

INSPECTION REPORT

Bidbury Junior School

Bedhampton

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116053

Headteacher: Mrs V J Webster

Reporting inspector: Mr Paul Bamber
15064

Dates of inspection: 2 – 5 May 2000

Inspection number: 191055
Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7-11
Gender of pupils:	mixed
School address:	Fraser Road Bedhampton Hampshire
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr M Simmonds
Date of previous inspection:	24 June 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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		Physical education	The school's results and pupils' achievements
			How well are pupils taught?
Ian Blair	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			How well the school cares for its pupils
			How well the school works in partnership with parents
John Burt	Team inspector	Science	The provision of curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
		Art	
		Design and technology	
Ian Stainton-James	Team inspector	English	
		Religious education	
		English as an additional language	
Carol Slade	Team inspector	Mathematics	
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		Equality of opportunity	
Christine Richardson	Team member	History	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Bidbury Community Junior School educates pupils between the ages of seven and eleven. The school lies on the fringe of an educational action zone in which a significant minority of the pupils reside. There are 272 pupils on roll, 131 of whom are girls. The present Year 3 entered the school with above average attainment, but the pupils in Year 6, last year and this year, and to whom all comparative data relates, entered the school with well below average attainment. There are 128 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs. Two pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is approaching three times the national average. Fourteen per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is close to the national average. There are seven pupils who use English as an additional language, all of whom speak English well. Over the last academic year an average number of pupils either joined or left the school at times different from the norm.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Bidbury Community Junior School is an improving school which is increasingly providing its pupils with a sound education. Although standards in writing and mathematics remain below the national average, the school has made good improvements over the last year in raising these standards. The school provides good support for the many pupils who have special educational needs and ensures good behaviour from most of the pupils. The quality of teaching is good. The school encourages the pupils to be independent and to take responsibility and promotes good relationships. The school is well managed and led, and has made good improvement since the last inspection. It offers satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching is always at least satisfactory and is good, or better, in over two thirds of lessons. This contributes significantly to the steady improvement in standards.
- Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and as a result the vast majority behaves sensibly, in and out of the classroom.
- The school develops the pupils' personal and social skills well by giving them roles and responsibilities which contribute to the smooth running of the school.
- The quality of relationships throughout the school is good and this contributes positively to the very good attitudes most pupils have to the school and their lessons.
- The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and this results in most of these pupils making good progress.
- The headteacher, senior staff and governors provide clear and enthusiastic leadership which promotes a positive ethos in the school and an impetus for raising standards.
- The school's administration is most efficient and provides excellent support for the school's management, teachers, pupils and parents.

What could be improved

- By the time they leave the school, the pupils attain standards below the national average in mathematics.
- Pupils' standards in writing and in the presentation of their work are too low. This means that they find difficulty in writing down their thoughts and ideas, and in recording their knowledge coherently.
- As a result of the demands of the well above average number of pupils with special educational needs in each class, the needs of higher attaining pupils are not always fully met.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvement since the last OFSTED inspection in June 1996. Of the seven key issues identified at that time, the school has addressed six of them well. The best progress has been achieved in improving standards in information technology, in long-term planning and in the way in which governors have become more pro-active in setting targets and monitoring standards. Least progress has been made in ensuring that teachers plan to meet the needs of the highest attaining pupils in all lessons. Another significant improvement has been the quality of teaching, which now contributes well to improving pupils' attainment in mathematics.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	D	D	E	D
mathematics	D	C	E	D
science	C	B	D	C

Key

well above average A
 above average B
 average C
 below average D
 well below average E

The information shows that over the period 1997-1999, the school achieved standards consistently below the average in English. In 1999 the school's results reflect the very large proportion of pupils with special educational needs which is likely to affect average standards negatively. When compared with similar schools, standards were below average in English and mathematics but average in science.

The findings of this inspection are that standards are below average in writing and mathematics and average in science. This represents an improvement upon last year's test results and is achieved in the context of a year group which has more than 48 per cent of pupils with special educational needs. The school has set formal targets for 65 per cent and 70 per cent of pupils to achieve the expected level in the national end of Key Stage 2 tests, in English and mathematics respectively. These are challenging targets and if achieved, will represent a good improvement on the 1999 results. The pupils achieve average standards in all other subjects of the National Curriculum and in religious education. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy school and the vast majority show good attitudes to their lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall. Apart from a very few, almost exclusively boys, the pupils behave sensibly and respect each other.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils get on well together and are comfortable in their relationships with adults. Initiatives such as the 'young governors' and the 'buddy' system encourage a sense of responsibility amongst the pupils.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance is slightly above the national average and there is a lower than average rate of unauthorised absence. Pupils are punctual.

This aspect is a strength of the school. Adults and pupils relate well and older pupils care for younger ones well.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	na	na	Good

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

The quality of teaching is good. Of the 58 lessons observed during the inspection, three per cent were excellent, ten per cent were very good, 55 per cent good and 31 per cent satisfactory. There was no unsatisfactory teaching observed. Strengths of the teaching include good behaviour management, successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and National Literacy Strategy, and effective use of resources and homework. Any weaknesses in teaching are linked to a lack of planning to challenge the highest attainers and too low expectations of the quality of the presentation of pupils' written work. This latter contributes to the low standards in writing. Strengths in pupils' learning include their ability to work independently, to build on previous knowledge and in their awareness of how they can improve. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of the support they receive from non-teaching staff.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is broad and balanced and fully meets statutory requirements. Appropriate extra time is given to facilitate improvements in writing and mathematics. There is a limited range and number of extra-curricular activities offered.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The school accurately identifies the pupils' level of need and sets appropriate targets for improvements in their attainment.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. The pupils' social and moral development is good. Their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. There are good procedures for ensuring child protection and first aid. The school has very good systems for ensuring good attendance and for assessing the pupils' attainment and progress.

The partnership between the school and parents is satisfactory. The school keeps parents well informed on their children's progress. The majority of parents is strongly supportive of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher leads the school calmly and thoughtfully. Senior staff make strong contributions in the areas of data analysis, monitoring standards and in the provision for special educational needs.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors now take a very pro-active interest in monitoring standards in order to identify areas for improvement and to set targets for raising standards. Statutory responsibilities are fully met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Although standards are below average in writing and mathematics the school is aware of this, the reasons for it and has used analysis and monitoring to establish how improvements may be made.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school's financial planning is effective in meeting current and future needs and spending is monitored rigorously

The overall quality of the school's staffing, accommodation and learning resources is satisfactory and adequately supports pupils' learning. The hall is rather small for whole school assemblies and some indoor physical education activities.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children enjoy coming to school. • The staff work hard and the teaching is good. • The school helps the pupils to become mature and responsible. • The school has high expectations of the pupils. • The pupils have the right amount of homework. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More information about the progress their children make. • A greater range of activities outside lessons. • The school working more closely with them. • An improvement in the behaviour of pupils. • More challenge for the brighter pupils.

Inspectors concur with the positive views of the parents. Despite an unusually high percentage of negative responses in the parents' questionnaire and some disquiet at the parents' meeting held prior to the inspection, inspectors found little evidence during the time of the inspection to substantiate concerns. Pupils generally behave sensibly and the school provides more information and greater opportunity for parents to talk with teachers about their children's work, than is the norm. There is frequent communication through fortnightly newsletters and the governors lobby parents' opinion through questionnaires annually. The school has acknowledged that issuing reports on the same evening as consultation meetings is unsatisfactory for all parents and has amended this practice. Inspectors do agree that the range of extra-curricular activities offered to pupils is less than in most similar schools and that, in some classes, the brighter pupils are not challenged fully.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Analysis of the school's 1999 national end of Key Stage 2 test results shows that standards are well below average in English and mathematics and below average in science. These figures relate to a year group, which contained 45 per cent of pupils with significant special educational needs. This is likely to have had a negative effect upon average standards. Compared with similar schools, standards are below average in English and mathematics and average in science. Few pupils achieved a higher level than that expected nationally. The assessments made by teachers closely matched the test results.
2. The combined data for the years 1996 to 1999 show that, in English, both boys and girls attained about one term behind the average of their peers nationally. In mathematics and science, boys performed better than girls, although compared nationally they both lagged behind their peers. However, the trend of improvement for all core subjects was broadly in line with that nationally.
3. The school has set formal targets for 65 per cent of pupils to reach or exceed the expected level in the national tests, in English, this year. It has set a formal target for 70 per cent of pupils to reach or exceed the expected level in mathematics. The inspection findings are that the school is likely to be close to achieving these targets and that they represent a significant challenge given that 48 per cent of the present Year 6 have special educational needs.
4. The findings of the inspection are that the proportion of pupils attaining the national expected level is below the average in writing and mathematics and average in science, information technology and religious education. In all other subjects standards are average. Standards in English, mathematics and science are an improvement on those indicated by last year's test results. The school encourages the use of literacy well across the curriculum, for example when pupils prepare debating points for discussion in their own work on the environment. Numeracy skills are promoted satisfactorily across the curriculum. Compared with the findings of the 1996 OFSTED inspection, standards are higher in information technology, lower in writing and similar in all other subjects of the National Curriculum and in religious education.
5. In English, by the age of 11, pupils attain average standards in speaking and listening and in reading. Pupils speak confidently and listen to each other well, they read reasonably fluently and higher attaining pupils read with good expression. Overall, the pupils attain below average standards in writing, although some higher attaining pupils, in Years 5 and 6, write well for different purposes and readers. Weaknesses in pupils' writing include poor presentation, inaccurate spelling, inappropriate use of punctuation and slow working resulting in many writing tasks not completed in the time allocated. In mathematics, by the end of the key stage, pupils attain just below average standards. The introduction of Year 6 booster classes, in which pupils are grouped according to their prior attainment, has accelerated improvements in pupils' standards and more pupils are likely to achieve higher levels in the national tests than in recent years. Many pupils think quickly and flexibly when calculating mentally, although some still rush into answering too quickly and make elementary mistakes in

their use of the four operations. They estimate accurately in order to find an approximate answer to more complex problems and use systematic methods to solve problems with several stages. Pupils use calculators well to check the accuracy of their answers. In their work on data handling, pupils, including those with higher attainment, do not interpret data as well as they should, nor do they work at the expected level with spreadsheets. In science, pupils achieve average standards. They understand the principles of experimentation, observe carefully and record their findings well verbally, but less systematically in writing. Pupils understand the food chain and properties of materials, such as insulation and conductivity. By the end of the key stage in information technology, the pupils achieve satisfactory standards when they combine information from different programs, for example when they design a poster to help their peers prepare calmly for tests. They embellish their work by using different fonts and graphics. Pupils confidently use information technology to support their work in other subjects such as literacy, music, history and geography. Older pupils still do not use spreadsheets with confidence. In meeting the requirements of the school's adopted curriculum for religious education, the pupils know about the main beliefs and rituals of the Christian faith and compare and contrast these with the traditions of other faiths such as Hinduism.

