far-reaching improvements. In the first place, the curriculum has been successfully adapted and a two year cycle developed. The flexibility created through working with class two also using the same curriculum enables appropriate groupings to be made. For example, one child joins a group in class two for his numeracy and literacy work. The school system for setting targets and recording progress using Individual and Group Education Plans has been implemented well and with the carefully selected work that is retained this provides a clear record of the progress each child has made. The areas where the children learn have been developed and there are plans to improve the outdoor area further. Accommodation is good, although there is no covered outdoor area to allow children to be outside more often. The action plan for the early years has set clear priorities and an early years statement is in the process of being drafted. The current gap in recording progress for physical and creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world, particularly during the 'structured play' sessions, is recognised and is planned to be dealt with shortly. Resources have been carefully chosen and meet the needs of the pupils well.

## **ENGLISH**

58. As at the time of the last inspection, the school gives a high priority to meeting pupils' literacy needs and, as a result, pupils achieve satisfactory standards across the subject. Most pupils arrive with very limited reading or writing skills and, for many, there are additional speech and language difficulties that impede communication and depress their achievement in speaking and listening. The successful introduction of a literacy strategy that closely reflects the national model has focused attention on the need for a more rigorous approach. This is now being used in all classrooms and is having a considerable effect so that learning is now good overall and, in some classes, it is very good. While for pupils who have been in the school for some time progress has been satisfactory, over the last two years there has been much good and some very good progress in the development of literacy skills.
59. Pupils in both key stages make satisfactory progress in speaking and listening. However, for those pupils who arrive with severe communication difficulties, progress is usually good because the use of PECS enables them to communicate their needs and wishes effectively and make appropriate choices. A small number of pupils use signing effectively to help them communicate. Well-conducted whole-class and group sessions provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their oral responses and they make good progress in lessons where questioning is effectively used to extend their thinking. Pupils listen well, concentrate on what the teacher and other pupils are saying and offer sensible and thoughtful contributions to discussions. By the time they are seven, they enjoy listening to stories and are able to retell some events with adult help. More able pupils recall and discuss what they have heard and offer views on it. By the time they are 11, pupils develop satisfactory listening skills, which they demonstrate in lessons and assemblies when they are able to answer questions about what they have heard. In lessons in other subjects pupils extend their speaking and listening skills through stories and discussions and, at times, as in religious education, through role-play. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to speak at any length and there is insufficient drama or role-play across the curriculum so that the progress of more able pupils in these areas is limited.
60. Progress in reading is satisfactory. Although few pupils become fluent readers, a significant number acquire sufficient reading ability to read simple texts independently. During their time at the school, they make steady progress through the objectives of the literacy scheme. By the time they are seven, most pupils identify rhyming words and emphasise these in guided reading sessions as when they read 'The Bear That Would Not Share'. They read shared texts with support and most recognise words using the initial letter as a clue. More able pupils read selected texts unaided, although they do not have sufficient confidence to read with expression. By the time they are 11, pupils read familiar sentences with reasonable confidence and accuracy;

they have a secure grasp of the alphabet, know the sounds made by individual letters and are able to identify common letters and combinations that begin words. More able pupils know most of the key words and some are independent readers.

