

INSPECTION REPORT

ST DENYS PRIMARY SCHOOL

St Denys, Southampton

LEA area: Southampton

Unique reference number: 116102

Headteacher: Mrs C Fayle

Reporting inspector: Mr M S Burghart
20865

Dates of inspection: 21st – 24th May 2001

Inspection number: 19366

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Dundee Road
St Denys
Southampton

Postcode: SO17 2ND

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr G Flather

Date of previous inspection: January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20865	Mr M S Burghart Registered inspector	Mathematics; Information and communication technology; Art and design; Religious education; Special educational needs; English as an additional language.	What sort of school is it? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? Areas for improvement.
9487	Dr F Hurd Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
20671	Mr J Palethorpe Team inspector	Science; Design and technology; Music Physical Education; Equal opportunities.	The school's results and pupils' achievements.
20977	Mr R Thelwell Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage; English; Geography; History.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	19
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	20
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	23
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	24
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Denys Primary School is situated in Southampton. The school is housed in Victorian buildings, modified significantly to provide accommodation for seven classes. There are 202 children on the school roll aged from four to eleven. Numbers have decreased slightly since the last inspection. All classes contain children from single year groups. There is an average of 29 pupils per class. Currently there are 24 children in the reception class. Pupils are drawn from the local surrounding area, predominantly from rented accommodation. Nearly all pupils have had some kind of pre-school education. However, their attainment on entry to the school is below average. There are 86 pupils on the special educational needs register. This accounts for 42.5 per cent of the school roll, and is almost twice the national average. One pupil has a formal statement under the terms of the DfEE Code of Practice¹, which is below the national picture. Sixty-three children are known to be eligible for free school meals, which at 31 per cent is well above the national average of 19.7 per cent. Nineteen pupils require extra support as a consequence of having English as an additional language. As a proportion this is above the national average. The headteacher has been in post for five terms and is supported by seven full time, and one part time, teachers. During the inspection the Year R teacher was on maternity leave and the Year 6 teacher was on long term sick leave, both classes were taught by temporary staff. In reception this cover was for the whole term, but the Year 6 replacement had not worked in the school before the inspection. The teacher in Year 4 had only been in post for three weeks prior to the inspection, following a period of uncertainty for that class.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

At St Denys Primary pupils and staff get on well together. Literacy and numeracy are usually effectively taught and pupils make sound, and frequently good, progress from below, and in some cases well below, average from when they first arrive. Provision for the Foundation Stage² is a strength of the school. The high proportions of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are well provided for. Although standards are generally below national expectations by the time pupils leave, the school usually performs at least as well as and sometimes better than, similar schools. The profile of teaching over time is satisfactory, with good features in the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1³ and Year 5. Weaker teaching at the top of the school since September 2000, and deficiencies in monitoring, have had negative effects on standards of work in Year 6. Improvements in management and strategic planning since the head was appointed five terms ago are having positive effects, but a high turnover of staff has had restricting impacts on delegation and monitoring. The school presents a very good learning environment which benefits pupils' personal development in particular. Pupils respond and behave well and relationships are good. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Children in the Foundation Stage make a good start because provision is very good.
- The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been introduced well with positive effects on pupils' achievement.
- Standards in design and technology are good.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are good.
- Moral, social and cultural provision is very good.
- Provision for special educational needs is good.

¹ The DfEE Code of Practice gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities to ensure that all pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

² From September 2000, the term Foundation Stage refers to children's education from the age of three until the end of the reception year.

³ Key Stage 1 refers to pupils in Years 1 and 2 aged five to seven.

What could be improved

- The quality of monitoring, especially of the coverage of planned work to ensure the balance of the curriculum, particularly at Key Stage 2.
- Provision for Year 6 to guarantee standards, especially for science, geography and history.
- The quality of science provision.
- Improving the standards in information and communication technology still further.
- The quality of physical education teaching.
- Acts of collective worship to meet statutory requirements.

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 satisfactory progress overall against the four key issues raised by the last inspection in January 1997. The most significant progress has been over the last year. Good progress in focusing the teaching of reading and writing means that pupils make at least sound progress. Subject planning has been improved. Under a new head, documentation and strategic management confirm the school's educational direction. There are better structures and procedures to ensure the management of subjects. However, there is more work to do in developing rigorous monitoring to confirm coverage and standards. Assessment and analysis of pupils' performance is now established in core subjects. Procedures to follow up absences are now in place. In addition literacy and numeracy have been successfully introduced. Modifications to the building have improved facilities, notably to toilets and the entrance hall. The quality of teaching observed is better than during the last inspection. Although there are some uncertainties in staffing, the school is appropriately placed for future development.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores⁴ in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	C	D	E	C	well above A average above B average average C below average D well below E average
Mathematics	A	E	D	B	
Science	A	D	B	A	

The table shows that compared with national expectations pupils left the school in 2000 above average in science; well below in English and below average in mathematics. However, the school's performance was better against similar schools⁵. Trends are hard to establish because of the variable levels of special educational needs in each year group,

⁴ Average point scores refers to the average of pupils' scores weighted by Ofsted for each level attained in each subject.

⁵ Similar schools refer to those with between 35 and 50 per cent free school meals.

but they are broadly in line with the national picture. Because of staffing difficulties pupils currently in Year 6 have not covered all aspects of the National Curriculum in sufficient depth and their performance in 2001 tests may not be as successful. Presently standards in science are below average at the end of Key Stage 2. Standards in English although still below average have been improved as the result of the National Literacy Strategy. Attainment in numeracy has benefited from the national strategy and is now average. However, other aspects of mathematics are below average for eleven year olds.

In tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000 pupils' performance, on the basis of average points score, was below the national average in writing and mathematics, and well below in reading. However, performance was in line with similar schools and above in mathematics. Early indications for assessments made in 2001 show improvement, notably in mathematics. Children who start school below average make good progress in reception with the majority achieving the required Early Learning Goals⁶ before entering Year 1.

Standards in art, music, physical education and religious education are in line with expectations at the end of both key stages. Attainment is above expectations in design and technology at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards are satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 1 in information and communication technology (ICT) but the new, more exacting requirements for the subject are not yet fully met at Key Stage 2 and pupils' attainment is below expectations. Geography and history standards are satisfactory at the end of Year 2 and Year 5, but as a result of underemphasis, poor at the end of Year 6. Although pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language attain generally below national expectations they make good progress in response to good provision.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good: pupils enjoy school and most are keen to learn and take part.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good: despite those who can, and occasionally do present problems.
Personal development and relationships	Good: pupils take responsibility and, when given the opportunity, show initiative. Relationships are good.
Attendance	Well below the national average with above average unauthorised absence which is the result of a very few families. Improvements being achieved through better systems and good links with the education welfare officer.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good.	Good.	Satisfactory with good features.

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.

⁶ QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) has produced a set of 'Early Learning Goals', comprised of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the time they enter Year 1. There are six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literature; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development; and physical development.

The quality of observed teaching during the inspection was good. Ninety-one per cent of lessons were satisfactory or better, with 63 per cent good or better and 25 per cent very good. Teaching was consistently good, and often very good, for the Foundation Stage, substantially good at Key Stage 1 and very good in Year 5. At Key Stage 2 observed teaching was predominantly good but statistics are distorted by the high quality teaching delivered in Year 6 by the teacher only employed for the inspection. A combination of observation and work sampling confirms that teaching and learning are secure at Key Stage 1. However, poor coverage of work particularly in science, geography and history between September 2000 and April 2001 especially in Year 6 shows aspects of teaching and learning to have been unsatisfactory. Consequently the quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is not judged as good as Key Stage 1. The school's profile of teaching over time is judged as satisfactory.

Strengths in teaching are in some literacy and numeracy lessons, the Foundation Stage, Year 5 and design and technology. Relationships are good and in most cases pupils are well managed. Weaknesses arise from teachers' lack of knowledge and understanding in science and physical education at both key stages; pupils inappropriately challenged; and occasionally the slow pace of lessons. Because of these, five lessons observed were less than satisfactory. Teaching and support for the high proportions of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is good from teachers, learning support assistants and outside agencies.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Appropriate planning in place, but aspects of some subjects are underemphasised with a negative effect on the balance of the curriculum at Key Stage 2. Requirements for science and ICT not fully met. Gaps in Year 6 work this year. Very good provision for the Foundation Stage.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision and still improving. Learning support assistants make a positive contribution. Good individual education plans support learning effectively.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good well targeted support. Contributions from the local education authority service enable pupils to progress well.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall, with moral, social and cultural elements very well planned for. Spiritual satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good: a secure building. Child protection issues well catered for. Sound assessment procedures in core subjects with opportunities in other subjects now being planned for.

The school is popular. It maintains a good partnership with parents and the community. Parents support the school well in fundraising, helping in class and joining in practical projects such as redecorating.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good vision of the head confirms educational direction and strategic planning. However, roles of senior managers and coordinators not fully established to guarantee standards through full coverage of the National Curriculum.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are supportive. Sound contribution to financial control. However, statutory requirements not met for science, ICT or acts of collective worship. More to do to develop knowledge of curriculum issues.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good analysis to evaluate the needs of the school; good school development plan. However, monitoring of the curriculum, teaching and standards in need of improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Best value principles followed. Accommodation and resources used effectively to produce a very good learning environment. Finances well managed; good links between finance and curriculum needs.

The school has had a high turnover of staff. Six out of eight teachers, including the head, have been appointed in the last two years. This has resulted in a lack of monitoring and gaps in the curriculum especially at Key Stage 2.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is approachable. • It is well led and managed. • Expectations are high. • Pupils are helped to be mature. • Children like school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework: too much or too little. • Curriculum information available to parents.

Through the Ofsted questionnaire and at meetings with inspectors parents expressed their support for the school. Inspectors find that changes of staff have led to some inconsistency in provision for homework, but overall it is managed effectively. The school is aware of the need to ensure consistency of information concerning curriculum details available to parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In 2000, the percentage of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 reaching Level 2 or above in reading and writing was well below the national average, but in mathematics it was high in comparison with the national average. When compared with schools with similar circumstances, results were average for reading and writing, but high for mathematics. Trends over the last four years have generally been upward, although the reading results were slightly down in 2000. The school attributes this to the relatively small size of the year group, where one pupil equates to 3.3 per cent, and the high number of pupils on the special needs register. This explanation is convincing and well founded.

2. When average point scores are considered the school's performance at Key Stage 1 in 2000 was well below the national average in reading and below average in writing and mathematics. Compared with similar schools results showed reading and writing to be average and mathematics above average.

3. The percentage of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 reaching the expected level, Level 4, or above in English and mathematics was well below the national averages, whilst in science it was close to the national average. When compared with similar schools, results were well above in science, below average in mathematics, and well below the national average in English. Results have fluctuated over the last four years, again due to the size of year groups and the variation in each year group of the number of pupils with special educational needs. In 2000 in science, these were the best results the school had achieved, and in English and mathematics there was a slight rise on 1999. Realistic, but challenging, targets are set each year. They were exceeded in English by five per cent but missed in mathematics by three per cent in 2000.

4. Compared with all schools nationally on the basis of average point scores the school's performance at the end of Key Stage 2 was well below average in English, below in mathematics and above in science. Against similar schools St Denys was average in English, above in mathematics and well above in science in 2000 tests for eleven year olds.