6. In art, pupils attain average standards when they talk knowledgeably about the work of famous artists, such as Monet. They use a range of media to express their ideas and draw accurately from observation. Pupils attain average standards in design and technology by designing, testing, amending and evaluating their products. In geography, pupils test soils for the level of acidity, compare life in an Indian rural community with their own, debate the way in which the environment is harmed and how it can be protected. In history, pupils have a good sense of chronology, through their use of timelines and photographs, and know that historical accounts can be biased. In music, pupils attain average standards when they listen to and appraise a wide range of music, create their own musical scores on the computer and play untuned instruments rhythmically. Pupils attain overall average standards in physical education, although their work in gymnastics is above average. However, too few know how to use bats or racquets to send a ball accurately or have good hand/eye co-ordination when attempting to control a ball. Around 70 per cent of pupils swim 25 metres unaided by the time they leave the school.
7. Overall, the pupils achieve well. Pupils with higher attainment do not always achieve to their full potential. This is often due to a lack of sufficient challenge in the tasks they are set, or in insufficient time devoted to their needs as a result of the demands of the large numbers of pupils with special educational needs in each class. When the pupils in Year 6 are grouped according to their prior attainment, then higher attaining pupils are fully challenged.
8. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets on their individual education plans and in the development of their confidence and self-esteem. The suitability of their targets and the good quality teaching they receive promote effective learning.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils show a very positive attitude towards their learning. They show an eagerness to come to school and clearly find the environment congenial. Indeed some pupils arrive early, using the time constructively by engaging in informal, self-organised activities with their peers on the playground. They respond well in the classroom and

in other situations such as assemblies. This is shown by the enthusiasm with which pupils answer questions and the conscientious way in which they follow the instructions of their teachers. The generally high standard of teaching is a major contributory factor to this good response as it results in lessons which pupils find interesting.

10. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well through the implementation of a very good whole school policy. This is a comprehensive and well argued document which clearly sets out expectations for behaviour and articulates graded scales of rewards and sanctions. The policy is well understood by both pupils and parents. As a result, the behaviour of pupils both in the classroom and around the school is generally good. Pupils are usually polite, both to each other and to adults, and they show respect for property, particularly that of the school. For example, there is absolutely no graffiti and virtually no litter around the school premises. What litter does exist is cleared by teams of volunteer litter collectors. Some parents expressed concern over the disruptive behaviour of a few pupils in Year 3 who were having a detrimental effect on the learning of other pupils. Indeed, there were nine fixed period exclusions over the last year. This is higher than the figure quoted in the previous report and adds substance to these concerns. However, the disruptive influences that were in the school are no longer present. At the time of the inspection there was no evidence to suggest that such disruption now exists in Year 3, or elsewhere in the school.
11. Pupils have a well-developed sense of personal responsibility as a result of positive actions taken by the school. For example, there is a 'Young Governors' committee which comprises representatives of each class elected by their peers. It conducts its meetings in a business-like manner, under the discreet guidance of the headteacher, and sets its own agenda covering all aspects of school life. Also, class teachers give individual pupils tasks to perform which contribute to the smooth running of lessons and the daily routines of the school. These are progressive, so that by Year 6 each pupil has a major responsibility for some aspect of school-life. Pupils show initiative in the way they help each other and care for their school. They take positive steps to include those who feel isolated and they report potential hazards on the school grounds, such as broken bottles, to the caretaker. Thus overall, the effective personal development of pupils is a strength of the school. The quality of relationships throughout the school is good and this contributes positively to the good attitudes most pupils have towards the school and their lessons. Instances of bullying are very rare and where they do occur they are dealt with promptly and effectively by the staff.
12. Attendance is satisfactory. The rate of unauthorised absence is low. Registration takes place at the start of both morning and afternoon sessions. The procedures are sound and fully meet the legal requirements. The school secretary records all absences each morning and if no explanation is forthcoming phones home to determine the whereabouts of the pupil. This practice is highly commended. Pupils generally arrive promptly for school, lateness is rare and much lower than in comparable schools. This represents an improvement since the time of the previous inspection. Pupils' good attendance and punctuality, which are consistent with their eagerness to come to school, are making a positive contribution to their progress.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. During the inspection the quality of teaching varied between satisfactory and excellent. Of the 58 lessons observed, two were excellent, six very good, 32 good and 18 satisfactory. There was no unsatisfactory teaching observed. This represents a very good improvement on the last OFSTED inspection when 20 per cent of all lessons were judged unsatisfactory and a lower percentage judged very good or better. Major strengths in the teaching include good subject knowledge, clear planning, good behaviour management, effective use of resources and good use of homework. These strengths result in pupils having a clear idea of the purpose of their lessons, working in a calm and settled atmosphere and improving their skills in researching topics on their own. Weaknesses in teaching include some low expectations of the quality of pupils' written work and some lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils. This contributes to below average standards in writing and higher attaining pupils not always achieving what they should. When pupils are grouped according to their prior attainment, as in the booster classes in literacy and numeracy in Year 6, then the higher attaining pupils are challenged by well-focused teaching. The lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils is linked to the demands that the large numbers of pupils with special educational needs make in most classes.
14. The quality of teaching is very good in information technology, good in English, mathematics, art, geography and music and satisfactory in science, design and technology, physical education and religious education. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the quality of teaching in history. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good. Teachers promote literacy well and numeracy satisfactorily across the curriculum. The very good teaching of information technology has resulted in pupils making very good improvements in this subject since the last OFSTED inspection and some high attainment amongst younger pupils.
15. Teachers have good subject knowledge in literacy and numeracy, science, art and geography. Pupils are given a range of interesting activities through which to learn. This was evident in a Year 6 literacy lesson, in which the teacher encouraged pupils to extract information from a text using different methods for scanning and skimming paragraphs to highlight the most relevant facts. Teachers conduct lessons at a good pace which enthuses pupils, keeps them busy and results in a good quantity of work produced. The good relationships the teachers have with pupils encourage them to persevere through difficulties in order to improve. In a swimming lesson, the teacher was enthusiastic and provided encouragement to pupils who struggled with their breathing techniques. This helped them overcome some lack of confidence and as a result pupils made good progress. By planning carefully for lessons, sharing the objectives of the lesson with pupils from the outset and reviewing learning at the end of the lesson, teachers promote understanding amongst the pupils and help them acknowledge the steps they make in their learning. This was evident in many literacy and numeracy lessons and contributes well to the improvements in standards apparent in these subjects. Teachers use homework well, particularly to encourage pupils to research information and to prepare them in advance for a new topic. In a very good geography lesson, the first in a series about rivers, the teacher required the pupils to find out as much as they could over the school holidays. This meant that pupils came well prepared to participate in discussion and written work in which they pooled their combined knowledge for the benefit of all, and encouraged very good independent learning amongst the pupils.
16. Where weaknesses in teaching are apparent, they are linked to insufficient planning

to cater for the needs of the highest attaining pupils in the class. When plans indicate more challenge for these pupils, teachers sometimes find it difficult to implement them, as a result of the demands of the large numbers of pupils in each class who have special educational needs. Throughout the school, teachers' expectations of the quality of pupils' presentation of work are too low. This contributes to the below average quality of pupils' writing both in literacy lessons and in other subjects. Some teachers' marking of work is perfunctory and lacks guidance for pupils on how to improve.

17. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers take account of the targets for pupils with special educational needs in their planning. The targets in the individual education plans are usually clear and achievable. They are reviewed regularly and progress towards them is noted. Pupils are grouped according to prior attainment in numeracy and literacy lessons and tasks are matched well to their capabilities. Pupils have good quality support from experienced and skilled learning support assistants, or the special educational needs manager, either on an individual or small group withdrawal basis, or within the classroom. There is very good liaison between all support and teaching staff, which promotes pupils' good progress.
18. Strengths in pupils' learning include their ability to use previous knowledge to tackle unfamiliar tasks and to concentrate fully on their work. Pupils study independently, they have a good knowledge of their own progress, as a result of the targets set for them, and of what they have to do to improve. These all make a good contribution to the recent improvements the pupils have made in their attainment, especially in mathematics and information technology. Pupils' use of information technology to support their work in many subjects is a particular strength in their learning.