61. Pupils make satisfactory progress in writing. However, there is no agreed whole-school policy for handwriting, so that pupils are not consistently taught letter formation skills during their time at the school. By the time they are seven, pupils produce a range of letters independently with some regard for proper formation. They combine known words to form simple sentences. More able pupils produce legible writing with letters of an appropriate size. By the time they are 11, skills improve so that pupils communicate simple ideas effectively in writing. Their handwriting improves so that most develop an unlinked style with appropriate regard for relative letter sizes and using capital letters with some accuracy. More able pupils demonstrate the ability to write in a variety of styles, producing independent stories and poetry. They write in complete sentences when answering questions set and a few pupils make progress to a clear, linked, mature style of handwriting.
62. Pupils respond well in English lessons and show considerable enthusiasm and commitment. They respect the routines associated with the literacy structure and find them helpful in providing a secure, predictable pattern to lessons. This is particularly the case for pupils with additional special needs, who are enabled by it to participate in class and group sessions. Pupils move quickly from class to group activities and settle willingly to the tasks set. For example, Year 2 pupils display very positive attitudes when playing matching games, sequencing stories and listening to tapes. They concentrate well and persevere until they have completed the work set. Older pupils in particular are developing the ability to work independently with minimal supervision. However, on occasion, when pupils are working independently, their attention wanders and, if they are insufficiently monitored, they waste their time and achieve little.
63. Teaching and learning in English lessons in both key stages are now good overall and never unsatisfactory because teachers have a good grasp of the school's literacy strategy and apply it consistently. This is beginning to improve the progress pupils make. Lessons are well structured with a predictable pattern that provides additional security for pupils with special needs on the autistic spectrum. The needs of these pupils are well met and behaviour management plans are consistently implemented in most classes. Teaching is significantly assisted by the excellent relationships based on mutual respect that exist in some classrooms. In the best lessons, detailed weekly planning makes good links between pupils' Individual Education Plans and group plans based on pupils' achievements. Teachers make good use of resources; the flannel graph board and magnetic whiteboard are effectively deployed to enable pupils to participate actively in whole-class work. This work is made more effective by the very good use of questioning to ensure that pupils fully understand the story and to help them recall what they have learned in previous lessons. Learning support assistants play a key role in literacy lessons when they work with individual pupils in independent activities or support them within the class or groups. Another very effective feature of teaching is the careful division of pupils into groups where they are offered a good variety of tasks well matched to their abilities. Well-conducted plenary sessions at the end of each lesson generally ensure that learning is reinforced and effectively shared. Pupils are given very good opportunities to assess their own learning and this is very effective in keeping their attention focused on their work. However, at times these sessions are rushed and there is inadequate opportunity for pupils to share their learning. In lessons in other subjects, there is insufficient planning to support the development of literacy skills and often opportunities for promoting these are missed. Teachers' marking is variable in quality but is satisfactory overall. At its best, it is clear, consistent and corrective, indicating what the pupil needs to do next to improve.
64. The school's policy for English, largely derived from the National Literacy Strategy, provides a good basis for ensuring that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met. This ensures that there is generally a good balance between the elements of the subject, although there is still insufficient opportunity for pupils to practise extended speaking, and opportunities for drama and role-play are limited. In addition, there is insufficient use of information and communication technology to support writing. Assessment arrangements are good; the records in pupils' progress files are kept up to date and provide a good basis for planning future work.

65. Arrangements to co-ordinate the subject are effective; the co-ordinator has been relatively recently appointed but has already had a significant effect on the subject, particularly in the introduction of the literacy strategy. Effective use has been made of local education authority literacy co-ordinator support to monitor teaching and provide advice to the school on how to improve its work in this area. Appropriate areas for future development have been identified and incorporated into the school improvement plan. Resources have been rigorously audited, pruned and upgraded by the co-ordinator so that, although there are still some shortcomings identified through audit, the school is well equipped to teach the subject.

