

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **CHRIST CHURCH CofE JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Chertsey

LEA area: Surrey

Unique reference number: 125138

Headteacher: Mr Gareth Griffith

Reporting inspector: Mr George Crowther  
18814

Dates of inspection: 28<sup>th</sup> February – 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2000

Inspection number: 191965

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Dr Mick Westaway
Date of previous inspection:	January 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
George Crowther Registered inspector	Science Geography Physical education	What sort of school is it? The schools results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
Deborah Pepper Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Jo Harris Team inspector	English History	How well does the school care for its pupils?
David Major Team inspector	Mathematics Information technology Equal opportunities	How well is the school led and managed?
John Viner Team inspector	Art Design and technology Music Religious education Special educational needs	How good are the curricular opportunities offered to pupils?

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The Registrar, Inspection Quality Division, The Office for Standards in Education, Alexandra House, 33 Kingsway, London. WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Christ Church is a medium-sized voluntary controlled junior school for boys and girls 7-11 years old. It has 255 full-time pupils. Socio-economic data suggest that the circumstances of the families in the area are more favourable than national averages. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. Taken together, pupils' attainment when they join Year 3 is at least above average. Fifty-six pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, of whom five have a statement. The proportion of pupils needing additional support is about average. There are very few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and none has English as an additional language.

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

Christ Church is an effective school in many ways. Pupils make sound progress and, in national tests, achieve results that are well above average. The school fulfils its aim to provide a caring and supportive community in which pupils can achieve high standards in their academic and personal development. Relationships between all members of the school community are a strength. The teaching is good overall, and particularly strong for pupils in Year 6, though there are some weaknesses in teaching for the younger pupils. Nonetheless, most pupils reach standards that are well above those expected for their ages in mathematics and science, and above expectations in English, art, history and music. Standards in information technology, however, are below average. The school is well led and managed. Staff and governors work well together and have been successful in improving a number of aspects of the school's work. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

- In English, mathematics and science, results in the national tests are well above average.
- Art, history and music are taught well and pupils achieve high standards.
- The school provides an environment in which pupils' good attitudes, their good behaviour, and their very good relationships with each other and with staff support learning well.
- The quality of teaching for the oldest pupils is of a very high standard.
- The school provides a broad, balanced and rich curriculum for its pupils, complemented by a good range and quality of extra-curricular activities, which supports their academic and personal development.
- Provision for pupils' social and spiritual development is very good.
- Pupils' achievements and progress are carefully assessed and monitored.
- The school is well led and managed by the headteacher and senior staff.

### **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

- In some lessons, teaching does not have the organisation, pace and challenge to ensure that pupils make good progress.
- Attainment is not high enough in information technology.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION

When it was inspected last in January 1997, Christ Church was found to provide a sound standard of education, but there were significant weaknesses in some aspects of its work. Since then, the school has made good progress in tackling most of the action points. The quality of teaching has improved considerably, and there is now far more good and very good teaching. Procedures for assessment are much improved and are now a strength. There has been a marked improvement in the quality of teaching and standards of attainment in music. In design and technology, improvement has been barely satisfactory, but the requirements of the National Curriculum are now met. In information technology, however, despite some improvements in provision, pupils are still not making the progress they should. Results achieved by pupils in national tests at the age of eleven have improved steadily. The school is in a good position to continue raising standards.

## STANDARDS IN SUBJECTS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	A*	A	A	B	very high A* well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	A	A	A	C	
science	A*	A*	A	C	

Attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year, but is at least above average overall, and for some year groups well above average. Pupils make sound progress during their time at the school and good progress in some subjects. Pupils make best progress towards the end of the key stage. Results achieved in national tests for 11 year olds have been consistently well above average, and have improved in line with the national trend during the past four years.

Inspection evidence shows attainment in the current Year 6 classes to be above average in English, and well above average in mathematics and science. Pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy are good throughout the school. Literacy skills are developed well through activities in a wide range of subjects. Attainment in religious education exceeds that expected by the locally Agreed Syllabus. Attainment in information technology is below national expectations: pupils' basic skills are sound, but they do not spend enough time using computers and do not have sufficient experience of some aspects of the subject. Standards in art, history and music are better than those expected for pupils' ages. In all other subjects, standards are close to those expected for pupils' ages.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to school; they are interested in their work, and they usually concentrate well and persevere with tasks.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good in most lessons, and very good around the school; pupils know the rules, and respond well to the good role models provided by the staff.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between pupils and with teachers are very good; pupils of all ages work and play well together.
Attendance	Close to the national average.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good

*Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; sound; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Sound' means that strengths outweigh any weaknesses.*

Teaching was sound or better in 90 per cent of the lessons observed. In 26 per cent of lessons it was very good, sometimes excellent, which is a high proportion compared with the national picture; in 56 per cent of lessons it was good or better; it was less than satisfactory in 10 per cent. Teaching is particularly strong in Year 6 where pace and challenge ensure that pupils make good progress. Teaching is sound overall for the younger pupils, but in some lessons learning is not sufficiently well organised, teachers are not secure enough in their knowledge of the subject, and inappropriate behaviour is not dealt with firmly enough. The school recognises the need to raise the standard of this teaching so that it matches the high quality seen in many classes. Overall, teaching of English, mathematics, science, art, history and music is good. Literacy and numeracy are both taught well. Teaching generally meets the needs of all pupils.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good: the school provides a broad, balanced and rich curriculum, which has strengths in a number of subjects; extra-curricular activities are very good in range and quality; aspects of information technology are not covered sufficiently.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good: work is generally well matched to pupils' needs in lessons and they receive good support from adults.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good: provision for pupils' personal development is an important priority, and is supported effectively by very good relationships; provision for pupils' social and spiritual development is particularly strong; there is also good provision for moral and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides very good care and support for its pupils through a range of effective policies and procedures; the assessment and monitoring of pupils' progress is very good.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	The school has effective links with parents, which support children's learning well.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good: the headteacher provides experienced and astute leadership for the school, and has been successful in achieving a number of improvements since the last inspection; he provides good support to his colleagues, which gives them confidence to develop their skills; senior staff, and in particular the deputy headteacher, make very valuable contributions.
How well the governing body fulfils its responsibilities	The governing body is thoroughly involved in the work of the school and fulfils its statutory responsibilities well; governors visit school regularly and are developing an overview of standards; their role in assisting the school to plan the way forward is less effectively carried out.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There is considerable monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning, by the headteacher and many subject co-ordinators; weaknesses are identified and effective action taken to achieve improvements.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning and management are good.
The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources	The school is well staffed; teachers and support assistants are committed and hard working; the accommodation is adequate and well cared for; learning resources are good.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Their children enjoy going to school and make good progress.</li> <li>▪ Behaviour in the school is good.</li> <li>▪ Teaching is good.</li> <li>▪ The school is approachable if parents have concerns.</li> <li>▪ The school expects children to work hard and achieve their best.</li> <li>▪ The school helps children to become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Some parents would like more information about the progress their child is making.</li> <li>▪ Some parents do not feel that they are able to work closely with the school.</li> <li>▪ A significant minority of parents do not feel that there are enough activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>

The great majority of parents are pleased with most aspects of the school's work, and inspectors' judgements support parents' positive views. The school provides a good range of activities for children outside lessons, including a variety of clubs and many trips and visits that support pupils' learning. Inspectors were surprised that more parents did not recognise this strength in their questionnaire responses. At their meeting, some parents expressed the view that they would like more opportunities to discuss their children's progress with teachers, and the school is responding by adjusting the pattern and frequency of these meetings. Questionnaire responses suggested that some parents feel that the school does not work closely enough with them, but inspection evidence shows that many parents work very closely with the school, for example through the parent teacher association. The school welcomes the involvement of parents.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. In the end of key stage assessments in 1999, results in English, mathematics and science were all well above the national average. In English and science, there were no significant differences in results of boys and girls, but in mathematics boys performed significantly better than girls. In English, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 of attainment was well above average, as was the proportion gaining the higher Level 5. In mathematics and science, however, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 was above average, and it was the large proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 5 that raised the results to well above average overall. These results represent high attainment compared with the national picture, and they are a marked improvement on the results reported at the time of the last inspection in 1997. Compared with schools in similar social circumstances, the 1999 results were above average in English, and average in mathematics and science, indicating that pupils achieve at least the standards of which they are capable. Over the past four years, the school's results have improved steadily, in line with the national trend of improvement.