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

19. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and those of religious education. It reflects effectively the stated aims, values and mission statement of the school. It provides an interesting and stimulating programme for pupils, which promotes their intellectual, physical and personal development. The school has a suitably designed whole-school curriculum framework, which takes account of the 20 per cent non-National Curriculum time in an appropriate way; with a particular emphasis on personal, social and health education. The use of this time is made explicit in the governors' curriculum policy statement. The curriculum is organised and planned very effectively and contributes to the quality of learning. The governing body is well informed and very supportive of all aspects of curriculum development in the school.
20. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. This is an improvement since the previous OFSTED inspection. All staff who work with these pupils are involved in the preparation and review of their individual educational plans. Pupils participate in all school activities. There are currently only two pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need and their needs are fully met.
21. Particular emphasis is given to English and mathematics. The school has effectively introduced the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and both have been successfully implemented with good effect and operate well for the obvious benefit of the pupils. The teaching of these strategies is beginning to have a positive effect on

standards in both these subjects. As a result of the extra time devoted to literacy and numeracy all other subjects have reduced, but suitable, time allocations. The governors' policy for sex education states that it is taught as part of personal and social education, health education and science. Health and drug education is covered appropriately as part of the school's personal, social and science programme and through especially planned health promotions. The length of the teaching week at both key stages is in line with the Department for Education and Employment's recommended guidelines.

22. The curriculum is planned and taught as separate subjects but where appropriate linked effectively with other subjects into a topic theme. This results in a good sense of meaning and purpose given to the programmes of work, as seen in the study of plants, with the younger pupils, where there was an appropriate link between art and science. Within subjects, there is generally an appropriate balance between aspects of the programmes of study. In classes, pupils are usually grouped according to their prior attainment for English and mathematics and during the booster lessons, in Year 6, the pupils are set by ability.
23. There are supportive policy statements and schemes of work for all subjects. This is a good improvement from the last OFSTED inspection. These policies are helpful in assisting planning and they provide a framework for ensuring progression. They are beginning to have a positive impact on standards. The medium-term plans are constructed to give a clear outline of subject coverage. The short-term plans are helpful. They list learning objectives and assessment opportunities but they do not always show how the higher attaining pupils will be extended. Subject managers provide positive support and guidance but most have a limited role in the direct, in-class monitoring of their subjects throughout the school.
24. The range of extra-curricular clubs is limited and this is a concern of the parents. This term the school runs art, computer, dance and drama clubs. There is no sports club of any type and the school does not presently take part in competitive matches with other schools. The clubs that do take place are well attended, enhance and extend the curriculum and provide the pupils with the opportunity to develop their social skills and other interests. Musicians, artists and other visitors come in to school to extend and enrich the curriculum. The quality of the curriculum is much improved by the use of the local environment and outside visits to a wide range of places and events, which promotes the pupils' social and cultural development. Older pupils have the opportunity to take part in residential visits. These have a positive and beneficial effect on the quality of the curriculum provided.
25. The school's provision of homework is good and the school has held a parents evening to provide information and guidance on the homework policy. It mainly emphasises language development but also includes other subjects, and it carefully takes account of the needs of individual pupils. Homework is often used as a stimulus for the start of lessons and to promote the pupils' research skills. The homework provision is much improved since the last OFSTED inspection. All pupils are prepared well for the next stage of education, particularly in the range of homework tasks they are set.
26. Through its policies and practice the school makes satisfactory provision for equal opportunities. The previous OFSTED inspection report identified that there was no policy for equal opportunities. The school now has a carefully worded policy prepared by the headteacher in November 1999 which clearly defines the broad

scope of the school's responsibilities. It effectively raises a series of open questions, which challenge teachers to be alert to prejudice and stereotyping in their relationships with pupils, to be watchful in their management of pupils and in the provision of resources. The staff offer satisfactory role models for equal opportunities. All staff show equally respectful attitudes to pupils and adults. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to the curriculum. The school is becoming increasingly aware of its obligations to ensure that the more able are sufficiently challenged and has recently initiated a register of more able pupils in order to facilitate this. Results of national tests from 1996 to 1999 show some slight variations in performance between boys and girls but there was no observable reason from inspection evidence as to why this might be. One aspect of the school's organisation does challenge its equal opportunities provision. Pupils are regularly withdrawn from the same lessons each week for instrumental music teaching.

27. Where possible the school seeks to involve the wider community in its work, which enhances pupils' learning and broadens their experience. The school has regular visits from representatives of local churches to conduct assemblies. The school's liaison police officer contributes well to the school's health and drugs education programme. A great deal of effort is made to involve parents in their children's education and over a dozen parents work regularly in school. Their contribution is valuable and valued. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are particularly well informed and involved in their child's learning. There is good liaison with the adjoining Infant School and joint staff meetings are held. Links with other local primary schools and secondary schools are productive and helpful. There are few links with local business or industry.
28. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. It takes place mainly during assemblies, acts of worship, class discussions and circle time. In one assembly, pupils were asked to reflect on the reason for rules and how these affected everybody's lives. In a Year 3 art and science lesson, pupils not only considered the structure of plants but also their beauty and colour, thus bringing another dimension to their learning. The quality of the acts of worship is satisfactory and sometimes very good. An assembly presented by the chairman of the governors completely held pupil's attention and left a strong message with all the pupils. The assemblies are mainly Christian in character and provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own and other's lives through prayer and songs of worship.
29. Provision for moral development is good. Good moral attitudes are encouraged in all areas in the life of the school both in and out of class and pupils respond positively to this expectation. Pupils are well aware of the difference between right and wrong and can apply this to their own actions. All adults provide very good role models and constantly reinforce the expectation of good behaviour. The school and class rules are prominently displayed and they are presented in a positive form. Assemblies are used successfully to celebrate pupils' achievement and good behaviour.
30. The school develops the pupils' social skills well. Many opportunities are given for pupils to work in pairs and small groups, as seen in a science lesson on food chains, where pupils co-operated to good effect to complete the activity. In many ways pupils take responsibility for each other and the school community. For example, the very productive and well-organised Young Governor group. Older pupils produce introduction booklets for the new Year 3 pupils and look after them during their early days in the school. Library monitors organise a lunch-time story session and there is an effective monitor system. Class and longer residential visits help pupils to live and

learn together. Pupils are encouraged to think of others and they take initiative for fund raising for both local and national charities.

31. The schools provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils' own culture and historical culture have secure places in the curriculum through studies in history, geography, art and literature. Visits to places of cultural interest are arranged to support topics studied and the school is involved in local festivals. Pupils' understanding of the cultures of other countries is covered mainly in geography and religious education, with some limited links in art, such as in an art lesson on repeating patterns with the use of examples from India. The school has adopted an African child to support and has a link with a school in Russia. However, provision for giving pupils a clear understanding of the variety of cultures represented in today's society is underdeveloped.
32. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. This is a similar judgement to that made in the last OFSTED inspection report.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good. The school analyses pupils' Key Stage 1 national assessment results when they enter the school, in order to establish their attainment on entry. The pupils' attainment and progress are assessed twice a year in all subjects and the information from this is used to set individual targets for improvement. These are reviewed with the parents and pupils at consultation meetings. The end of Key Stage 2 test results are analysed annually to establish strengths and weaknesses in pupils' attainment. As a result of recent analysis, the school has placed more emphasis upon improving pupils' writing skills and on helping pupils with problem solving strategies in mathematics. The school acknowledges that it needs to increase the use of the information it gains from the analysis of test data, and to establish better the potential of all the pupils in order to improve standards in writing and mathematics even further. This is especially true for higher attaining pupils. There are very good procedures for monitoring pupils' progress in information technology and this contributes well to the rapid improvement the pupils make in the subject. The identification and assessment of pupils with special educational needs is thorough and accurate and as a result appropriate targets are set for improvements in their learning. Staff work well together to monitor and assess pupils' work and learning and share information gained. They know the pupils well. The school complies fully with the Code of Practice for special educational needs and liaises well with external agencies. The special educational needs policy has been recently updated. The school has just begun to identify those pupils who are more able and this has the potential to improve the provision for these pupils.
34. The school provides a safe and secure environment for all its pupils. For example, the headteacher and caretaker carry out a health and safety inspection of the premises each term and any issues identified are dealt with promptly. Emergency exits are clearly signed and appropriately located. Fire drills are held once a term and these are correctly recorded. A risk assessment has been completed with the advice and help of the fire service. There are no significant health and safety matters that give rise to any concern.
35. The school has a caring ethos, and parents commented on the kindness shown by staff towards pupils. Good procedures are in place to ensure child protection. The headteacher is the 'named person' and all staff have been fully informed of the steps

to be followed should they have any concerns over individual pupils. Pupils are well supervised at break and at lunch times, with the staff on duty having a clear view of all the play area. There is an adequate number of staff with current first aid qualifications, and when accidents do occur, they are dealt with promptly and effectively and are fully recorded. The school has a satisfactory medical room in which pupils can be treated. The school meticulously documents the requirements of pupils who need to take medication during the day and obtains the appropriate parental consent for this.