## **MATHEMATICS**

66. Pupils' achievements and progress in mathematics are satisfactory overall. In many lessons pupils now learn well. This is because the National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented successfully. Also, the co-ordinator added much pace, expertise and enthusiasm to the teaching of numeracy across the school, although the quality is not yet consistent in all classes. Progress in mathematics since the last inspection is satisfactory and more recently it is good. Pupils in the additional special educational needs class make good progress. Other pupils with additional special educational needs in other classes make satisfactory progress, some good, but there is a lack of consistency in following procedures for some pupils.
67. By the age of seven, less able pupils sort and classify a variety of fruit, identify their colour and rote count up to five. Many more able pupils can identify a square and a triangle but identify a circle as an egg. One pupil with autistic spectrum disorder uses a number line to add and subtract and counts in twos. As a result of targeted, relevant work matched to the needs and abilities of the pupils, they make good progress in lessons. Numeracy across the curriculum has a good profile; for example, during registration pupils identify how many pupils are in the class and how many have sandwiches or a cooked lunch. There is good use of number lines and 100 squares. In another class during role-play, pupils use a "ticket" system to go on the toy bus during imaginative play, which they bought with money.
68. By the age of 11, pupils practise and learn to count in fives from nought to 60 and in tens from nought to 100 in the whole-class mental mathematics introduction to the lesson. Pupils with additional special educational needs complete well-planned suitably difficult activities at their workstations. This is relevant and meets their needs well. The use of the TEACCH strategy provides a security and ensures that pupils are involved in their own learning. More able pupils are able to break three figure numbers into hundreds, tens and units and use these methods for harder addition. Other more able pupils can recognise how many minutes in an hour, identify half-past, quarter-past and quarter-to the hour. Pupils with additional special educational needs work with each other and a member of the non-teaching staff as a group and confidently identify the time of day as requested. At the end of group work, these pupils use the systems appropriately and move on to the next activity. Good opportunities are taken to reinforce numeracy across the curriculum; for example, Year 6 run a tuck shop at the start of the day and during class time identify how many pupils will have sandwiches if five pupils have school dinners. Younger pupils consolidate their understanding of one-to-one correspondence and match three cups to the three pupils present in the designated additional special educational needs class. At another time in this class, the use of objects to reinforce the notion of subtracting one toy cake from the total ensured pupils' interest was extended and the pupil made good progress before choosing to work independently at his workstation.
69. Teaching and learning are now good and this is beginning to improve the progress pupils make. Appropriate mathematics targets are set for groups of pupils in each class, which enables teachers to plan activities that are suited to the pupils' ability during group work. This is a positive feature of the teaching and ensures pupils make the good progress in lessons that they do. As a result of this good match, all pupils are suitably challenged, extend their concentration and learn well. The materials themselves are very well prepared, are of a good quality and show a good level of subject knowledge and expertise. The co-ordinator has shared much of this expertise amongst the staff through a variety of training. Including pupils with additional special educational needs in

classes is appropriate and the range of teaching techniques is flexible and works well, but they are not yet consistent across all classes. The subject specific materials for these pupils working within small groups and in their workstations are of a good quality. In Year 6, support given by non-teaching staff is particularly good.

70. The planning for teaching numeracy is good and the use of the 100 square and number lines, for example, provides good clues to pupils to find the answer. The work is planned to challenge pupils to achieve their best. In Year 6 lesson, for example, pupils were asked to “think” when they lose concentration when counting up to 60 in fives with no prompt. In the plenary session pupils show their learning through showing what they had done and responding to questions. They enjoy being awarded merits by the staff. Whilst in some lessons non-teaching staff record the details of what pupils know, understand and can do during the course of the lesson or indicate where learning needs to be supported further, this good practice is not consistent in all classes.
71. The leadership and management of the subject are good. Training and support for all staff and the resources are good. The effort and focus the school has given to numeracy is clearly evident in the improvement in progress the pupils are making. This focus has been very successful.