2. Evidence gathered during the inspection largely confirms the picture of high attainment painted by the national test results. In mathematics and science, attainment in the current Year 6 is well above national expectations, with a significant proportion of pupils on track to achieve the higher Level 5 in this year's national tests. In English, attainment is above national expectations, including a significant proportion of high attainers, but is slightly lower than 1999 because approximately a quarter of the current Year 6 pupils is on the special educational needs register and many of their learning difficulties relate to language skills.

3. Pupils start Key Stage 2 with attainment that is above the national average overall, as shown in the results of assessments for seven year olds at the school from which most of the pupils transfer. In reading, attainment is well above the national average. At the last inspection, pupils were found to make inconsistent progress in English and science and unsatisfactory progress in mathematics, owing to weaknesses in teaching. Now, pupils are making sound progress in all three subjects, and they made good, sometimes very good progress in many of the lessons observed. This marked improvement in pupils' achievements since the last inspection is a result of a significant improvement in the overall quality of teaching. However, the variable progress in lessons, noted at the last inspection, remains. In the early part of the key stage, pupils make inconsistent progress because the teaching in some lessons, in some classes, has weaknesses. Towards the end of the key stage, pupils make good progress and, in Year 6, pupils' achievements improve considerably in response to challenging teaching that uses and extends their existing skills.

4. Pupils with special education needs make good progress in relation to their initial attainment because of the good support they receive. Tasks in lessons are generally well matched to their needs and help them to meet the targets on their individual educational plans. In the lessons where they receive help from a classroom assistant, these pupils make particularly good progress. When they are withdrawn for extra support, pupils with special

educational needs make sound progress in consolidating basic skills in English. No evidence during the inspection showed significant variations in pupils' achievements by gender.

5. Attainment in English is above national expectations. By Year 6, pupils listen attentively, both to the teacher and each other, and most are articulate, confident speakers with a wide vocabulary. They discuss their ideas sensibly in a variety of situations. They enjoy reading, and higher-attaining pupils read challenging texts fluently, with good expression. Pupils discuss favourite books and authors, justifying their opinions well. Limited use is made of the library, however, and most pupils do not understand the Dewey classification system. Pupils write confidently using appropriate styles for different purposes. Balanced arguments, letters of complaint and diary entries are among the many styles of writing undertaken successfully. Some pupils do not, however, have good enough skills in the full writing process of planning, drafting, revising and proof reading prior to final presentation. Most pupils write well, using a neat, cursive script. Their punctuation and spelling are both of a good standard. Across the school, pupils have good literacy skills that are used and developed well in other subjects of the curriculum, for example in history and science.

6. Attainment in mathematics is well above national expectations. By Year 6, most pupils calculate confidently with numbers to 10,000 and know more complicated processes such as long multiplication and division. They are confident in their use of fractions, decimals and percentages. Most pupils have very good understanding of work relating to shape and space, are confident in handling and interpreting data, and in using and applying their mathematical knowledge to solve problems. Pupils' recorded work shows consistent evidence of the more able pupils being extended, by being given challenging tasks. Similarly, less able pupils receive good support and made good progress. Throughout the school, pupils' numeracy skills are well above average. Younger pupils develop quick recall of number bonds, and most of the older pupils know multiplication tables very well. These good basic skills support work in mathematics and other subjects.

7. Attainment in science is well above national expectations. In their current work about materials, Year 6 pupils investigate factors affecting how quickly a screw will rust. They bring a very good general knowledge of science to the experiment, which enables them to hypothesise that iron is the metal that rusts and that the process is irreversible. Higher attainers speculate about the conditions for rusting, with one pupil suggesting that the oxygen in air is needed, and another saying that the acid in vinegar would make the screw rust. All the pupils have a rigorous concept of conducting a fair test, and know that all conditions except one variable must be kept constant. They set up their experiments very carefully, and explain what they are doing using a good range of scientific vocabulary. Year 6 pupils' past work shows a good understanding of a range of science topics.

8. In information technology (IT), pupils make unsatisfactory progress and, by Year 6, attainment is below national expectations. Pupils do not spend enough time on IT and do not experience the full range of work required by the National Curriculum, for example in controlling, monitoring and modelling. In religious education, pupils make good progress and, by the end of the key stage, attainment is above that expected by the locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils learn particularly well from religion. They know how to reflect on the things that move them, understand what it means to be calm and still, and are able to respond to these feelings in worship.

9. In art, pupils make good progress because they experience a wide range of media and techniques, and develop their skills steadily through good teaching. By Year 6, attainment in art is above that expected for pupils' ages. Enthusiastic, knowledgeable teachers bring periods of history to life for their pupils, who develop a good knowledge of history and the skills to find out about the past using a range of evidence. As a result, pupils make good progress and reach standards that exceed those expected for their ages. In music, consistently good teaching enables pupils to make good progress and reach high standards by the end of the key stage. In design and technology, pupils make barely sound progress and, though they design and make a range of products, the development of their skills is not coherent enough. Pupils make sound progress in geography and physical education.

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

10. Pupils' attitudes to school, the values they display through their behaviour, and their relationships with others are all good. These qualities support pupils' learning effectively, which is a similar picture to the last inspection. Almost all parents say that their children enjoy school. In over nine out of every ten lessons observed, pupils' responses were at least sound. They were very good, sometimes excellent, in about four out of every ten. The best responses were from the older pupils, particularly in Year 6.

11. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, are usually keen to learn and so they ask and answer questions enthusiastically. For example, pupils in Year 5 were eager to discuss whether Henry VIII was a good or a bad king and offered their ideas readily. In most lessons, pupils listen attentively to the teacher and each other, concentrate well, and settle rapidly to group or individual tasks. They work quickly and complete good quantities of work, taking a pride in what they do. In a few lessons, however, some pupils' attitudes were unsatisfactory, often because of weaknesses in teachers' management of learning. Pupils were slow to settle, fidgeted whilst listening to the teacher, and were reluctant to answer questions. The school's extensive extra-curricular programme is oversubscribed because pupils are keen to make the most of all the opportunities the school provides.

12. Behaviour is good overall, and most parents regard this as a strength of the school. Pupils are polite and co-operative in most lessons, responding well to teachers' high expectations and their good management of behaviour. Pupils' behaviour around the school, at lunchtime and in the playground is very good. They know the school rules, which they have had a part in devising, and they abide by them. In a few lessons, including some withdrawal classes for pupils with special educational needs, some pupils behaved in an inappropriate way, which restricted their progress and that of others. There were no exclusions last year. No bullying was observed during the inspection. Bullying occurs only rarely at the school, and incidents are dealt with promptly and effectively.

13. The very good quality of relationships between pupils and with staff underpins the very good provision the school makes for pupils' personal development. Teachers like their pupils and provide good role models for them. Pupils work together very effectively in pairs and groups, for example planning experiments in science lessons. Lower-attaining Year 6 pupils involved in group reading helped each other with difficult words. In religious education, pupils reflect with maturity and sensitivity on their own feelings and beliefs and those of others.