36. The school takes very positive and effective steps to promote good behaviour and attendance. Some parents expressed concern that the behaviour policy is not applied consistently in all classes, leading to poor behaviour to the detriment of other pupils. No evidence was found during the inspection to support this concern. On the contrary, classroom behaviour management by teachers was observed to be good. One of the sanctions for more serious misdemeanours is for pupils to be sent to the office at lunch-time where they are severely reprimanded by the headteacher. This procedure was observed and seen to be effective. Bullying and harassment are clearly not a problem at this school. Good attendance is encouraged by making the school an attractive and interesting place to be, hence pupils are keen to come to school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

37. The overwhelming majority of parents stated that their children like the school and are eager to come each morning. This is confirmed by the observation of pupils' very positive attitudes and their good attendance and punctuality. Some parents expressed concern, however, over a range of aspects of the school's provision. Most of these are related to difficulties that the school has experienced in the past and which have now been satisfactorily resolved. They are discussed in detail in the appropriate sections of this report. One concern, which was confirmed by observation, relates to the provision of extra-curricular activities. Although those that exist are of high quality and are enthusiastically supported by pupils, the range of such activities available is rather limited compared with that offered by similar schools. The school attempts to obtain the views of parents by sending out an annual questionnaire. The results are analysed and discussed by the governing body and the staff and influence practice. Overall, despite the criticisms of some parents, the majority of them are strongly supportive of the school.
38. Parents are kept fully informed and have good opportunities to discuss targets and reviews with the school. There are weekly 'surgeries' which are appreciated by parents. Good dialogue is maintained between home and school, which has a significant impact on learning.
39. The school keeps parents well informed on their children's progress. An annual written report on each pupil is produced in the spring term. This is of high quality and describes what the pupil is doing well and also the targets set to enable them to improve. This is followed at the end of the school year with a summary report which indicates how successfully or otherwise pupils have achieved these targets, together with the pupils' attendance record and (where appropriate) their test results. There are two formal meetings with parents each year at which attendance is virtually 100 per cent. The first is in the autumn term to assess how well pupils are settling into their new classes, the second in the spring term to discuss the written report. Some parents complained that as they only received the report when they arrived for the spring meeting they had insufficient time to digest it before they met the class teacher. The school accepts this criticism and has amended this practice. Parents

may, if they wish, have a further meeting with staff to discuss the summary report, and are welcome to meet class teachers or the headteacher at any time by appointment. There is a good quality fortnightly newsletter, which informs parents of all aspects of school life. Both the school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents are of a high standard, are reader friendly and fully meet legal requirements. Nevertheless, some parents were concerned that they are not being kept fully informed. The evidence clearly suggests that these concerns are not justified. Indeed, both the quality and quantity of the information the school provides for parents significantly exceeds that of many similar schools.

40. A number of parents come into school to assist teachers in the classroom on a regular basis, particularly with the Literacy Hour and with the Numeracy Strategy. Their involvement is well co-ordinated and planned, hence they make a significant contribution to the work of the school. Some parents also provide help for the school by accompanying parties of pupils on visits. A home-school agreement is in place and has been signed by all parents. Parents have welcomed the school's homework policy and they help their children with their work at home, particularly by hearing them read. There is an active parents' association, the 'Friends of Bidbury School', which strongly supports the school by organising fund-raising events and by providing refreshments at parents' evenings and at sports days. Liaison with the school is through a nominated teacher.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

41. The quality of the leadership and management of the school is good. The headteacher, key senior staff and governors share a strong commitment to improving standards and convey this clearly to the rest of the school's community. The headteacher provides calm and thoughtful leadership and supports staff well through her presence around the school and in teaching some groups of pupils. The recently appointed deputy headteacher has already strongly promoted higher standards through the use of the analysis of test data, to pinpoint specific weaknesses in pupils' learning, and by reviewing assessment practices. Governors are keenly involved in monitoring the progress the school is making towards meeting its targets for improvement and those who are able directly support teachers by working with pupils in and out of the classroom.
42. The governing body fully meets its statutory duties and makes a good contribution to shaping the direction of the school and by closely monitoring school improvement. Over the last two years it has become much more pro-active in its involvement in strategic planning. Governors now have committees to promote and review the effective working of the governing body and which have oversight of the schools strategic plan. Through this, all governors are now fully aware of their roles and responsibilities and the priorities for development. Individual governors have responsibility for supporting literacy, numeracy and special educational needs, as well as monitoring provision in these areas. This has had a good effect in making all governors more knowledgeable about the school's implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and National Literacy Strategy and the contribution these are making to improving the pupils' standards in English and mathematics. The governor with specific responsibility for special educational needs is very knowledgeable about the progress that these pupils make as they move through the school. She uses her dual role, as a governor with similar responsibilities in the attached Infants' School, to track pupils' progress from their initial identification through to the time they leave the Junior School. Governors are fully involved in setting targets for school improvement

and have set current targets for the headteacher and deputy headteacher which link closely with the school's determination to improve standards in mathematics and in writing.

43. The headteacher monitors the quality of teaching thoroughly throughout the school. She observes lessons and provides oral and written feedback to individual teachers about strengths and weaknesses in their teaching. This has resulted in improvements in teaching, particularly in positive behaviour management and in clearer and more focused planning. Subject managers all monitor teachers' plans to ensure that the pupils receive their entitlement to the school curriculum and the English and mathematics subject managers have also directly monitored, in classrooms, the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy. In this they have received useful training and support from the local education authority's attached inspector.
44. The school now analyses test data thoroughly to identify strengths and weaknesses in the pupils' attainment and to inform its future long and medium-term planning. This has resulted in the school implementing specific strategies to improve pupils' standards in writing, in problem solving and data handling in mathematics and to eliminate some under performance amongst boys in English. Although these strategies have been in place for a comparatively short period, indications are that improvements, particularly in pupils' standards in mathematics, have resulted.
45. There is a special needs governor who is well informed and fully involved in the life of the school. She meets regularly with the special needs manager. Special needs issues are discussed fully at governing body meetings and the manager for special educational needs handles the provision well. The additional funding for special needs is spent well and resources are good. The accommodation is used well to enable groups of special needs pupils to be taught within the classroom or in specific areas. The learning support staff are well qualified and experienced and make an effective contribution to the quality of support for the pupils.
46. The quality of the school's financial planning and budget monitoring is good. Governors and senior management staff carefully consider demographic trends, strategic priorities and future costs when setting the school's budget and this ensures that the school is financially secure. The school's financial officer works closely with the headteacher and members of the governing body to monitor spending and provides the full governing body with regular information about the school's financial position. Funds specifically earmarked to support the provision for pupils with special educational needs are used effectively, which makes a significant contribution to the good progress these pupils make. The school makes good use of new technology both within the curriculum and to support its administration. The school's administration is most effective and contributes strongly to the smooth running of the school and to pupils' welfare.
47. The school, through its governing body, constantly challenges itself to improve standards, has strategies for evaluating the effectiveness of its spending, canvasses parents' views on a range of issues and compares its standards with those of similar schools. This reinforces the school's commitment to improvement.
48. The school has an adequate number of teaching and support staff to deliver the curriculum. Where possible, the duties of staff are matched to their qualifications. Where this is not the case, for example some subject management posts, appropriate

training takes place using the good provision available from the local education authority. Good policies are in place for appraisal and staff development. Both of these activities are well established and indeed the school is hoping to obtain the 'Investors in People' award. All members of staff have an appropriate job description, which is reviewed as part of the appraisal process. Although there is as yet no written policy for the induction of newly qualified teachers, practice follows the national and local education authority guidelines and these arrangements are satisfactory.

49. The school building has a well-designed overall structure, which is conducive to good learning. Partitions have been erected to cut down on the noise intrusion mentioned in the previous report and these are generally effective. Even where class sizes are large, for example in Year 3, classrooms do not feel overcrowded as teachers make use of the resource areas in the wings when activities need extra space. However, there must be some concern that the hall is not big enough to accommodate such large classes for physical education. Standards of maintenance and decoration are high, though there are occasional problems with vandalism perpetrated by persons unconnected with the school. The school is set in delightful grounds, which are used well for both curricular and social activities.
50. Learning resources are at least satisfactory in all subject areas and in some subjects, mathematics, English, information technology and art, they are good. Particular mention should be made of the resources for information technology, which are used to good effect across the curriculum. Resources available to teach pupils with special educational needs are also good.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

51. In order to raise standards of attainment further the governors, headteacher and staff should:

(1) Improve pupils' attainment in mathematics by:

- considering grouping pupils according to their prior attainment in all mathematics lessons;
- improving pupils' skills in organising and handling data;
- encouraging pupils to check their calculations, oral and written, before firmly committing themselves to a final answer.
(paragraph numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 33, 42, 44, 63-71)

(2) Ensure that pupils attain at least average standards in writing by:

- improving pupils' attainment in spelling and punctuation;
- raising expectations of the quality of the presentation of pupils' written work;
- providing pupils with more systematic frameworks through which to record their ideas and knowledge in all subjects.
(paragraph numbers 1, 2, 4, 5, 13, 42, 44, 53-62, 86, 87)

(3) **Fully meet the needs of the higher attaining pupils by:**

- identifying more closely the level of work required to challenge them in all classes;
- more carefully addressing their needs in lesson plans;
- extending the scope and use of the register of the more able pupils.
(paragraph numbers 1, 7, 13, 16, 22, 33, 67, 74)

52. Other issues which should be considered by the school:

- the school should ensure that all teachers consistently mark work in such a way that is helpful for pupils and encourages them to improve.
(paragraph numbers 62 and 69)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	58
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	73

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	10	55	31	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	na	272
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	na	38

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	na	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	na	128

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	7

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	23
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	24

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.7
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	33	32	65

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	19	25
	Girls	19	18	25
	Total	36	37	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	55 (59)	57 (60)	77 (75)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	18	24
	Girls	17	20	26
	Total	32	38	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	49 (65)	58 (73)	77 (82)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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	1
Black – other	1
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	3
Chinese	0
White	263
Any other minority ethnic group	2

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	9	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: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27
Average class size	30

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	188

Financial information

Financial year	1998/1999
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	£
Total income	474354
Total expenditure	457431
Expenditure per pupil	1707
Balance brought forward from previous year	17541
Balance carried forward to next year	34464

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	272
Number of questionnaires returned	54

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	33	59	6	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	30	41	20	6	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	17	47	23	8	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	9	67	13	9	2
The teaching is good.	13	65	17	4	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	19	37	22	19	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	37	41	9	11	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	44	43	7	4	2
The school works closely with parents.	11	50	22	13	4
The school is well led and managed.	24	46	9	11	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	33	41	20	2	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	15	52	7	24	2

Other issues raised by parents

- Many parents praised the administrative staff for the care they provide for the children, particularly when they are injured or sick, and for the positive and prompt responses they provide for parents.
- There were many positive comments about the hard work and commitment provided by teaching and non-teaching staff.
- One or two parents felt that their children, who have special educational needs, had not been diagnosed early enough nor were their targets appropriate.

