

INSPECTION REPORT

MILLFIELD FIRST AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Buntingford

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117309

Headteacher: Mrs D Blizzard

Reporting inspector: Mrs M Gough
22361

Dates of inspection: 6th - 9th November 2000

Inspection number: 189060

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First school
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Monks Walk Buntingford Hertfordshire
Postcode:	SG9 9DT
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Paul Hadley
Date of previous inspection:	May 1996

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs Marina Gough 22361	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Art and design Music English as an additional language	What sort of school is it The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught How good are the curricular opportunities offered to pupils What should the school do to improve further
Mr Bernard Harrington 16833	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils How well does the school care for its pupils or students How well does the school work in partnership with parents
Mr Peter Isherwood 20301	Team inspector	Mathematics Religious education Design and technology Geography Special educational needs Equal opportunities	How well is the school led and managed
Mrs Angela Wilkinson-Tilbrook 10068	Team Inspector	English History Physical Education The Foundation Stage	How well does the school care for its pupils How well is the school led and managed

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Millfield First and Nursery School is situated in the middle of a housing estate in Buntingford. It serves the local area, and currently caters for two hundred and eleven pupils between the ages of three and nine. The school is very popular, and parents are justifiably pleased with the standard of education provided. Pupils are mostly of white ethnicity and only three pupils have English as an additional language. Four per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, and this figure is well below average. Twenty five pupils have special educational needs. This represents thirteen per cent of the school population and is below average. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is mixed and spans the full ability range.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an extremely effective school. By the end of Key Stage 1, and when the pupils leave school at the end of Year 4, standards are high in English, and very high in science and mathematics. Pupils of all ages and abilities have very positive attitudes to learning and are keen to do well. The quality of teaching in the lessons seen during the inspection was very good overall, with the exception of the Reception class, where teaching was frequently unsatisfactory. The leadership of the headteacher, who has been in post for just over one year, is excellent, and contributes significantly to the very good quality of education provided by the school. The headteacher enjoys the support of the deputy headteacher, the staff, governors and parents, all of whom have a shared commitment to maintaining the high standards achieved in many aspects of the school's work. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils of all ages achieve high standards in English, and very high standards in mathematics and science.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher are excellent. She has a real vision for the future development of the school.
- The quality of teaching seen during the inspection was very good overall in the Nursery class, and in the Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 classes.
- Pupils of all ages and abilities have very positive attitudes to learning and enjoy coming to school. They tackle problems with enthusiasm and very high levels of initiative and independence.
- The provision for pupils who have special educational needs is very good and enables them to make very good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans.
- The school provides a very good curriculum for pupils in the Nursery and Reception classes. Curriculum planning throughout the school is of very good quality.
- The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, and there are particularly strengths in the provision for pupils' social development.
- The school provides very high levels of support and guidance for all pupils, especially those who have special educational needs.
- The school has good links with parents which have a positive impact on pupils' learning.
- The school make very good use of its available resources and gives very good value for money.

What could be improved

- The overall quality of teaching in the Reception class.
- The use made of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning across the curriculum.
- The balance, in terms of the time allocation, to individual subjects in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in May 1996. In addition to addressing the key issues identified in the previous report, the school has made good progress in many other aspects of its work, including the development of the curriculum and the monitoring of teaching and learning. New national initiatives, such as the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy, have been enthusiastically and successfully implemented, and they are having a positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress. The quality of teaching, which was described as satisfactory overall in the last inspection has improved dramatically, and in the lessons seen during the current inspection was of a consistently high standard in almost all classes. High standards in English, mathematics and science have been maintained, and there has been rapid, recent improvement in standards in information technology since pupils have had regular access to the newly installed computer suite. The headteacher has an excellent overview of the school's work, and a very clear vision for the school's future development which is shared by the staff and Governing Body. The school is very well placed for continued development.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by seven year olds based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
Reading	A*	A	A	B	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Writing	A*	A	A	B	
Mathematics	A	A	A	B	

The table shows that on the basis of the 1999 end of Key Stage 1 test results, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is well above the national average, and above average when compared with similar schools. There are no tests for Key Stage 1 pupils in science, but teachers' assessments of the pupils indicate that standards in science are also well above average.

The inspection findings indicate that at the end of Key Stage 1, and when pupils leave school at the end of Year 4, overall standards are above the national expectations in English, and well above the national expectations in mathematics and science. Standards are slightly higher in science and mathematics than they are in English because of the way the highest attaining pupils are encouraged to forge ahead in these subjects, enabling them to really achieve their full potential. The school sets challenging targets for pupils which they achieve, but does not as yet identify gifted and talented pupils who may be stretched even further. Literacy skills are very effectively promoted across all subjects and pupils have many very good opportunities to develop their writing and reading skills. Pupils have good opportunities to develop numeracy skills in some subjects, but do not make as much use as they might of these skills across all subjects.

Standards in information and communication technology are in line with national expectations in all year groups, and pupils' progress has been rapid in recent months because of the impact of the new computer suite on their learning. At present, not enough use is made of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in other subjects of the curriculum.

Pupils' attainment in religious education exceeds the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of Key Stage 1 and when pupils leave school at the end of Year 4.

Pupils' attainment in art exceeds national expectations across all year groups. Standards in design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education are satisfactory for pupils of all ages and abilities, but could be even higher if more time were given to these subjects, enabling pupils to gain a greater breadth and depth of experience.

Pupils in the Nursery class make very good progress and achieve good standards in relation to their age. Pupils make only satisfactory progress in the Reception class, where much of the teaching is unsatisfactory, but because of the very good grounding they receive in the Nursery class, their attainment at the end of the foundation stage nevertheless exceeds the expected levels in each of the key areas of learning.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils of all ages and abilities have very positive attitudes to school and to work. They are keen, enthusiastic, and have very high levels of concentration and perseverance.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Behaviour is very good throughout the school. Playtimes are pleasant social occasions, and in class, pupils show good levels of self-discipline, respect and consideration for others.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are highly independent and extremely keen to solve problems and carry out investigations. They work very well together and are keen to take responsibility for aspects of their learning, and for jobs around the school.
Attendance	Good. The rate of whole-school attendance is above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-9 years
37 lessons seen overall	very good in the Nursery class unsatisfactory in the Reception class	very good	very 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.

During the inspection, the quality of teaching was excellent in 8% of lessons, very good in 46% of lessons, good in 16% of lessons, satisfactory in 22% of lessons and unsatisfactory in 8% of lessons. All of the unsatisfactory teaching occurred in the Reception class. Examples of good and very good teaching were seen in all other classes throughout the school.

The teaching in the Nursery class is of a consistently high standard, and ensures that pupils receive a very good start to their education. Tasks are very well matched to pupils' levels of interest and ability and excellent use is made of the support staff to work with small groups of pupils, extending their learning, and helping them to develop the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding. Although some satisfactory teaching was seen in the Reception class during the inspection, the weaknesses in teaching have an adverse impact on pupils' learning.

In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, the teaching of English, mathematics, science is very good overall, and makes a significant contribution to the high standards achieved by pupils in these subjects. The way in which pupils are encouraged to carry out challenging open-ended tasks, and to follow their own lines of enquiry, is a great strength of the teaching in science and mathematics, and is an example of good practice which could usefully be extended across other subjects. Teachers are very effective in promoting literacy skills, and provide many very good opportunities for pupils to write independently. The way in which teachers foster numeracy skills across the curriculum is good, but there are missed opportunities in some subjects. The teaching of information and communication technology in the computer suite is very good, but insufficient use is made of classroom computers on a daily basis to reinforce pupils' learning in other subjects.

The teaching of art and religious education is good, and teachers have a secure knowledge of these subjects which enables them to present activities in a stimulating and confident manner. The teaching of design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education is satisfactory, and some examples of good teaching were seen during the inspection. However, even more could be done to increase teachers' expertise and confidence in these subjects, enabling them to challenge the pupils even more in their learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum for the foundation stage pupils in the Nursery and Reception classes is very good. The curriculum for the Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils is good, although the available teaching time is not evenly distributed amongst subjects, and some subjects do not receive enough time. Planning throughout the school is of very good quality, and ensures that pupils' previous learning is built upon.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school makes very good provision for pupils who have special educational needs, enabling them to make very good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school makes good provision for those pupils who have English as an additional language. They benefit from the effective support of a specialist teacher.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes good provision overall for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and there are significant strengths in the way in which pupils' social and moral development are promoted. Even more could be done to foster pupils' cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares very well for the pupils, and their welfare, health and safety are the shared concern of staff and governors. There are very good procedures in place for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and attendance. Assessment procedures are well established, and are helpful in identifying strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	The school has excellent links with the parents, and there is a sense of true partnership between home and school. Parents are very supportive, and are keen to help their children with their homework.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides excellent leadership and management for the school and enjoys the firm support of the senior management team, staff, Governing Body and parents. Key stage leaders play an important role in moving the school forward and in monitoring standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The Governing Body is knowledgeable and very supportive. It fully meets its statutory responsibilities. However, the Governing Body relies too heavily on the headteacher for information and this constrains its ability to act as 'critical friend' to the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has a rigorous programme of monitoring and evaluation, which provides a clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the life and work of the school.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes effective use of the resources at its disposal, and specific grants are used wisely. The school gives very good value for money.
Staffing, accommodation and learning resources	There are enough teachers for the number of pupils on roll, and a generous number of support staff, all of whom are very well deployed. The accommodation is adequate. The school has enough learning resources to support teaching and learning in most subjects.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents are pleased with the frequency, amount and quality of information they receive. • Parents believe that the school promotes very positive values and attitudes. • Parents appreciate the warm welcome they receive when they visit school, and know that they can approach the classteachers or headteacher at any mutually convenient time. • Parents are especially pleased with the way in which the headteacher consults them about proposed changes in the school. • Parents agree that their children enjoy coming to school. • Parents are very pleased with the progress their children make and agree that teaching is good. • Parents state that the school is well led and managed. • Parents think that their children's behaviour in school is good, and that occasional incidents of misbehaviour will be dealt with swiftly. • The vast majority of parents are pleased with the amount of homework their children receive. 	<p>Some parents would like their children to have access to a wider range of extra-curricular activities.</p>

The inspection findings support the parents' positive views, and indicate that the school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The inspection findings indicate that by the end of Key Stage 1, and when pupils leave school at the end of Year 4, standards in English are high, and standards in mathematics and science very high. In mathematics and science there are particular strengths in the pupils' ability to use and apply their knowledge and understanding, and in their ability to tackle and solve open-ended problems.
2. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1, on the basis of the end of key stage National Curriculum tests in reading, writing and mathematics have been consistently well above the national average for the past three years. The school's results for 2000, appear to be slightly lower than in previous years, reflecting the composition of that particular cohort of pupils. However, the current Year 2 pupils are well on course to achieve standards that are well above average by the end of the year. In comparison with schools that are deemed to be similar on the basis of the percentage of pupils who are eligible for free school meals, the pupils' performance is above average. Pupils of all abilities, including those for whom English as an additional language, and those who have special educational needs, do their best, and with the exception of a small number of higher attaining pupils who could be stretched even further in some aspects of their work, all pupils achieve their full potential.
3. By the end of Key Stage 1, and by the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 4, pupils' attainment in English exceeds national expectations. The vast majority of pupils read well, and this helps them in their work in other subjects, when they are finding information from reference books, for example, or when they are reading instructions for tasks they have been given. Pupils write for a variety of purposes, and in a range of different contexts, and produce well structured and sequenced pieces. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are good, and they express their ideas and opinions in a clear manner. Pupils' literacy skills are very well developed and there are many very good opportunities for them to use these skills in their work across the curriculum.
4. By the end of Key Stage 1, and when they leave school at the end of Year 4, pupils' attainment in mathematics is well beyond the national expectations. There are many occasions for pupils to use their mathematical skills, for example in science, where they produce graphs and charts, and make measurements of temperature, capacity or length. Pupils have very good mental agility, and this helps them greatly in their written mathematics work. Pupils are particularly skilled in the way in which they approach mathematical problems, and they are very methodical and original in their work. Throughout the school, pupils have good skills of numeracy which they use to good effect to support their work in other subjects of the curriculum.
5. In science, pupils' attainment is well above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1, and when pupils leave school at the end of Year 4. Pupils have a very secure knowledge of the subject, but the real strength in their attainment is the way in which they carry out scientific investigations and experiments, often seeking new and original ways of finding things out, and collecting their evidence.
6. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with national expectations across the school. Pupils' progress has been rapid in recent months because of the impact of the new computer suite on their learning. Standards are improving steadily, although there are gaps in the knowledge and skills of some of the

older pupils whose previous experience has been limited. At present, not enough use is made of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in other subjects of the curriculum. Pupils' attainment in religious education exceeds the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of Key Stage 1 and when pupils leave school at the end of Year 4.