5. Assessment on entry to the school shows the majority of children have levels of attainment below those expected for their age. The school makes very good provision for its young children. Those now in reception make good progress, and a number of higher attaining children have already achieved the officially recommended learning goals. Nearly all others are on line to achieve the expected levels by the time they leave reception.

6. As a result of the last inspection, when overall standards were below average at the end of both key stages, the school has focused more closely on the teaching of reading and writing. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, a detailed analysis of assessment results, the development of assessment procedures and the setting of personal targets for writing, have all had a positive effect on pupils' learning. Whilst standards remain below expectation for a significant minority of pupils, bearing in mind the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, this represents sound, and for many pupils, good achievement.

7. Results of 2000 tests for those at the end of Key Stage 2 show that pupils leave the school below the national average in mathematics. However, pupils' performance was better than those in similar schools. Since then the National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced and the school has made a concerted effort to improve standards in pupils' number work. Most pupils are now in line with national age related expectations in numeracy. With 42.5 per cent of pupils on the special educational needs register and a below average profile of children's attainment in mathematics on entry, this is a creditable

achievement. However, standards in other aspects of the subject (shape, space and measures; data handling and investigative and experimental work) remain below average. The school is aware of this and plans to redress the underemphasis on these elements to improve the balance of the mathematics curriculum.

8. In science, inspection findings show that attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with the national average. Bearing in mind the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs, this represents good achievement. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is below the national average. This is largely due to insufficient coverage of the National Curriculum since September in Year 6. Much of the work pupils have done is in line with or above expectations. However, problems with staffing, teaching and monitoring have meant that pupils have not covered the curriculum in sufficient breadth or depth, therefore hindering progress and achievement. The inconsistency in progress and standards in different year groups was evident in the last inspection, and has not improved sufficiently.

9. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) have been maintained at Key Stage 1 and are in line with national expectations. At Key Stage 2 pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 is below new, more rigorous, expectations for the subject. However, this is because of the lack of opportunity and elements of the statutory curriculum which there has not been time to cover. The school is aware of this and planning seeks to ensure that pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 will have completed all aspects before they leave. At Key Stage 1 the school has done well to get pupils to the required standard.

10. At the end of both key stages standards of religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. A very positive feature of the subject is the progress pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 make in understanding the customs and beliefs of different religions.

11. Standards in art are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. This is an improvement over the previous inspection where pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 was criticised.

12. In design and technology, attainment at the end of both key stages is above national expectations for pupils of this age, which is slightly better than when the school was last inspected. All pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language achieve well because of appropriately matched work and good support from learning support assistants.

13. At the time of the last inspection, standards were satisfactory at the end of each key stage in geography. At the end of Key Stage 1, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress and achieve nationally expected levels. At Key Stage 2, pupils make appropriate gains in their geographical skills and understanding up to, and including Year 5. However, in Year 6, poor provision is the major factor leading to unsatisfactory levels of attainment.

14. The previous inspection found standards to be sound in history at the end of both key stages. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress in their development of historical knowledge and skills. By the end of Key Stage 1, attainment is consistent with national expectations. Similar levels of achievement are confirmed at Key Stage 2, for pupils up to and including Year 5. However, in Year 6, provision for these pupils has been poor and prevents them from achieving levels of which they are capable. Consequently, standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are poor.

15. In music, pupils throughout the school attain the standards expected for their age and enjoy music making activities. This includes pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language and is similar to judgements made in the last inspection.

Lessons are taken by a specialist teacher who visits for one day each week. This is supplemented by visiting instrumental teachers for violin, flute and clarinet, which enables the more able pupils to achieve well.

16. In physical education, standards are in line with those expected for pupils of their age in both key stages. However, there are areas of higher attainment, such as very good dance in Year 5 and good games skills in Year 6. This is an improvement on the standards reported in the last inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

17. Overall, pupils have good attitudes towards learning. The overwhelming majority enjoy coming to school and are enthusiastic about their work. This is particularly the case in the reception class, where children are confident, independent and happily settled into school. However, older pupils are sometimes so keen to start work that they fail to listen to teachers' instructions. A few with identified behavioural and emotional difficulties are defiant towards their teachers and have a negative effect on their own and other pupils' learning. Behaviour is generally good. In 96 per cent of lessons observed during the inspection pupils' attitudes and behaviour were judged to be satisfactory or better, and in 62 per cent of lessons attitudes and behaviour were judged to be good or better. In the reception class, children's attitudes and behaviour were never less than good and in 67 per cent of lessons very good or better. Most behaviour at Key Stage 2 was satisfactory and most behaviour at Key Stage 1 was good. Most pupils are friendly and welcoming towards visitors, eager to discuss their work and their school. They accept responsibility in the classroom or around the school enthusiastically, and are well behaved in the lunch hall and when taken out of school on visits. There were no exclusions in the last academic year. However, a small minority of pupils were observed being rude and defiant towards school staff during lessons. Nevertheless, most pupils do not see this as a reason to behave likewise, but try to continue their work despite the bad example given by someone else. Even when teaching is not satisfactory the majority of pupils do not misbehave. No bullying or oppressive behaviour was observed during the inspection, and bullying is not seen as a problem by parents or staff. Children from different racial backgrounds have warm friendships and children show interest and tolerance towards the beliefs of others.

18. Relationships between pupils are relaxed and tolerant. It is noticeable at playtimes that children of different ages, sexes and ethnic groups play together of their own choice. Older children are thoughtful and caring towards the younger ones: it is not uncommon to see Year 5 or 6 children walking about the playground holding hands with two smaller friends. Clearly there are usually good relationships between children and adults at the school, both teaching and non teaching. The many recent changes in the teaching staff have made it more difficult for pupils to form close relationships with their class teachers.

19. The attendance rate is unsatisfactory, being well below the national average (93.2 per cent as against 94.4 per cent nationally) and the unauthorised absence well above (2.0 per cent as against 0.5 per cent nationally). However, the school has identified a very small number of pupils whose attendance is very poor. If the records for these pupils are removed from the statistics, the unauthorised absence level drops to 0.7 per cent. While this is still above the national average, it is a marked improvement. The vast majority of children arrive punctually for school each day and classes start on time with little disruption from late arrivals.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. The quality of teaching at the time of the last report was satisfactory with 11.4 per cent judged very good and 9 per cent less than satisfactory. Overall teaching has been improved. Of the 55 lessons observed, which included all teachers, 91 per cent were satisfactory or better, 63 per cent good or better and 25 per cent were very good. As a result the quality of observed teaching was judged good. All teachers were judged as

teaching at least one lesson at the good level and five at the very good level including temporary teachers. All lessons for those in reception were at least good and for 67 per cent very good. Teaching here is a strength of the school and over the whole school year has been responsible for children's good, and in some cases, very good learning and progress with the majority of children of below average attainment on entry still achieving Early Learning Goals before Year 1. Teaching at Key Stage 1 was predominantly good with particular strengths in Year 1 where seven out of nine lessons were at least good. At Key Stage 2 during the inspection 59 per cent of lessons were good or better with 28 per cent very good. However, the temporary teacher working with Year 6 for only the four days of the inspection was responsible for nearly 20 per cent of good or better lessons in this key stage. When these statistics are removed from the profile it is clear that, whilst there are strengths particularly in provision for Year 5, the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is judged satisfactory, being less successful than Key Stage 1.

21. Work sampling evidence points to weakness in teaching for Year 6 during this school year and up to five weeks prior to the inspection. A low level of recorded work in terms of quality and quantity has not always been effectively marked. Such work does not show that pupils have covered all required elements of the National Curriculum. Pupils have not received their full entitlement. There are obvious gaps: for example in science, geography and history and this was confirmed in discussion with pupils in this year group whose knowledge and understanding were found lacking.

22. Strengths in teaching evident in the Foundation Stage and both key stages are in:

- The consistent management of behaviour using the school's good system effectively;
- Making objectives clear to pupils at the start of lessons and referring back to them at the end. This is particularly effective in literacy and numeracy sessions which are well planned and often well taught;
- Relationships between staff and pupils which are, for the most part, good and are partly responsible for pupils' good attitudes;
- Good support for the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language: for example learning support assistants making a good contribution to teaching groups; and teachers planning work for different levels of ability, as was demonstrated effectively in a Year 2 mathematics lesson;
- Design and technology teaching which ensures that pupils have a good understanding of the design, make, evaluate process and that standards are above national expectations by the time pupils leave the school, most evident in Year 5.

23. There are good incidences of staff making good use of resources: for example in a variety of religious education lessons where teachers encourage pupils to handle artefacts from a range of religions with good effects on children's understanding. Although parents have concerns, teachers make appropriate use of homework to support the curriculum.

24. Weaknesses in teaching, other than those already stated, include:

- Teachers' lack of knowledge and understanding of science and physical education. The former resulting in incomplete coverage of the National Curriculum programme of study, and the latter in pupils being insufficiently challenged by activities and time not well used;
- A lack of pace and challenge in some lessons: for example in a Year 4 religious education lesson where expectations of what pupils needed to do in a given time were too low and resulted in pupils making too little progress;
- Insufficient use of information and communication technology to support other subjects. The school is aware of this and plans are in hand to improve the use of ICT once new resources are established for September 2001.

25. The senior management team and the curriculum co-ordinators are charged in their job descriptions with monitoring the quality of teaching. However, this has yet to prove

effective in ensuring the full curriculum is appropriately covered and emphasised. Monitoring works best in literacy and numeracy which have been a focus for whole school development. It is least effective in science where, prior to the very recent appointment of the new co-ordinator, gaps in the management of the subject (particularly in the monitoring of teaching) have negatively affected pupils' opportunities.

26. Changes in staffing (and the still uncertain situation regarding Year 6) have affected stability and the quality of teaching on offer especially for Key Stage 2 pupils in this academic year. When all things are considered, the school's profile of teaching over time is judged satisfactory. The headteacher has worked hard in five terms at the school to try to raise teaching standards through staff appraisal and their professional development. There is a need to share this responsibility more widely to involve the senior management team and co-ordinators more effectively in these processes and further improve teaching.

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

27. The school provides a very good programme of studies for children in the Foundation Stage. It covers all areas of learning, and links well with the early stages of the National Curriculum. For pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2, the planned curriculum covers all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Although the curricular provision for pupils in Key Stage 1 is broad and balanced, overall provision, together with equality of access to the curriculum, is unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2, and poor for pupils in Year 6. Due to a lack of monitoring of subject provision, quality of teaching, and pupils' work, the school has failed to deliver the full requirements of the National Curriculum for science. Whilst the school does not yet meet all statutory requirements for information and communication technology, plans are in hand to address the situation. Although the school makes good provision for teaching numeracy skills, work relating to other aspects of the mathematics programme has been underdeveloped at both key stages. Provision for geography and history is unsatisfactory for pupils in Year 6; this has a negative impact on standards achieved.

28. A positive feature of the curriculum at both key stages is the good provision for English. The successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, together with a programme of staff training, has, in addition to addressing the issue within the last report to 'focus more closely on the teaching of reading and writing', had a positive effect on pupil achievement. There is a clear and effective programme for personal, social and health education, including drug awareness and sex education, about which parents are fully informed.