14. Pupils respond very well to opportunities to take responsibility. A particular strength is the pupils' evaluation of their own work and that of others. For example, in a Year 4 art lesson, pupils eagerly offered positive comments about the work of their classmates. In Year 6 'booster' English lessons, pupils edited each other's work helpfully. Younger pupils willingly take on class monitor roles. Year 6 pupils carry out responsibly tasks such as helping at lunchtimes and running a weekly stationery shop. As part of a mentoring scheme, Year 6 pupils provide good support for Year 3 pupils when they join the school.

15. Pupils' attendance rate for 1998/99 was just under 95 per cent and this is satisfactory. There was no unauthorised absence. The attendance rate is higher than the national average, but lower than at the time of the last inspection. This is because more families are taking holidays during term time. Pupils' punctuality is generally good, though a few children are regularly late. Lessons begin punctually.

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

16. The quality of teaching is good overall, but varies significantly between classes. For the older pupils, the quality of teaching is invariably good and, for those in Year 6, consistently very good, sometimes excellent. The lively pace and challenge of much of this teaching captures pupils' interest, ensures that they work hard, and promotes very good gains in learning. For the younger pupils, the quality of teaching is sound overall, with examples of good teaching in some classes. However, the quality of teaching is inconsistent both within and between classes, largely because most of these teachers lack experience. In some of the lessons observed, the teacher's knowledge of the subject was not secure, the organisation of pupils' learning was not planned carefully enough, and there were weaknesses in the teacher's management of pupils' behaviour. As a result, pupils did not make the gains in learning of which they were capable. Variations in the quality of teaching were also clear from the scrutiny of pupils' work, which showed sound progress during the early part of the school, but marked improvements in the quantity and quality of work in Years 5 and 6.

17. The quality of teaching was very good or excellent in 26 per cent of the lessons observed, a high proportion compared with the national picture. It was good in a further 30 per cent of lessons, and sound or better in 90 per cent. In 10 per cent of lessons teaching was unsatisfactory. Overall, the teaching of English, mathematics, science, religious education, art and history is good, and the teaching of music is very good, which is a marked improvement since the last inspection. Literacy and numeracy are both taught well. The overall quality of teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection when it was judged to be unsatisfactory in 29 per cent of the lessons observed, and very good or better in only 9 per cent. However, significant variations in teaching quality noted at the last inspection remain, and teaching of information technology continues to be weak because many teachers lack expertise and the school does not make best use of its existing resources to provide a balanced programme of work to cover the National Curriculum.

18. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is sound. In most lessons, teachers meet the special needs of pupils well, providing appropriate activities and good support. Classroom assistants play a vital role in ensuring that pupils with special

educational needs benefit from activities and make good progress. Additional literacy sessions are well taught resulting in good gains in pupils' skills. In the afternoon withdrawal sessions the quality of teaching is too variable. It was very good when pupils behaved well, responded positively, and interacted with the teacher in oral work. Teaching is less effective when pupils behaved poorly and affected the concentration of the group, or when the task was too formal. These sessions, although intended to provide bursts of targeted support, are often too short to be effective and their link with pupils' usual work is sometimes unclear.

19. Teachers' knowledge is secure in most subjects, and good in many. This is reflected in their teaching. For example, in a history lesson, it was the teacher's good knowledge of the Tudor period, and detailed knowledge of Henry VIII's meeting with the king of France, that brought the subject to life and captured pupils' interest. As a result, they learnt much about the significance of the meeting, and also how to gather historical evidence from paintings. In many of the lessons observed, teachers used their good subject knowledge to explain new ideas clearly, to lead effective discussions, and to extend pupils' understanding. In music, the expertise of specialist teachers leads to good gains in learning for pupils. In a few lessons, however, weaknesses in teachers' knowledge inhibited pupils' learning, for example when multiples were confused with factors in a mathematics lesson.

20. Competent teaching of basic skills was a good feature of a number of lessons. In literacy sessions, clear teaching about types of words and punctuation strengthens pupils' skills in writing. Phonics are taught well to pupils with special educational needs, which improves their skills in spelling and reading. In mathematics, teachers explain different ways of carrying out mental calculations, to promote speed and accuracy, as was seen in a Year 4 lesson when the teacher explored a variety of strategies to add 25 to 91. In physical education, teachers explain basic skills well, such as the correct way to hold a tennis racket or the best technique for catching and throwing.

21. Teachers' medium-term plans are very detailed and, in most lessons, support well-planned teaching. For example, in a mathematics lesson for Year 5, the teacher had planned the sequence of activities very carefully, with detailed notes about the vocabulary needed to describe angles and rotation. Following a clear introduction, pupils were able to start work quickly because the exercise had already been placed in their books. Good planning resulted in a very productive lesson. In general, teachers rely on a fairly brief plan of the main learning objectives and the sequence of activities that pupils will complete. In most cases, this is sufficient because the teacher has a very clear idea of how the lesson will develop. In a number of lessons observed, however, plans did not identify the pacing of the lesson and, as a result, introductions lasted too long and pupils' interest began to wane. In a few lessons, the teacher's learning objectives were not clear enough. In most lessons, teachers share the learning objectives with pupils, which helps them to focus on what they are trying to learn.

22. In a high proportion of lessons, particularly for the older pupils, challenging activities and high expectations of what pupils could achieve resulted in very good gains in learning. Pupils in Year 6 discussed 'respect' in their personal and social education lesson, and the high quality of discussion, skillfully led by the teacher, resulted in considerable intellectual effort and very mature ideas. Excellent teaching in a music lesson enabled Year 6 pupils to compose their own tunes, drawing on their good grasp of note values. Challenging written tasks in a Year 5

literacy lesson extended the pupils' understanding of adverbs, with pupils of all levels of attainment being provided with suitably demanding work. In the best lessons, a challenging task is pursued at a lively pace, which results in pupils working hard but enjoying the satisfaction of achievement. In just a few lessons, tasks were too easy for some pupils, or they finished their work and did not have another activity to pursue.

23. A hallmark of the best teaching was excellent organisation, and the clever range of methods that teachers used to promote learning. For example, most of the pupils have good oracy skills, and teachers capitalise on this strength by asking them to discuss issues in pairs or small groups, often before class discussion. In whole class sessions, teachers provide lively explanations, which hold pupils' interest, and draw out pupils' ideas well through skilful questioning. For example, in a mathematics lesson for Year 6, the teacher gradually extended the pupils' understanding of negative numbers through explanation, questioning and demonstration, challenging the pupils to explain their strategies. In an art lesson for Year 6, pupils were challenged to work out the process of 'applique' themselves, by studying examples, before drawing their own designs. Giving pupils responsibility for their own learning doubled their interest and effort.

24. For part of most lessons, pupils work individually or in groups, and this is usually well organised. Teachers and classroom assistants monitor pupils' progress well and intervene by asking questions or encouraging pupils to explain their thinking. In the lessons where teaching was unsatisfactory, however, there were often weaknesses in teachers' organisational skills. Too much time was spent explaining activities to pupils, or the explanation was not clear enough, and so pupils were not sure what to do. The transition from whole class work to individual activities was not managed well enough, and so pupils did not settle to their tasks. In a few lessons, too many pupils needed support at the same time, and the teacher was unable to meet all their needs.

25. In most lessons, teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well. They offer considerable praise and encouragement for good work and behaviour and pupils respond by listening well, concentrating on their work and behaving well in all situations. The interesting tasks that are provided for pupils also encourage good behaviour and concentration. In a few lessons, however, the teacher failed to manage the inappropriate behaviour of a small minority of pupils, or did not ensure that all pupils were working productively. Sometimes they were not vigilant or firm enough, and sometimes not consistent enough. As a result, too much time was taken gaining and re-gaining control and valuable time for learning was lost.