7. By the end of Key Stage 1, and when pupils leave school at the end of Year 4, pupils' attainment in art exceeds national expectations across all year groups. Their attainment in design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education is satisfactory for pupils of all ages and abilities, but could be even higher if more time were given to these subjects, enabling pupils to gain a greater breadth and depth of experience. At present the school does not have a system for identifying and developing the potential of pupils who may be especially talented in subjects such as art, music or physical education.
8. Pupils in the Nursery class make very good progress and achieve good standards in relation to their age. Pupils make satisfactory progress in the Reception class, and by the end of the Foundation Stage, their attainment exceeds the expected levels in each of the key areas of learning.
9. Pupils who have special educational needs receive very good levels of support from their teachers and classroom assistants, which enables them to make very good progress towards their individual targets. The school identifies pupils who have learning or behavioural problems as early as possible, and swift and appropriate intervention means that pupils often catch up with their classmates within a short period of time. Pupils who have English as an additional language receive very good support from their classteachers and from the part-time specialist teacher, and these pupils make good progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils have very good attitudes towards school and approach all tasks with high levels of enthusiasm and commitment. During the inspection, pupils demonstrated very positive attitudes and behaviour, enabling lessons to proceed at a good pace and without interruption. Pupils of all ages and abilities enjoy learning, and this is because almost all teachers work very hard to ensure that lessons and activities are challenging, stimulating and well matched to the pupils' levels of ability and interest. One of the significant features of the pupils' learning is the enthusiastic way in which they respond to open-ended and problem solving tasks which require them to follow their own lines of enquiry, and to draw on their previous knowledge. This is most noticeable in science and mathematics lessons where teachers promote very high levels of independent learning. The vast majority of pupils, in all classes, demonstrate very good levels of concentration and perseverance.
11. Behaviour throughout the school is very good. Pupils respond well to class and school rules and understand that inappropriate behaviour has a detrimental impact upon their own learning and that of others. Occasional incidents of misbehaviour are dealt with effectively and, should any serious incident arise, procedures exist to enable a speedy and effective resolution of the problem. Bullying is not a problem in the school. Most staff make very good use of a range of rewards to promote and encourage good behaviour, and there is a consistent approach to the management of behaviour which helps pupils to know exactly what is expected of them. There have been no recent exclusions.

12. Playtimes are pleasant social occasions where pupils play in a friendly manner. Lunchtimes have been significantly enhanced by the input of play leaders who have been appointed by the school to work with pupils, showing them how to play traditional playground games, and providing a framework for those who lack confidence in interacting with others. This initiative is very effective and popular with pupils and parents.
13. Throughout the school, very good use is made of general, class, and individual target setting as a means of developing pupils' personal skills. Pupils of all ages are encouraged to carry out a wide range of monitorial roles which help them to become responsible members of the school community. Relationships amongst pupils, and between pupils and their teachers are very good. Pupils work exceptionally well together on shared tasks, sharing equipment and ideas with no fuss. From an early age, pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for aspects of their own learning, and by the end of Key Stage 1, many pupils are capable of carrying out personal study. This skill is developed as pupils move through Year 3 and Year 4, ensuring that they are well prepared for their transfer to the next stage of their education.
14. The rate of whole-school attendance is good and is above the national average. Almost all absences are authorised, however, some parents withdraw their children during term time for family holidays. These absences account for most of the authorised absences.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. During the inspection, the quality of teaching was excellent in 8% of lessons, very good in 46% of lessons, good in 16% of lessons, satisfactory in 22% of lessons and unsatisfactory in 8% of lessons. All of the unsatisfactory teaching occurred in the Reception class. Examples of good and very good teaching were seen in all other classes throughout the school.
16. The teaching in the Nursery class is of a consistently high standard, and ensures that pupils receive a very good start to their education. Tasks are very well matched to pupils' levels of interest and ability, and excellent use is made of the support staff to work with small groups of pupils, extending their learning, and helping them to develop the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding. All of the adults in the Nursery class have a very good understanding of how young children learn, and constantly reinforce important basic language and mathematics skills. Very good opportunities are provided for the children to develop independent learning skills, and to make choices and decisions about aspects of their work. The organisation of the Nursery class is a particular strength of the school, and ensures that pupils' learning advances at a rapid rate. There is a very good mix of directed and free-choice activities, all of which have a clear purpose, and are well thought out.
17. Although some satisfactory teaching was seen in the Reception class during the inspection, the teaching is unsatisfactory overall. The weaknesses in teaching are linked to a lack of understanding of the way in which young children learn, and poor knowledge in some subjects, including religious education, physical education and science. There is an over-emphasis on formal activities which are more suited to older children, and insufficient opportunities for the children to find things out for themselves through practical, well structured, first-hand experiences. The teaching of basic skills of literacy and numeracy, although satisfactory, is insufficiently challenging, and does not move the highest attainers forward at a fast enough rate. In other subjects, tasks are not well matched to the needs of the children, and this adversely affects pupils' learning. The experienced classroom assistant is not always used to her full potential, although when

she is working with small groups, her input is effective in extending the children's learning.

18. In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, the teaching of English, mathematics, science is very good overall, and makes a significant contribution to the high standards achieved by pupils in these subjects. The National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy are very firmly established within the school, and teachers plan their lessons carefully. Introductory sessions are particularly well paced, with enough time for teachers to give clear explanations and instructions, without the pupils losing interest. This is especially noticeable in numeracy lessons where the mental mathematics sessions are often rigorous and demanding, providing a good start for the rest of the lesson. Class discussions, at the end of the literacy and numeracy lessons, where pupils discuss their work and consider the work of their classmates, are very well managed and have the same brisk pace that characterises the introductory sessions. These sessions draw together the main threads of the lesson, and provide a good opportunity for pupils to evaluate their achievements, and to identify aspects with which they are not secure. Teachers are very effective in promoting literacy skills, and provide many very good opportunities for pupils to write independently. The way in which teachers foster numeracy skills across the curriculum is good.
19. In science, the emphasis placed by teachers on developing pupils' investigative and experimental skills is having an excellent impact on pupils' learning. Pupils are encouraged to pursue their own lines of enquiry, and to tackle new learning with little prompting from their teachers. Resources are made available to the pupils, but the tasks often allow them to make their own choices about the resources they use. For example, in a science lesson seen during the inspection, pupils in Year 4 who were making circuits with switches could choose the number of batteries they required, and could select bulbs or buzzers to complete their circuits. The same open-ended approach is seen in many mathematics lessons, where pupils are given a starting point, but are encouraged to find different solutions and outcomes. By giving pupils challenging open-ended tasks, the teachers place no ceiling on pupils' learning, with the result that the pupils often achieve beyond the teachers' expectations. Although the teaching of English is very good, the activities rarely require the pupils to give that extra bit of effort which would make their learning that much more effective.
20. The teaching of information and communication technology in the computer suite is very good, and teachers are working hard to update their skills and knowledge. The practice of teaching information and communication technology to half class groups is very effective and enables pupils to have good access to the computers. Lessons are very well prepared and planned, and take good account of the pupils' previous learning. In Key Stage 2, teachers are still plugging gaps in the pupils' knowledge, arising from their lack of previous experience, but in Key Stage 1, the pupils' learning is more progressive and is closely linked to the national scheme of work for information and communication technology. Specific computer skills are taught well, and pupils are given good opportunities to practise them in a range of different contexts, but not enough use is made of computers in classrooms to support pupils' learning in other subjects.
21. The teaching of religious education and art is good, and teachers have an enthusiasm for these subjects which is effectively communicated to the pupils. The teaching of design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education is satisfactory, and some examples of good teaching were seen during the inspection. However, even more could be done to increase teachers' expertise and confidence in these subjects, enabling them to challenge the pupils even more in their learning. Justifiably these subjects have not been a priority in recent years, and teachers' skills and knowledge now need updating

to ensure that the requirements of the newly revised National Curriculum can be fully met.

22. In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, teachers' preparation is very thorough, and they identify clear learning objectives for each lesson which are shared with the pupils through the use of various characters called 'WILF', (what I'm looking for) and 'TIB', (this is because). This strategy appeals to the pupils, and enables them to know exactly what is expected of them, and why. Teachers have a real understanding of how to stimulate the pupils and make them want to learn, and in those subjects where teachers have a particularly secure knowledge, they are dynamic and enthusiastic in their delivery.
23. Throughout the school teachers are skilled in using questions effectively to probe the pupils' understanding and to extend their thinking. Teachers make very good use of open-ended questions to challenge the highest attaining pupils and to support the lower attainers. In all classes teachers use a wide range of teaching methods which they vary to suit the particular activity. They often give pupils the opportunity to work collaboratively in pairs and small groups, and this is highly successful in promoting pupils' personal and social development. Pupils are trusted to do their best, and there are many opportunities for them to make choices and decisions about their work and to develop independent learning skills, such as searching for information, or selecting recording methods.
24. Teachers in all classes give very good levels of support to those pupils who have special educational needs enabling them to make very good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Teachers in the lower part of the school are especially vigilant, and quickly pick up potential learning or behavioural problems which can then be dealt with quickly and effectively. Work is usually well matched to the pupils' needs, and there are good opportunities for parents to speak to teachers about their children's progress. Pupils for whom English is an additional language receive very good support from their classteachers and from a specialist teacher who works with them for a total of seven hours per week. They make good progress.
25. An appropriate amount of homework is set regularly in all classes, and pupils are conscientious about completing set tasks. However, most of the homework tasks relate to English, mathematics, science and ongoing topics, and more imaginative use could be made of homework to support pupils' learning in subjects such as art, music and physical education.
26. Pupils' work is marked regularly throughout the school, but the quality and usefulness of marking varies from class to class. In the best examples of marking, pupils are given pointers as to how they can improve their work further.