29. Curriculum planning is good. In response to the recommendations of the last inspection, the school has now put in place policies and schemes of work for each subject. However, the guidance given to staff regarding marking and homework is not always applied in a consistent manner. In the case of homework, the inspection team agrees with a number of parents who, on their returned questionnaires, indicated their concerns regarding the provision of homework.

30. Good support is given to pupils with special educational needs. This provision, supported by effective classroom assistants, enables pupils to make good progress in relation to prior attainment, and to targets set within individual education plans. The school has a clear special educational needs policy that meets the requirements of the Code of Practice for special educational needs. Documentation for these pupils is clear and well managed. Individual education plans provide detailed targets, appropriate to the needs of each pupil, and are reviewed regularly. Support for pupils with English as an additional language is effective in ensuring their ongoing development of language skills.

31. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of extracurricular activities which include provision for sporting, musical, cultural and creative interests. It is further enhanced by a

good number of visitors and visits and field trips made to a range of places to support studies within subjects that include geography, history and religious education. Educational links with the community are satisfactory. In addition to singing to elderly residents at a nearby home, pupils have worked with local inhabitants on an oral history initiative, and with members of an Asian Elders Day Centre, as part of a 'story sack' project.

32. The provision made by the school for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. The school has successfully maintained the quality provision noted in the previous report.

33. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Although the daily acts of worship do not always comply with statutory requirements, they contribute to pupils' spiritual development by creating a calm and reflective mood, and through the playing of appropriate music. Stories and themes, such as 'Feelings' are used to good advantage to encourage pupils to reflect on personal values, and for the consideration of others. Further opportunities for contemplation are given within lessons, and, as in the case of Year 2, by the creation of a curtained off 'special place'. Within the area, complete with artefacts of worship from several faiths and well-loved teddies, pupils sit in a calm manner to think about those places held special, not only to themselves, but to others. Opportunities to grow plants allow pupils to observe and appreciate the wonder of growth. Visits to places of worship enable them to marvel at the grandeur of buildings, as well as supporting their understanding of the values of other faiths.

34. Provision for moral development is very good. A high priority is given to equipping pupils with a clear set of moral codes. Values that encourage respect for others are effectively promoted through the curriculum and through the school's 'Golden Rules'. Staff are good role models. They actively encourage collaborative learning and sharing of resources and taking turns. These habits are successfully instilled in reception, where children adapt quickly to the expectations of the school. Pupils are given a clear sense of right and wrong. They are taught to show consideration for other people, property and the environment, and are encouraged to appreciate how their actions affect others. The emphasis placed on care and consideration of the wider community gives pupils a clear understanding of those who are less fortunate than themselves. In response to this, pupils actively work to sponsor the education of a child in Ecuador.

35. Very good provision is made for pupils' social development. Pupils relate well to each other and to adults, including visitors. Nearly all lessons include an element where pupils work together and co-operate on a task. Regular class assemblies, although these often do not meet requirements, enable pupils to share and talk about their work, not only with other pupils, but with parents and visitors. Whilst all pupils take turns in helping with classroom tasks, older pupils take on responsibilities that help with the smooth running of the school. For example, at lunchtimes they staff the office and take telephone messages, some are 'lunchtime helpers', whilst others join and play with younger children. The school provides many and varied opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of citizenship. Their growing understanding of social awareness involves pupils in fundraising for local and national charities and causes, and involvement with local associations. The school's good range of extracurricular activities provides many opportunities for pupils to meet together socially, and, in the case of the several sports teams, to appreciate the importance of teamwork. The social development of pupils in Key Stage 2 will shortly be enhanced further by the introduction of an annual residential visit.

36. The very good provision for cultural development not only enables pupils to gain an understanding of their own heritage, but of the richness and diversity of other cultures. Work in literacy hour provides pupils with many opportunities to sample work by nationally recognised authors and poets, including Shakespeare and Frost. Geography and history provide good information regarding the development of pupils' home locality, together with an understanding of life and times in times gone by. Pupils' awareness of their own heritage is developed further through their work in dance, music and art. In religious

education, sensitive consideration and discussion supports pupils' growing understanding of faiths from cultures other than their own. Provision of a range of multicultural texts for literacy hour, is reinforced by pupils working with members of a nearby centre for Asians who provide pupils with 'story sacks', each of which contains several traditional stories. Visiting dance groups and artists, together with visits to places of worship, enrich pupils' cultural experiences. In their current topic on Africa, pupils in Year 5 learn in detail about cultural aspects of art, music, dance and literature. In front of parents and fellow pupils, they sang, danced and enacted the story of 'Omutagwa', the African version of the traditional tale of Cinderella.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. The headteacher is the child protection liaison officer, and the deputy has undertaken the training to assume this role in the head's absence. The school's policy follows local authority guidelines, and the staff handbook (issued to all staff, teaching and non teaching) gives clear guidance for them to follow. When new staff join the school, the headteacher gives them a verbal briefing on the subject. A training session to update the staff is scheduled for the autumn term.

38. This is a safe environment for children, where staff generally have a good awareness of safety issues. The headteacher and caretaker carry out regular risk assessments, and staff are encouraged to report any safety concerns immediately. A recent grant was used to update the alarm system. Perimeter gates are locked at the start of the school day so that all visitors must ring for admission at the main entrance, and pupils are only released at the end of the day to a known adult or on written instructions from parents. Electrical items are regularly checked, as are the fire extinguishers and alarms. The local authority carried out a health and safety audit in January of this year. The school has responded promptly to its suggestions, undertaking alterations to procedures or equipment as directed. There are three fully qualified first aiders, one of whom is always on site, and two other members of staff have the one day qualification. There are two first aid boxes, one at each end of the school. Accident reporting procedures are fully complied with. Staff administer prescription medicines only on written instructions from parents, and no non prescription medicines are allowed in school. All regular visitors to school are police checked. The school does not have any significant problem with vandalism or break-ins. There is very little shaded area in the playgrounds, particularly for the youngest children, and high walls increase the heat levels. Pupils were clearly finding May sunshine oppressive during the inspection. Supervision during playtime is difficult because of the number of different play areas. The youngest children are fully supervised throughout playtimes. Since the last inspection for the sake of safety the adventure climbing trail and collapsible swimming pool have been removed.

39. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good, if informal. This is a caring community, where pupil welfare is seen as a priority. Staff try to get to know pupils and their families well, and to provide support when necessary. Although there is no planned scheme of work for personal, social and health education at present, all classes study such topics as keeping healthy, road safety and eating sensibly. There are policies for drug and sex education. The latter is delivered through 'Mothers and Daughters' and 'Fathers and Sons' evenings when parents are invited to join their children in school. If pupils want to talk to a member of staff confidentially about these issues they can put a request into a special post box. Circle time⁷ is used regularly in the two youngest year groups, and occasionally in other classes. Pupils are encouraged to talk about their feelings, and to consider how other people might feel, during assemblies and in circle time. Provision for the personal development of pupils with special educational needs, and those whose first language is not English, is good. All pupils undertake duties in the classroom on

⁷ In these lessons, pupils sit in a circle, and through agreed rules, have the opportunity to speak and listen to each other talking about issues that concern all of them.

a rota basis. Older children help as lunchtime monitors, or man the reception desk. Year 6 pupils can be appointed as prefects, who have a special responsibility to look after younger children in the playground. The special needs co-ordinator has been running an anger management group for Year 5 pupils in conjunction with the education psychology service, and training has been given to staff on this subject. Pupils' personal development is reported on in annual reports, although monitoring of it tends to be informal. Some learning tends to be too teacher directed and pupils are given few opportunities to develop their research and investigative skills, and thus to become independent learners.

40. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are now good, whereas they were unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection. The school is now using a computerised system for monitoring attendance, which enables the attendance of each pupil to be monitored in detail. Unexplained absences are followed up on the day, and the school is working closely with the education welfare service to try to improve the attendance rate of the small minority of pupils who are largely responsible for the unsatisfactory attendance level. Parents are informed about the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in the prospectus, and this is reinforced with frequent reminders in newsletters.

41. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour, and eliminating oppressive behaviour, are very good. The school has a well planned behaviour policy, which was drawn up in consultation with governors, parents and staff. This is circulated to all parents, and is well understood by pupils. Children can gain or lose 'Golden Time' on Friday afternoons for their behaviour, and each class as a whole can be rewarded for good behaviour by a special treat once a term. Stickers and certificates are awarded every week for good behaviour, examples of kindness to others, and for good work. Lunchtime supervisors are given guidance on behaviour management, and carry out this task very competently in the dinner hall and the playground. Children are fully aware of what is regarded as acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. The staff generally provide good, and in some cases excellent, role models for pupils by their own conduct. The headteacher provides good support for staff in the management of pupils. In classes with the best teaching, behaviour management is not a problem, and teachers need to waste very little time managing discipline. In some classes teachers have problems in maintaining discipline and suppressing unruly behaviour, and this inhibits learning. The absence of any small outside play equipment (such as skipping ropes, bats and balls) in the main playgrounds (some items are provided for the youngest children) leads to boredom and could result in oppressive behaviour. There are few markings on the ground which could be used as the basis for imaginative or competitive play. If some pupils were more actively occupied during their playtimes, they might be less fidgety in their lessons.

42. Procedures for assessing pupils' academic attainment and progress are satisfactory overall. In addition to the good records kept for English, the school maintains clear and helpful information regarding pupils' ongoing performance in mathematics and science. These indicate how well pupils achieve, and where they have difficulties. This information is used well, particularly in English and mathematics, to set individual targets for raising levels of attainment. This marks an improvement on the findings of the last inspection, which stated the school made insufficient use of assessment information. The school has very recently introduced a system to record and assess pupils' skills in information and communication technology. Although assessment opportunities for religious education are incorporated within the locally agreed syllabus, assessment of pupils' performance for this subject, together with the non core subjects, is planned for review in the near future. Whilst pupils' attainment in the core subjects, together with religious education is stated clearly in annual report forms, information relating to performance in other subjects does not always give a clear indication of pupils' achievements.

43. Teachers carry out assessments at particular points of pupils' time in school, including a baseline profile on entry, statutory assessments at ages seven and eleven, and optional assessments in Years 3, 4 and 5. These, together with several 'informal' end of

topic evaluations, enable staff to monitor and support pupils' progress as they move through the school. Teachers carry out detailed analysis of assessment results in core subjects to determine how curriculum provision needs to be modified to improve pupils' attainment. To support staff assessment activities, the school has compiled moderated portfolios of pupils' work for English, mathematics and science. Portfolios for other subjects are at various stages of development.