## **SCIENCE**

72. Pupils’ achievements in science are good overall. They are satisfactory by the time pupils are seven but good by the time pupils are 11 because of the improved quality of teaching for the older pupils. Pupils with additional special educational needs make good progress by the time they reach 11 because of the good support they receive and the effective strategies used by teachers and support assistants.
73. Between the ages of five and seven, pupils learn about light and, by the time they are seven, less able pupils can indicate an awareness of light and dark, while more able pupils can name sources of light such as the sun, candles and light bulbs. They explore materials that toys are made from and experiment with push and pull and the effects of friction. Pupils learn about life and living processes from the handling and care of plants, and through discussion about humans and other animals, pupils identify and name facial and body parts. They grow plants from seed and observe growth over time. Pupils learn that both water and light are necessary for plants to grow. Between the ages of seven and 11, pupils continue to develop their understanding of plants, learning to identify parts of a plant correctly. They learn where different animals can be found and why. By the time pupils are 11, they know that electricity cannot be seen but that it has many important uses around the home. Some pupils construct simple electrical circuits with help and explain the use of bulbs, switches and wires to complete a circuit and test its effectiveness. More able pupils make predictions about the strength, hardness and flexibility of materials and are beginning to make good predictions about which materials will conduct electricity. They construct simple tests to check their predictions. The majority of pupils can group materials by their characteristics; for example, Year 6 pupils group materials according to their transparency during investigations based on light.
74. The teaching and learning of science throughout the school are good overall and always at least satisfactory, which is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection. Teaching is satisfactory overall and sometimes good for the younger pupils. In the best lessons, pupils are interested in the activities, try hard to be as independent as possible and concentrate on what they are doing. Although in most lessons there is sufficient pace and variety, some explanations are not clear enough and occasionally, as a result, pupils carry out tasks with little understanding. Teaching of the older pupils is good. Teachers use a range of appropriate methods to encourage all pupils to explore and find out about things. Simple scientific terms are used well to develop pupils’ knowledge of scientific words effectively. This, with careful questioning, ensures that pupils understood the points they have made. Resources are chosen carefully and are simple yet effective. Pupils have opportunities to explore habitats around the school where they enjoy the experience of discussion and discovery. For example, after careful explanation by the teacher pupils link the types of animals and plants that are likely to fit the habitat. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and provide them with work that is

appropriately difficult. They improve the pupils' understanding of literacy and numeracy by emphasising information carrying words and asking specific questions such as 'Can you name the parts of your plant?' 'Can you place the seed in the pot?' 'How many seeds can you find in your pack?' However, there was little evidence in pupils' workbooks of the use of information and communication technology to record investigations, for example, word-processed reports or simple tables and graphs. Teachers use praise to encourage pupils and most make good use of the TEACCH structure to ensure that all pupils are involved. Pupils respond by trying hard to describe what they see and understand. They work hard and enjoy the practical tasks, gaining both in knowledge and self-esteem.

75. The co-ordinator for science has made considerable progress with developing a scheme of work based on the QCA recommended units of work, which are modified to ensure work is set at an appropriate level. Although the monitoring of science teaching and pupils' learning is planned in the action plan, it is not yet taking place, which contributes towards the difference in progress between the younger and the older pupils. Resources are good, well labelled and centrally stored. The development of an agreed system of recording and reporting achievements is an area requiring some improvement. Since the last inspection there have been satisfactory improvements overall. Teaching has improved; a new scheme of work has been introduced and work is now more closely matched to the needs of the pupils.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

76. There are insufficient means to ensure pupils build on skills and techniques already learnt in a systematic way and, in consequence, progress over time is unsatisfactory. Further, the range of skills and techniques taught is narrow. The school is well aware of these deficiencies and improvements are scheduled. The co-ordinator has had to improve another area of the curriculum as a priority. However, pupils make satisfactory progress in art and design during their lessons. At times their progress is good, particularly when the teacher has expertise in the area being taught. In one lesson with Year 5, for example, a few pupils made very good progress exploring effects created using a comb on thick paint.
77. Between the ages of five and seven, pupils learn about the texture of paint. They work with clay and print and make collages using a range of materials. Their drawings of people develop to include features. Paintings on display by pupils aged seven show how pupils have used their painting skills well to illustrate their work in geography on landscapes. Clear representation is made of grass, trees and sky through good coverage of the paper with a range of appropriate colours. Pupils with additional special educational needs make collages, for example, demonstrating the materials the houses of the three pigs are built of and print using shapes choosing appropriate colours. Pupils work on observational drawings and produce three-dimensional work using papier mâché between the ages of seven and 11. They create pleasing effects with printing blocks they have designed themselves. By the time they are 11, pupils have learnt to use paint and colour effectively. They change the texture, gradually thickening and working it to create successfully whirls and swirls to represent water.
78. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Most teachers have appropriate expertise to teach what is currently being taught. However, it is recognised that the planned widening of the curriculum requires further training for staff. The consistent following of behaviour plans and very clear organisation in most classes ensures that behaviour difficulties are dealt with quickly and effectively. Contingency plans in the best lessons ensure that pupils with autistic spectrum disorder participate as far as they are able: for example, in a Year 6 lesson, a pupil finished the first painting successfully and then, as planned, moved away from the table. New techniques are introduced through good demonstrations by staff. However, there is insufficient use of examples of the work of famous artists and the multi cultural element of art and design is not yet exploited to give pupils an insight into the richness and diversity of the subject. Weaknesses in teaching often stem from unsatisfactory organisation that leads to some pupils not having enough to do and not being given work that is suitably difficult. Occasionally, procedures for supporting pupils with additional special educational needs are not systematically followed and they take longer to start work than they should.