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

27. The school provides a very good curriculum for the Foundation Stage pupils in the Nursery and Reception classes which successfully promotes the Early Learning Goals, and ensures that the children receive a broad and well balanced range of learning activities. The curriculum for the Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils is good, and suitably broad. However, at present there is not enough balance in terms of the time allocated to the individual subjects.
28. In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, a disproportionate amount of time is given to English. Whilst this is justified in part, there are occasions when literacy sessions extend beyond the recommended hour, and when tasks such as handwriting, and extended writing

could be addressed just as effectively using other subjects as vehicles. An appropriate amount of time is given to mathematics and science, and the available time is very well used. Information and communication technology is timetabled in all classes to ensure maximum use of the computer suite, and this time is well used to develop pupils' computer skills. The school does not allocate enough time to the remaining subjects of the curriculum, and in the case of religious education this means that the school does not comply with the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

29. Curriculum planning is a strength of the school, and ensures that the pupils' learning can be tracked from year to year through well documented programmes of work which contain learning objectives and ongoing opportunities for assessing pupils' progress and attainment. The whole-school computerised system of curriculum planning is in the early stages of implementation, but is already starting to have a significant impact on pupils' learning. Cycles of topics ensure that pupils in mixed age classes do not repeat work in consecutive years. The practice of identifying different learning objectives for pupils of different ability within the same class ensures that all pupils are appropriately challenged by the activities, even when the subject matter is the same. In almost all classes, teachers are making very effective use of the school's planning documents to ensure that pupils' learning advances in a systematic and measured way. Teachers are flexible in their use of the planning system and move backwards and forwards appropriately if they discover gaps in pupils' learning, or if concepts are already firmly established and do not need to be revisited.
30. The school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities for pupils in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Activities are generally held during lunchtimes and include music, dance, and creative activities. A large number of older pupils take part in the Reading Passport scheme which is sponsored by the local newspaper group. This activity is effective in helping pupils to develop research skills.
31. Good provision is made for the personal, social and health education of pupils, and comments about their individual progress are included in their annual progress reports. The personal, social and health education programme provides opportunities for pupils to work in pairs and small groups, discussing subjects such as friendship. Social opportunities such as these are effectively extended by informal events during the day, and through the work done by the play leaders at lunchtimes. The school recognises the need to further develop the provision for pupils' personal, social and health education, in the light of recently produced national guidelines, and the appointed co-ordinator has already identified the way forward. Through science, drama and religious education lessons, pupils are given opportunities to explore issues such as safety, growth, relationships and moral values, the need for hygiene, and respect for oneself and for others. There is no formal programme for sex education, although the relevant sections within the science curriculum are appropriately taught. However, teachers respond to children's questions, taking into account their age and level of understanding, with due regard to moral considerations and the value of family life. Pupils learn about the dangers of misusing drugs through science topics.
32. The school has good links with the community that it serves and pupils are involved in a variety of social and fundraising events. Pupils have planted daffodils in the town as part of a fundraising activity in aid of the Marie Curie fund, and have sung carols at the local home for the elderly, and in the town centre. They have raised considerable amounts of money in support of charitable organisations through such activities as the Nursery 'sponsored toddle' which raised £500. Offerings raised for the Harvest Festival in school were distributed to members of the community by the local church, and the pupils have prepared boxed Christmas gifts for children in Romania. These events provide the pupils

with a sense of belonging to their community and remind them that there are others less fortunate than themselves.

33. There are very good links with the local Middle School through the co-ordination of literacy and numeracy, the sharing of good practices, the liaison for special educational needs and pastoral care, and through the general support that the schools provide for one another on a daily basis. Transfer arrangements are well developed and include visits by Year 3 and Year 4 pupils to the Christmas show at the Middle School, and a visit by Year 6 pupils to talk to the Key Stage 1 pupils about special books that they could write for them and read to them. The school has good links with a local special educational needs school, and one of the pupils visits the Reception class once a week to join in lessons and share experiences with children of his own age. Year 10 pupils are welcomed into school to carry out work experience projects, and students of child development from the local college attend each term for practical experience. Two students from a nearby Higher Education College are currently undertaking teaching practice in the school, and this is providing pupils with further experiences of different teaching styles.
34. The provision for the social development of the pupils is excellent. Most lessons provide very good opportunities for pupils to interact with their classmates, and to learn how to co-operate and share. All pupils understand the need to take turns in conversation and most listen well to the contributions of others. Pupils need few reminders about how to behave, but respond very well to the range of reward systems that are in place, and are particularly proud when they take part in the weekly 'Worth Assemblies'. Pupils in all classes are encouraged to undertake monitorial roles and these include holding doors open for their class to pass through. Adults in school set an excellent example and their positive manner and high expectations encourage the pupils to give of their best. Relationships between pupils, and between adults and pupils are very good and engender a high quality of life for everyone in the school.
35. There is good provision for the spiritual development of pupils. The quality of daily collective acts of worship has improved greatly since the time of the last inspection, and some very good examples were seen during the inspection. Within science and religious education lessons, and in school assemblies, there are opportunities for pupils to reflect upon the mystery of life, and the significance of their own being, which they undertake with seriousness and reverence. Pupils enjoy exploring their own responses to music and art, such as in one of the Year 3/Year 4 classes where a musical stimulus was used in a religious education lesson to provide a calm background whilst pupils were writing prayers. Because of the emphasis placed on pupils learning from first-hand experience in the Nursery class and in the Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 classes, there are many opportunities when pupils unexpectedly encounter something that promotes high levels of awe and wonder, and such moments are seized by teachers and successfully extended.
36. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good and is strongly promoted through the religious education curriculum, through personal, social and health education sessions, and in assemblies. Positive guidance from parents, teachers and other adults in school ensures that most pupils distinguish between right and wrong, and that older pupils are able to make moral decisions through reasoned argument. Teachers effectively present moral issues through stories, and through incidental opportunities in lessons, for example by discussing why some people have lots of possessions and others have none. Within the school's code of behaviour, pupils are encouraged to consider the effect of their actions upon others.
37. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils' knowledge of their own culture has been enhanced by visits to museums, exhibitions, the seaside and

London Zoo. These visits are linked to curriculum topics and provide opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their knowledge through extended writing and drawing. The school has held a 'Viking Day', and Year 2 pupils recently held an afternoon tea event where they entertained their grandparents whilst sharing memories of past times. Pupils have studied the world's main religions and have benefited from the experience of staff members who are able to discuss their own beliefs and rites. Pupils have studied African and Aboriginal art, and in design and technology and art lessons have studied different artistic traditions, and have produced Roman mosaics and Celtic brooches. Opportunities for promoting pupils' cultural development are not consistently embedded in teachers' planning and there are missed opportunities for fostering cultural development in music, and through dance, drama and literature.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. The school provides very good levels of care for the pupils, and their well being, happiness, health and safety are the shared concern of all adults. Pupils are well known to their teachers, and there are high levels of mutual respect and trust, which help to create a supportive learning environment in which pupils feel valued. There are many informal opportunities for pupils to talk to their teachers, and structured opportunities such as personal, social and health education sessions, where a range of topics are discussed, enabling pupils to voice their concerns.
39. The school has very good procedures for child protection, which are known to all of the teaching and support staff. The headteacher has overall responsibility for this aspect of the school's work and has received recent training. She is supported in this role by the deputy headteacher, and by one of the governors.
40. The school makes every effort to ensure the health and safety of all pupils and adults in school. Teachers remind pupils in lessons such as science and physical education about possible hazards, and there are good levels of supervision at playtimes and when pupils are moving around the school. Posters and safety notices draw pupils' attention to a variety of risks, such as those associated with the kitchen, and there are reminders about various safety issues in pupils' subject notebooks. All staff, including supply teachers, have received training in first-aid and in the use of epipens. First-aid boxes are available throughout the school. Records are kept of children with specific medical needs so that their conditions may be monitored and appropriate action taken if required. Pupils who feel unwell during the day are brought to the secretary who contacts the parents if they need collecting from school. Parents are notified if their child has had an accident or received a head bump during the day.
41. The deputy headteacher is responsible for health and safety in the school and has arranged for a safety audit to be carried out in all areas. Where remedial actions have been identified they have been completed within an appropriate timescale. Safety equipment is tested regularly and records of the tests are maintained. Practices for the evacuation of the building take place each half term with due consideration for any visitors who may be on the premises. Evacuation class lists, and the Visitors' Book, are used to augment the class registers during fire drills. Evacuation routes are clearly marked.
42. Pupils of all ages and abilities receive very good educational and personal support and guidance from teachers and classroom assistants. The school provides very good support for those pupils who have special educational needs enabling them to make very good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Support for pupils who have English as an additional language is good, and enables them to fully participate

in all activities. Classroom assistants are effectively deployed to work with pupils with special educational needs or to support small groups of pupils who need help with their work. Higher attaining pupils are well challenged in most classes. Teachers make very good use of judicious praise to encourage pupils to take risks in their learning, and to find things out for themselves. This helps pupils to develop high levels of confidence in themselves as learners, and has a positive impact on their attitudes to work.

43. Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress and personal development are very good. An effective assessment policy is in place and a very good range of formal and informal assessments is carried out regularly. Each term there is an assessment week prior to consultation evenings with parents. The information that is gathered is used wisely to inform teachers' subsequent planning, and also ensures that parents are given accurate and specific information about their children's progress. Targets are set regularly. These are shared with pupils and are recorded in English and mathematics books. Targets are also set for reading and these are recorded in the home/school reading books and are shared with pupils and parents. Pupils are involved in self-assessment, and have a good idea of strengths and weaknesses in their learning because of regular dialogue with their teachers. Pupils also make assessments of one another's work, for example, in literacy sessions. This helps pupils to identify ways in which to improve their work, and promotes very good levels of social interaction. Initial testing is carried out when pupils enter the school in the Nursery class, and the results provide a useful baseline against which pupils' progress can be measured.
44. The school's procedures for monitoring pupils' attendance are very good. The school monitors pupils' absence very closely. Parents are expected to telephone the office before the start of the school day if their child is going to be absent, and this request is consistently met. The school works hard to ensure that absence is kept to a minimum and parents are strongly discouraged to take their children on holiday during the school term.
45. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very effective and are applied consistently in most classes. Very good use is made of a range of rewards to celebrate good behaviour, and occasional incidents of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with in a quiet and calm manner. Pupils who misbehave are encouraged to discuss their actions, and to appreciate the impact of their behaviour on the well being of others. Very good opportunities are provided through assemblies and personal, social and health education sessions for pupils to discuss general matters of behaviour and social interaction, and these opportunities help pupils to clarify their thinking.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46. Parents are very supportive of the school and agree that the school expects their children to work hard and to achieve their best. Parents confirm that their children like school, and that pupils' behaviour is good. They are confident that any incidents of bullying would be dealt with swiftly and effectively. Parents believe that the school is extremely welcoming, and that the headteacher and staff are very accessible and approachable. Almost all parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems, and they appreciate the way in which the headteacher considers and responds to their requests. Since her appointment just over one year ago, the headteacher has consulted the parents about several proposed areas of change within the school, and the parents very much appreciate having the opportunity to express their views, even when ultimately a different course of action is taken. Some parents would like the school to offer a wider range of extra-curricular activities. At present the school

offers a satisfactory range of activities, some of which take place during the lunchtime break rather than after school.