44. Procedures to identify, assess and monitor pupils with special educational needs are good. Pupils with English as an additional language are monitored through the use of local authority procedures. Assessment of pupils' performance is used satisfactorily within teachers' planning, and helps ensure pupils are set tasks suitably matched to their ability. Although staff give pupils good oral feedback and encouragement during lessons, the quality of written marking is inconsistent. Whilst in the main, it is constructive and sensitive, pupils are not always given clear information on what they must do to improve.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45. Parents have a very positive view of the school. All those responding to the questionnaire felt that the school had high expectations of its pupils. They felt that the school had a good partnership with parents, and helped their children to become more mature. They thought teaching good, the school approachable and well managed. Most parents thought their children liked school and made good progress, and that behaviour was good. The majority felt well informed about what their children were doing, and that the extracurricular provision was good. However, nearly half of those responding were not satisfied with the homework their child was given. Parents attending the pre-inspection meeting, and a meeting during the inspection, felt that it was a friendly, caring school where behaviour was well managed. They were pleased with the improved security and the new reception area. It was felt that the distribution of curriculum information was inconsistent between classes, and this view is endorsed by the inspection team. Overall the parents are very happy with the school and the way in which their children's education is managed. They are particularly impressed with the changes introduced by the headteacher in the year since her appointment.

46. The school has effective links with parents. Parents of reception children are invited to an induction meeting, where they meet the headteacher and other members of staff, and are given an informative induction pack. They are asked to complete a questionnaire giving their views of the school's induction procedures. Responses received indicated a high degree of satisfaction. When children start school, parents are invited to help their children select their first activity for the day. The school runs a SHARE scheme, which offers guidance for parents so that they can help their children with homework, and this is available for parents of pupils in Years 1 and 3. Parents with children in Years 2 and 6 are briefed on the tests their children will be taking. Parents of children with special educational needs are kept fully informed of their progress, and regularly invited to attend meetings. There are regular parent consultation evenings. Each class holds a special assembly to which children may invite their parents, which is an occasion for displaying their work and other achievements. Parents are invited to come to school lunch with their children on special occasions such as Easter, Christmas and Harvest Festival, which has been a very popular innovation. Some parents feel nervous about approaching the school through the office, and would like the teachers to be more available in the playground before school so that they can discuss any problems informally.

47. Parents have a satisfactory impact on the work of the school. A few come in regularly to help in class. Other parents are currently painting a mural in the toilets for older pupils. Several parents help to run after school clubs. The Friends of St Denys is run by a small but extremely active group of parents who organise fundraising and social events. They have just provided £1000 towards the new playground equipment. Although few parents are willing to offer regular support to the school, many will help on a one off basis, for instance by manning a stall at the annual fair or helping teachers during a school visit.

48. The quality of day to day information provided for parents is good. Newsletters are regular, clear and informative. The format used for reports was recently changed, and parents are pleased with this new approach. The quality of the reports is good for English, mathematics and science, and satisfactory for other subjects. Reports include targets for improvement, and a space for pupils to comment on their own progress. There is a noticeboard for parents outside which is regularly updated. The school has effective arrangements in place to convey information to parents who do not speak English, using the local authority's bilingual support service. The school sent out information on learning objectives in English, mathematics and information technology at the start of the school year, but the provision of other curriculum information varies between classes.

49. Parents make a satisfactory contribution to their children's learning at school and at home. Most make good use of the home-school reading diaries, particularly in the lower half of the school. Most parents of younger children hear them read every day. Support for other homework varies, but some parents provide a very good level of support for their children's learning at home. A significant number of parents felt that homework was not handled consistently between classes. In some year groups, it is regularly set and marked, while in others this is not the case.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50. The headteacher has established the school's educational direction in a good school development plan. This plan is led by the needs of the curriculum and appropriately sets timescales and identifies criteria for success. It features financial implications which are reviewed regularly and efficiently. Governors, administrative officer and head are successful in ensuring that the principles of best value are followed. This has resulted in the school being at least satisfactorily resourced and presenting a good learning environment. Plans to develop facilities for ICT will add to the very good work which has recently improved toilets and office accommodation. The quality of financial control is good. Presently the school has an above average financial carry forward from year to year, but this residue is being used wisely for improvements and does not constitute a weakness. Currently the school is judged as giving satisfactory value for money.

51. Targets for the development plan are consistent with the school's aims and values and are effectively prioritised by the head, following consultation with staff and governors. As a result of her initiative the school has achieved satisfactory progress since the last inspection, with much of the improvements achieved in the past year. A notable feature of school development is improvement to management and provision for the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. This has been achieved with very good contributions from the head, special educational needs co-ordinator and the well informed governor with responsibility for special needs.

52. Overall governors are supportive of the school. Their recent involvement in subjects is a good initiative and set to improve their understanding. However, there is more to do to help the school in monitoring the curriculum to avoid gaps. Consequently governors have been unaware that teaching fails to ensure all required elements of the science programmes of study are covered at Key Stage 2, and that some subjects (notably geography and history) are underemphasised; particularly in Year 6. However, governors' input in terms of their support for the management of the building and finances is having positive effects, especially for ICT. This followed an evaluation that the subject did not meet statutory requirements. However, governors have not ensured that the school's daily assemblies meet the requirements of being collective acts of worship.

53. This inspection has identified some significant weaknesses in aspects of teaching which have negative effects on curriculum coverage and pupils' entitlement particularly in Key Stage 2. These have arisen partly as a result of staff turnover, but in the main because monitoring has not been sufficiently rigorous. Curriculum co-ordinators and senior

managers have very clear responsibilities from this point of view, delegated to them in their job descriptions. However, with some exceptions, for example in literacy, co-ordinators have yet to strike an appropriate balance between establishing planning, maintaining resources and evaluating teaching to confirm that the school's intentions are carried out to an appropriate standard. Good support from the local education authority has produced good guidelines for developing curriculum management in terms of monitoring pupils' work in order to assess teaching and provision. However, these are not yet applied effectively to overcome negative effects.

54. The deputy as overall curriculum co-ordinator has produced a good overview in the form of a curriculum map. There is now a need to monitor more stringently the work of the school to ensure that it matches intentions: for example to confirm that good planning is followed in Key Stage 2, and in Year 6 in particular.

55. The school takes good account of equality of opportunities, particularly regarding pupils' ages, gender, ethnicity and capability. For example, having ascertained that boys' reading was causing some concern, particular fiction books that would interest and motivate boys were purchased. The school has a good library, but its use is not effectively managed to ensure that pupils at both key stages benefit from this good resource. It was found that the English as an additional language provision was going to pupils whose English had advanced so much that they no longer needed this particular support. Revised systems of assessment enable the support to be given where it is needed most. There are good procedures for identifying pupils who need extra support for their learning, ensuring that they are able to make progress according to their ability. A less successful area concerns access to the full National Curriculum for all pupils. Because of difficulties with staffing over the past year, and a lack of adequate monitoring, the school has failed to deliver the full requirements of the National Curriculum, particularly in Year 6.

56. As a result of difficulties with staff recruitment, the school has suffered from a significant level of staffing disruption that has required a succession of supply teachers since September 2000. This, together with a lack of monitoring over time, has a negative impact on pupils' learning at Key Stage 2, particularly from September 2000 in Year 6. However, with the exception of on-going, short term supply cover for Year 6, the school is now sufficiently staffed with appropriately qualified teachers to meet the requirements of the primary phase of education, together with those for special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language. Good procedures are in place to support either newly qualified teachers and those new to the school. A clear and helpful staff handbook provides further support for short term and supply staff. Since the last inspection, satisfactory new procedures have been introduced for performance management. Professional development of staff is linked well to the school development plan, and includes training requirements for National Curriculum initiatives. The good number of support staff is well deployed and highly valued. They work in effective partnership with teachers to give good support, particularly to pupils with special educational needs. Administrative staff are efficient and contribute to the smooth running of the school. The school benefits from the services of a dedicated caretaker who takes much care and pride in ensuring pupils and staff alike, have a working environment that is as pleasant as possible.

57. The school was built in the nineteenth century as two separate schools for infants and juniors, with a headmaster's house. Considerable adaptation has taken place since, principally in the 1970s, when the three original structures were made into one by the addition of glass-roofed corridor areas. There are a sufficient number of classrooms for all year groups. Beside these, there are library and food technology areas, the staff room, the school office, the head's room, a special educational needs room, and a music and drama room (which doubles as a hall for Key Stage 1 assemblies), as well as a good sized hall. The glass-roofed corridors are used for storage and display. The reception area has recently been attractively remodelled, making better use of space. The school makes good

use of limited storage facilities. New toilets for the younger children were installed last term. A dedicated area appropriately resourced for ICT is to be created for September 2001.

58. The grounds are attractive and leafy. There is a car park for staff and visitors, and a small hard surface area used for ball games. The main playground is paved with York slabs. There is a separate small playground for under fives: a third play area is separated by arches and a wall. The adventure playground (sited in yet another separate area) has had to be removed in the last year for safety reasons. Plans have been drawn up for the installation of replacement equipment in three phases, and funding for the first of these has already been obtained through grants and fundraising by parents. There is a small grassed field with a quarter-sized football pitch. However, the surface of this area gives cause for health and safety concerns. There is a quiet area with a brick maze and sculptures. A small courtyard accessible from the food technology area is used by staff and sometimes for small group work. The grounds are well maintained; at the time of the inspection a landscape contractor was due to undertake large scale pruning. The building is in good condition externally: the Victorian roof does not leak, although tiles need replacing from time to time. The window frames are replaced on a rolling programme and the drainpipes and guttering are well maintained.

59. The rooms used by Years 3 and 5 are cramped, being originally built as infant classrooms. The glass roofed corridors get very hot in warm weather. High ceilings in some classrooms and the school hall result in heat loss and poor acoustics. This latter problem is exacerbated in some rooms by noise intrusion from adjacent areas. There is no medical room: sick children are cared for in the headteacher's office. The library area is cramped, as noted in the last inspection report, and current plans call for two-thirds of it to be taken up by the installation of a computer suite. Externally, although the total area of hard surface is good, especially for a city school, it is divided up somewhat inconveniently by brick walls and arches. This makes playtime supervision more difficult. There is very little shade, especially in the play area for under fives. The grassed area was laid over demolished houses. The surface is uneven and after wet weather pieces of brick and other debris occasionally rise to the surface. It is too small to use for field sports and can offer trip hazards. The quiet area with the maze is not accessible to the children during playtimes and seems to be little used. The 1970s glass roofs leak in various places, depending on wind direction. At present there is no wheelchair access to the school. Overall, however, the accommodation is adequate for the number of children, and its condition is good. It is well maintained by its dedicated and hard working caretaker and contributes positively to the very good learning environment.

60. The general level of resources to support learning is satisfactory. However, there is good provision in:

- Religious education, where there is a good range of good quality books and artefacts, and the county loan service is well used;
- Music, where good use is made of the music room, in which good quality instruments are well stored and easily accessible;
- Special educational needs, where the budget is used well to provide a wide range of equipment to help pupils with their learning;
- The Foundation Stage, where a range of apparatus and equipment, for indoor and outdoor use, provides stimulation for work and play.

Resources for information and communication technology are barely adequate, as there are insufficient computers of a sufficiently high standard. However, improvements in this area are imminent.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

61. In order to further improve the school governors, headteacher and staff should:-

- **Guarantee** that required aspects of all subjects are taught in sufficient depth, especially science, geography and history, and that pupils receive their full entitlement to the curriculum by:
 - Developing the monitoring role of the deputy and senior management team;
 - Ensuring that co-ordinators effectively monitor coverage, teaching and standards in their subjects as well as planning, as specified in their job descriptions.