26. Time was used well in most of the lessons observed and, in the best lessons, not a minute was wasted. Teachers use time targets well to inject pace and urgency into pupils' working, giving them five minutes to complete a task, or reminding them that they only have 15 minutes left or, in one case, giving just a few seconds for pupils to gather their ideas for a discussion. For example, in a literacy lesson for Year 6 pupils about words that make the sound they describe, it was the teacher's urgent pace and excellent organisation that resulted in the pupils enjoying their work and making very good gains in learning. In the lessons where teaching was unsatisfactory, there was not enough urgency. Whole class introductions lasted too long, and pupils were not encouraged to work as quickly as possible. Teachers generally make sound use of resources to support pupils' learning, as was seen in a number of science lessons.

27. Teachers use good strategies to assess pupils' understanding and to ensure that work is well matched to their prior attainment. They often begin the lesson with a review of previous learning to check understanding. They encourage pupils to explain what they are doing and monitor their progress effectively. Teachers identify assessment opportunities in their planning, and good practice was observed in a number of lessons where teachers observed pupils and assessed their attainment. Pupils' work is marked thoroughly and there are many examples of teachers posing further questions to which the pupils respond. The school sets an increasing amount of homework as pupils move through the school so that, by Year 6, pupils have demanding schedule, which prepares them well for secondary school. There were good examples of pupils completing projects for subjects such as science, which enriched their understanding of the work covered in school. The work that pupils complete at home makes a valuable contribution to the learning at school. Most parents are happy with the pattern of homework, though some would appreciate a little more flexibility to meet the varying needs of their children.

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

28. The school provides a broad, balanced and rich curriculum, enhanced by educational visits and extra-curricular activities. Religious education is taught in line with the locally Agreed Syllabus. The curriculum is sufficiently broad and balanced to meet the needs of all pupils. There are outstanding strengths in science, art and music, and significant strengths in English, mathematics, religious education and history. Provision for IT, however, has some weaknesses. Overall, the school makes good provision for the intellectual, physical and emotional development of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and, in some classes, this provision is of high quality.

29. The school has managed to retain a strong curriculum in many of the foundation subjects, including in history, music and physical education, despite the greater emphasis on English and mathematics. Progress and standards in the core subjects have not suffered as a result, with pupils achieving well above average standards in national tests. Curriculum time is generally used well, and little time is wasted at the beginning of lessons, which is an improvement on the last inspection. The school has worked hard to provide equal access for all pupils to the full curriculum, though a minor weakness is the way in which time is allocated to subjects, and some aspects of subjects. In the early part of the key stage, long science lessons create problems for both pupils and teachers because they find it difficult to sustain motivation and concentration. Throughout the school, there is a lack of time for the development of individual pupils' reading skills. In the later part of the key stage, design and technology is allocated a whole afternoon every two weeks. This leads to lessons that are too long in which pace flags and pupils become bored. IT is a weakness and does not meet statutory requirements because pupils have little experience of using the computer for controlling, monitoring and modelling. The time that pupils spend using IT is variable, and often does not allow them to complete tasks that have been set.

30. The strategies to develop pupils' numeracy and literacy skills are very good, and literacy skills, in particular, are used and developed well across a range of subjects. The additional



literacy support provided for pupils with special educational needs is generally effective. During the morning literacy and numeracy lessons, pupils with special educational needs are given good support in class or in small groups rather than being withdrawn. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Some of these pupils receive extra teaching in afternoon withdrawal sessions, with the intention of consolidating basic skills in aspects such as phonics, grammar and spelling. Because these lessons are very brief, it is difficult to relate the work to the pupils' own reading and writing, which restricts their effectiveness.

31. Pupils' learning is enriched by very good extra-curricular activities. There is an impressive range of clubs, including sports, music, and craft activities. The recorder club and the orchestra make valuable contributions to the school's music curriculum, and the choir represents the school at local festivals. The sports' clubs include netball, rugby, cross-country, football and rounders. They are well attended, and significantly enhance the school's provision for physical education. Other clubs include art, sewing and French. The clubs tend to be for the older pupils, though younger pupils attend some activities. The inspection team was surprised that, in their questionnaire responses, more parents did not recognise this very good provision. Many visits to places of interest in the locality support work in history, geography, art and religious education. Residential visits in Years 4 and 6 also support pupils' work in a range of subjects and play a valuable part in their personal and social development.

32. There is good provision for special educational needs, equality of access and social inclusion. No pupils are disapplied from National Curriculum requirements. An average number of pupils are identified as having special educational needs. Provision for these pupils is good, and the school pays due regard to the Code of Practice. Pupils' special needs are identified carefully, their progress is monitored well, and reviews are carried out correctly. The writing of individual education plans has improved since the last inspection, but the clarity of targets remains a weakness. For some pupils, targets for improvement are not specific enough, which makes them difficult to monitor. Individual education plans do not always clearly show the actions that will be taken to achieve the targets. Pupils with a statement of special educational need are well supported by effective special needs assistants, but the liaison books that class teachers use do not make clear enough the short term targets for each lesson. There are good systems to support statement reviews, which take place as required and for which parental views are taken into account. There are no pupils with English as an additional language.

33. Assemblies and acts of collective worship take place regularly and meet statutory requirements. Pupils' spiritual development is very well promoted through religious education, music, art and the well-planned assemblies. Provision for pupils' moral development is good and that for their social development is very good, through paired and group work in classes, visits and trips, opportunities to take responsibility and the good role models provided by the staff. There are high expectations of positive behaviour. Pupils contribute to the class rules and they know the difference between right and wrong. They have a good understanding of fairness in playground games and in behaviour. A weakness is that procedures for managing pupils' behaviour are inconsistent in some classes.

34. The school makes good provision for pupils' cultural development, particularly helping them to understand their own culture, through history, art, music, religious education and the

many visits that take place. Geography does not make a strong enough contribution to pupils' cultural development because too few opportunities are taken to compare and contrast the pupils' own culture with that of other localities. The curriculum does not contain enough activities to raise pupils' awareness of the cultural diversity of our society.

35. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good, through a clear policy, circle times and informal opportunities within lessons. The governors meet their responsibilities towards sex education, which is very well covered as part of the science curriculum and by specific lessons. There is a sound drugs education policy.

36. Good links with other educational establishments have been developed, particularly with the infant school from which pupils join Christ Church, and the range of secondary schools to which pupils transfer. The school is also has extensive links with local provision of teacher training, and student teachers use the school for teaching practice.

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

37. The headteacher and staff know the pupils well and provide a safe, welcoming environment. This reflects the school's vision to provide a caring and supportive community. Relationships throughout the school are very good, and parents feel that the school promotes good attitudes and values, such as caring, honesty and respect. Procedures for promoting pupils' personal development are very good. Each class has a personal, social and health education lesson regularly, when many issues are discussed. For example, in a very good lesson, Year 6 pupils engaged in a high quality discussion about respecting others, and identified the qualities that earn their respect. Year 6 pupils mentor the younger Year 3 pupils, and a school council has recently been established in order to incorporate pupils' views into school decisions.

38. Procedures for promoting and monitoring behaviour are very good. There is a useful policy, which emphasises the importance of valuing everyone as an individual, and being consistent and fair while taking into account individual differences. Positive class and playground rules have been agreed. The policy affirms assertive encouragement of good behaviour and identifies rewards and sanctions, which have been shared with support staff so they are fully understood and used consistently. A number of misdemeanours will not be tolerated, including bullying, cheating and dishonesty. The policy is clearly in use through the school, and parents agree that the pupils' behaviour is very good. Achievements are acknowledged in monthly celebration assemblies, and each month a class is awarded 'Buckley Bear' for its contribution to school. Pupils are highly motivated by this.