47. The school works hard to keep parents up-to-date and well informed about the life and work of the school, and sends out regular and frequent letters to ensure that parents always know what is going on. This strategy is a strength of the school, as it helps to reduce parental concerns, and increases the parents' confidence in the way in which the school is managed. From the outset, the headteacher has involved the parents in her vision for the future development of the school, and has held a range of meetings, all of which were well attended, to ensure that parents felt that they were partners in the education of their children.
48. Parents are provided with very good information about their children's progress and attainment, and the end of year pupils' progress reports in particular are of very good quality. Most parents avail themselves of the opportunity to report back to the school on their perception of the progress of their children and to comment upon the coverage of work. Targets within reading records enable parents to monitor their children's progress on a daily basis, and informal discussions with teachers at the start and end of the school day provide additional information where necessary. Teachers often stick daily reminders about homework tasks and school events on the windows of their classrooms, which parents who are waiting for their children can read, and this ongoing information is welcomed by the parents.
49. Parents make a good contribution to their children's learning at home and at school. They are generous in providing artefacts, photographs and other materials to support ongoing topics. A number of grandparents have visited the school this term to share their life experiences with Year 2 pupils. A large number of parents help in school each week by listening to readers, helping in the library, and contributing to information and communication technology and design and technology lessons. One parent has shared features of the Hindu culture with pupils by showing them traditional hand-painting techniques and her style of dress. All of these experiences enhance pupils' learning and reinforce the partnership that exists between home and school.
50. Home-school agreements have been recently reviewed and sent to all parents for consideration and agreement. There is an active Parent Teachers' Association, which raises a significant amount of money each year to support school projects. Without the support of the parents the school would not have been able to have set up the computer suite, and their contribution to this initiative is greatly appreciated.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. The headteacher, who has been in post for just over one year, provides excellent leadership and management. Her vision for the future development for the school is very clear, and is shared by the staff and the Governing Body. She has an enthusiasm for education and a real desire to continue to raise standards across all aspects of the school's life and work. She enjoys the full support and commitment of the deputy headteacher who has a clearly defined management role, and the senior management team, which has been instrumental in starting an effective programme of monitoring and evaluation within the school. The school's aims and values are fully reflected in all aspects of its life and work, and there is a positive ethos, stemming from a shared commitment to provide the best possible education for pupils of all ages and abilities.
52. The monitoring of teaching and learning has led to a significant improvement in the overall quality of teaching. Individual targets are set for teachers to help them to become more effective, and monitoring visits by the headteacher provide information about

strengths and weaknesses within the school. Although much of the monitoring has been carried out by the headteacher, the co-ordinators of English, mathematics and science have also been involved in monitoring their subjects.

53. The senior management team, which is made up of the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the key stage leaders, is effective in fulfilling its role. The roles of the subject co-ordinators have been redefined, and they have a very clear understanding of their role. All co-ordinators have produced action plans for their subjects, which show what needs to be done to raise standards even further. Co-ordinators have a good overview of their subjects, but some have not yet had the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning through direct classroom observation.
54. The current School Development Plan was produced by the headteacher soon after her appointment, and was discussed with teachers and governors. The plan identifies clear priorities, and shows who has responsibility for achieving the targets, what the financial implications are, and how the success of the targets will be evaluated. It has been a useful working document for the headteacher during her first year at the school, but is very much an interim document. An in-service day has been arranged for staff and governors at the start of the next term so that they can all be involved in designing the next School Development Plan.
55. The Governing Body gives very good support to the school, and to the headteacher, but a number of governors are new to the role, including the Chair of Governors, and they currently rely heavily on the headteacher for information. This prevents them from fully acting in the role of critical friend to the headteacher. Most governors visit the school whenever they can, and some regularly help out. Governors have attended an appropriate range of training course and are fully aware of their statutory responsibilities, which they meet.
56. The school is very effective in monitoring and evaluating its performance and this has a positive effect on improving standards in the school. There are regular reviews of progress towards the targets in the School Development Plan, and progress towards the issues raised in the last OFSTED report are closely monitored. Action plans prepared by subject co-ordinators give a clear picture of where the school is now and where it should be in the future. The results of tests and assessments are used well to monitor pupils' progress and to set realistic targets for classes and individual pupils. Frequent classroom visits and discussions with staff and pupils give the headteacher an excellent overview of the school.
57. The school's finances are very well monitored and controlled. The school makes very good use of the grants that it receives. The Standards Fund is used appropriately for teachers' professional development. Funding for pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language is very well used to support their learning. The school has also received a grant to enable classes to remain at or below thirty in number. Educational priorities are identified in line with the School Development Plan and when making purchases the school consistently applies the principle of 'best value'. The governors and the headteacher fully understand the implications of the school's falling roll, and have made every effort to minimise the effects of this.
58. The school's provision for special educational needs is very good, and fully reflects the recommendations of the Code of Practice. The register for pupils who have special educational needs is up to date, and well organised. Teachers play an important role in monitoring the progress of pupils who have special educational needs, and make regular ongoing assessments which lead to pupils moving on and off the register as appropriate. Parents of pupils who have special educational needs are fully involved in reviews and

are consulted when decisions need to be taken. The school caters well for the few pupils who have English as an additional language. They receive good levels of support which enable them to make good progress.

59. There are enough suitably qualified teachers for the number of pupils on role. In one class, two teachers share the teaching commitment. A part-time teacher is employed for seven hours each week to work with pupils who have English as an additional language, and her input is invaluable in helping the pupils to make progress and in terms of liaising with the parents who also have limited English. The headteacher generally teaches for one and a half days each week to provide non-contact time for co-ordinators.
60. The headteacher encourages the teaching staff to visit other schools to gain experience of different styles of teaching. The Nursery teacher, and Foundation Stage support staff, have made visits to other Nursery classes, and the rest of the staff have made visits to a variety of schools, including a beacon school. There is an appropriate programme in place for the in-service training of all staff, which is linked to individual need, and whole-school priorities which have been identified in the School Development Plan. Teachers are encouraged to develop professionally, and two members of staff have become leading teachers for the LEA.
61. The school employs a number of well qualified and experienced classroom assistants and nursery nurses, all of whom make a significant contribution to the pupils' learning. A recent initiative has been the employment of play leaders, who work with pupils at lunchtime, helping them to develop their social skills, and enabling them to learn some traditional games. The school secretaries provide a friendly and professional first point of contact for visitors, and play an important role in ensuring the smooth running of the school.
62. The school's accommodation is adequate, and is maintained to a high standard of cleanliness by the caretaker and cleaners. However, the Y4 classroom is used as an alternative route through the school when the hall is being used, and despite the best efforts of those passing through, this is disruptive for the Year 4 pupils and their teacher. The school library is well used, but although a significant amount of money has been spent on it in recent years, it still does not contain a sufficiently wide range of non-fiction books, or enough fiction books for the older, high attaining pupils. The school has pleasant grounds with grassed and hard play areas for the older pupils and separate secure areas for the Nursery and Reception children. The headteacher is keen to continue to develop the outside play areas and to improve the fabric of the school which in parts is quite shabby. She is constrained by lack of funds, but some internal decoration has already taken place to good effect.
63. The school has worked hard to improve resources for information and communication technology and, with the generous support of parents, the school now has a computer suite. However, computers in classrooms are old and outdated, requiring pupils to use different skills on different machines. Resources for literacy, numeracy, science and art are generally good, but there are shortages in the amount and range of resources for religious education, geography, history and music. The school has a satisfactory range of materials and tools for design and technology and resources for physical education are adequate.
64. In the light of the high standards achieved by pupils in English, mathematics and science, the frequently very good teaching across the school, and the excellent leadership and management of the school by the headteacher, the school is giving very good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 1) The headteacher and Governing Body should urgently improve the quality of teaching in the Reception class. (*paragraphs 8, 15, 17, 65 - 84*)
- 2) The school should provide more opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology across all subjects of the curriculum. (*paragraphs 6, 20, 110, 118, 122, 123, 126, 127, 133, 141*)
- 3) Standards in design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education are in line with the national expectation, but could be even higher by:-
 - ensuring that each of these subjects receives an appropriate and equal amount of time to enable full coverage of the programmes of study;
 - improving and increasing the range of resources to support teaching and learning;
 - ensuring that these subjects are taught regularly so that pupils do not forget their previous learning;
 - increasing teachers' confidence and expertise.

(paragraphs 7, 21, 28, 115, 122, 131)

The school should also consider the following minor areas for development, and should:-

- improve the quality of marking across the school so that pupils can see how they can improve their work further; (*paragraphs 26, 93, 99*)
- identify and make provision for pupils who are gifted and/or talented to ensure that these pupils fully achieve their considerable potential; (*paragraph 7*)
- further develop the role of the Governing Body so that it is able to act as 'critical friend' to the headteacher. (*paragraph 55*)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	37
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
8	46	16	22	8		

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	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	20	173
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	5	25

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	19
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.4
National comparative data	5.9

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.87
National comparative data	0.2

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	20	18	38

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	17	18
	Girls	18	18	18
	Total	35	35	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (100)	92 (97)	95 (100)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	15	18
	Girls	18	18	18
	Total	35	33	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (97)	87 (100)	95 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	3
Chinese	0
White	150
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	25

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	115

Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	37

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	60

Number of pupils per FTE adult	9
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	421306
Total expenditure	419587
Expenditure per pupil	2209
Balance brought forward from previous year	19963
Balance carried forward to next year	21682

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	193
Number of questionnaires returned	67

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	22	3	5	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	36	10	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	37	51	6	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	62	3	1	3
The teaching is good.	52	42	5	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	34	55	10	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	28	5	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51	43	3	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	45	41	12	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	49	38	3	0	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	48	3	1	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	21	39	27	6	7

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

65. Since the previous inspection there have been considerable improvements in the quality of teaching in the Nursery, which is now very good. Some of the lessons seen during the inspection were of excellent quality, and were characterised by extremely effective organisation, very good pace, and a clear match of activities to the children's needs and levels of ability. The very good teaching has a positive impact on the children's learning, and ensures that they make very good progress in their first year in school. All staff in the Nursery have a comprehensive understanding of the needs of young children and they plan together effectively to ensure that all children have a rich and stimulating range of activities. Adults use very effective questioning and constantly build upon the children's prior knowledge. Staff ensure that children are able to move smoothly from one activity to another and there is a calm and purposeful atmosphere throughout the Nursery.
66. Children enter the Nursery with average levels of attainment. This is confirmed by the initial baseline assessments that are conducted soon after the children join the Nursery. The staff in the Nursery make effective use of a good range of assessment procedures when planning the next stage of the children's learning. The teacher and Nursery assistants make regular focused observations of the children at work and at play which they share with parents and carers. Children who have special educational needs are identified as soon as possible to ensure that they receive the additional support that they need, and where appropriate, detailed individual education plans are drawn up.
67. The provision for the children in the Foundation Stage in the Reception class is unsatisfactory. Although by the end of the Foundation Stage, most children achieve beyond the National Early Learning Goals, this is largely because of the very good start they receive in the Nursery class. Teaching in the Reception class is unsatisfactory overall, and the children do not make the progress of which they are capable. In the lessons seen during the inspection, tasks were not always well matched to the children's levels of ability and interest. Insufficient emphasis was placed on children learning through practical first-hand experience, and some of the lessons were inadequately prepared. Basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught to a satisfactory level, but there are weaknesses in the teacher's understanding of how young children learn which adversely affect the quality of the children's learning in other areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum.
68. The quality of curriculum planning is very good throughout the Foundation Stage, and is the result of a great deal of collaboration amongst the staff. Planning is shared with the parents who know exactly what their children are going to learn, and have an understanding of the methods that will be used and the underpinning philosophy of the school. In both the Nursery and Reception classes, the support staff play a very important role in working with groups of children, and their input is highly valued and has a significant impact on the children's learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

69. The children in the Nursery class make very good progress in terms of their personal social and emotional development. They confidently come into the room at the start of the session, and settle readily to a range of activities, sharing resources and taking turns

well. They show good levels of interest and concentrate for good periods of time on their chosen tasks. The children are encouraged to develop independent learning skills by selecting their own games and making choices about materials and equipment. Most children are keen to try new experiences which they approach with enthusiasm and confidence. The children relate well to one another and to the adults with whom they come into daily contact. All staff within the Nursery relate exceptionally well to the children, and this has a significant impact on their behaviour, their sense of security and their quality of learning.