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE

CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

ENGLISH

53. The results of the national tests in English in 1998 for eleven-year-old pupils, were below the national average and in the national tests in 1999, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 was well below the national average and very few pupils reached higher levels. In comparison with similar schools, attainment is below average. The performance of boys in English was well below the national average whilst the girl's results were slightly better, being only below the national average. Comparison of test results from the last four years shows that the school's results have remained below the national average and were well below in 1999.
54. The inspection findings indicate that the proportion of pupils achieving at nationally expected levels is below the average, but that standards are improving. The evidence from the most recent work of the pupils in Year 6 shows that they are now below the expected level, rather than well below. However, attainment remains too low and has fallen since the last inspection. The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs now attending the school has an adverse effect on the average attainment of pupils in English. The introduction and full implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, booster classes for Year 6, additional literacy support and the increasing competence of the teaching staff are all having a positive impact on the pupils' learning in most lessons. In addition, teaching assistants and parent helpers, who receive appropriate training, make a positive contribution to pupils' learning.
55. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are in line with the expectation for eleven-year-olds. Nearly all the pupils speak confidently, if quietly, and listen very well to each other and their teachers. The higher attaining pupils use a wide range of vocabulary and are able to discuss sensibly and use rational argument. This was evident in the work Year 6 were doing on 'Whaling' and in their previous debate on 'Fox Hunting'. Good use is made of plenary sessions to enable pupils to develop their speaking skills and they talk confidently about what they have achieved in the lesson.
56. Standards in reading are average and nearly all pupils who were heard to read expressed an enjoyment of reading, a fact made apparent by their keenness to read to adults. Almost all pupils read with confidence and fluency, and the higher attaining pupils read with full expression. When faced with unfamiliar words, most pupils use a range of strategies to work them out and quickly correct their own mistakes. Pupils read from a wide range of texts and most pupils in Years 5 and 6 are free readers, choosing from the library a selection of novels as well as non-fiction books. They demonstrate good understanding of the content of what they read, and talk with confidence about plots and characters in stories by popular authors such as Roald Dahl, Jacqueline Wilson, Dick King Smith and J K Rowling. Pupils use scanning and skimming techniques when searching a non-fiction text for information. All pupils have developed good library skills and research skills, which they use effectively to support their learning, particularly in project work, as in geography.
57. By the age of 11, pupils' standards in writing are below what is expected for their age group. However, there are examples of Year 5 and Year 6 pupils writing for a good range of purposes and readers. This was seen in the play scripts, in Year 5, on 'Flannan Isle' where several pupils made good use of idiom and in imaginative stories such as 'Rachel and the Monster'. In Year 6, pupils write a few well constructed and

clearly written book reviews, as for Harry Potter and 'The Philosopher's Stone', and concise factual reports about a visit to the 'Mary Rose'. In Years 3 and 4, good use was made of the computer in word processing pupils' poems on such varied subjects as 'Spring', 'My Pet Cat' and 'Witches', the latter using the acrostic technique. Some good examples of Haiku poems were also seen.

58. Generally, pupils' grammatical knowledge is satisfactory and in all year groups higher attaining pupils also used alliteration, similes and metaphors with effect in their writing. Handwriting skills are just satisfactory but work is poorly presented and invariably carelessly spelt. Far too many simple spelling errors and punctuation mistakes occur in the recorded work of the pupils. However, there is much work on display that demonstrates the accurate use of punctuation and a development of vocabulary, using phrases and corrections to improve their style. The majority of pupils work too slowly and much of their written work is often unfinished. There are, however examples that show that when pupils receive sufficient challenge they produce work of an acceptable standard. The subject manager is aware of this and the school has begun to target particular groups who need special help to raise their attainment levels, through the introduction of 'Booster Classes' and 'Additional Literacy Support', and these are beginning to have an impact.
59. Pupils have good attitudes to their work and quickly settle down to the tasks set. The majority behave and listen well and in the Literacy Hour they concentrate during discussion time. They work successfully in pairs and make good use of the opportunities they receive to co-operate in collaborative work.
60. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is good and is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching and on pupils' learning. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills in science, history, geography, and religious education but some are not yet fully developed.
61. The quality of teaching and learning is good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Strengths of the teaching include well-planned and organised lessons, good control and management of pupils, which ensures that the pupils have a positive learning environment. Teachers identify clear objectives, which results in pupils knowing what they should achieve by the end of lessons. Lessons are conducted at a brisk pace with well-structured plenary sessions which provide pupils with opportunities to reflect on their learning. The best features of teaching were illustrated in the lessons in Year 6 that involved pupils discussing non-fiction texts and completing related tasks. The teacher's skilful questioning challenged them to think for themselves and to concentrate closely on the text. The pupils were encouraged to focus on paragraphs, headings and how to skim and scan to locate information quickly.
62. The policy and schemes of work in English provide pupils with a good range of worthwhile learning opportunities to develop their skills in literacy. Homework is used effectively to reinforce and extend what pupils have learnt in lessons. Information technology is well used in the subject particularly in Years 3 and 4. Assessment procedures in the subject are good and enable teachers to keep useful records, which inform their planning for different groups of pupils. However, marking of work is inconsistent and often perfunctory, and does not always include helpful comments to show pupils what they have done well and how they may improve. The subject manager is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and has monitored the subject closely throughout the school. There is a good range of resources to support teaching in

English and this includes a small well-stocked library, which uses a Micro Librarian computer system, run by four Year 6 pupils. The subject fully meets statutory requirements.

MATHEMATICS

63. The inspection findings show that whilst there has been a significant improvement in the quality of mathematics provision in the school since the last OFSTED inspection, attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is below the national average.
64. This judgement constitutes an improvement in standards made since 1999 when pupils' attainment in mathematics in national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 was well below the national average when compared with schools nationally and below the average of similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining Level 5 in the national tests is less than half the national average.
65. The previous inspection report shows mathematics to have been at a low ebb in 1996, indeed failing to fully meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. The standards and provision in the subject have been subsequently raised through effective action planning to improve standards in teaching and curriculum provision and by setting targets for future attainment. Since September 1999 a further boost to standards has resulted from the school's full and effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. Year 6 is targeted for extra teaching support for mathematics and pupils are set into five ability levels for productive, smaller group teaching.
66. Many current Year 6 pupils arrived in Year 3 with very low attainment in mathematics and a significantly high proportion of pupils have or have had special educational needs. At the age of 11, a majority of pupils are now able to think flexibly, quickly and accurately when working mentally with numbers. They put this range of thought strategies to good use in producing correct answers to verbal mathematical problems. They solve written problems systematically by identifying key features. They then use a full understanding of the potential processes and methods available to them to perform calculations and use estimation as a tool to approximate their answers. Pupils decide whether they will reach the correct answer by using addition, subtraction, multiplication or division, with many having a satisfactory recall of multiplication tables. They also know whether they can solve a problem mentally, using pencil and paper method or a by using a calculator, and many have satisfactory skills to confidently use any of these strategies. However, too many still commit themselves to answers, orally or on paper, too quickly without checking the accuracy of these and, as a result, make elementary mistakes.
67. Generally, good progress is being made in the subject across the school. Pupils with special educational needs are usually well supported during lessons and they too make good progress. However, there is some lack of challenge in the data handling aspect of mathematics, particularly for the higher attaining pupils. In Year 5, the measurement of angles is detailed and accurate and pupils decide whether angles are acute or obtuse. Through a challenging assessment activity which rounds off a topic and by using their understanding of the numerical equivalence of fractions, percentages and decimals, pupils create varied problem solving questions to match with a known mathematical answer. In Year 4, pupils estimate proportions and then practise these and other number skills in responding to a range of mathematical problems based on fractions of numbers. In work on shape, space and measures,

Year 3 pupils use newly learned mathematical language of movement. Most understand the meaning of horizontal and vertical axes and right-angled turns. They proficiently combine these two mathematical ideas to plan a route program for a robotic machine to be trialled in an information technology lesson. Whilst data handling is represented in the curriculum, there is insufficient rigour in its pursuit, particularly for the more able. The regular interrogation and evaluation of information in order to draw appropriate conclusions is lacking. The use of spreadsheets for the collating of data on the computers is at an early stage of development.