79. The art and design co-ordinator was appointed last September and has accomplished as much as she can in the time available. She has made resources very accessible to staff and selected topics for each team to teach throughout the year from the QCA curriculum document. A draft policy is being devised and has already aims and objectives. Her action plan outlines steps to be taken to improve the subject. However, at present, planning what is to be taught and assessing what pupils know, understand and can do are unsatisfactory, which contributes to the lack of sufficient progress of the pupils over time. A selection of photographs records displays of completed work but this is not yet used as a means to record evidence of individual pupils' progress. There has been insufficient improvement since the last inspection.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

80. Pupils' achievements and progress in design and technology are unsatisfactory. It was only possible to observe a few lessons so judgements about pupils' achievement and progress are based on a scrutiny of teachers' plans, records, displays around the school, pupils' work and discussions with the co-ordinator.
81. By the age of seven, pupils, through a multi-sensory approach, taste a variety of fruit and make judgements about its shape, colour and taste. Other elements of design and technology can be identified through some other subjects such as art and design and science. By the age of 11, some pupils, during food technology, plan, shop and make a sandwich and evaluate the quality of the finished product; other pupils identify materials used in a collage.
82. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the quality of teaching and learning overall. In the few lessons observed during the inspection, teaching was satisfactory but narrow in the range and focus. This indicates a limited subject knowledge and confidence of the teachers.
83. The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory and insufficient progress has been made since the last inspection. The recently appointed co-ordinator has a subject action plan, however; it lacks rigour and pace. There is no effective planning which includes appropriate reference to the range of attainment targets, identifies when these will be taught and is made relevant to the range of special educational needs in the school. The school cannot ensure that pupils do not repeat the same experiences within and across the key stages. This was the case in the last inspection and this is unsatisfactory. Currently, there is not sufficient breadth in what is taught. Assessment, recording and reporting are unsatisfactory. In-service training in the teaching of design and technology is very limited and is a weakness.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

84. It was only possible to observe one lesson from each key stage during the inspection. Evidence from this lesson, a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and teachers indicate that standards of achievement over time are satisfactory.
85. Between the ages of five and seven, pupils learn how to find their way around the school and complete simple plans of the building and grounds. By the time they are seven, pupils explore differences between Basingstoke and the seaside. They successfully place pictures linked to either the seaside or town on the correct sheets, recognising some of the differences between the two types of area. By the time pupils are 11 their local knowledge has improved and the more able pupils describe features contrasting with their own school's locality using correct geographical terminology. Year 6 pupils are making a study of water: each pupil is keeping a water diary recording the amount of water they use at home. They can also list the sources of water and investigate how it travels around the school, recording their findings with a digital camera.
86. It is not possible to make an overall judgement about geography teaching on such a small sample. However, in these two lessons teaching and learning were good. The lessons interested

the pupils, who were taught from a basis of good subject knowledge. Activities prompted pupils to ask questions and work was well matched to individual needs. Year 6 pupils were pleased to be allowed to use the digital camera, for example, to record the school's water pipes. However, the scrutiny of pupils' work showed too few opportunities for pupils to research and record the results of their work, missing opportunities to extend their literacy and numeracy skills.