70. In the Reception class the children make satisfactory progress in their personal, social and emotional development, and relationships amongst the children and between the children and adults are very good. However, the children do not have enough opportunities to make choices and decisions about aspects of their work, and their skills of independent learning are not sufficiently extended. Some planned opportunities for developing the children's understanding of other cultures are not used as effectively as they might be, because of weaknesses in the teaching.
71. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most pupils achieve beyond the National Early Learning Goals in terms of their personal, social and emotional development.

Communication, Language and Literacy

72. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most children attain beyond the Early Learning Goals in the communication, language and literacy area of learning, and some attain beyond the expected level. Children in the Nursery class make rapid progress in this area of learning, and benefit from very good teaching. In the Reception class, where the teaching is less effective, the children make satisfactory progress overall, but some of the highest attaining children do not make the progress of which they are capable.
73. Children in both the Nursery and Reception classes speak clearly and when talking to adults often show an awareness of the listener. They respond well to stories and listen with considerable attention. They know a wide range of songs and rhymes which they sing with enjoyment and enthusiasm. There are many good, planned opportunities for the pupils to use spoken language through role-play activities. For example in the Reception class there is a 'café' which is used imaginatively by the children who take turns to be the waiter and the customer. Children in the Nursery class make marks on paper and are beginning to recognise and write the letters of their name. As they move through the Reception class, the children's writing skills are further developed, and they gain a good appreciation of the link between reading and writing. All children in the Nursery class are aware of the idea of a book and some can say what an illustrator is. These early reading and writing skills are built upon in the Reception class, and most children read simple texts and use the language of stories when retelling a narrative.

Mathematical development

74. The children in the Nursery class make very good progress in the mathematical area of learning, and achieve well in relation to their age. In the Reception class, the children make satisfactory progress overall, although some of the highest attaining children are insufficiently challenged and do not reach their full potential. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most children attain beyond the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning.
75. In the Nursery class, the quality of teaching is very good, and staff work very hard to promote mathematical language, skills and understanding through structured play and small group work. The children recognise and name a range of shapes, using them to make patterns and when playing games. They count confidently to ten, and staff use the

registration time very effectively to encourage children to develop addition and subtraction skills, adding one more and taking one away. There are many good opportunities for children to use numbers in games and activities and for them to solve mathematical problems. When working with construction toys, and in the water and sand, children explore mathematical ideas, discussing with adults whether containers are full or empty. Incidental opportunities for reinforcing the children's mathematical understanding, such as in art activities when pupils can choose paper in the shape of triangles, squares, rectangles and circles, are well used.

76. In the Reception class the children's mathematical skills are built on in numeracy sessions, and incidentally, for example, when using the 'café' resources. Pupils have a secure grasp of number and count confidently up to and sometimes beyond ten. They regularly sing number songs which help them to order numbers, and to count backwards. They know how to record numbers on paper, and most write them accurately. Pupils are starting to recognise and name commonly used two-dimensional shapes, and have a good grasp of repeating patterns. The highest attaining pupils generate patterns themselves, understanding that they continue indefinitely. Pupils are developing an appropriate mathematical vocabulary to compare size, and the highest attaining pupils make sensible estimates as to which object may be the heaviest or lightest.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

77. By the end of the Foundation Stage, the vast majority of children achieve beyond the Early Learning Goals in terms of their knowledge and understanding of the world. Pupils are observant, and inquisitive about their surroundings, and their learning in school is often supplemented by experiences they have at home.
78. In the Nursery class, there are many excellent opportunities for children to investigate and explore using their different senses. For example, they compare the differences in sinking and floating when the water is full of bubbles and when it is not. Staff encourage children to develop a sense of time by using photographs of when the children were babies, and provide a good range of science based activities which include melting ice and changing basic materials when cooking. Children learn about their environment. They talk about their homes and where they live, and regularly explore the school 'digging pit' and nature area looking for newts and frogs. The children build and construct different models using construction kits and recycled materials. They have closely observed a bird's nest and have made one of their own from twigs and glue. Very effective teaching ensures that the children's knowledge and understanding of the world often comes from first-hand experiences, ensuring that the children have a secure understanding.
79. In the Reception class, many of the skills learned in the Nursery class are successfully extended. However, there is a limited focus on some aspects of this area of learning, and insufficient emphasis is placed on children learning through first-hand experience. For example, in a lesson seen during the inspection, where the children were investigating which objects would roll and which had a flat surface, the teacher's pre-occupation with encouraging the children to record their findings on a worksheet prevented the children from actually working with the objects and making important discoveries for themselves. Reception pupils learn about other cultures during religious education lessons, and have a good appreciation of the notion of celebration as it applies to their own lives. However, the teacher's lack of confidence in the subject means that the activities are sometimes insufficiently stimulating and are not pitched at the right level for the children.
80. In both the Nursery and Reception classes, the children have access to the computer suite providing them with good opportunities to use information and communication

technology successfully to support their learning, but not enough use is made of classroom computers.

Physical Development

81. By the end of the Foundation Stage, the children achieve the Early Learning Goals in terms of their physical development. They make particularly good progress in the Nursery class, and satisfactory progress in the Reception class.
82. The children travel in a variety of ways when working in the hall and when playing outside, and most show a good awareness of space. They develop good levels of control and co-ordination, and stretch and curl using large and small movements. In both classes, teachers place good emphasis on safety, and in the Nursery class, the teacher draws attention to the changes that occur in the children's bodies when they are active. In the Reception class, there is sometimes too much direction from the teacher in physical education activities, and this slows down the pace of the lesson, and prevents the children from developing their own ideas. Teachers' planning indicates that there are good opportunities for children to use small and large equipment, and wheeled toys. By the time the pupils transfer to Year 1, they are skilled in handling tools, objects and construction materials, and most have good control when using brushes and pencils.

Creative Development

83. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most children achieve beyond the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning, and many show good levels of originality and creativity in their work.
84. In both the Nursery and the Reception classes, the children have good opportunities to explore colour, shape and texture, and they make good progress. They use paints with confidence, and confidently choose the size of brush they want, the shape of paper and the colour of paint. They use their imagination when making different shapes and objects in playdough. In the Nursery class, the children are encouraged to experiment with paint, for example, finding out what kind of pattern they can make when flicking their brush on paper. Staff in the Nursery intervene skilfully when children express their thoughts and ideas in role play situations for example, they go on 'bus journeys' through the town with the children and wait while they 'park the bus' in the car park. Children throughout the Foundation Stage are given many opportunities to sing songs from memory and are very keen to sing. However, there are times in the Reception class when the teacher sings too quickly, or fails to encourage the children to join in, and ends up singing the songs alone. There is a good range of musical instruments and regular opportunities are planned for the children to use them.

ENGLISH

85. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1, on the basis of the end of key stage National Curriculum tests in reading and writing have been consistently well above the national average for the past three years. The school's results for 2000, appear to be slightly lower than in previous years, reflecting the composition of that particular cohort of pupils. However, the current Year 2 pupils are well on course to achieve standards that are well above average by the end of the year. The inspection findings indicate that standards in English at the end of Key Stage 1, and when pupils leave school at the end of Year 4, are above average overall, and well above average in reading.

86. Pupils of all ages and abilities make good progress as a result of very good teaching, their own enthusiasm for learning, and the good curriculum coverage. Considerable attention is paid to the development of literacy skills within other curriculum areas and this supports the development of pupils' reading and writing skills very effectively. With the exception of handwriting, the standard of which varies too much in Key Stage 2, pupils of all ages achieve well in all areas of the English curriculum.
87. By the end of Key Stage 1, and when pupils leave school at the end of Year 4, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is above the national average. Progress in speaking and listening is good across the school, because in the majority of lessons, pupils have many opportunities to present their views and to take part in class discussions. Teachers listen well to the pupils and encourage them when they are answering questions or volunteering opinions. Older pupils have no hesitation in taking part in a spontaneous debate with their teachers or classmates, or expressing their opinions. Pupils in both key stages listen attentively to their teachers and to one another. They are keen to respond to the teachers' questions, and contribute confidently to class discussions. They express their ideas clearly and use a wide range of vocabulary, but when speaking to large groups, such as in the 'Worth' assembly, pupils sometimes forget to project their voices and this is an area that could be further improved. Pupils become particularly animated when discussing aspects of their work.
88. Pupils make good progress in reading and standards are well above average by the end of Key Stage 1, and by the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 4. Key Stage 1 pupils read their reading books confidently, accurately and with increasing fluency, showing enjoyment in their reading. During literacy lessons, teachers encourage pupils to build up words very successfully, and to pronounce words accurately. Teachers make very good use of the 'Big Book' sessions to develop reading skills and to encourage pupils to take an interest in different styles of literature. Targets for reading are set for all pupils. These are shared with parents through the home reading diary, and parents and teachers regularly record how well pupils are progressing. This support from home has a positive impact on pupils' learning and reflects the very good partnership that exists between home and school.
89. Key Stage 2 pupils read with increasing confidence and fluency, and the vast majority talk about their favourite authors and books and give good reasons for their choice. They know how to scan for information and have good research skills. However some pupils in Year 3 are reading books which are not well matched to their high level of ability. This is partly due to the lack of demanding fiction books in the library, and partly due to lack of confidence by teachers, who are sometimes reluctant to take high attaining pupils off the reading scheme. Although a great deal of money has been invested in the library, it is not ideally situated for pupils to browse and the range of books is limited. There is a lack of literature to extend the reading of more able, older pupils, and some of the non-fiction books are a little outdated.
90. Standards of writing at the end of Key Stage 1 are above average. Pupils write for different purposes, writing instructions, for example, 'How to make a melon seed necklace', letters and postcards, and different types of poetry and stories. Many pupils write independently using a good range of vocabulary, and make good use of punctuation and spelling. Very good progress is made in spelling with pupils using common word patterns and more complex patterns. This is very well supported by teachers in the Literacy Hour when the pupils play 'press the phonic button' game. Throughout the school the Literacy Hour is very well used with good quality tasks that encourage pupils to consider different styles of writing. For example, in a Year 2 lesson seen during the inspection, the teacher had written a recipe using 'polite' but inappropriate language which pupils changed into the correct form. Extended writing sessions are planned into

the curriculum, and pupils have made some very attractive 'zig zag' books with imaginative stories about life under the sea.