68. The quality of teaching is good overall with a range from excellent to satisfactory. The quality of learning ranges from very good to satisfactory and it, too, is good overall. There has been a clear improvement in teachers' expertise in mathematics since the last inspection, when it was part of a key issue for action. All teachers now have a good understanding of the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy as a result of the effective school training they have received. Teachers frame challenging open and closed questions which help pupils to think flexibly and extend their learning. Teachers usually have sensitive relationships with their pupils, who are willing to ask for help when they need it. Pupils' learning problems are usually quickly diagnosed during the lesson and individual help given. Teachers' medium and short-term planning meets standard requirements. They organise lessons so that time is used fully and gainfully. Teachers show an interest in, and commitment to, making the subject enjoyable for their pupils. They use praise effectively as a positive behaviour management strategy. The effect on pupils' learning is positive. Almost all pupils enjoy their mathematics. Teachers usually make a point of sharing the lesson objectives with pupils at the outset. In effective plenary sessions towards the conclusion of lessons, pupils celebrate their learning against the lesson objectives as they share their results with the rest of the class. Lessons are usually well paced and stimulating. Activities are interesting and worksheets usually well designed to meet pupils' needs and the objectives of the lesson. Work is usually satisfactorily matched to pupils' learning needs. All these factors help pupils to make secure progress in their knowledge, understanding and development of skills. Only in one instance during the inspection did an aspect of the design of a worksheet negatively affect the scope of learning for more able pupils.
69. Teachers have a good understanding of their pupils' attainment. Day-to-day assessment is satisfactory. Every teacher has a record book in which they keep information about pupils' learning. However, whilst pupils' recorded work is regularly marked, the overall quality of marking is variable and does not often provide pupils with guidance on how they may improve their work. Procedures for assessment are good. Mathematics tests are undertaken by pupils twice yearly. The results are used satisfactorily to plan new work to set targets for individuals and for whole-school performance in national tests.
70. Pupils' attitudes to mathematics are good. Many pupils say that it is their favourite subject. During mental calculation sessions, at the beginning of lessons, there is an eager sense of competition. This often sets the tone for the rest of the lesson. Pupils are frequently willing to share their strategies for mental mathematics with the rest of the class because they know their ideas will be valued. Behaviour is generally good. Pupils usually work well co-operatively and collaboratively and maintain good levels of concentration. Just occasionally there are lapses in behaviour where teachers' behaviour management strategies are not fully effective. The quality of pupils' presentation of their work is frequently unsatisfactory and lacking in pride. Where work sheets are used this is particularly the case, though presentation is also poor in

pupils' exercise books.

71. The leadership and management of the subject are good. These have significantly contributed to improvements in standards since the last OFSTED inspection. The governors, headteacher and subject manager are all well aware of the urgent need for this momentum to continue so that standards continue to rise. The structured nature of the National Numeracy Strategy successfully promotes a systematic development of knowledge, skills and understanding across the curriculum. The subject manager monitors teachers' plans, pupils' work and test results and efficiently manages a significant budget on the school's behalf. The headteacher and subject manager monitor the quality of teaching of the National Numeracy Strategy. The school has a very comprehensive range of mathematical resources to support the teaching of a broad curriculum. Resources used in lessons are usually very well chosen and organised. The subject manager has successfully organised resources so that every child in the school has a useful individual mathematics learning pack. Each contains such items as digit cards to hold up during mental number work, a number line and a hundred square. Further additions to the pack are planned as ideas for extending numeracy provision evolve.

SCIENCE

72. Overall attainment in science is satisfactory. This is a similar judgement to that made at the time of the last OFSTED inspection. Most pupils broadly achieve national expectations with few achieving beyond this. The proportion of pupils attaining Level 4 or above, in the 1999 end of Key Stage 2 national tests, was below the national average. In comparison with schools of a similar type standards were average. During the last three years there has been a deterioration in standards in science, compared to national results. This should be viewed in the context of an increasing number of pupils entering the school with special educational needs. Standards observed during the inspection do not accord with recent national assessment results. They indicate an improving trend throughout the school.
73. In all classes, pupils have opportunities to participate in practical investigations and as a result the majority of pupils understand the basic principles of experimentation. Pupils make careful observations and develop the ability to evaluate scientific evidence and make predictions. Pupils record carefully in a variety of ways depending on the age and ability of the pupil. The written records of the pupils are of a lower standard than their oral presentations. This acts as a constraint on progress and attainment, as does the limited vocabulary range of some of the pupils. Year 3 look at the conditions necessary for growth and pupils gain a good understanding of the effect of different conditions on plant life. Most pupils develop appropriate levels of knowledge and understanding about life and the living processes, materials, properties and physical processes. Older pupils understand the need for a fair test and apply this concept in their investigations. Time allocation to the subject is low in Years 3 and 4 but the planned work meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The limited time available in these years makes it more difficult for classes to carry out experimental work.
74. The quality of learning is generally satisfactory with some classes making good gains in their knowledge. Any unsatisfactory progress is due to teachers setting the higher attaining pupils work that is too easy. This is often linked to the demands made by the large numbers of pupils with special educational needs in the classes. Science is successfully related to other subjects, such as mathematics and design and

technology. In a lesson in Year 3, discussion on the wonder of plant life helped pupils gain a sense of spirituality. Most pupils draw on previous knowledge and experience to develop skills and understanding in new situations. Some older pupils make perceptive links between science and other subjects. Pupils with special educational needs make appropriate progress.

75. Pupils are highly motivated, mainly well-behaved, show curiosity, listen attentively and are interested in their work. Throughout the school, pupils co-operate well with each other and contribute confidently to class discussions. They use apparatus safely and are aware of health and safety issues. All pupils show a natural and productive curiosity for science.
76. The quality of teaching is satisfactory with a number of good features. In particular the revision programme for Year 6 was well presented and organised. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations of all the pupils, maintain a brisk pace and set clear learning objectives. Teachers use questions well to draw out ideas from pupils and advance their learning. They consistently emphasise the need to take a scientific approach to all enquiries when they involve pupils in practical work. This contributes well to the development of pupils' investigative skills. Teachers establish good relationships with pupils which encourages positive attitudes to the subject. Individual lessons are planned and prepared well and teachers make effective use of a suitable range of resources including the use of the local and school environment.
77. The subject fully meets statutory requirements. A whole school policy statement, long-term plans and the scheme of work for science are useful and well designed, ensuring continuity, balance, coverage and progression within the subject. This is an improvement on the judgement made in the previous OFSTED report. Assessment procedures are satisfactory, as is the monitoring of pupils' performance. The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The curriculum manager is new to the post but has already been instrumental in looking at ways to advance the science curriculum. There has been no significant improvement in standards in science since the last inspection but the school has realised this and is energetically addressing the issue.

ART

78. By the time the pupils leave the school they attain average standards in art. All pupils make suitable use of observation, memory and imagination. Younger pupils produce some high quality close observational drawings of flowers, showing careful use of line and colour. Throughout the school, a range of art techniques are used to good effect. Pupils of all ages talk about the work of named artists, appreciate and comment on their work. Some of the work in art is effectively related to the topics studied in other subjects. Younger pupils understand colour mixing and combinations and use the correct terms for different media. There is some evidence of three-dimensional work but this area is still underdeveloped. Some computer-generated graphics are productively used and attractive cards are produced. Pupils with special educational needs make appropriate progress. Pupils gain from their art experience and make satisfactory progress. Pupils build on previous knowledge and experience and amend and improve their work. They practise and improve their skills and products. There is a good balance between the two attainment targets and the requirements of the National Curriculum are fully met.
79. The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are planned and prepared carefully. Aims

are clearly stated and resources made available. Art homework is sometimes used as a good stimulus and introduction to the art lessons. This was seen to good effect in a Year 5 lesson on repeat patterns. Teachers use the work of acclaimed artists to illustrate and explore ideas and link to on-going themes and topics. The quality of learning is satisfactory and pupils gain from the various activities. In a lesson observed, good use was made of Indian art to illustrate repeated patterns. This also aids a greater cultural understanding. Most pupils are well motivated and concentrate well on their activities as individuals or in groups. They are well behaved, co-operate to good purpose and most make informed contributions to discussions. They make effective use of all the good resources available to them. Most pupils show a noticeable interest in art activities and a number demonstrate a sense of pride in their work. The subject makes a positive contribution to the pupils' cultural and spiritual experience. A popular art club, which includes the younger pupils, helps give a value and status to the subject.

80. There is a well-qualified subject manager who has produced a comprehensive scheme of work. There has been an improvement since the last OFSTED inspection in planning to ensure that pupils build on their skills progressively. There is now a scheme of work which provides helpful guidance for teaching staff.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

81. By the age of 11, pupils attain average standards in design and technology. This is a similar judgement to that made at the time of the last OFSTED inspection. Limited class lesson observation was made, but evidence from the scrutiny of previous work and information from planning, informed the judgement. Work covers the National Curriculum attainment targets, is often related effectively to the topic being studied and also to information technology and science. Pupils, when given the opportunity, achieve satisfactory levels in the complete design process. In some lessons, pupils suggest a range of imaginative ideas, test and evaluate their own designs and refine and improve their own work. Most pupils develop a satisfactory range of basic skills. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make appropriate progress. They build on previously practised skills and develop new approaches.
82. Pupils work with great interest, purpose, concentration and co-operation on model making with a variety of materials. Basic skills of cutting and assembly are carried out with care and accuracy and general safety is considered. Pupils talk confidently and clearly about their work and show an understanding of the nature of the materials used.
83. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Pupils are well managed and organised effectively. Most lessons are planned well, prepared carefully, with suitable materials made available. Older pupils are provided with sufficient resources including electric motors, gears and other mechanical equipment in order to design and construct at a higher level. Practical work is managed safely and efficiently. Instructions are given clearly and pupils are provided with positive support and encouragement, which enables them to complete their work. Much of the work is appropriately linked to the general topic being studied. In the best lessons, purposeful discussions with the teacher enable pupils to explore their own ideas and improve their work.
84. The curriculum is broad and balanced. However, assessment is underdeveloped and there is little systematic recording of attainment in the subject. The headteacher is acting as subject manager, on a temporary basis, and is keeping an effective holding

brief until a new subject manager is appointed. The level of resources, including tools and materials, is satisfactory. Satisfactory progress has been made since the last OFSTED inspection. Planning for the subject shows an improvement since the last inspection.