Paragraphs: 8, 13, 14, 21, 24, 25, 26, 27, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 81, 91, 96, 97, 109, 112, 114, 121, 134.

- **Ensure** that recent improvements to the quality of teaching for Year 6 are sustained. Providing pupils with the balanced curriculum that the school's good subject planning already allows for; especially for science, geography and history.

Paragraphs: 8, 13, 14, 21, 26, 27, 52, 53, 54, 56, 87, 90, 95, 96, 97, 109, 112, 114, 116, 118, 121.

- **Improve** the quality of provision for science by:

- Ensuring that all statutory requirements are met and that all elements of the programmes of study are covered in sufficient depth;
- Developing teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject;
- Improving the quality and quantity of pupils' recording of their work to raise standards and present sufficient evidence to gauge progress by.

Paragraphs: 8, 21, 24, 25, 27, 52, 95, 96, 97.

- **Improve**, as planned, provision, standards and resources for information and communication technology; ensuring all required elements are covered and that ICT is used effectively to support other subjects.

Paragraphs: 9, 24, 27, 78, 90, 96, 121, 123, 125.

The following minor issues should be considered in the governors' action plan:-

- Developing the quality of teaching of physical education by improving teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject through a programme of in-service work.

Paragraphs: 24, 133, 134.

- Fulfilling statutory requirements with regard to daily acts of collective worship.

Paragraphs: 33, 35, 52, 136.

- Developing, as intended, the use of the library as a resource for pupils' learning in both key stages.

Paragraphs: 55, 76, 124.

- Improving the consistency of teachers' marking and use of homework throughout the school.

Paragraphs: 29, 44, 45, 49, 87, 96.

- Attending to the health and safety issues as reported to governors.

Paragraphs: 58, 59, 133.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	55
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	25	38	27	9	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	202
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	63
Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	86
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	19
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

%

Unauthorised absence

%

School data	4.8
National comparative data	5.2

School data	2
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 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	21	9	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	15	21
	Girls	8	8	9
	Total	23	23	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (81)	77 (74)	100 (81)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	18	19
	Girls	8	6	8
	Total	22	24	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73 (77)	80 (81)	90 (97)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest 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
	2000	18	12	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	13	18
	Girls	5	3	9
	Total	15	16	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	50 (59)	53 (62)	90 (66)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	13	18
	Girls	5	3	9
	Total	16	16	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	53 (59)	53 (66)	90 (69)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	4
Indian	8
Pakistani	6
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	0
White	155
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	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.9
Average class size	28.9

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	222

Financial information

Financial year	1999 - 2000
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	£
Total income	423809
Total expenditure	424699
Expenditure per pupil	2004
Balance brought forward from previous year	47645
Balance carried forward to next year	46755

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	202
Number of questionnaires returned	43

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	35	9	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	49	47	5	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	49	5	2	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26	30	35	7	2
The teaching is good.	37	58	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35	53	9	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	19	2	0	5
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	56	44	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	35	60	5	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	55	38	0	0	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	51	42	2	2	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	40	33	9	5	14

Due to rounding percentages do not total 100.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

62. Currently, 24 children are in the reception year of the Foundation Stage. They enter reception at the start of the school year in which they become five. Although nearly all attend pre-school groups before joining school, assessment on entry shows the majority have levels of attainment below those expected for their age. The school makes very good provision for its young children. Those now in reception make good progress, and a number of higher attaining children have already achieved the officially recommended learning goals. Nearly all others are on line to achieve the expected levels by the time they leave reception.

Personal, social and emotional development

63. Children's progress in personal, social and emotional development is good. Staff are extremely sensitive to the needs of children in their early years of schooling. They have successfully created a happy and purposeful atmosphere where children settle quickly into the routines of school. Children work together in a friendly and supportive manner, and show respect for each other, adults and visitors. They take part in a number of self chosen and adult led activities, and handle resources with care. Children are well behaved, and sustain concentration when working. They make sensible choices from the range of activities available, play well with others, share and take turns. Children respond well to adults. They follow instructions, listen to what they are told, and begin activities eagerly. Children are sensitive to the needs of others, and show obvious pleasure in friends' successes as well as their own. They line up and move around the school in a sensible manner. Their food technology activities provide children with opportunities for observation, language development and preparation skills, together with an awareness of the importance of washing hands before handling food.

Communication, language and literacy

64. Children make good progress in this area of learning. They have many opportunities to speak and listen to adults and to each other, in groups or as a whole class. For example, they listen attentively, and, when required, join in enthusiastically with the story of 'I love animals'. At other times, they demonstrate growing confidence when taking part in discussions and answering questions. Through carefully chosen stories, children come to recognise an increasing number of words in familiar contexts. They recognise the letters of the alphabet, and associate sounds with them. Whilst a small number of higher attaining children confidently read texts from the school's reading schemes, others use picture clues and their developing phonic ability to help them enjoy story books. Most develop sound book skills and enjoy sharing books. They understand the terms 'author' and 'illustrator', and correctly explain what each does. Children carry out 'pretend' writing as part of their activities within their 'Riverside Café' where they write menus, record orders and take down telephone bookings. By the end of reception, many write simple sentences. For instance, having listened to the story of 'Jack and the Beanstalk', they wrote sentences telling what they would like to find at the top. They learn the correct way to shape letters and copy examples of writing with increasing control.

Mathematical development

65. Mathematical development is good. Children recognise and count numbers to ten, many to 20 and beyond. They sing and play a range of number rhymes and finger games, and put together number puzzles and jigsaws to reinforce learning. Through a variety of carefully directed activities, children develop their understanding and capability regarding addition and subtraction. They sort objects in a variety of ways; for instance, by colour,

shape and size; by threading objects and repeating patterns. Children use correct mathematical language for simple shapes, and compare measurements such as 'more than' and 'less than'. They become familiar with handling and identifying coins, and use them to make purchases as when in their café. Children develop an awareness of capacity and volume through play tasks with sand and water. In so doing, they use quantitative words such as 'empty' and 'full'.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

66. Children make sound, and, on occasions, good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world. They observe and discuss weather, and understand why we wear different types of clothes for each season. Children develop an awareness of place when studying the layout of their school, and exploring the grounds to determine the best place for a picnic. Their understanding of chronology is helped by considering the many ways in which they have changed since they were babies. Children understand the difference between living and non-living things; they know and name different parts of the body. They explore the textures of different materials, and use their sense of touch to identify items within their 'feely box'. Children operate computers with growing confidence, and use the keyboard and mouse to control, colour and move items on screen.

Physical development

67. Progress in physical development is satisfactory. Children make sound progress in their fine manipulative skills. They handle tools, scissors, paint brushes, construction kits and malleable materials safely, and with increasing control. In outdoor structured play, children make thoughtful use of a range of equipment to ride, balance and explore. They work well in pairs to improve their skills of throwing and catching large balls. In all activities, children show growing confidence, together with a willingness to share and take turns.

Creative development

68. Children make satisfactory, and on occasions, good progress in creative development. They use a range of media to draw, paint, print and make models. Children create small imaginary environments, and act out scenes in them, exploring ideas and feelings. They have good opportunities for structured role-play. During the inspection, children were observed developing language, number and social skills when enacting the roles of customer, waiter and chef within their café. Children enjoy singing songs from memory. They sing enthusiastically, tunefully, and with a sense of rhythm.

69. The quality of teaching was judged to be very good in two-thirds of lessons observed, the remainder being good. All activities are very carefully planned and focus clearly on learning outcomes. Adults use conversations and questions very effectively to draw out children's ideas and develop their confidence. All adults understand the content and desired outcomes of the activities they supervise. This clarity of purpose makes a significant contribution to children's progress. Expectations of children's progress are suitably high, and a positive ethos creates an environment in which children are encouraged to make progress. The needs of all children are met very well; this includes higher attainers, those with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language. At all times, the teacher, support assistant and visiting student, provide children with very good role models.

70. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is well managed. Very good procedures are in place to assist children's induction into school. A helpful policy and scheme of work supports planning for the six areas of learning. A thorough assessment of children's skills and understanding is carried out shortly after entry, and provides information that is then used to inform subsequent planning and teaching. Children's

development in learning is aided by careful observations and record keeping, and ongoing assessment. Whilst the school provides good resources to support children's learning, they would benefit from playground markings to help develop outdoor games and imaginative play.

ENGLISH

71. The last inspection judged overall standards in English to be below average at the end of both key stages. Since then, the school has successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy, and undertaken detailed analysis of assessment results to inform its modification of curriculum provision. Further improvements include the development of helpful assessment procedures that enable staff to track individual pupils' strengths and weaknesses, and the setting of personal targets for writing. These strategies, together with the school's programme of staff development regarding the English curriculum, have met the requirements of the last inspection that the school 'should focus more closely on the teaching of reading and writing'. Although the improved provision has had a positive effect on pupils' learning, standards remain below expectation for a significant minority of pupils. However, this represents sound, and for many pupils, good achievement.

72. Results of the end of Key Stage 1 assessments for 2000, showed standards in reading to be well below the national average, and below for writing. When compared with similar schools, results were average. At Key Stage 2, although results were well below average when compared with all schools, they matched those of similar schools, based on pupils' eligibility for free school meals. Of the year groups assessed, 45 per cent of those in Year 2 were on the school's register of special educational needs. This proportion rose to 60 per cent for Year 6.

73. Although for the last four years, standards have been considerably below average at both key stages, with the exception of a dip in 1999 reading results at Year 2 there has been a gradual improvement. Inspection evidence confirms this upward trend has been maintained, with overall standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 now being below average. However, 43 per cent of pupils currently in Year 2, and 42 per cent in Year 6 have special educational needs. Whilst nearly all pupils with average levels of ability achieve levels in line with national expectations for each element of the English curriculum, such proportions of pupils with special educational needs naturally have a marked bearing on standards overall.

74. Pupils with special educational needs, together with those who have English as an additional language, make good progress in terms of prior attainment, and towards their individual learning targets. Pupils receive good support in their lessons, and are given good encouragement by teachers to succeed in all activities.

75. The school provides many opportunities for the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills, through discussions in literacy lessons, circle time and end of lesson plenary sessions. Whilst the majority of pupils at the end of each key stage make satisfactory, and on occasions, good progress, achieving levels expected nationally for their age, the proportion doing so is insufficient to meet requirements. As a result, standards at the end of both key stages are below average. In Key Stage 1, most pupils listen carefully to their teachers and to each other. Many are keen to answer questions and follow instructions, with average and higher attaining pupils confidently joining in discussions. For example, pupils in Year 1 sensibly discussed their book, 'My holiday diary', and talked about the differences between fiction and non fiction texts. In Year 2, many pupils contributed thoughtfully to a history lesson on the causes of the 'Fire of London'. By Year 6, most pupils listen to each other and to adults, and enter into class discussions. For instance, after the reading the poem, 'The road not taken' by Robert Frost, pupils talked about its meaning. However, a significant minority lacked the appropriate vocabulary and were not sufficiently confident or able to explain their thoughts and ideas, even when given much support and encouragement by the teacher

76. At the end of both key stages, overall standards in reading are below expectations. However, the majority of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6, attain average, and in some cases, above average levels. Within literacy lessons observed, pupils' progress in developing reading skills was fostered well by teachers and progress is satisfactory overall. At Key Stage 1, pupils use a variety of strategies to decode new words, including a well taught and sequenced programme of phonics. By Year 2, the majority of pupils successfully read and compare texts by the same author, and are keen to read to adults. At Year 6, many read a wide range of texts, including non-fiction and poetry. Higher attainers read fluently, with good expression and understanding. In order to improve pupils' research and study skills, the subject co-ordinator has recently produced a library scheme for each key stage. However, this has yet to be implemented. Currently, library time is not planned within the school timetable. This has a negative impact on its use as a learning resource, and on the development of pupils' independent research and study skills.