91. As they move through Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make good progress in writing and spelling, and have produced some very good work on newspaper reports in Year 4. This work has been further extended by pupils in the out of school activity 'Mercury Passports'. This is a very good programme which is supported by the local Mercury newspaper and in which pupil use real newspapers for investigation and research. Pupils use different genres of writing well in their work in other subjects, and appropriately choose to present their written work in the form of reports, narrative accounts and lists. The highest attaining Key Stage 2 pupils make very good use of a wide range of vocabulary and try to use adjectives and adverbs to add interest to their work.
92. In handwriting, Key Stage 1 pupils are beginning to form their letters well and to control the size and spacing of letter, however, in Key Stage 2 pupils use different styles of writing depending on their task. Some pupils consider that joined up writing is only for handwriting lessons, and others do not use joined script when writing in their draft books. Pupils make good use of use of the computer to edit, draft and redraft their work and word processing is well used to support pupils' writing skills.
93. The quality of teaching is very good overall. Teachers have very good subject knowledge which enables them to present activities in a lively and stimulating way. Lessons have a brisk start and time is well used. Teachers make very good use of praise and encouragement, drawing attention to what pupils have achieved and encouraging them to support one another. They use their voices skilfully and this results in pupils concentrating well and having very positive attitudes to their work. Teachers constantly reinforce pupils' learning by asking pupils to consider how they might improve what they are doing. Questioning is very effective in drawing on pupils' prior knowledge, and teachers value pupils' contributions highly. Pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, are very well supported, and work is well matched to their ability. Ongoing assessment is used well with pupils involved actively in setting their own targets which are outlined at the beginning of their writing books. The marking of pupils' work is generally supportive and constructive with an explanation of the 'correction code' and reminders of the current target throughout, but could be even better in some classes. Although the teaching of English is very good overall, there are occasions in all classes when teachers do not allow pupils enough freedom in their learning, with the result that the learning of the very highest attaining pupils is sometimes limited by the tasks that have been set.

MATHEMATICS

94. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1, on the basis of the end of key stage National Curriculum tests in mathematics have been consistently well above the national average for the past three years. The school's results for 2000, appear to be slightly lower than in previous years, reflecting the composition of that particular cohort of pupils. However, the current Year 2 pupils are well on course to achieve standards that are well above average by the end of the year. The inspection findings show that at the end of Key Stage 1, and when pupils leave school at the end of Year 4, pupils' attainment is well above average. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good and sometimes very good progress and achieve very well.
95. There has been very good progress in mathematics since the last inspection, especially in terms of the quality of teaching, which has improved significantly. The National

Numeracy Strategy is fully implemented and is having a positive impact on pupils' learning and the standards they achieve. The co-ordination of the subject is excellent, and the co-ordinator's considerable expertise enables her to give very good support to colleagues.

96. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils attain high standards in their number work. Many pupils work confidently with numbers over twenty, and understand pattern in number, such as odds and evens. They show very good mental skills, for example when adding three numbers together in their head. Pupils confidently explain the different strategies they use to get their answers, which include adding pairs of numbers and putting the largest number first. In work on subtraction the pupils take single digits from two digits, with the higher attaining pupils able to subtract two digits. In work on dividing by ten, pupils use their knowledge of number facts and know that numbers that do not end with zero cannot be equally divided by ten. Most pupils have a good understanding of fractions as equal parts of a whole, and are confident when working with halves and quarters.
97. In the area of shape, space and measures, the pupils use the correct mathematical terms when describing regular two and three-dimensional shapes. They estimate and measure well, and understand the need for standard units of measurement. Most pupils show a developing understanding of the passage time, and most tell the time accurately from both analogue and digital displays. Pupils use their mathematical skills well to plot using simple co-ordinates, for example when identifying places on a map. Pupils are confident about gathering information to produce graphs and most interpret graphs well.
98. In Key Stage 2, the pupils build on the skills they have acquired earlier, and pupils of all abilities continue to achieve very well. The pupils become more competent in their number work and handle large numbers with skill and agility. Their mental mathematics skills are very well developed, and pupils are imaginative in the way in which they find answers to number problems. Pupils make sensible estimates when making calculations that involve large numbers and have a range of suitable strategies for checking their answers. Pupils understand that subtraction and division are the opposite operations to addition and multiplication, and use this knowledge well to help them in their written work. Pupils' measuring and estimating skills are well developed. They understand the notion of area and perimeter, and confidently calculate the area of many regular shapes. They are skilled in collecting information for graphs, and produce their findings using pie charts, block graphs and line graphs. Key Stage 2 pupils make good use of computers to support this aspect of their mathematics work.
99. The quality of teaching overall is very good and has a very positive impact on pupils' learning and the standards they achieve. Mental agility sessions at the start of numeracy lessons proceed at a rigorous pace. These fast and intensive sessions really keep pupils' interest and help to improve the speed at which they recall number facts. Activities in lessons are well matched to the pupils' needs and often contain an open-ended element which enables pupils to proceed at their own level and pace. Pupils are encouraged to be original in their thinking, and to follow their own lines of enquiry when solving problems. Teachers use questions well to check the pupils' understanding, to support the lower attaining pupils and to extend the higher attainers. Pupils are often asked to explain how they reached an answer, and this helps them to clarify their thinking, and demonstrates to the rest of the class that there are many different ways of solving the same problem. Pupils are very well behaved, and this enables the teachers to concentrate on imparting knowledge to the pupils, and enables them to make effective use of group work where pupils work on shared tasks. In most lessons, pupils are told what the purpose of the activity is, and this helps them to understand what is expected of them and to gain a measure of their own progress. In discussions at the end of numeracy lessons, teachers check what the pupils have understood, and encourage

pupils to share their learning with their classmates. Although all pupils' work is marked regularly, the teachers' comments do not always show pupils exactly how they can improve their work further. Teachers make very accurate ongoing assessments of pupils' progress, and use this information effectively when planning the next stage in pupils' learning. Homework is used well to extend and support pupils' learning.

SCIENCE

100. By the end of Key Stage 1, and at the end of Year 4, pupils' attainment in science is well above the national expectations. In addition to having a very secure knowledge, pupils' investigative skills are particularly well developed, enabling very good quality learning to take place. The co-ordinator has a very good overview of the subject, and sets high standards in the science work she carries out with her own class, which have a positive impact on the work in the rest of the school.
101. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have an extensive scientific vocabulary which enables them to explain their work clearly and accurately. Pupils make very careful observations, and record their findings in a variety of ways including diagrams, charts and text. They make very good use of a wide range of literacy skills to describe experiments they have carried out, to make lists, and to explain their findings. They use numeracy skills well, for example, when measuring the growth of plants, although opportunities for them to do so are limited in some classes. Pupils really enjoy carrying out investigations and experiments and approach this aspect of their work with extremely high levels of confidence and enthusiasm. They are encouraged to follow their own lines of enquiry, and to make choices and decisions about their work. Pupils who are creative in their work, and who do not always follow the expected routes of learning, are praised for their individuality, and this promotes very high levels of scientific thinking and originality of thought. By the end of Key Stage 1, the vast majority of pupils make confident predictions based on their previous knowledge, and almost all Year 2 pupils have a good idea of what constitutes a fair test.
102. As they move through Key Stage 2, pupils continue to develop very good scientific skills. The very good grounding they receive in Key Stage 1, in terms of investigative and experimental work, prepares them well for tackling the more complex work they are presented with in Key Stage 2. Pupils of all ages and abilities enjoy the challenge of setting up their own investigations, selecting their own resources, and recording their results. They make very accurate predictions based on their previous knowledge and experience, and draw sensible conclusions from the findings. In a lesson seen during the inspection, pupils were challenged to make an alarm that would be activated if a theft occurred. The pupils used their knowledge of electric circuits to create a wide variety of alarms, with various combinations of bulbs, buzzers, which were set off when a switch, linked to a switch, was removed from the circuit. In addition to testing the pupils' knowledge of circuits, the open-endedness of the task allowed the highest attainers free rein in terms of the number of batteries, bulbs and buzzers they used, and the way in which they arranged them. By the time they leave school at the end of Year 4, pupils are well on target to attain well beyond the national expectations in this element of the science curriculum.
103. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a very secure knowledge of living things. They understand that all living things have the same basic needs, and that certain conditions are required for healthy growth. They know that living things can be classified according to their most distinguishing characteristics, and that their habitats, in addition to providing shelter, are selected because of their suitability. Through their study of the senses, pupils carry out some very good investigational work, and gain knowledge about the importance

of different senses to different living things. Pupils have a good understanding of the need for maintaining a healthy lifestyle through regular exercise and healthy eating habits, and explain how the heartbeat accelerates during and after exercise. Pupils carry out extended observations of seeds growing under different conditions, and notice that not only is the amount of growth affected certain conditions, but that also the colour of the shoot changes from green to yellow if it is starved of light.

104. Key Stage 2 pupils extend their knowledge of living things by growing bulbs, and some good links are made with mathematics and information and communication technology as pupils predict the colour of their bulbs, and produce a graph showing this information. Pupils understand that all living things reproduce and know the main stages of life cycles. They are aware that there are food chains, and that living things consume other living things in order to survive. Pupils are confident and accurate when classifying living things, noting similarities and differences.
105. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a very good knowledge and understanding of materials and their properties. Most pupils understand that some changes, such as melting ice, are reversible, whilst others, such as changing bread to toast, are not. Pupils have carried out a variety of experiments to locate the best position in the classroom for an ice-cube. This activity involved the pupils in a great deal of recording and repeated observations, and was very effective in promoting skills of scientific investigation. Pupils are gaining an awareness of the different states of matter through their work showing water changing from a frozen state to steam, and are gaining a very early understanding of solids, liquids and gases. Pupils know that some materials are waterproof and some are not, and have conducted investigations to prove or disprove their predictions. Pupils know that the properties of materials determine their use, and know for example, that wool is warmer than cotton, and that it would therefore be more practical for winter clothes.
106. Key Stage 2 pupils continue to build upon their earlier knowledge of materials and their properties and consider the materials that make the best insulators and conductors. An investigation where pupils were required to find the best materials for keeping water hot, provided very good opportunities for them to make repeated measurements over regular periods of time, and helped them to appreciate the need for measurements to be precise. Pupils were able to draw very pertinent conclusions from this work, which emphasised the need for fair-testing. As part of their work relating to electrical circuits, pupils in the Year 3/Year 4 class have considered which materials make the best conductors, and they use this knowledge well when making switches in their circuits.
107. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a very good knowledge of physical processes. They understand forces as pushes and pulls and know that the shape of an object may change if it is dropped. They know that force is used to alter the shape of materials by bending, stretching, squashing and twisting. Pupils have listened to sounds from different parts of the room, and make sensible predictions about which sound, produced by a recorder, drum and clap, would be heard most clearly from the same point. Pupils have a good knowledge of sources of light, and understand that historically, electricity is a relatively recent source of power. Pupils construct simple circuits with very high levels of confidence, and the higher attaining pupils are beginning to understand the effect of introducing more powerful batteries into the circuit or of including more than one bulb running off the same battery.
108. By the time they leave school at the end of Year 4, pupils' knowledge of physical processes is very secure and well above the level expected for this age group. Pupils construct complex circuits with speed and efficiency. They understand the impact of switches in a circuit, and know which materials make the best electrical conductors.

Pupils follow scientific symbols well and use them appropriately when writing up their own investigations and experiments. Pupils have a good understanding of forces and know that gravity is a type of force. They have a growing knowledge of the solar system and the highest attaining pupils know that day and night are the result of the earth spinning on its own axis.

109. The teaching of science is very good and has a very positive impact on pupils' learning and on the standards they attain. Teachers throughout the school are very committed to ensuring that pupils develop scientific skills of investigation and experimentation. They provide many very good opportunities for pupils to explore, observe and find things out for themselves, and activities are exciting, stimulating and challenging. One of the great strengths of science teaching is the way in which pupils are encouraged to pursue their own lines of enquiry, which often take them beyond the point expected by the teacher. Teachers are very effective in promoting high levels of independent learning in science, and give pupils time to explore the resources and to consider the task, before asking them to record their ideas in written form. When pupils are carrying out practical tasks, teachers are very effective in working with small groups of pupils, helping them to clarify their thinking, and ensuring that they have the necessary understanding to enable them to continue. Teachers encourage pupils to use their mathematical skills in a variety of ways, and pupils often use graphs and charts to communicate their findings.
110. Literacy skills are very well promoted in all classes, and the vast majority of pupils independently write about their scientific investigations in the form of reports, lists, and narrative accounts. At present insufficient use is made of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in science, mainly because the classroom computers are of limited capacity, and the range of software is narrow. Pupils' science work is marked regularly, but comments often relate to points of English grammar or spelling rather than the scientific content. Better marking would help pupils to improve their work further.