87. The newly appointed subject co-ordinator provides good support to colleagues. She has produced an action plan for the subject and has begun to monitor the pupils' learning through a scrutiny of teachers' planning. There has been a satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The subject policy has been agreed and a new scheme of work based on QCA units of work is beginning to inform the Programmes of Study and provide subject guidance for all teachers. Assessment of pupils' progress recorded is unsatisfactory and should be developed to include portfolios of pupils' work.

## **HISTORY**

88. It was only possible to observe three lessons during the inspection. Evidence from these lessons, a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and teachers indicate that achievement and progress are satisfactory.
89. Between the ages of five and seven, most pupils develop a limited awareness of chronology. In lessons they listen to stories about famous people from the past such as Jesus. They explore items from the past such as old teddy bears, but there is little evidence that they develop an understanding of time over a longer period than the recent past. Most pupils are aware of the sequence of the timetable, including those with additional special educational needs, who quickly move on to their next activity indicated by the TEACCH structure. By the time they are 11, pupils know about some of the important events and significant figures in British history, such as Queen Victoria and what happened during her reign. Earlier this year, six pupils and staff went back to Victorian times for the day. They dressed in period costume and created a Victorian schoolroom, which reinforced their knowledge and understanding of previous times. Pupils have visited old buildings and local museums and, as part of their local history study, have looked at old toys. As a result, they are beginning to have an understanding of the concept of how things change over time.
90. The few lessons seen indicate that the teaching and learning of history are satisfactory overall. In the best lessons, teachers gain the attention of all pupils, including those with additional special educational needs, by encouraging them to hold and describe a range of old toys brought into school by staff and pupils. Some of the most effective teaching of historical concepts takes place at the beginning of the day. Teachers use this time well to develop pupils' knowledge of their daily routine and to help them recall past events. Teachers manage pupils well and the pupils enjoy the well-planned lessons, often supported by experienced teaching support assistants. Teachers plan to use time towards the end of lessons effectively to allow pupils to reflect on key points they have learnt.
91. The history co-ordinator has only recently been given the responsibility to co-ordinate the subject. She is aware of the improvements needed and has begun to monitor the pupils' learning through a scrutiny of teachers' planning. The school is using the QCA history scheme of work and the new co-ordinator has a clear action plan for the subject, which is part of this year's school development plan. She plans to review the QCA scheme to ensure it meets the needs of all pupils, including those who are more able and those with additional special educational needs. Assessment of pupils' progress is unsatisfactory overall and does not include portfolios of pupils' work.
92. Progress since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. The scheme of work for the subject, to ensure pupils increase their learning from one year to the next, has yet to be completed. Although resources have improved, information and communication technology is insufficiently used by staff to generate pupils' interest.



## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

93. There has been insufficient improvement in information and communication technology (ICT) since the last inspection where there was insufficient teaching to enable appropriate progress to be made. This is still the situation so that too little teaching was available to be seen for a full range of judgements to be made on teaching, learning and pupils' response. In the two short Year 6 lessons seen, teaching was good and pupils did well. For the majority of classes, ICT is not separately timetabled as a lesson, and there is limited evidence of planning to extend pupils' ICT skills through work in other subjects. As a result, although there is good learning taking place in a few classes, particularly in Year 6, overall progress is unsatisfactory.
94. Judgements about what pupils know, understand and can do are based on scrutiny of the limited amount of information contained in pupils' reports and teachers' records, as well as observation of pupils using computers and conversations with them. By the time they are seven, pupils use the computer with help for simple tasks, particularly using programs that support learning in literacy and numeracy, using a mouse to select and manipulate items on the screen. They know how to operate simple electronic equipment such as a cassette player. The most able pupils use the computer independently and listen to songs and stories on the cassette player. By the time they are 11, pupils understand that e-mail is a way of sending letters by computer and send and receive electronic mail (e-mail) with support. They use desktop publishing programs, choosing and inserting a picture and applying text as a caption. They have an understanding of how a database works and select appropriate fields when preparing a class database. When word-processing, the most able pupils have appropriate keyboard skills and use the shift key for punctuation and capitals. They begin to find information on the Internet with help and where their literacy skills are sufficient, they use these to follow instructions in opening a range of programs.
95. Pupils respond well to the opportunity to use computers and treat them with care and respect. They concentrate well and persevere with simple tasks involving the use of the mouse, to activate reading and number programs. However, for many pupils the repetitive nature of the task provides a degree of security and they show little inclination to extend their ICT skills.
96. The school has a policy for ICT that includes the aim of enabling staff and pupils to 'use ICT effectively as a tool for teaching and learning across the school and National Curriculum'. However, it does not indicate how this is to be achieved and there is no effective scheme of work. Most classes do not timetable lessons in ICT and there is too little planning in other subjects for the development of skills through the use of computers to support work in those subjects. As a result, the curriculum is too narrow and statutory requirements for what is taught are not met.
97. Arrangements for management and co-ordination of the subject are the responsibility of a recently appointed teacher who, in the short time available, has identified a number of areas for improvement, which are included in the current school improvement plan. However, there is, at present, insufficient monitoring of teaching or planning to ensure that the subject is effectively taught and assessment and recording are unsatisfactory. Resources are sufficient and of generally good quality and the school has an Internet connection for use in exchanging e-mail.

## **MUSIC**

98. Pupils' achievements and progress in music are unsatisfactory, partly because there is too much emphasis on singing and also because planning to develop pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding is inadequate. Judgements about pupils' achievements and progress are based on a scrutiny of teachers' planning, records, displays around the school, pupils' work, discussion with the co-ordinator and the observation of a few lessons.
99. By the age of seven, pupils take part in singing nursery rhymes, for example, "Humpty Dumpty" and "Miss Polly had a Dolly", and pupils participate and, for example, act out the role of the doctor, Miss Polly, Humpty Dumpty or even the wall. Pupils learn to take turns and they develop a tolerance of each other. More able pupils are able to express which song they would like. By the age of 11, pupils use a variety of subject vocabulary to describe sounds, for example, 'louder',

'faster', 'slower' and 'quicker'. Pupils respond well to a picture of a weather scene and interpret it though the use of instruments. For example, in one lesson pupils represented thunder through the use of cymbals and rain through the use of shakers. This lesson developed well and pupils followed a sequence of weather patterns through pictures. They composed and performed a short sequence of music. Pupils with autistic spectrum disorder were well included in this lesson through the effective use of support staff and good use of pictures as prompts.

100. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the quality of teaching and learning overall. However, in the few lessons observed during the inspection, teaching was satisfactory but narrow in its range and focus with an emphasis on singing, as observed in a whole-school practice. The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory and progress since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. Improvement is now a priority. The recently appointed co-ordinator has a subject action plan: however, it lacks detail. There is no effective medium-term plan relevant to the additional special educational needs of the pupils. The school cannot ensure that pupils do not repeat the same work experiences within or across each key stage. This was the case in the last inspection and this is unsatisfactory. Assessment, recording and reporting are also unsatisfactory and there has been little training in the subject since the last inspection. Opportunities are missed to improve pupils' multicultural awareness through music.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