77. Although standards in writing at the end of each key stage were below average, in lessons observed, the majority of pupils made sound progress and achieved levels expected for their age. The school identified writing as an area for further development and successfully introduced a system for setting pupils individual targets for the development of their writing skills. Pupils respond well to their targets, and the procedure is having a positive effect on pupil attainment. The teaching of grammar, punctuation and spelling is developed systematically within the structure of the National Literacy Strategy, with the effect that pupils' performance is improving. At Key Stage 1, pupils have appropriate opportunities to write down their own thoughts, and to extend simple sentences into more complex sentences through the use of connectives. They use their developing writing skills to compose simple stories, to write letters, and to produce accompanying captions for work. By the end of Year 2, the quality of handwriting for nearly all pupils is at least average.

78. At Key Stage 2, pupils write for a range of audiences, using a variety of genres. Pupils use the skills of drafting and editing to good advantage when writing reviews and synopses of books, or when working on letters or extended writing. By Year 6, writing from the majority shows effective use of paragraphs and the correct use of punctuation, including speech conventions. In stories and persuasive writing, pupils commence with a clear introduction, followed by a series of logically ordered points that lead to a considered conclusion. When writing letters, many show an appropriate level of formality, together with a satisfactory breadth of vocabulary. To support their writing, pupils make use of an appropriate range of dictionaries and thesauruses. The strong emphasis on handwriting skills results in standards being above average by the end of the key stage. Nearly all pupils write in a fluent and clear cursive style, and present their work well. However, the use of word processing programs to enable pupils to write, draft and edit direct to screen, or for the presentation of completed work, has yet to be developed fully.

79. Pupils' literacy skills are used and developed satisfactorily in other subjects. The use of circle time discussions in personal and social education lessons effectively supports the development of speaking and listening skills. Through the varied use of traditional tales, modern stories, books from other cultures, and non fiction texts, English makes a positive contribution to pupils' cultural development.

80. The quality of teaching was judged to be satisfactory or better in 92 per cent of lessons observed. It was good in 50 per cent, including 8 per cent very good. One lesson which featured speaking and listening linked to geography and personal, social and health education, was judged unsatisfactory. In this lesson, pupils were set inappropriate tasks, and, as a consequence, they made too little progress, and behaviour deteriorated. Teachers plan effectively to the guidelines of the literacy strategy, and, at the start of each lesson, pupils are given a clear explanation of the objectives to be met. Teachers are secure in their subject knowledge, and this is used effectively to stimulate pupils' imagination and enthusiasm. A feature of nearly all lessons is effective questioning which involves all pupils. With few exceptions, teachers have suitably high expectations of pupils'

performance, and cater for all needs, including those of higher attaining pupils. The effective work of the well briefed support assistants is noted particularly in their support for pupils with special needs, and those with English as an additional language. Their close work with teachers enables these pupils to make good progress in terms of prior attainment.

81. Despite being in post for less than a year, the co-ordinator provides sound management, and has a clear understanding of what needs to be done to raise standards further. Good procedures are now in place to monitor what pupils know and can do. These include regular assessment of pupils' performance, and individual targets for writing being set for pupils. Whilst the co-ordinator monitors planning, evaluates pupils' work and is involved in the analysis of assessment results, she has yet to monitor the quality of teaching across the school. This is currently undertaken by the headteacher.

MATHEMATICS

82. Results of 2000 tests for those at the end of Key Stage 2 show that pupils leave the school below the national average in mathematics. However, pupils' performance on the basis of the school's average point score was better than those in similar schools (those with 35 to 50 per cent free school meals). Since then the National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced and the school has made a concerted effort to improve standards in pupils' number work. Most pupils currently in Year 6 are now in line with the national average in numeracy. With 42.5 per cent of pupils on the special educational needs register, and a below average profile of children's attainment in mathematics on entry, this is a creditable achievement. However, standards in other aspects of the subject (shape, space and measures; data handling and investigative and experimental work) remain below average. The school is aware of this and plans to redress the underemphasis on these elements to improve the balance of the mathematics curriculum.

83. At the end of Key Stage 1 test results for 2000 showed Year 2 pupils to be below average by national comparisons in mathematics, but above average compared with similar schools. As at Key Stage 2 the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has had a positive effect and early indications of tests undertaken by seven year olds in 2001 point to standards in mathematics in line with the likely national average and potentially well above that of similar schools. This is evidence of good progress in mathematics and improved provision.

84. At both key stages there is a satisfactory match between test results and teachers' assessments of pupils' performance. Consideration of results over a four year period shows an improving trend and no significant difference between the work of girls and boys. The school has improved its overall profile of standards by successfully targetting those pupils who would just meet the required standard, and improved their performance so that they comfortably achieve at least average levels.

85. The high proportion of special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language are effectively supported. Outcomes in terms of test results demonstrate that such pupils make good progress and that their learning is good. Learning support assistants give good support in class and in withdrawal work. Planning takes into account pupils' differing ability and experience and allows for more able pupils to work at higher levels (some joining older pupils for mathematics lessons). The success of this can be seen in that 30 per cent of Year 6 pupils in 2000 reached levels above what is expected of this age group and one child achieved the highest level, Level 6, normally associated with secondary education.

86. Children in Year R make good progress in working with numbers, learning to count on and back accurately. This is capitalised upon in Key Stage 1 with Year 1 and Year 2 pupils demonstrating good understanding of more and less and identifying patterns in sequences. By the time they complete Year 2 pupils have benefited from good opportunities to improve

speed and accuracy of mental arithmetic work and are competent for their age in working out calculations; particularly those of addition and subtraction.

87. Evidence from Key Stage 2 shows pupils have an appropriate understanding of mathematical vocabulary by the end of Year 4 and that they are developing awareness of which strategies to use to solve numerical problems. For example, Year 4 pupils are adept at halving and doubling and really enjoy beating class targets for the speed at which they complete mental work. Year 5 books show that pupils have secure knowledge of place value, angles and decimals. Their work is in line with expectations. Evidence from lessons observed in Year 6 shows that pupils can manipulate numbers and solve problems using a variety of strategies: for example checking their accuracy through inverse operations. However, their recorded work over time (since September) is not presented well enough, not systematically marked and does not show that sufficient work, other than number, has been attempted. It is clear that teaching for this year group has not ensured all pupils will fulfil their potential.

88. During the inspection the quality of mathematics teaching (almost exclusively of numeracy) was at least satisfactory, with 70 per cent being good or better. All teachers were observed. Evidence from pupils' work indicates that teaching is sound overall with strengths in Key Stage 1. It confirms that in order to improve opportunities for pupils, more work in areas in addition to number is a priority. Strengths in teaching are in planning for the National Numeracy Strategy; relationships with children; making clear objectives and referring back to them at the end of the lesson; and in oral work. Weaknesses include: too little work which makes use of strategies in problem solving and investigating; and a lack of pace and challenge in some lessons.

89. Most teachers make appropriate use of homework to support mathematics and, in most mathematics lessons, pupils are well managed. Pupils respond satisfactorily and make at least sound progress. When well challenged, pupils respond even better! They generally behave well and follow instructions as required.

90. The co-ordinator for mathematics completed a satisfactory audit of the subject and made good use of the budget to ensure a satisfactory level of resourcing. As a result of the long term sick leave of the co-ordinator, the headteacher has temporarily assumed responsibility for mathematics. She has good insight into strengths and weaknesses including the underemphasis of some elements, and deficiencies in Year 6 teaching. She has produced a good position statement for the subject which identifies areas for development. Currently ICT is underused to support mathematics.

91. A strength of the subject is the quality of planning adapted from guidance of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidelines and the National Numeracy Strategy. If applied appropriately (as it is in numeracy) this would support systematic development of pupils' skills. Gaps in the monitoring of the subject in terms of coverage and teaching, in addition to standards, need to be addressed with a more rigorous approach to the role of the co-ordinator as subject manager.

SCIENCE

92. Results of the 2000 National Curriculum teacher assessments in science for Year 2 pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 show the percentage of pupils achieving Level 2, the expected level, to be close to the national average. The percentage reaching the higher Level 3 was above the national average. Results were well above those of similar schools.

93. Results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 show the percentage of pupils achieving Level 4, the expected level, to be in line with the national average. The percentage reaching the higher Level 5 was above the national average. Results were well above those of similar schools. Results have fluctuated over the last four years, being above average in 1998 and 2000, but below average in 1997

and 1999. The school attributes this to the variation in the ability of the year groups, and this is substantiated by assessments made when pupils enter the school.

94. Inspection findings show that attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with the national average. Bearing in mind the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs, this is a good achievement. Pupils know that humans need healthy food and exercise to keep them well. They know that plants need light and water for growth, and have grown sunflower seeds, keeping a diary of the amount of growth. They have grown cress seeds in different materials to find out which is best. They have looked in the school grounds to discover the different plants, animals and insects that live there. With materials, pupils know that they have different properties, such as hard, bendy or stretchy, and have found out that ice cubes melt back to water. In their current work in Year 2, pupils are developing their investigative skills by testing how cars travel on different surfaces. They predict the outcome, perform the test, record the results, and compare them with their prediction. Most understand the factors that are needed to make the test fair.

95. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is below the national average. This is due to insufficient coverage of the National Curriculum in Year 6. However, many pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of the work that they *have* covered. For example, in their most recent work, pupils are designing and making a burglar alarm using simple electrical circuits. Pupils have put forward their ideas and drawn their plans, tried them out in a simple model, and modified their plans in the light of their experiences. Good links are made with the design and technology curriculum. Such work shows good achievement. It is therefore because of the quality of teaching and curriculum coverage, where pupils' books show unsatisfactory progress over time, rather than pupils' ability, that their attainment is unsatisfactory. Recent 'extra science' sessions with a teacher who volunteered for that purpose, may have had a positive impact on pupils' achievements in their National Curriculum tests.

96. Teaching varies a great deal across the school, and has varied during the last year with different teachers. In Key Stage 1, observed teaching during the inspection week was satisfactory and good. In Key Stage 2, teaching ranged from unsatisfactory to very good. However, with the two very good lessons, one was taken in Year 6 by a teacher employed for the inspection, and the other was taken in Year 5 by a teacher who has not been with that class all year. In Year 6, there is no recorded evidence of any science work before 6 March 2001, and the pupils' description of what they did in science indicates that teaching was unsatisfactory. There has been teacher disruption in other year groups in Key Stage 2, and this too has had a detrimental effect on provision for science. The main areas of weakness are:

- Insufficient adherence to the planned Key Stage 2 curriculum resulting in inadequate coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study;
- An inadequacy in teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject;
- Insufficient attention to the development of pupils' investigative skills;
- Insufficient recording of work that has been attempted, making it impossible for teachers, or inspectors, to evaluate progress over time;
- Insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop independent inquiry;
- Insufficient use of information and communication technology as an information source or to communicate results in a range of ways;
- Inadequate marking, either not being done, or marking which is inaccurate and fails to give pupils information on how to improve.