GEOGRAPHY

85. By the time they leave the school, the pupils attain average standards. This is a similar judgement to that made at the time of the last OFSTED inspection. Pupils have good attainment in their understanding of environmental issues and in their ability to carry out fieldwork. Pupils in Year 6, in their investigation into endangered species and pollution, write seeking information and opinion to a range of international and national organisations concerned with managing the environment, such as the National Rivers Authority, or in lobbying for preservation, such as Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth. They use this to formulate arguments for and against environmental issues and extend their literacy skills by writing poems and scripts for debate, to be used in class. In their work on Africa, pupils compile a simple spreadsheet to indicate up to eight different statistics, such as the capital city, population, land area and main crop for four African countries. In their field work, pupils categorise soils into Ph and R factors and indicate, through testing, whether they are acidic, neutral, or alkaline. When studying Chembakali, a community in Southern India, the pupils compare and contrast their own urban, European culture with that of an Asian, rural one. Weaknesses in pupils' attainment are in their lack of confidence and accuracy with key geographical vocabulary and in their untidy and often disorganised presentation. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
86. The quality of teaching is good overall. This is a good improvement since the last OFSTED inspection. Teachers plan lessons well, indicate the learning they expect to occur, the way in which the class will be organised and the resources to be used. This means lessons proceed at a good pace and that reference materials, such as atlases and geographical texts, are readily at hand to support pupils' learning. Most teachers have good subject knowledge and use this to enhance pupils' interest in geography to help them gain understanding of environmental issues and to develop their fieldwork skills. During lessons, teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and this means that they work together well in groups or independently. Teachers use homework well to promote pupils' research skills and to prepare them for new topics. This was evident in a very good Year 4 lesson, introducing the topic of rivers. The pupils came prepared with information they had gathered from texts, CD-ROM and the Internet. After an initial question and answer session, the pupils working in groups completed a chart indicating what a river is, how it forms, the stages of its course, wild life associated with a river and the names of major rivers in the United Kingdom and the world. The quality of the pupils' learning was very good as a result of the teacher's clear explanations, the high expectations of the quality and amount of work they would complete, and the range and accuracy of the geographical vocabulary the pupils would acquire. However, teachers do not consistently plan for pupils to develop key geographical vocabulary nor emphasise its use in lessons. Together with a lack of rigour in promoting well presented work, this represents a weakness in the teaching of the subject.
87. Pupils have good attitudes to their learning in geography. They listen attentively to instructions and explanations, are keen to spend time out of lessons researching topics and themes and are willing to explain to their classmates what they have found

out in their research. When required, pupils work co-operatively together and enjoy their lessons, particularly those in which they work on practical tasks. However, quite a number fail to take sufficient pride in the way in which they present their work.

88. The curriculum for geography is broad and balanced and provides pupils with a wide range of experiences to enhance their knowledge and understanding of their own locality and the wider world. The subject provides good links with mathematics when the pupils use scale and coordinates in map work and with information technology when they interrogate CD-ROM and the Internet to research topics. The pupils' social development is enhanced when they carry out field work in rural and urban settings and at an outdoor residential activities centre. When they study environmental issues this contributes well to their moral development. Pupils' cultural development is well promoted when they study life in Africa and India.
89. The quality of leadership and management of the subject is good. The subject manager has very good subject knowledge and enthuses staff to improve their skills through personal support and by arranging pertinent training, such as in fieldwork skills. The scheme of work provides a clear structure for teaching in each year group. The subject policy provides guidelines to promote a consistent approach throughout the school, and the subject manager has ensured that the subject is adequately resourced to enable pupils to extend their geographical knowledge and skills. Pupils' attainment and progress are assessed termly and this, together with the subject manager regularly monitoring samples of pupils' work, provides good information for teachers about the strengths and weaknesses in the pupils' attainment. The subject manager has very recently completed an audit to confirm that pupils need to develop more accurate geographical vocabulary, and improve their skills in the use of scale and identifying keys on maps. These now represent key issues in the geography development plan.

HISTORY

90. Pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in history are as expected at the end of Key Stage 2. During the inspection there were no lessons observed in history. There was, therefore, insufficient evidence to judge the quality of teaching and learning. Conversation with teachers and pupils and analysis of planning and displays show that pupils have a breadth of experience over the year and that there is a clear focus on historical learning within all topics. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. The standards indicated in the previous inspection have been maintained.
91. Years 3 and 4 pupils successfully develop the use of sources, for example books, maps, the Internet and computer, to find out about the past, as they carry out research into aspects of the lives of the Romans and Egyptians. They create interesting posters about the Romans, and for the capture of Boudicca. Their research and learning are reinforced well by activities linked with the visit of 'a Roman soldier' and visits to places such as Fishbourne.
92. By the end of the key stage, pupils develop a secure understanding of timelines and how, or why, things change over time. They order photographs and pictures, correctly identify the nature of the changes shown in them. They are interested in history and are keen to find out and learn about the past. Pupils enjoy handling artefacts and being history detectives. They talk with interest of the artefacts they see or handle on visits or in school and younger pupils comment how helpful it is to

study the River Nile in history before they learn about rivers in geography, 'because it makes it all easier to follow'.

93. The well-established links between history and other subjects, for example art and music, enhance the quality of learning for pupils. For example, in art pupils paint in the style of the Egyptians or sketch Tudor portraits. In music, they compose tunes for Tudor and Roman events. Pupils use designs inspired by Greek myths effectively when they decorate an unusual range of musical instruments and they use their knowledge of the Greeks' style of decoration on vases to celebrate special events, when they make vessels to celebrate their own lives. Visits and visitors give pupils an opportunity to enrich their learning further and the school makes good use of artefacts, which they borrow from the local loan services, to broaden and focus pupils' learning.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

94. Pupils attain average standards by the time they leave the school. This represents a significant improvement since the last OFSTED inspection when attainment levels were judged to be inconsistent and generally unsatisfactory. With the good level of provision now in place, the school is in a strong position to raise standards even further. There are several contributing factors to this improvement in standards. The school's curriculum has been successfully synthesised with the national information and communication technology curriculum recommended by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. It ensures a clear progression of knowledge, skills and understanding across the school. The recent acquisition of a well-organised computer suite with up-to-date equipment facilitates teaching more economically with large groups of pupils. Every pupil now has regular twice-weekly access to the information technology curriculum.
95. By the age of eleven, most pupils confidently combine information from different applications to create work for specific audiences. Year 6 pupils carefully plan and prepare a poster designed to help their peers to prepare sensibly for the days when they will be completing national tests. They quickly access a desk-top publishing program, using fluent manipulative skills with the mouse, and select attractive borders, colours and fonts to give their posters impact. They call in graphics from other programs and shrink or expand these to meet their needs. They access previous work independently and amend and store it from lesson to lesson. Pupils compose their own effective short musical pieces in common time on the computer. They access the Internet for information during topic work but only limited use is made of spreadsheets in data handling.
96. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in information technology as they move through the school. Good links are made with many areas of the curriculum. In Year 3, pupils systematically plan the pre-coded movements of a robotic machine during a mathematics lesson, which focused on shape and space. During an information technology lesson some pupils then excitedly activate the robots with experimental pre-programmed movements. Other pupils follow the same process using a simulator robot program on the computer. In Year 4, pupils extend the potential of a design and technology topic by preparing detailed instruction sheets on the computer. In doing so, they incorporate group photographs of themselves, filed in the computer, from the school's digital camera. Year 5, pupils design and produce large bright covers for their topic files. They too incorporate photographs and illustrations as they prepare a class newspaper, using

increasingly varied word-processing skills as part of a literacy topic.

97. The quality of teaching is very good overall and, due to this, the quality of pupils learning is good. The level of teachers' competence and confidence, which were criticised in the previous OFSTED report, have been effectively raised through successful in-service training and through the recruitment of computer-literate teachers. Teachers have very good subject knowledge. This enables them to plan exciting tasks, using sophisticated additional equipment, such as the digital camera. It also helps during practical sessions when trouble-shooting skills are needed quickly at a computer. Good teachers give clear introductions to lessons and provide back up with written step-by-step prompts for the less confident pupils to access programs independently. Careful planning and high expectations of behaviour are crucial to the success of lessons where at any one time only half the pupils will be engaged in working at the computers. In the lessons observed, well-designed tasks mostly succeeded in complementing the computer-based work, and pupils usually concentrate well when working independently. During information technology lessons, all the pupils, including those with special educational needs benefited from the sensitivity and expertise of a learning support assistant, who also helped pupils use the fully computerised library system.
98. Most pupils greatly enjoy their computer time. They are attentive during teachers' introductions and try hard to remember and to follow instructions. When they work in pairs, there is a good sense of collaboration and co-operation, with pupils, for the most part, stimulated and eager in their tasks. Just occasionally there are pupils less confident in finding their way around programs. They are well nurtured and supported both by the teachers and the support assistant. The pupils take great pleasure in finding their photographs filed on the computer and this personalisation of computer-based work very effectively boosts their self-esteem.
99. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The governing body, headteacher and subject manager, through considered decision making, have improved and re-deployed computer resources to maximise their use. They have effectively raised the profile for the subject since the previous OFSTED inspection. The subject manager has attended information technology courses and provides in-school support for teachers. He has also developed a secure curriculum overview on which teachers' long-term planning for learning is based. Although he has not monitored the teaching of information technology, he has carefully monitored computer use, teachers' plans and record keeping and has recorded his findings systematically and in detail. These have been fed back to teachers. With the support of other curriculum managers he is developing a useful library of software programs to fully support teaching and learning in all the subjects of the curriculum. He also organises an extra-curricular after-school computer club.