101. There is insufficient evidence in pupils' files or teachers' records for any judgement to be made about the progress pupils make over time but, from lessons observed, achievement is currently satisfactory. This maintains, but has not improved, standards reported at the last inspection. By the time they are seven, pupils are at an early stage of learning to swim. They throw a ball or beanbag with increasing accuracy, using over arm and underarm throws, and are developing skills in catching. They move confidently on the floor and use large apparatus with increasing skill. They begin to play simple games and recognise the need for rules. By the time they are 11, pupils begin to develop the skills for competitive games and apply their throwing and catching skills to games such as tag rugby. Many manage to swim a width of the pool with the support of floats, while some swim independently.
102. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Where teaching is good, there is very good attention to the warm-up session, which sets a good tone for the rest of the lesson. Very well established routines ensure that pupils are effectively managed and provide security for pupils with additional special needs. Teachers make good use of pupil demonstrations to ensure that instructions are clearly understood and to enable the group to assess each other's performance. Good individual planning ensures that learning support assistants play a very effective role in supporting individuals and groups as well as enabling pupils with additional needs to be included in the class activity. The teacher constantly assesses pupils' learning and, where appropriate, adapts the lesson plan to accommodate unexpected difficulties. At times, however, although teaching is satisfactory, there is limited use of assessment and feedback to enable pupils to review and improve their performance. In addition, on occasion, the planned activity is not suitable for the setting chosen in the light of individual pupils' difficulties and there is insufficient contingency planning to ensure that appropriate support staff are available to work with pupils with additional special educational needs.
103. There is an appropriate overall scheme of work based on the QCA documents, into which have been interleaved medium-term planning objectives. However, in using this, teachers do not always plan in sufficient detail for the individual needs of pupils within the class. Also, there are insufficient safeguards to ensure that pupils build effectively on past learning without undue repetition of work. Arrangements for co-ordination and management of the subject are recent but the new co-ordinator has already conducted a full audit of resources to ensure that these are appropriate, safe and in good condition. The school has a useful swimming pool but this was not in use at the time of the inspection. There is, at present, no system for monitoring teaching and, while a system for recording outcomes of lessons in terms of objectives from the scheme has recently been adopted by the school, it is not consistently used.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

104. There were only a few opportunities to observe the teaching of religious education during the inspection. These lessons, an analysis of planning, sampling of pupils' work and discussions with pupils indicate that standards of achievement and progress are at least satisfactory, and a few pupils do well. By the time they are seven, pupils listen to stories about important people in the Bible. They explore their environment and begin to sort natural and man made features as part of their work on the creation story. The pupils are beginning to understand that many people believe that God created the natural world. Between the ages of seven and 11, pupils extend their experiences of religion to include an awareness of ways in which followers of Christianity, Judaism and Buddhism worship and celebrate festivals. More able pupils remember key words and facts about different religions. By the time they are 11, pupils recall special occasions in the life of Jesus. They visit a church and look at key features of the building, noting special signs and symbols, see the baptismal font and talk through the process of baptism. They understand this is the way of joining the Christian family.
105. The teaching and learning of religious education are satisfactory overall. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and they use a range of appropriate resources, especially artefacts from different religions, to interest pupils. Pupils pass these to each other carefully and wait patiently until it is their turn. Good class management based on good relationships between teachers and pupils ensures that pupils remain as attentive as possible and listen carefully to each other. However, some teachers are not sufficiently clear about what they expect individual pupils to learn. The objectives set for pupils explain what they will experience rather than what they should achieve. At times pupils with additional special educational needs are not sufficiently involved because the teaching is only aimed at more able pupils.
106. The subject co-ordinator provides good support and advice for non-specialist teachers and manages a good range of appropriate resources effectively, to ensure their availability for all teachers and classes as required. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' understanding of spiritual, social and moral and cultural development, by giving opportunities for pupils to study other religions and special people. Visits in the local community, including the church, also contribute to pupils' development. There has been a good improvement since the last inspection in the quality of teaching. A new policy has been agreed and the new religious education co-ordinator is developing a scheme of work linked closely with the Locally Agreed Syllabus and QCA units of work. Assessment of pupils' progress is weak and not recorded against what pupils are expected to learn. There are no examples of pupils' work to provide evidence of their progress.