39. The school has a useful child protection policy, which has been shared with support staff and newly appointed staff. The headteacher is the designated child protection officer and he has attended relevant training. Fire drills are held regularly and records kept. First aid procedures are good and records are carefully kept. Regular health and safety checks are carried out.

40. Procedures to monitor attendance are securely in place. Parents understand the requirement to inform the school if their child is absent, and any queries are noted and

followed up by the school. Although there are no instances of unauthorised absence, a number of parents take their holidays in term time.

41. The school has effective systems for identifying pupils with special educational needs and determining strategies to support them. Care is taken to ensure that the support provided by the school meets the needs of the pupils. These pupils are well supported, both academically and personally. Many make good progress so that, towards the end of the key stage, additional support is no longer required. Assessment and record keeping for pupils with statements is also of good quality.

42. For all pupils, procedures for assessing attainment and monitoring academic progress are now very good. The headteacher uses screening tests as a benchmark to predict pupils' attainment, and subsequent results are monitored against this benchmark. The school uses standardised reading and spelling tests twice a year, a mathematics test annually and the optional national assessments for all pupils. Records are kept in an attainment portfolio, and pupils who require additional support are identified, as well as issues requiring action. For example, the progress of high attaining readers has been identified as an area for further development. Evidence of each pupil's work in core subjects is kept in an achievement portfolio and this shows progress through the school very clearly. Teachers identify assessment objectives and activities for each unit of work in every subject and record results using a recently introduced system that identifies three levels of achievement. All these procedures ensure teachers know their pupils' achievements very well. Individual targets are set for each pupil in English and mathematics and these are reviewed each term and discussed with parents. Lessons are evaluated and planning reflects this. A key issue for development after the last inspection was to improve the assessment and recording of pupils' attainment and progress and this has been addressed very effectively. It is now a strength of the school.

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

43. The school has a good partnership with parents, which contributes to the high standards pupils achieve. The school is popular in the local area and is consistently oversubscribed. The great majority of parents are pleased with most aspects of the school's work and inspectors' judgements support parents' positive views. The school has used a recent parental survey to evaluate the quality of the partnership and identify areas for development.

44. Some parents raised concerns on the questionnaire about the range of activities available outside lessons. The school provides a very good range of school clubs, many of which are open to all year groups. There are also many trips and visitors to school, which enhance curriculum provision. At their meeting, some parents said they would like more opportunities to discuss pupils' progress with teachers. The school is responding by increasing consultation meetings from two to three and reviewing their timing in the year. Some parents indicated on the questionnaire that they do not feel the school works closely enough with them. However, inspection evidence shows that many parents work closely with the school through their active support of children's learning at home and their involvement in the thriving parent teacher association.

45. The school provides good quality information for parents, which enables them to support their children's learning effectively. The school prospectus, regular newsletters and annual report of governors to parents are clear and informative. Governors' meetings are open to parents and copies of minutes are available. Year group newsletters, sent out at the beginning of the school year, include brief curriculum information, homework expectations and a note of visits. A home school agreement has been implemented. Reports are of good quality, and parents are given the opportunity to discuss them. They include information about curriculum coverage, pupils' attainment and the individual targets set and achieved during the year. Parents find staff easily accessible for informal discussion, where necessary.

46. The school's active involvement of parents promotes high standards of attainment and pupils' personal development. Individual pupil targets, introduced this year, are discussed with parents at the first consultation evening and reviewed at subsequent meetings. Homework diaries have been introduced, in addition to home school reading records, and inspection evidence shows that these are widely used by parents, who hear their children read regularly and support them in independent research. The parents of children with special educational needs are involved in annual review meetings and are advised on how to support their children. Although there are only a few regular parent helpers in school, parents do help on school trips. The parent teacher association is committed and innovative and is drawing on the professional skills of parents to raise substantial funds for, and potentially to build, the new IT suite.

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

47. The leadership and management of the school are successful in enabling pupils to attain high standards in most subjects of the curriculum. They have also created and maintained a positive environment in which pupils' good attitudes and behaviour make a significant contribution to their learning and progress.

48. The headteacher provides experienced and astute leadership, and has very good relationships with all members of the school community. He has a clear vision for the school, shared with governors and staff, which is well expressed in the vision statement and aims, and is being fulfilled. He monitors the work of the school well, and has a clear picture of strengths and weaknesses. He has a calm approach to management, offering considerable support to his colleagues, which gives them confidence to develop their own practice. The headteacher wants pupils to achieve high standards, but values the broad and balanced curriculum provided by the school and the development of children as individuals. He receives good support from an energetic deputy headteacher, who provides an excellent role model as a class teacher, and carries significant responsibilities for the management of the school. Most of the weaknesses identified at the time of the last inspection have been addressed, and marked improvements have been achieved in a number of areas.

49. Good delegation ensures an effective contribution from staff with management responsibilities. All teachers have subject responsibilities, and many are given time to observe or work alongside colleagues in order to monitor standards. Co-ordinators are given a clear brief, which includes producing a progress report each term, and they receive good support in

order to lead the development of their subjects. Effective monitoring programmes have helped to raise standards in English, mathematics and science. The professional development of teachers is supported by annual appraisal interviews, with agreed targets informing future priorities. The school is now focusing more closely on the training needs of all staff as it achieves Investors In People status. There are good systems for the induction of new staff, and the school works effectively with partner institutions to provide initial teacher training opportunities for students. The school has productive links with Marshfields Infant School, from which most pupils transfer.

50. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities and is thoroughly involved in discussing all aspects of the school's work. Governors bring a wide variety of expertise to their role, and have established good relationships with the school management and the staff. These have developed through each governor taking a specific interest in one subject area. Governors visit lessons, hold discussions with co-ordinators, and gain some overview of standards in each subject. Strategies for sharing this information with the full governing body are still evolving. The governing body has established a strong pattern of working groups, which deal effectively with issues relating to finance, personnel and buildings. The role of the governing body as a critical friend to the school is still developing. Their involvement in school development planning and reviewing the progress made towards targets relies heavily on information provided by the headteacher.

51. Whole school development planning is good, with appropriate priorities identified and relevant success criteria chosen to judge progress. The review of subject development plans, and discussions involving all teaching staff help to identify targets for the next year, which are mostly related to the curriculum. Specific time and cost allocations are attached to each target, to ensure that sufficient priority is given to each one. The progress towards targets is reviewed regularly by the management team, and progress reports given to the governing body at meetings. However, the plan is only for one year, and does not take account of developments or priorities over the next few years.

52. The educational priorities for the school are well supported through its financial planning. Appropriate attention is given to implementing national initiatives, and making good use of associated funding. For example, quality training and rigorous monitoring programmes have enabled the school to implement national strategies for literacy and numeracy effectively. Very good use has been made of booster funding to support all pupils preparing for national assessment tests. The school's use of new technology, and recent staff training, has not yet been successful in raising standards in IT, a key issue from the last inspection. The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is good. The school building and grounds provide good quality accommodation, which support the teaching of a broad curriculum. Learning resources are at least adequate, except for IT, with good resources in English, mathematics, art and religious education, and very good music resources.