MUSIC

100. Pupils attain average standards by the time they are 11 years old. This is a similar judgement to that of the previous OFSTED inspection. The majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in lessons and over time. From entry into the school, teachers give pupils good opportunities to listen to music and this helps them to develop good listening skills and appraise the work of a wide range of composers. The younger pupils compose their own tunes on the computer and create their own graphic scores. These skills are developed well by the end of the key stage. Year 6 pupils use their graphic scores very effectively. For

example, they listen to the Planets Suite and contrast the dreamy, floating music of Venus with the warlike, strong music for Mars. They are aware of the contribution of its heavy percussion. They learn how major and minor chords are used for contrast and create their own score for 'Lost in Space', using major chords when the spaceman is happy and hopeful and minor ones when he is sad and lost. Pupils use the computer, keyboards and other tuned or untuned instruments for their composition. When learning about the 'Blues' pupils rise to the challenge set by the teacher to copy and improvise four and eight beat rhythms, clapping crotchet, quaver and semi-quaver patterns from a score. They learn to recognise the different notes quickly and all eyes are focused intently on the teacher as they wait to come in when she 'rests'.

101. Year 5 pupils respond immediately to the teacher's imaginative games, which demonstrate that they have a good understanding of pitch. They distinguish between high, medium and low notes with little difficulty so that they improve their singing of a simple three-note tune quickly. Pupils listen well to music on a tape and explain what they like about the balance of the singing clearly.
102. Teaching is good overall. There is clear evidence that teachers promote the acquisition of skills and knowledge across the school. Teachers provide an interesting variety of activities, using the computer and taped resources well. They make very effective interventions, which ensure that pupils learn what they should in the lesson. Although few staff have musical expertise they compensate with thorough planning and preparation. The use of a very well structured programme and appropriate tapes has increased teachers' confidence and ensures that all aspects of the programmes of study are covered during the year.
103. Pupils enjoy listening to music and playing instruments. They listen carefully and thoughtfully and find great pleasure in creating their own music. Pupils are very aware of the need to respond to each other and are very keen to clap, play or sing. They appraise each other's performance in a friendly, helpful manner and appreciate each other's contribution to the lesson. Several pupils have some experience of reading music through learning instruments, such as the recorder, guitar, violin or clarinet in school. The pupils who benefit from the skilled instruction of visiting music teachers enjoy opportunities to contribute to lessons, assemblies and performances in school. Pupils value the opportunities to participate in workshops with other schools and in school productions.
104. The subject manager has been particularly effective in planning for the use of information technology in lessons and this has added an interesting dimension to the subject. Resources are adequate for the subject at present but many instruments are old and well used and need replacement. More tuned percussion instruments are required to give a greater number of pupils an opportunity to play this type of instrument when composing. Listening to and appraising music makes an important contribution to assemblies.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

105. Overall, by the time they leave the school, pupils achieve average standards in physical education. This is a similar judgement to that made at the time of the last OFSTED inspection. Within this judgement, pupils' attainment in gymnastics is often good, it is average in swimming but below average in outdoor games. No dance lessons were observed and it is not possible to make a judgement about this aspect

of the subject. In gymnastics, pupils use their trunks, arms, legs and hands well to travel in different directions and at different speeds, both at floor level and using apparatus. They balance and turn well on beams and higher attaining pupils jump and land gracefully from them. When travelling at speed they avoid each other well and work safely. The pupils handle apparatus appropriately and some understand how to place mats in those positions most likely to ensure safe work on higher apparatus.

106. During a swimming lesson, for higher attaining pupils in Year 5, the only year group to swim in the school, pupils swam in competition, using front and back crawl and breaststroke. Several combined arm, hand and leg movement well to propel themselves quickly through the water and a few used good breathing techniques. By the time they leave the school around 70 per cent of the pupils swim 25 metres unaided.
107. Pupils' attainment in outdoor games is unsatisfactory for their age. Although some higher attaining pupils control a bouncing ball with their hand and send it accurately with hand or bat, too few do this with consistent control. Many lack the necessary knowledge or eye-hand co-ordination to perform the conventional techniques in tennis, handball or cricket.
108. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The teaching of gymnastics and swimming is often good. The main strengths of the teaching in these aspects include good subject knowledge and personal skills, which provide the pupils with good models to follow, enthusiasm for the subject to motivate the pupils and inject good pace in lessons and good attention to safety issues, such as the use of apparatus and warming up and cooling down the pupils before and after strenuous activity. In a good lesson about symmetric and asymmetric movement the teacher made good links with the pupils' work in mathematics and helped them improve their techniques through personal demonstration and by encouraging them to appraise each other's performance. Weaknesses in the teaching are linked to a lack of subject knowledge and confidence in teaching and managing outdoor activities and games. This sometimes results in some pupils making unsatisfactory progress in ball skills because they are not taught the basic techniques sufficiently well or as a result of some inept class organisation which leads to some silly behaviour. Strengths in pupils' learning, particularly apparent in their work in gymnastics and swimming, are their ability to build on previous skills and techniques and their willingness to appraise their own and their peers' performance in order to improve,
109. The vast majority of pupils have good attitudes to the subject. They enjoy physical education and co-operate well together particularly in gymnastics. Year 5 pupils worked very hard to improve their breathing techniques in a swimming lesson and pupils in Year 6 supported each other well during balancing work in a gymnastics lesson. A very few pupils, almost exclusively boys, sometimes act immaturely and do not follow instructions fully.
110. The school provides pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum in physical education. Teachers use the comprehensive scheme of work to organise a good balance of activity throughout the year and to ensure that the pupils are given good opportunities to swim safely. The quality of leadership and management of the subject is good. The comparatively recently appointed subject manager is enthusiastic about the subject and has good subject knowledge. This has already been put to good use to support, through training, less confident and knowledgeable

colleagues, especially in encouraging them to require the pupils to evaluate their own and other's performance. This has helped the pupils to improve their skills, notably in gymnastics and in swimming. In Year 5, the school has a comprehensive programme for swimming and provides more instruction time for those pupils who swim less well in order to give them the best opportunity to improve. There is a good subject policy, which provides clear guidance about the activities to be followed, safety issues and assessment. The subject makes a good contribution to other subjects particularly mathematics, through work on symmetry, and in history, through encouraging pupils to devise dances in the style of the ancient Egyptians. The subject manager is also aware of the limited provision for after-school sports clubs and the lack of opportunities for pupils to participate in competition with other schools, or at district or area level. This is a weakness in the school's provision compared with schools of a similar type. At present the only after-school activity in which pupils can further their physical development is a dance club which is attended by around 20 pupils, all girls. Pupils in Year 5 do have the opportunity for a residential visit to a local outdoor activities centre, where they participate in a range of physical pursuits including orienteering. Those pupils who are unable to attend this, visit another centre for a day's programme of physical activities. Overall, the school provides adequate resources to support the pupils' learning, although there is a lack of dance music from other than European cultures. The outdoor accommodation is good with a large hard standing area and a grass pitch and athletic areas. The school hall which accommodates gymnastics and dance lessons, is rather small and restricts activity for those classes which have large numbers and for the older, bigger pupils.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

111. The standards reached by the great majority of pupils at the end of Year 6 are at the level expected for their age. Their knowledge of Christianity, its main beliefs and rituals meets expectations. Pupils have a good knowledge of the story of Lord Krishna and Rada and this leads to a sound understanding of virtues and vices. Pupils have an opportunity to reflect on their feelings about matters of deep significance in their lives. Pupils are confident and secure in using the language of feeling in describing how people such as Helen Keller, Anne Frank, Joan of Arc and Pocohantes must have felt when faced with adversity. Most are confident in their understanding of the differences between Christian beliefs and practices and those of Hinduism.
112. Throughout the school pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in their development of religious knowledge and in applying what they learn to their lives. In Year 3, they progress steadily in the development of their awareness of Christian beliefs and ceremonies and in their capacity to describe them. Their time line of Holy Week showed that they understood the significant happenings during the build up to Easter. In Year 4, their understanding of the differences and similarities between Christian and other faiths further developed. They obviously took pleasure in celebrating the Festival of Holi in assembly, even if they did not get the chance to throw paint! In Year 5, Hinduism is developed further, but at the same time Christianity is still the centre of their learning. Year 6 pupils compare and contrast Roman Catholic and Anglican traditions using Henry VIII as an interesting starting point. The displays illustrating the different Creation stories had obviously intrigued the pupils and brought home to them the close similarities of many religions.
113. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good and they behave well in lessons. Most pupils

are interested in all matters related to religious and moral beliefs and practices. They are willing to discuss their own beliefs and feelings. They share ideas when the opportunity arises and are eager to share and justify their own beliefs and anxieties about matters they find puzzling.

114. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. A strength of the better lessons is when teachers' draw out the pupils to express their own innermost feelings and thoughts. Assemblies enhance the teaching of religious education. Some teachers have a limited knowledge of the subject. However, they prepare lessons carefully in relation to the scheme of work. The subject has continued to develop satisfactorily since the previous OFSTED inspection and the quality of leadership and management is good. The new subject manager has recently up-dated the programmes of study to develop the pupil's knowledge and understanding further. The subject meets the requirements of the school's adopted syllabus.