97. Planning is thorough, and the scheme of work would allow for appropriate coverage of the National Curriculum. Lesson plans indicate that appropriate tasks are set for pupils of different abilities. This enables the higher attaining pupils to be challenged, whilst the lower attaining pupils and pupils with English as an additional language are well supported by learning support assistants, enabling them to make satisfactory, and sometimes good, progress in the lessons that take place. However, in Year 6, due to a lack of monitoring of

provision and the unsatisfactory quality of teaching, the school fails to deliver the requirements of the National Curriculum. It is impossible to ascertain how the planned two hours per week have been spent. Some remedial action was implemented which enabled Year 6 to catch up in some areas, but an inadequate monitoring system failed to identify problems earlier in the year. Test results have been analysed carefully and this has influenced the work carried out. The co-ordinator has been in post for only a few weeks, so has not yet had an opportunity to influence the subject. Monitoring is quite rightly high on the list for the subject's development. Resources are adequate to deliver the curriculum, and there are plans for a new environmental area with pond.

ART AND DESIGN

98. Standards in art are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. This is an improvement over the previous inspection where pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 was criticised. Good planning provides for a good balance of skills based activities and creative work. Teachers make good use of the good start children make in Year R; mixing colours, experimenting with textures, and making observational drawings of, for example, spiders. This is developed in Year 1 and Year 2 in portrait work making good reference to the work of famous artists such as Renoir; and in perfecting work on line and tone when drawing daffodils from life, and sketches made on visits to the mosque and church.

99. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make sound progress with some of the more able producing good quality drawings. Collage work using 'natural objects' forms a good link with science and art is regularly used to illustrate other subjects. For example, Year 2 pictures of the 'Fire of London' support work in history as well as art.

100. At Key Stage 2 pupils continue to make satisfactory progress and their work is in line with expectations by the time they leave. Year 2 illustrations for the story of Grace Darling make good use of drawing, painting and collage skills developed lower down the school. Links with geography and science are sustained in diagrams and drawings about the rain cycle. Whilst the painting skills of Year 4 are below expectations, pupils do make an appropriate start on printing from their own string blocks. This is capitalised upon in Year 5 where pupils produce very good work exploring repeating patterns, textures and colours arising from a study of life in the Gambia. Pupils have opportunities to be creative in making and decorating clay pots and in trying tie-dyeing techniques. Although evidence is limited, Year 6 have produced satisfactory landscape pictures to demonstrate their understanding of perspective. Art is effectively used to illustrate anthologies of class poems.

101. Few lessons could be observed during the inspection, but evidence from pupils' work (including displays, sketchbooks and a review of design and technology which is linked in planning for art), discussion with staff and pupils indicates the quality of art teaching is satisfactory.

102. The subject is managed effectively. The co-ordinator maintains a good file showing how art is to be developed. Staff are supported through good planning and joint in-service work to improve skills and understanding. The absence of a collection of pupils' work in a portfolio, which would show what children are capable of compared with expectations, makes assessment of performance and progress difficult. Plans are in hand to rectify this.

103. The school has adequate books and resources for art which are well stored and accessible. Software to develop the use of information and communication technology to support the subject is to be increased when the new computer suite is in place.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

104. Because of the school's timetable arrangements, it was only possible to observe two design and technology lessons during the inspection. However, it was possible to talk to teachers and pupils, to view pupils' plans and some of their finished artefacts, and to look at a number of photographs of work. From this, it is judged that pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages is above national expectations for pupils of their age, which is better than when the school was last inspected. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language achieve well because of appropriately matched work and good support from learning support assistants.

105. Key Stage 1 work builds well on reception where pupils make Humpty Dumpty. In Year 1, pupils are designing patterns which will form part of Joseph's coat. They are given challenging practical tasks, such as pinning a card template to their piece of material, which most achieve successfully after a good deal of concentration and co-operation. In Year 2, pupils have made puppets during a day's workshop where a professional puppet-maker visited to inspire pupils. They have investigated the way that mechanisms can be used, and have successfully incorporated wind up pulleys into their models. Challenging tasks and good teaching have motivated all pupils well, enabling them to make good progress and achieve well.

106. Pupils' attainment throughout Key Stage 2 is inconsistent. There are examples of good work, especially in Year 5. For example, when making emergency shelters, pupils produced well thought out designs, clearly labelled with the materials they were to use, and then indicated where the designs had to be modified when they did not work well enough. There is good attention to food technology, where a specially equipped area is used well. Pupils have designed and made sandwich snacks in Year 3; and Year 5 pupils are designing and making biscuits, having completed a product analysis and listed their ingredients. Mechanisms have been incorporated into storybooks in Year 4 and moving toys in Year 5, where pupils have used cams to move various parts. In Year 6, pupils have only attempted one unit of work, but this has been done well. They have designed and made slippers, with a good deal of thought and care, achieving good standards.

107. Teaching is good in Key Stage 1, and has many good features in Key Stage 2. The variation is largely due to teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject, and their confidence to teach it. Where good teaching occurs, good attention is given to pupils developing their ideas, clearly explaining them and listing the requirements for their designs. Pupils then choose tools and techniques appropriately to make their product. However, there are examples of inadequate attention to the design process: for example with just a simple sketch with no labelling of parts or material requirements. In some work without headings, it is impossible to tell what the product is. It is suggested that some designs have been completed on separate sheets of paper which have not been saved, but this is not good practice.

108. The co-ordinator has worked well to incorporate the new curriculum requirements into the school's scheme of work, and current plans meet statutory requirements. A detailed curriculum map indicates what each year is to do. Plans for improved assessments of pupils' work are due to start in September. Training to improve teachers' knowledge and confidence has been identified as a priority for development. Resources are well organised, with well stored and labelled boxes available for each topic.

GEOGRAPHY

109. At the time of the last inspection, standards were satisfactory at the end of each key stage. Due to timetable arrangements, no geography could be observed during the recent inspection. Review of pupils' work and teachers' plans, together with discussions with staff and pupils, confirm that at Key Stage 1, all pupils, including those with special educational

needs and those with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress and achieve nationally expected levels. At Key Stage 2, pupils make appropriate gains in their geographical skills and understanding up to, and including Year 5. However, at Year 6, the absence of pupils' written work, together with their inability to recall information relating to the planned work for the year so far, indicates both poor provision and poor levels of attainment.

110. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have, through a well planned programme of field trips, gained a clear understanding of their immediate locality in terms of road layout, use and style of buildings, together with those people who work in, or visit the area. They draw simple maps, and know the countries that make up the United Kingdom. They particularly enjoy learning about the travels of 'Ollie Owl', and receiving cards he and his minders send from different locations, and finding the various places on maps. They have a clear understanding of the seasonal changes in weather, and the effect this has on life in general. Pupils visited a nearby recreation area to undertake a survey of its layout, noting its main features. They produced simple maps together with tally charts of how many people were using each section. The activity was used to good advantage to support literacy skills when pupils wrote an account of their visit.

111. Pupils in Key Stage 2 build well on what they have learnt earlier. In Year 3, pupils develop their understanding of the locality. They learn about, and find on a map, the roads, buildings and houses within the school's catchment area, and consider the nearby places where they spend much of their time. This results in more detailed maps being drawn from pupils' homes to places such as school and shopping facilities. Pupils now include appropriate symbols and keys for maps. Pupils in Year 4 compare and contrast the urban conurbation of Southampton with the smaller historic town of Wickham. They conduct surveys and interviews with inhabitants to elicit their views on shopping, eating, leisure and other facilities, together with a range of other information. Their work results in the production of detailed 'tourist brochures' providing much useful information. In association with their work on rivers, pupils in Year 5 study the water cycle, and the journey of a river from its source to the sea. In so doing, they compare and contrast the River Gambia in West Africa, with that of the nearby Itchen. An impressive interactive display of artefacts greatly enhances pupils' understanding of the life and culture of Africa. Such elements of the curriculum make valuable contributions to the improvement of pupils' cultural development.

112. At the time of inspection, pupils in Year 6 were at the very early stages of work related to the geographical features of Cherbourg. The school was unable to produce any further evidence of pupils' written work, nor were pupils able to talk about the planned activities which related to the newly completed West Quay shopping complex, and its impact on the environment and existing shops, which school planning indicates they should have covered.

113. With the exception of that for Year 6, indications are that the quality of teaching is at least sound. Planning is clear, tasks interesting, and good provision is made for pupils at all levels of attainment. A good programme of field trips enhances pupils' understanding of the places and concepts they study as they move through the key stages.

114. A clear and helpful policy is in place, together with a scheme of work that complies with recent National Curriculum requirements. Whilst the newly appointed co-ordinator has yet to monitor the quality of teaching for geography, she has, with the exception of Year 6, evaluated both the provision and outcomes for other year groups. The omission of monitoring Year 6 geography has had a negative impact on standards achieved.

HISTORY

115. The previous inspection found standards to be sound at the end of both key stages. During the current inspection, only one history lesson was observable. Review of pupils'

work and teachers' planning, together with discussions with pupils and staff, confirms that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress in their development of historical knowledge and skills. By the end of Key Stage 1, attainment is consistent with national expectations.

116. Similar levels of achievement are confirmed at Key Stage 2, for pupils up to and including Year 5. However, for Year 6, there is an absence of pupils' written work within history, and pupils are unable to recount any information relating to work planned for them during the year so far. Provision for these pupils has been poor and prevents them from achieving levels of which they are capable. Consequently, standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are poor.

117. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a sound understanding of chronology and change. In Year 1, pupils compare and contrast toys from years ago with those of today, and find out how their homes are different from those a long time ago. Their understanding of Victorian England is developed when, along with their teacher, pupils dress in costume, and spend a day in their 'Victorian schoolroom', learning and playing games in the manner of that era. Pupils learn about famous people from the past, such as Dr Barnardo. In Year 2, pupils mount a noteworthy display of the 'Fire of London', in which their learning is supported by the effective use of artefacts and costumes. Pupils have a sound understanding of the causes and subsequent effects of the fire. Pupils have satisfactory knowledge regarding the 'Gunpowder Plot' and appreciate the bravery shown by Grace Darling when helping her father rescue survivors from the wrecked 'Forfarshire'.

118. At Key Stage 2, history comes alive for pupils in Year 3, when, as part of their work on the Anglo-Saxon period, they receive a visit from members of a re-enactment society. Pupils were able to handle and examine a wide range of artefacts and watch several displays, including that of 'doing battle'. The visit, together with subsequent workshop activities, not only gave pupils an understanding of everyday life of that era, but helped them learn the importance of primary sources of evidence in telling the story of our heritage. Review of pupils' work shows them to have an appropriate understanding of life during Roman Britain and World War Two, with particular regard to the lives of children. The school's participation in an 'Oral History Project' enabled older pupils to interview elderly residents of the neighbourhood to obtain their memories of the area, together with information about lifestyles when they were young. Pupils appreciate the part they have played in gathering first hand historical evidence as their recorded interviews, together with the information obtained, are now held in the city archives. Although work planned for Year 6 included studying the life of everyday people in Tudor times, together with the influence of the Ancient Greek civilisation, no evidence of pupils' work or knowledge was forthcoming.