53. Since the last inspection, the school has successfully addressed key issues relating to improving the quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs and the quality of teaching in some classes. The teaching of mathematics, and assessment and recording procedures for all subjects have greatly improved. The timing of withdrawal of pupils from a range of lessons has been addressed. National Curriculum requirements are now being met in design and technology and music. All statutory requirements are met with the exception of the full implementation of the National Curriculum in IT.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

54. The school has an ethos that is very supportive of pupils' learning and development. This enables them to make sound progress overall during their time at the school. Pupils make particularly good progress towards the end of the key stage in response to good, often very good teaching that challenges and extends them. Results of national tests for pupils in their final year at the school have been well above average and have improved steadily during the past three years. The quality of teaching is good overall, but varies significantly between classes. Within this context, and to improve the standards of work and the pupils' achievements, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- ◆ raise the standard of teaching, where there are weaknesses, by:
  - ensuring that lessons are well organised, and appropriate strategies employed so that pupils concentrate on the tasks they are given and work productively;
  - improving teachers' knowledge in the subjects where they are least confident;
  - ensuring that the school's good guidance for managing pupils' behaviour is implemented consistently;
  - ensuring that the pace of learning enables all pupils to make as much progress as possible;
  - enabling all teachers to share existing good practice.

*(paragraphs 3, 16-27, 60, 66, 72, 84)*

- ◆ raise standards in information technology, as planned, by:
  - teaching a curriculum that meets all the requirements of the National Curriculum;
  - increasing the amount of time pupils spend on computers;
  - ensuring that pupils use and develop their IT skills whilst supporting work in other subjects of the curriculum;
  - ensuring that existing guidelines for the subject are implemented consistently;
  - improving the quality and range of resources, as funding permits;
  - strengthening teachers' subject knowledge and making full use of improving expertise.

*(paragraphs 8, 17, 28, 53, 90-94)*

In addition to the key issues, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan. Each weakness is followed by a reference to the paragraph(s) in which it is discussed.

- ◆ review the way in which curriculum time is used, as follows:
  - create more time for teachers to develop pupils' reading skills, both individually and in small groups, in addition to the work already undertaken in literacy lessons;
  - reduce the length of science lessons for the younger pupils;
  - clarify the purpose of withdrawal lessons for pupils with special educational needs.

*(paragraphs 18, 29-30, 57)*

- ◆ ensure that pupils' progress in design and technology is more consistent.

*(paragraphs 9, 78-81)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	77
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	21

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5	21	30	34	10	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**

	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	255
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	9

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Special educational needs**

	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	56

#### **English as an additional language**

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

#### **Pupil mobility in the last school year**

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	5.3
National comparative data	5.6

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	1999	30	22	52

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	27	26	28
	Girls	18	17	19
	Total	45	43	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	87 (90)	83 (89)	90 (95)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	26	25	27
	Girls	19	18	19
	Total	45	43	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	87 (94)	83 (89)	88 (94)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	3
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	250
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

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

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

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



***Teachers and classes*****Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	28

**Education support staff: Y3 – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	122

***Financial information***

Financial year	1998-99
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	£
Total income	449563.00
Total expenditure	461354.00
Expenditure per pupil	1853.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	40021.00
Balance carried forward to next year	28230.00

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	220
Number of questionnaires returned	84

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	46	50	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	33	54	8	1	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	27	62	7	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	20	60	14	6	0
The teaching is good.	33	56	5	0	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	24	50	23	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	45	50	2	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	44	50	6	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	13	58	24	1	4
The school is well led and managed.	21	57	5	10	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	35	56	6	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	17	36	26	17	5

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

### **ENGLISH**

55. The end of key stage results in the 1999 national assessments were well above the national average, and above average compared with similar schools. Results have been well above average for the past three years and show steady improvement, in line with the national trend. There are no significant differences in results of boys and girls, though last year the boys' results were higher. Overall attainment of pupils currently in Year 6 is above the national average overall, with some areas of particular strength. Attainment is slightly lower than 1999 because approximately a quarter of the current Year 6 pupils is on the special educational needs register and many of their learning difficulties relate to language skills. The school sets appropriate targets for each year group as well as for individual pupils.

56. Pupils usually listen attentively in lessons, both to the teacher and each other. Most are articulate, confident speakers with a wide vocabulary, and standards are well above average. In Year 6 for example, pupils evaluate the work of others in physical education lessons, explain their methods of working in mathematics and predict what type of holidays Victorians of different classes might take. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to work in pairs or groups. For example, groups of pupils in Year 4 discussed the usefulness of the contents and index pages of non-fiction texts as they tried to locate information to answer questions. Pairs of pupils in Year 5 discussed fiction books to determine which genre they represented. Technical vocabulary is well taught in other subjects. For example, in a Year 6 science lesson, pupils discussed evaporation and condensation.

57. Pupils enjoy reading and standards are above average. By the end of the key stage, higher-attaining pupils read challenging texts fluently, with good expression. They discuss favourite books and authors, justifying their opinions well. There is evidence of pupils enjoying a wide range of fiction, including some classic texts, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. Home support has a very positive effect on standards, with most parents hearing their children read daily. The texts used in the literacy hour are successfully introducing all pupils to a wide range of literature. Pupils enjoy group-reading times during the literacy hour, and some opportunities are provided here for pupils to engage in discussion about authors' style and use of language. However, opportunities for all pupils to read individually to their teacher or another adult are limited. A few pupils were found to be reading books that were too hard for them, and teachers do not always monitor the choice of reading material carefully enough. Pupils undertake research for a variety of topics, using non-fiction books and CD ROMs. The school is still aware of the need to improve higher order reading skills, which was noted as a weakness at the last inspection.

58. Limited use is made of the library, and most pupils do not understand the Dewey classification system, relying on the written labels to locate books. Although class book areas are well presented in most rooms, some of the books are worn and need to be replaced as funds permit. Sets of books for group reading and many big books have been acquired recently and these excellent resources are being used well. Regular book weeks and book fairs help to raise the profile of reading.

59. The standard of writing is well above average and a wide range is undertaken throughout the school. For example, expressive language is used effectively to create atmosphere in poems written by Year 4 pupils remembering their visit to Guildford Cathedral, and by Year 5 when depicting magical qualities of stones. By the end of the key stage, pupils write confidently, using appropriate styles for different purposes. Balanced arguments showing both points of view about children watching television, letters of complaint, diary entries and formal language for a curriculum vitae are among the many styles of writing undertaken successfully. Pupils can write well, using a neat, cursive script, though there is insufficient emphasis on good presentation in exercise books in some classes. Pupils are taught punctuation and grammar rules well, and there is no evidence of over dominance of formal exercises now, as reported in the previous inspection. Weekly lists of spellings are learnt and tested, and standards of spelling are good overall. Pupils use a dictionary and thesaurus confidently. Stories are planned carefully and pupils edit their work, sometimes sharing it with a partner. However, not all pupils have enough experience of the full writing process through planning, drafting, revising and proof reading prior to final presentation.

60. The quality of teaching is good overall, but varies too much between classes. Teaching was very good in almost half of the lessons seen, a high proportion compared with the national picture, but unsatisfactory in three out of 16. In the very good lessons, teachers have high expectations of behaviour and work, a brisk pace is sustained, pupils are fully involved throughout, and lessons are very well planned. For example, in a very good Year 3 lesson, the pupils consolidated their week's work by writing step-by-step instructions for collecting their lunch. Every pupil achieved the objective through the teacher's carefully planned lesson incorporating a range of activities, firm control and clearly explained expectations. Year 4 pupils made very good learning gains when they were well taught about different types of adverb. A well-selected text enabled the pupils to develop their knowledge in context, using a thesaurus to select alternative adverbs while still retaining the atmosphere of the passage. All the teaching seen in Year 6 classes was very good, capturing the pupils' interest through challenging tasks and ensuring that they made very good gains in learning. The content of these lessons included writing character sketches, using onomatopoeic words and writing kennings. In another lesson, with a lower ability group, the teacher focused on the use of speech marks, and the pupils made very good progress through well planned, progressively structured activities. In all these Year 6 lessons, teachers enjoyed excellent relationships with the pupils who worked enthusiastically and industriously to a high standard. Elsewhere in the school, where teaching was unsatisfactory, opportunities for pupils to learn from text were missed, or teacher knowledge was insecure, or time was not managed well. There were occasions when inadequate class control led to unsatisfactory progress, and times when pupils were insufficiently involved.