ART AND DESIGN

111. By the end of Key Stage 1, and by the time they leave school at the end of Year 4, pupils attain standards that are above national expectations in art. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language make good progress as they move through the school. Very attractive art displays in classes and around the school do much to enhance the learning environment, and are a great source of pride to those pupils whose work is displayed. Art is taught regularly in all classes, and teachers provide very good opportunities for pupils to develop their imaginations, so that even when working from the same starting point, the work that pupils produce is often very different. However, although art is valued in the school, there are times when insufficient distinction is made between art activities, and design and technology activities, with the result that insufficient time is allocated to the specific teaching of art skills in some classes. Standards in art have improved since the time of the last inspection when they were described as being satisfactory.
112. Key Stage 1 pupils have good experience of working with paint and know how to mix primary colours to make secondary colours. Pupils are confident when using paints for printing, and some very attractive bubble prints in the Year 2 classroom have been used to good effect as the background to a display of poems. Pupils use paints well in their portrait work, and try hard to mix colours to achieve skin shades. Younger pupils have made very good use of colour washes as the background to their paintings of the natural world, and most pupils know that thickly mixed paint will enable them to achieve greater texture in their work. Pupils make good quality observational drawings using pastels, crayons and pencils, and have recently produced good quality still life drawings of a

variety of fruits. By the end of the key stage some pupils are developing a sense of perspective, which is evident in their work. Year 2 pupils have recently reproduced views as seen through a 'view-finder', and this work is of a particularly good standard. Pupils take a great deal of care with their art work, and this enhances the quality of the pieces they produce. Although pupils have some experience of looking at the work of well-known artists, they have little recall of this work as they have no written record of the artists and works they have studied. Pupils have regular experiences of working with three dimensional materials such as clay and dough, and of producing three dimensional pieces using collage materials such as fabric, threads and paper.

113. By the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 4, they show a good sense of perspective, colour, line and texture in their work, and their skills of drawing, painting and printing are well established. Pupils have some good opportunities to paint on paper of different sizes, shapes and colours and different surfaces. For example, as part of their work in history, older pupils have painted their names in runes on pebbles, using acrylic paints, and have added pictures of Viking mythological beasts. Pupils have taken a great deal of care with their work, and the pebbles are all well finished and original. The pupils' three dimensional work using materials such as paper, card and fabric is of a particularly good standard, as demonstrated by an extremely attractive display in the foyer of the school of the inner workings of watches. Pupils made effective use of their mathematical knowledge when constructing the various cogs, all of which are geometrically precise, and the use of metallic foil card gives a sense of authenticity to the overall piece. Pupils use modelling clay and plasticine for a variety of purposes, but have little experience of creating sculptures. Pupils have recently used computers to produce very good quality Celtic designs, which are displayed on a sponge printed background. Pupils' knowledge of the works and style of well-known artists is a little sketchy, because they have difficulty recalling their previous learning, and have no record of the artists they have studied, to which they can refer.
114. The teaching of art is good throughout the school. Teachers enjoy art and have a secure subject knowledge which enables them to give the pupils good guidance when they are learning new skills. Pupils in both key stages take part in a wide range of art activities, covering most aspects of the National Curriculum programmes of study, but at present there is little opportunity for pupils in either key stage to develop skills of sculpting. Sketch books are used effectively in Key Stage 2 for sketching and drawing, but are not used enough for preparatory work, or to enable pupils to practise newly acquired skills. Key Stage 1 pupils currently do not have sketch books, although the art co-ordinator has identified this as an area for future development. Teachers have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve in art, such as the activity in Key Stage 1, which required pupils to extend a small section of a given picture, using their imaginations as to what else might be in the picture, and testing their skills of perspective. Pupils are encouraged to be original in their work and creativity is promoted and celebrated. There are some good opportunities for pupils to develop their cultural and historical understanding through looking at the work of aboriginal artists for example, or making cave drawings. Some very good links are made with other subjects in both key stages, and the use of numeracy and information and communication technology skills are effectively promoted in Key Stage 2.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

115. Pupils' attainment in design and technology at the end of Key Stage 1, and when pupils leave school at the end of Year 4 is in line with national expectations. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Standards are very similar to

what they were at the time of the last inspection, although the quality of curriculum planning has improved. Some very good links are forged between design and technology activities and other subjects, such as the Celtic pendants in Key Stage 2 which are linked to an ongoing history topic, but in some classes, insufficient distinction is made between art activities, and design and technology activities, with the result that neither subject is allocated enough time.

116. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils produce simple designs. They talk about what they have drawn and make suggestions about how their plans might be improved. They list the materials they might need, and are often original in their ideas. Year 2 pupils have recently been designing and making models that move, and have made a variety of vehicles using commercial construction kits, card and light wood. They understand that wheels and axles enable their models to move. Pupils are aware of the need to strengthen joints, and understand the need for a firm base when constructing towers. They know that hinges are a form of moveable joint, and explain that some joints can be fixed whilst others need to move. Pupils critically evaluate their models, and identify features they like and features that are not as they planned. They have a satisfactory range of making skills, and use scissors, glue and tape appropriately and with confidence. Although pupils have experience of using food products, such as fruit, in their design and technology work, opportunities for pupils to work with fabric are currently limited.
117. In Key Stage 2, pupils develop the basic designing and making skills they have acquired in Key Stage 1. They have a good understanding of the link between planning and making, and are prepared to spend time on their preliminary designs, knowing that the effort given at this stage will prevent unexpected problems during the making stage of the process. A good example of this was seen during the inspection when Year 4 pupils were making mosaic tiles, as part of their topic linked to the Romans. They precisely followed complex designs they had produced on paper, setting small pieces of coloured clay into square wooden frames filled with cement. The quality of these finished mosaics was very good and there was an excellent match between pupils' original designs and the final products. Pupils were able to critically evaluate their own work, and say which features they particularly liked about the work of others. Pupils make good use of modelling materials in their design and technology work. In the Year 3/Year 4 classes, pupils have produced detailed plasticine models of Viking boats, which have the main features of the original vessels. They have also modelled Roman lamps from clay which they have decorated with painted designs. Although pupils attain satisfactory standards overall in their work, opportunities for them to design and make models for an intended purpose are limited, and they do not make sufficient links between their own model making, and designing and making in its widest commercial sense.
118. The teaching of design and technology is satisfactory overall, and during the inspection some very good teaching was observed. Pupils are encouraged to make preliminary designs and are taught the necessary making skills. They are given opportunities to evaluate their work against their original plans, and to suggest improvements that might be made if the activity were to be repeated. Some very good links are made between design and technology and other subjects, but this sometimes prevents the development of specific design and technology skills. For example, although pupils gain much from making models linked to ongoing history and geography topics, these opportunities do not give pupils the chance to design and make products that have a specific function, and that can be subsequently tested for their suitability. There are some good opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills, but at present there are not enough opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology to support their learning in design and technology.

GEOGRAPHY

119. By the end of Key Stage 1, and by the time they leave school at the end of Year 4, pupils attain standards that are in line with national expectations in geography. Standards are similar to what they were at the time of the last inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language make satisfactory progress as they move through the school.
120. Key Stage 1 pupils have secure mapping skills. They draw simple maps showing their route from home to school, identifying important landmarks such as houses, churches and the school. When talking about their environment, pupils use appropriate geographical vocabulary and most understand the distinction between manmade and natural geographical features. Most pupils have a good vocabulary when talking about the weather, enabling them to accurately describe weather conditions. Pupils recognise that weather conditions are often seasonal, and have used simple charts to record weather patterns. The pupils contrast their own local area with the seaside, explaining differences and similarities. For example, they know that although there are shops in both areas, they are much bigger in towns than at the seaside. Pupils explain that there is sand at the seaside but not in town. The pupils are starting to acquire knowledge of life in other countries, but are not yet able to recognise how and why places have changed. Pupils do not make enough use of information and communication technology at present to support their learning in geography, nor do they have enough practical experience of using fieldwork skills.
121. In Key Stage 2 the pupils build on the skills they have acquired in Key Stage 1. They learn more about their local area, and use landmarks to give easy to follow directions. Most pupils identify and label towns on maps. Pupils have an understanding that there are hot and cold regions in the world, and that climatic conditions affect the work that people do and the design of the homes in which they live. Through their work linked to history, the pupils are starting to understand about the origins of some settlements.
122. The teaching of geography is satisfactory overall, and teachers have a secure subject knowledge. All elements of the National Curriculum programmes of study are taught during the course of one year, but because insufficient time is given to the subject, topics are not always covered in enough depth. The practice of teaching geography in blocks, with gaps of up to one term in between, is not fully effective, as pupils have sometimes forgotten their previous learning by the time the subject is revisited. Although teachers encourage pupils to develop geographical skills, and provide some first-hand experiences, there are not enough practical opportunities for pupils to learn fieldwork skills, or for pupils to use computers to support their learning. The new scheme of work is not yet having a significant impact on teaching and learning as it is in the very early stages of implementation, but over time, it will ensure that pupils' learning is systematically built upon as they move through the school. Although teachers make effective use of the resources that are available, there are not enough maps and globes to fully support the planned curriculum.

HISTORY

123. By the end of Key Stage 1, and by the time they leave school at the end of Year 4, pupils attain standards that are in line with national expectations in history. Standards are similar to what they were at the time of the last inspection. The school has very effectively introduced the new National Curriculum in history. Planning is thorough and detailed and ensures that teaching throughout the school is good and that all pupils,

including those who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, are making satisfactory progress in the development of historical knowledge, skills and understanding. However, insufficient time is currently allocated to history to enable the subject to be covered in sufficient depth and breadth or to enable high standards to be achieved, and there are some gaps in pupils' learning which are currently being identified and addressed. The school has few resources for the subject, and recognises this as an area for future development.

124. Pupils in Year 2 are learning well. They have made history books about their own lives and show a developing sense of chronology. They have studied the lives of their grandparents and have learned about how toys of today differ from those in the past. A recent 'grandparents' tea-party' gave pupils a real chance to talk to people from a different generation about their experiences, and was extremely effective in promoting pupils' social skills as they served tea and scones to their own grandparents and those of their classmates. Pupils are starting to draw comparisons between life today and life in the past. They are beginning to understand how change occurs, for example, they recognise that there were more children in Victorian families than in families today. However, although pupils' ongoing learning is secure, their recall of what they have studied in the past is very sketchy and some pupils have difficulty retaining historical knowledge and facts.
125. As they move through Key Stage 2, pupils show a developing knowledge of the life and times of early Invaders and Settlers, including the Celts, the Vikings and the Romans. Through their ongoing studies they are learning how to draw comparisons between life in the past and life today. The highest attaining pupils are particularly successful in the way in which they identify similarities and differences, giving good reasons for the comparisons they make. Pupils use timelines confidently to show where important events occur, for example, showing the invasions, and the building of Hadrian's Wall. They demonstrate their knowledge of how the Romans lived and have studied how words currently used in the English language are derived from Anglo-Saxon and Roman roots. Although pupils' current learning is secure and well established, their recall of previous learning is weak.
126. Teaching is good in both key stages, and work is well planned to meet the needs of all pupils. However, insufficient time is given to the subject, and the practice of teaching history in alternate terms means that there are big gaps in pupils' learning which make it difficult for them to recall what they have previously learned. Teachers throughout the school have a secure subject knowledge which enables them to present activities in an exciting and interesting way. They make very good use of artefacts, often brought in by the pupils from home, to increase pupils' enjoyment of the subject and to demonstrate the importance of primary and secondary historical evidence. There are effective links with other subjects. For example, in design and technology, Year 4 pupils have designed and developed their own Celtic pendants, and in art they have made very attractive 'Roman' mosaic tiles. Some good use is made of information and communication technology in Key Stage 2, where pupils use computers for research and to draft their views of life in the Roman times.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

127. By the end of Key Stage 1, and by the time they leave school at the end of Year 4, pupils attain standards that are in line with national expectations in information and communication technology. The co-ordinator and staff have worked very hard to develop the subject over the last few years, and the recent installation of a computer suite has been instrumental in helping the school to raise standards. Standards at the time of the

last inspection were described as unsatisfactory, and all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, have made significant progress since that time. There is still further work to be done in terms of developing the use of information and communication technology in classrooms, and across all subjects, although there are already some good links with history and art, especially in Key Stage 2. The school is aware that some of the computers in classrooms are old and out of date, and the replacement of these machines is an identified priority.

128. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are confident when using the computer, and show a good range of basic skills. They 'log-on' to the computers with confidence, and know how to open programmes by clicking the mouse twice. Pupils use the mouse or the directional keys on the keyboard to position the cursor, and know several ways of deleting letters and words. When working with text, a few pupils confidently change the size and colour of the font they are using with no help from their teacher, but most pupils still need some support with this. Year 2 pupils know how to use the 'drawing object' command to import a speech bubble into their text document, and although some pupils find it difficult, most know how to use the cursor to extend or change the shape of the bubble they have imported. Pupils are aware of the value of computers when conveying information, and in a lesson seen during the inspection, Year 1 pupils recognised the value of using colour to make their messages stand out more. Pupils throughout the key stage are keen to discuss their work and to make suggestions for ways they could tackle a problem differently, or what they might change if they repeated the task at a future date. Some good use is made of computers in Key Stage 1 for word-processing, and for producing graphs and charts, but even more use could be made of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning across the curriculum. Key Stage 1 pupils currently have few opportunities to use CD ROMs for research purposes, or for using databases to store their work in, and these are areas where more could be done to raise standards further.
129. As they move through Key Stage 2, pupils become more proficient and imaginative in their use of information and communication technology. Pupils are confident when using word-processing packages for drafting and editing, and make effective use of fonts of different sizes and styles to add interest to their work. In a lesson seen during the inspection, Year 4 pupils made good use of the computers in the computer suite to write an imaginary dialogue between a news reporter and a Roman citizen. They were confident about saving their work to the hard disk, and opening and closing the programme they were using. Year 4 pupils have made very good use of a painting programme to create Celtic designs, and pupils in the Year 3/Year 4 classes have made very effective use of database programmes to create a wide variety of different charts and graphs, showing which material has the best insulating properties. In the past, pupils have made e-mail links with a school in Kuwait, and this has helped them to gain an understanding of the potential of electronic mail as a fast means of world-wide communication. Pupils have no experience of creating spreadsheets, and their experience of monitoring is limited. Few pupils currently demonstrate the higher order data-handling and modelling skills.
130. The teaching of information and communication technology is very good in the computer suite, when teachers are working with groups of pupils, teaching specific skills. Teachers' planning is very thorough and shows clearly the skills that are to be developed. It takes into account pupils' previous learning, and systematically builds on what has gone before. Although teachers' subject knowledge and experience are sometimes limited, because of very good preparation, they present individual lessons with confidence and expertise. Teachers organise information and communication technology lessons very effectively, and often work with half class groups, enabling pupils to receive individual help and support where necessary. Tasks are often open-ended, and this

means that pupils work at their own level, with the highest attainers forging ahead and the lower attainers working at a steadier pace. Teachers are about to complete their training for information and communication technology, and all teachers and one classroom assistant have been involved in this initiative. When using the computer suite, teachers encourage pupils to use information and communication technology to enhance their learning in other subjects, but even more could be done in the classroom.

MUSIC

131. Pupils' attainment in music at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with national expectations. No music lessons were scheduled during the inspection in Key Stage 2, and no judgements can therefore be made about standards in this key stage. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language make satisfactory progress as they move through Key Stage 1. However, insufficient time is allocated to the subject in both key stages, and although all aspects of the National Curriculum programmes of study are covered, they are not addressed in enough depth. Pupils have the opportunity to learn how to play the recorder, and the recorder group often performs at the end of assemblies.
132. Key Stage 1 pupils sing well, and in tune, both when accompanied by the piano, and when unaccompanied. They have a good sense of pitch and rhythm, and they articulate words clearly. They pick up new songs quickly, and when singing rounds maintain their parts well. The vast majority of pupils are attentive listeners, and by the end of the key stage, they accurately pick out variations in tempo, volume and pitch. Pupils enjoy composing their own music, and in a lesson seen during the inspection composed good quality group pieces depicting rain, using untuned percussion instruments. Most Key Stage 1 pupils are very confident and enjoy performing to the rest of the class. During a lesson seen during the inspection, one pupil volunteered to teach her classmates the second verse of a song, and did so with high levels of enthusiasm and skill.
133. The teaching of music is satisfactory overall. However, although teachers make good use of a national scheme of work to guide their planning, they lack the support a good quality commercial scheme would give, and have to rely extensively on their own ideas. Many of the staff are non-specialists and do not have always have enough confidence when teaching the subject. Lessons are well planned and move at a good pace. In a good lesson seen during the inspection, the teacher was most effective in incorporating elements of performing, composing and appraising, linking them together in such a way that pupils could see the inter-relationship between the various strands. The range of activities that can be offered by the school is adversely affected by the small amount of time given to the subject, and the shortage of tuned and ethnic instruments, and good quality untuned instruments. Currently, insufficient use is made of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

134. Pupils' attainment in physical education, at the end of Key Stage 1, and when pupils leave school at the end of Year 4, is in line with national expectations. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Standards are very similar to what they were at the time of the last inspection, although the quality of curriculum planning has improved. During the course of the year, all areas of the physical education

curriculum are fully covered. Key Stage 2 pupils have regular swimming lessons and the school aims for every pupil to be able to swim 25 metres before they leave the school.

135. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' movement skills in gymnastics and dance are of a satisfactory standard. Dance lessons in Key Stage 1 are closely linked to drama and effective teaching using poetry and percussion frequently enables pupils to make satisfactory and sometimes good progress. Where teaching is good there is a strong emphasis on activity and pupils are challenged to develop and extend their skills. For example, pupils 'grow' and 'burst' fitting their movements to a poem about fireworks. They curl, stretch and jump effectively in a skilful, planned sequence. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own work and that of others and this enables them to improve their performance. High expectations of pupils' behaviour ensure that all pupils are engrossed in their activity. Pupils work well in groups and give support to one another.
136. Key Stage 2 pupils become more proficient at linking movements together to form short sequences, but rely heavily on prompts from the teacher to remind them to land properly after jumps. In all activities, the pupils work very hard and are often breathless at the end of a session. However, despite their efforts, their movements sometimes lack co-ordination and fluidity. Pupils show good levels of originality in their work and have some good ideas of ways of travelling in different directions and at different levels. In a lesson seen during the inspection, one pair of pupils quite spontaneously started mirroring the other's movements whilst forming a short sequence. Pupils' ability to work on apparatus is limited, and some do not have a great deal of confidence. Pupils understand the importance of 'warm-up' and 'cool-down' sessions, and have a good understanding of the effects of exercise on the body.
137. The teaching of physical education is satisfactory overall, and could be even better if teachers had more confidence and knowledge. Teachers explain well to pupils what they are expected to learn in each lesson, and there are good reminders about health and safety issues. Teachers often make effective demonstrations of movements, and encourage pupils to perform their work to the rest of the class, but there is not enough emphasis on pupils evaluating their own performance, or that of others. Lessons usually move at a good pace, but there are occasions when the pace of lessons is too slow and pupils are insufficiently challenged by the tasks.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

138. Pupils' attainment exceeds the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of Key Stage 1, and when pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4. Key Stage 1 pupils make satisfactory gains in their learning as they move through the key stage, and acquire a good range of knowledge, especially about Christianity. Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress, especially in terms of their understanding of the impact of religion on society today, and in their knowledge of different world religions. Pupils who have special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language progress at the same rate as their classmates. The school has made good progress in developing religious education since the last inspection, and standards have risen slightly in both key stages. However, in some classes, the recommended five per cent of teaching time is not allocated to religious education, and this prevents some of the topics being studied in enough depth.
139. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils understand that special signs associated with the different world faiths are of great significance. Pupils show a good understanding of why the cross is a special sign for Christians, and explain that it is a reminder of how Jesus

died. The highest attaining pupils understand the importance of the death of Jesus to Christians, and try hard to explain why Jesus died. Pupils have good recall of the Christmas story, and know that Easter is another important Christian celebration. As part of their studies, the pupils have learned about some of the main features of a church, such as the font, which they know is used for baptism. The pupils have an increasing understanding of festivals in other faiths. They know that the Hindus celebrate a festival called Diwali, and understand that Muslims have special rituals including washing and removing shoes. In learning from religions the pupils talk about helping others. They talk about how they feel and share special times with their classmates.

140. In Key Stage 2, the pupils build on the skills and knowledge they have acquired in Key Stage 1. They gain a better understanding of why festivals take place within most religions, and their knowledge of world faiths is much more secure. Pupils have a good knowledge of the Jewish faith, and explain why members of the Jewish faith celebrate Sukkot. The pupils are aware that there are both similarities and differences between religions. They understand that prayer is a common element in the religions they have studied, and that places of worship are an important feature of all faiths. Older pupils enjoy reflecting on the world in which they live, and have written prayers, thanking God and asking for help for those less fortunate than themselves.
141. Religious education makes a positive contribution to pupils' literacy development, and the pupils are encouraged to read and write about the religions they are studying. In a Year 3/4 class the pupils use independent writing to describe 'succahs' as part of their work relating to the festival of Sukkot. The subject makes a very good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and successfully promotes aspects of pupils' personal development. At present there are not enough resources to enable pupils to use computers to support their learning in religious education, and pupils do not make enough use of computers for research purposes.
142. The quality of teaching overall is good and has a positive effect on learning. During the inspection some very good and excellent teaching was observed. In these lessons, the teachers' subject knowledge was very powerful, enabling them to present material in an interesting and though provoking way. All lessons are well planned and relate closely to the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Teachers explain clearly to the pupils what they are going to learn in the lesson, and go over earlier work to check what the pupils have remembered. The school's limited religious education resources are used very effectively to enhance learning, for example Islamic prayer mats in a lesson on Muslim prayer. However, the shortage of resources means that there are some lessons which can not be enhanced in this way. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to present their own views and to consider those of others, and this helps them to clarify their thinking and learn how to be respectful of views that differ from their own. Pupils in all classes respond well in religious education lessons and have positive attitudes to the subject, which are in part due to the enthusiasm of their teachers. Many of the activities in religious education lessons are practical, and whilst this has a very positive impact on pupils' learning, the lack of written records means that pupils sometimes have difficulty recalling their previous learning. The school rarely plans visits to different places of worship, and the lack of such first-hand experiences, and the shortage of resources, are areas the school should develop in the future to ensure that standards in religious education continue to rise.