119. Pupils show positive attitudes towards history. Their enthusiasm is especially evident when they handle and discuss artefacts. In the lesson observed, together with another where historical knowledge was used as a focus for writing activities, pupils were interested and eager to respond to questions. However, in their haste to reply, pupils did not always listen carefully enough to their teacher, nor to the comments and information their friends had to offer.

120. Teaching in the lesson observed was effective. The session had clear objectives that were explained carefully at the start. Interesting activities and effective use of resources reinforced pupils' understanding of the concepts taught. Whilst planning is thorough, there is not yet a whole school procedure for assessing what pupils know and can do. Teachers undertake their own 'informal' assessment of pupils' performance at the end of each topic. Pupils' learning is supported by a good range of visits, together with teachers' effective use of loan services for books and artefacts which supplement the school's own resources.

121. Appropriate documentation that complies with National Curriculum guidance supports teachers' planning. The recently appointed co-ordinator has clear insight on how to further develop history across the school. Priorities for development include the further improvement of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning. Although not yet monitoring the quality of teaching, the co-ordinator evaluates planning and pupils' work for history across the school. Unfortunately, this has been ineffective for pupils in Year 6.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

122. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved since the last inspection. Standards have been maintained at Key Stage 1 and are in line with national expectations. At Key Stage 2 pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 is below new, more rigorous, expectations for the subject. However, this is because of the lack of opportunity and elements of the statutory curriculum which there has not been time to cover. The school is aware of this and planning seeks to ensure that pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 will have completed all aspects before they leave. Work that Year 6 pupils *have* completed is satisfactory with regard to word processing, data handling, an introduction to the Internet, and elements of simulations followed for subjects such as geography and history. Pupils of all abilities and those with English as an additional language can operate computers: loading, controlling, saving and printing; and access information from CD-ROM.

123. At Key Stage 1 the school has done well to get pupils to the required standard. Although Key Stage 1 pupils are introduced to the control aspects of ICT using a programmable toy, the school is aware that this, together with modelling⁸, are areas for future development. Currently at both key stages ICT is insufficiently used to support other subjects.

124. The school has recognised the new core curriculum status of ICT by ensuring that it features as a subject in its own right on the weekly timetable. Teaching is satisfactory and staff are making the most of limited equipment. Teachers are doing well at Key Stage 1 to develop the communication element of ICT. They present pupils with suitable opportunities to search and collate information and present it in a variety of ways for particular audiences. For example, pupils are taught to use contents and index to discover facts about chosen animals before presenting their findings to the class. However, it is noted that pupils, especially at Key Stage 1, have had very little experience of using the library. Pupils respond well to ICT and respect resources. They work well in pairs: for example on computers for religious education and in groups operating listening stations as part of literacy activities. Pupils make sound progress overall.

125. The co-ordinator has made a good audit of the subject and, together with the head and governors, proposed a very good plan for the development of ICT. This is to include 15 new personal computers arranged in a suite where each class will receive direct teaching every week. Planning forms part of the school development plan with intentions to be ready for use in September 2001. Such improved resources and good planning derived from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidelines means that ICT is well set for the future. Although by virtue of statutory requirements not yet being met, ICT features in the key issues of this report, it is acknowledged that the school's own evaluation and planning already have the situation in hand.

MUSIC

126. Pupils throughout the school attain the standards expected for their age and enjoy their music making activities. This includes pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English as an additional language and is similar to judgements made in the last

⁸ Modelling refers to pupils applying information and communication skills to solving and exploring problems in other subjects.

inspection. Lessons are taken by a specialist teacher who visits for one day each week. This is supplemented by visiting instrumental teachers for violin, flute and clarinet, which enables the more able pupils to achieve well.

127. Pupils in both key stages sing well, many showing good control of pitch, dynamics and rhythm. Vocal warm-ups at the beginning of lessons help them, particularly when they are asked to sing softly then loudly. Pupils sing a range of songs well, many of them requiring actions or clapping, which they enjoy and perform accurately and well in time. In Key Stage 1, pupils learn to control percussion instruments to produce a variety of effects to accompany songs or stories. They know the names of many instruments, and handle and play them with care and sensitivity. In Key Stage 2, pupils' singing is developed well. They are able to sing in two parts, maintaining their own line against others. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 sing an ostinato throughout a song whilst others sing the melody or play instruments. Well organised groups play untuned and tuned percussion, flute and keyboard to accompany the singers, all contributing to a class performance which is recorded on tape. The majority of pupils are able to keep in time well. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are fully involved, and make appropriate progress. The excellent attitudes of pupils in Year 5 enabled them all to make very good progress in their lesson. Some unhelpful behaviour by a small minority in Year 6 meant that learning, whilst still good, was not as good as it could be, as one or two pupils gained very little from the lesson.

128. All class music teaching is undertaken by the specialist teacher, and is nearly always of good or very good quality. Lessons are thoroughly planned with good reference to the National Curriculum and the school's own whole school curriculum map. For example, when Year 5 have a topic on rivers in geography, the work in music likewise deals with rivers and sounds representing moving water. The teacher leads pupils well in singing activities, and motivates them very effectively when performing with voices and instruments. Good teaching points are made which enable pupils to improve and achieve well. However, with the Year 2 class, there was insufficient involvement of many pupils in the observed lesson, which meant that their learning was unsatisfactory in this session.

129. The use of a specialist teacher is proving beneficial for pupils' learning, but this is a fairly recent development. Whilst singing throughout the school is good, the music teacher has now raised pupils to the levels they should be in other areas of music, such as composing and performing. There is good liaison with class teachers, who attend the lessons and look after groups when necessary. Special songs for class assemblies or other occasions are taught by the specialist teacher. The instrumental teachers provide a valuable service, but there is insufficient use of the pupils who benefit from them, in the life of the school. Whilst there is some involvement in class lessons, pupils are not given enough opportunity to perform: for example to play whilst pupils go in to and out of assembly, or even for playing the hymns. Other opportunities for performance are used well: for example in vocal festivals with a workshop and evening performance for Year 6 and another for Years 2 and 3. Good attention is given to music of other cultures, such as a workshop on Indian drumming from a visitor. Resources are good and well used, including the specialist music room.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

130. Overall standards are in line with those expected for pupils of their age in both key stages for physical education. However, there are areas of higher attainment, such as very good dance in Year 5 and good games skills in Year 6. This is an improvement on the standards reported in the last inspection.

131. Only one lesson was observed in Key Stage 1, and here, pupils showed that they can throw and catch appropriately for their age. In Key Stage 2, pupils develop their games and athletics skills further, with Year 6 achieving well, particularly with their cricket skills. Throwing and catching are good, and several pupils bat, and bowl overarm, with a good

degree of skill. In dance lessons, pupils learn traditional English folk dances, including using a maypole, as well as creating their own movements to a variety of stimuli. For example, Year 5 pupils performed 'Rain Dance' sequences, where they were challenged both physically and intellectually, to produce a dance with their partner. They were well motivated, rehearsed well with excellent relationships, and produced dances of high quality. They continued in the same vein with a celebration dance from the Gambia, although this was to set movements rather than creating their own.

132. Overall, teaching is satisfactory, although it does range from very good to unsatisfactory. In the better lessons, pupils achieve well. These are characterised by:

- Good planning with clear lesson objectives;
- Use of well established warm up activities;
- High expectations of performance, attitudes and behaviour;
- Very good interaction with pupils and very good relationships;
- Good organisation leading to maximum activity;
- Pupils challenged physically and intellectually, with plenty of opportunity to practise skills;
- The involvement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language.

133. In unsatisfactory lessons, or even satisfactory lessons that contained unsatisfactory elements, the main problems concerned:

- Insufficient attention to correct changing, such as inappropriate shoes being worn and long hair not tied back, both being potential hazards;
- Insufficient attention to safety during the lesson, such as pupils collecting their implement before others had thrown;
- Too much teacher talking with insufficient pupil activity;
- Insufficient or unhelpful teaching points.

These problems were largely as a result of insufficient knowledge and understanding by more than one teacher, and caused pupils' progress to be limited, sometimes to an unsatisfactory level.

134. The scheme of work shows appropriate coverage across the school, including adventure activities at a nearby centre, and swimming at a local pool. Records indicate that the vast majority of pupils are able to swim 25 metres before they leave the school. There is a good range of extracurricular activities that are well supported by pupils and teachers, and enable pupils to take part in a number of sporting competitions against other schools. The co-ordinator has very recently taken up her post, so has had little chance to have any influence. A previously written action plan correctly identifies monitoring as an area for development. Added to this should be training for teachers to improve their knowledge and understanding, and the methods they use.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

135. At the end of both key stages standards of pupils' attainment are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus in religious education. It was only possible to observe two lessons during the inspection but evidence from work sampling, teachers' records and discussions with staff and pupils confirms this judgement.

136. Good planning derived from a mixture of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidance, the local syllabus, and the school's initiative, provides pupils with a broad experience of religious education. In Year R children reflect on their feelings and relationships and learn of Bible stories: for example which illustrate caring for each other. A very positive feature of the subject is the progress pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 make in understanding the customs and beliefs of religions. This includes Christianity and Judaism

in Year 1; Islam and Christianity in Year 2, visiting a mosque and a church; consolidating and extending work on festivals and special customs in Year 3, including very good role play at a Shabbat meal; an introduction to the Hindu faith in Year 4; more detailed studies of Christianity and Islam in Year 5; and Year 6 work on sacred texts and prophets. This broad study ensures that religious education makes a significant contribution to pupils' very good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, although clearly some assemblies make a positive contribution to religious education only one of the six observed during the inspection fulfilled statutory requirements as acts of collective worship.

137. There is evidence that learning is secure and that pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of the work covered in religious education and that the subject acts as a good vehicle for literacy work: oral and written. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds respond well. They are interested, well behaved and respectful of different beliefs: for example a group of Year 6 pupils exploring the influence of the Qu'ran discussed their own families' faiths; paying particular attention to the contribution of a girl whose first language is not English, who has a good knowledge of Islamic worship.

138. In the two lessons observed teaching was very good in one; where the story of Mohammed receiving the word of God was taught very effectively; and the other about Creation stories was satisfactory, although the activity for Year 4 pupils following the introduction in this session lacked challenge. The quality of pupils' work over this year shows that religious education teaching is at least sound and often good. Good planning is translated into regular work which meets requirements and demonstrates a variety of approach. The school is planning to make use of assessment opportunities highlighted by the syllabus in all classes from next year and this is currently being trialled in some classes.

139. The co-ordinator manages the subject effectively making good use of the annual budget to provide a good range, number and quality of resources. She makes the most of the very good support of local education authority advisers for religious education and provides training for other staff. The last report made scant reference to religious education, but it is clear that provision for the subject has been improved. It is a credit to the school's planning that whilst evidence of other subjects is lacking due to staffing problems in Key Stage 2, satisfactory records of pupils' religious education have been maintained.