61. The school recognises the need to update the English policy, and draw up a scheme of work for speaking and listening. The literacy strategy is successfully in place through the school, though in some classes the teacher is insufficiently involved with one ability group on guided text work during the group time. Classroom assistants support groups of pupils very effectively. Currently, pupils in Year 6 are benefiting from additional teacher time twice a week, when the three classes split into four ability groups. The school has made great improvements since the last inspection with assessing and recording pupils' achievements and

attainment, and recognises that the assessment of speaking and listening, and individual reading records, require further development. Most teachers mark pupils' written work carefully, with reference to the learning objective, and the best give points for improvement as well. The subject is very well led by an enthusiastic, industrious and knowledgeable co-ordinator, who is an exemplary literacy teacher. Monitoring of the literacy hour has been undertaken, with useful reports provided identifying strengths and areas for development.

## **MATHEMATICS**

62. The results of national assessments in 1999 were well above the national average, and average compared with those achieved by similar schools. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 was well above the national average, and above the average for similar schools. In the 1999 tests, boys performed significantly better in mathematics than girls. Results over a four-year period to 1999 show an improvement in attainment exceeding the national trend. Evidence gathered during the inspection shows that, for the current Year 6 pupils, overall attainment is well above the national average, and there is no significant difference in attainment between boys and girls.

63. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils calculate confidently with numbers to 10,000 and know more complicated processes such as long multiplication and division. They are confident in their use of fractions, decimals and percentages. Most pupils have very good understanding of work relating to shape and space, are confident in handling and interpreting data, and in using and applying their mathematical knowledge to solve problems. Pupils' achievements improve considerably towards the end of the key stage, where they make very good progress in response to challenging teaching that uses and extends their existing skills. For example, in one Year 6 lesson, pupils were taught to calculate the differences between extreme temperatures in various places, by using a range of subtraction methods involving negative numbers, and from plotting and interpreting information on graphs. This task built effectively on mental mathematics work in the previous few lessons, and extended learning both in the use of negative scales on graphs, and data interpretation. Pupils' recorded work in Year 6 shows consistent evidence of the more able pupils being extended, by being given challenging tasks. Similarly, less able pupils receive good support and made good progress. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support, and make good progress.

64. Throughout the school, pupils' numeracy skills are well above average. Younger pupils develop quick recall of number bonds, and most of the older pupils know multiplication tables very well. These good basic skills support work in mathematics and some other areas of the curriculum. For example, in science, pupils take accurate measurements and are able to tabulate and present their data in appropriate formats. The school is still developing its planned links between numeracy and subjects across the whole curriculum.

65. The quality of teaching is good overall, with some very good and excellent teaching towards the end of the key stage. As a result, pupils show a high degree of interest and enjoyment in their mathematics lessons. Teaching was very good or better in nearly one third of the lessons seen, and good or better in two thirds. It was at least satisfactory in all but one

of the 13 lessons observed. The best teaching is exemplified by precise planning and very good subject knowledge, which is used to ensure that explanations are delivered at pace, with a high level of pupil involvement through questioning. For example, in one lesson, pupils explored two different methods of subtraction, which related very well to the mental activity of counting back in tens and hundreds. The pupils were all involved in demonstrating their methods, giving them confidence in their ability and helping the teacher to assess their progress. Strict time targets, with constant reminders, ensured that the pupils remained on task and made very good gains in learning.

66. Nearly all lessons have a good structure, with a brisk mental mathematics session followed by an explanation of the main task for the lesson. The teaching is purposeful, so pupils listen carefully to instructions, are keen to participate in question and answer sessions, and offer their methods and ideas confidently. Recorded tasks include extension activities for higher-attaining pupils, and support work for less able. Most lessons are well organised and, as a result, pupils work quietly, selecting appropriate equipment or resources with a minimum of fuss, and sustain their concentration for long periods. When required to work together, they do so in a supportive and co-operative manner. Plenary sessions are used well to draw together the main learning objectives. Where teaching is less effective, planning does not include precise learning objectives, the teacher explanation is not clear, and the pace of the lesson is too slow, preventing significant gains in learning. For example, one lesson involved a game, with pupils adding three single digit numbers to match higher numbers on a grid, to make a winning line of three numbers. Many pupils did not understand the teacher's explanation, and others worked very slowly in their recording of simple additions over a long period of time. A structured pattern of homework makes a valuable contribution to pupils' progress, particularly in Year 6.

67. The school has a good scheme of work, which incorporates new national guidelines very effectively. Assessment procedures are thorough and accurate. Good use is made of formal tests, to identify strengths and areas for development in teaching, and to provide information to help set individual targets for pupils. There is also a good portfolio of pupils' work covering their individual achievements. Teachers keep good records of pupils' progress in each unit of work covered. Resources for mathematics are good, and include a strong range of materials to support the teaching of mental mathematics. Very good use has been made of a government grant to boost standards in the subject, by providing opportunities for all Year 6 pupils to receive extra support. The co-ordinator provides good leadership, and has a comprehensive monitoring programme in place to help evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning.

68. At the time of the last inspection, attainment was close to the national average, the quality of teaching was unsatisfactory, and the overall progress made by pupils was also unsatisfactory. Since then, very good progress has been made in raising standards. This reflects the school's commitment to improving assessment and planning procedures, monitoring teaching and learning in classrooms, improving resources, and using new national guidelines to strengthen good practice.

## SCIENCE

69. Results of the 1999 national assessments for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 were well above average when compared with all primary schools. Almost all of the pupils reached the expected Level 4 of attainment, and 40 per cent achieved the higher Level 5, a high proportion compared with the national picture. However, the results were average compared with those achieved by schools in similar social circumstances. Over the past three years, results have been consistently well above the national average, and there has been a gradual improvement, in line with the national trend. There has been a marked improvement on the results reported at the time of the last inspection in 1997.

70. Attainment in Year 6 is well above national expectations, and much higher than the average attainment found at the last inspection. In their current work about materials, pupils investigate factors affecting how quickly a screw will rust. They bring a very good general knowledge of science to the experiment, for example being able to explain reversible and irreversible changes that happen to various materials. They describe processes, both physical and chemical, that change materials, such as the fact that intense heat changes sand in to glass. Using their knowledge, pupils hypothesise that iron is the metal that rusts and that the process is irreversible. Higher attainers speculate about the conditions for rusting, with one pupil suggesting that the oxygen in air is needed, and another saying that the acid in vinegar will make the screw rust. All the pupils have a rigorous concept of conducting a fair test, and know that all conditions except one variable must be kept constant. They set up their experiments very carefully, selecting equipment and measuring quantities accurately. Most of the pupils explain what they are doing using a good range of scientific vocabulary. Year 6 pupils' past work shows a good coverage of science topics, largely based on a series of experiments, with some well-judged factual input. Most pupils' recording is of a very good standard, both in presentation and content. Pupils' good literacy skills are used and developed well, with many examples of carefully written predictions and well-explained conclusions which, for the high attainers, are outstanding in quality. All the pupils are working at a level expected for their ages, and at least a third exhibit a breadth of knowledge and precision in experimental work well above expectations.

71. Overall, pupils' attainment when they start Key Stage 2 is well above national expectations. Pupils' work shows that they make sound progress across the key stage, through a consistent diet of investigations and experiments. They make best progress towards the end of the key stage because the experimental work is more rigorous, and this is reflected in the high quality of pupils' recorded work. Throughout the school, there is a good emphasis on teaching the correct scientific vocabulary to support pupils' discussion. Pupils with special educational needs also make sound progress, because they find the practical work interesting, and they are well supported by teachers, classroom assistants and other pupils. High attainers are generally given the same work as other pupils, but are challenged by their teachers to provide more complex explanations.

72. The quality of teaching is good overall, and has many strengths that support pupils' learning. Teaching was good or better in five of the eight lessons observed, and at least satisfactory in all but one. Most teachers have a good knowledge of the subject, which is reflected in their astute questioning of pupils and their clear explanation of concepts. This

helps pupils to understand new ideas and to learn new scientific vocabulary. Teachers also encourage pupils to explain what they already know, which is useful in assessing progress and helping pupils to clarify their understanding. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, the teacher reviewed existing knowledge about materials and their properties before pupils embarked on an experiment to find which materials conduct electricity. In most lessons, teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve, and this leads to good gains in learning. They set challenging activities and expect pupils to work hard. The good quality of most pupils' recorded work reflects the high standards expected by teachers. The quality of teachers' marking of pupils' work is particularly good, with praise, additional questions, and subsequent responses from pupils continuing the learning process. Teachers' good knowledge and effective organisational skills are generally evident when pupils are asked to carry out experiments. Teachers make time to discuss issues with pupils and to pose further questions, which extends learning. In the one lesson where teaching was unsatisfactory, however, weaknesses in the management of pupils' behaviour and the organisation of experimental work meant that much time was wasted and pupils made few gains in learning. In the best lessons, teaching moves at pace, as was seen when groups of Year 6 pupils set up their experiments, with constant reminders about the time available. As a result of the good quality teaching observed, pupils are interested in science, offer their ideas readily, and work productively.

73. The school organises the science curriculum very well through a detailed scheme of work, which has a well-judged emphasis on experimental and investigative activities. This is reflected clearly in pupils' work and lessons, and ensures that pupils have an active interest in science and gather their factual knowledge through purposeful inquiry. In Years 3 and 4, however, long sessions of science sometimes resulted in both pupils and teachers being unable to sustain the interest and pace of learning. The curriculum is enriched further by visits and residential experiences, which enable pupils to observe at first hand. However, pupils do not use information technology enough to support and enrich their work in science. The effective system of planning between teachers in the same year group shares expertise and promotes consistency. Assessment procedures, both at a whole-school level and informally in lessons, help teachers to plan work that challenges pupils. For example, in Year 6 lessons, teachers assessed pupils' skills in setting up experiments, to inform the planning of future activities. Co-ordination of the subject across the school is good. Information is gathered about the quality of teaching and learning, through lesson observations, looking at pupils' work, and analysing assessments. The school has a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject, which enables improvements be made.

## **ART**

74. Pupils of all abilities make good progress in art and, by the end of the key stage, attainment is above that expected for pupils' ages. This is a slight improvement since the last inspection. Pupils express themselves in a wide variety of media, in both two and three-dimensional work. Their pieces often show great sensitivity, for example the mood paintings produced by pupils in Year 5. The artwork displayed around the school, often linked to work in other subjects, particularly history and English, is of very good quality and enhances the learning environment.

75. Pupils have good drawing, painting and observational skills, which are learnt through a



variety of techniques, and developed as they move through the school. They learn about primary colours early in the school and then discover how to produce secondary, tertiary and subtle shades of colour. They are able to incorporate colour in complicated designs, such as the William Morris patterns painted by Year 6 pupils, and they can combine techniques to great effect, for example when pupils in Year 4 superimpose stencilled paint over pastel designs. Pupils copy and simplify designs accurately, incorporate fine detail and build on the quality work already in their sketchbooks. Pupils in Year 5 produce some high quality close observational work in copying patterns of lace design, and younger pupils draw still life studies with developing accuracy. In textiles, pupils in Year 6 have an excellent understanding of a variety of stitches, know their names and can describe them. Pupils respond artistically and emotionally to the work of great artists, identifying how feelings are conveyed in different ways. The standard and variety of three-dimensional work is good, for example the Celtic brooches seen in Year 4, the Tudor jewellery in Year 5 and the papier maché faces in Year 6.

76. The quality of teaching is good. Teaching was at least satisfactory in all the five lessons observed, good in two and excellent in one. Teachers' knowledge of the subject is strong and they are clear about their objectives. This helps them to plan lessons that are well structured and move at a good pace, so pupils make good gains in learning. Pupils respond enthusiastically in art lessons, settle to their work quickly, and sometimes work in silence because they are absorbed in what they are doing. Teachers have high expectations and this is reflected in the very high quality work that is produced in most classes. In the most successful lessons, pupils are encouraged to work out their approach to the task for themselves so that their learning is linked with the application of practical skills. Teachers use the language of art so that pupils acquire a good technical and critical vocabulary. Good use is made of sketchbooks to make preliminary designs and experiment with techniques. However, their use varies from year to year and, because they are not carried on from class to class, a valuable record of development is wasted.

77. The quality of subject leadership is good. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning carefully, offering support and advice. She ensures that regular assessments of pupils' developing skills are carried out. She is undertaking a thorough review of the school's policy for art, and ensures that good quality resources are readily available.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

78. Since the last inspection, the school's teaching of design and technology has improved gradually so that, by the end of the key stage, pupils' attainment now just meets the expectations for their ages. Only one design and technology lesson was observed, so judgements are largely based on a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning, and discussions with staff.

79. Pupils work with a sound range of materials and tools, and are able to design products and then build them. By the end of the key stage, pupils produce lively designs based on annotated diagrams, and are realistic about the possibilities of construction, as shown in the designs of implements for elderly people completed by Year 6. Pupils learn how to evaluate their work critically to bring about improvements. Pupils are taught to work safely with tools, and they use them to make products in card and wood, which they know how to join together

and articulate. Younger pupils make simple mechanisms using air pressure, and invent packages for cereals. Older pupils make storybooks with moving parts, learn how to tie-dye and then how to use the material to create a money container.

80. Although pupils learn how to design, build and evaluate a range of products, there is a lack of coherence in the progressive development of their skills. Few focused practical tasks are set to teach specific skills. Much of the work undertaken lacks challenge, for example the pop-up cards seen in Years 4, 5 and 6. Too few pupils disassemble mechanisms to see how they work. In some classes, good use is made of design and technology notebooks to draft designs and plans. However, this practice is not consistent across the school so good work done in one year is not necessarily built on in the next. The school has been slow to address the weaknesses identified at the last inspection and, though some progress has been made, more is needed.

81. Planning for design and technology has weaknesses, so work is not always well matched to the varying prior attainment of the pupils. In the one lesson seen, the quality of teaching was sound. Subject leadership is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has done much to raise the profile of design and technology. She monitors the delivery of the subject, has detected weaknesses, and is currently preparing a new scheme of work, which is intended to resolve many of the present shortcomings in planning.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

82. Pupils make sound progress and, by the end of the key stage, their attainment matches that which would be expected for their ages. This is a similar picture to the last inspection, with the improvement that pupils' work now shows more consistent progress.

83. Pupils cover work on a variety of themes, such as rivers, settlements, and the environment and, by Year 6, have a sound factual knowledge of these topics. The best work is based on real examples and first-hand experience, such as when Year 6 pupils walk a stretch of the River Wey before considering human influences and river features. Some of the thematic work, however, is completed in isolation from the study of real places or contrasting localities, using work sheets, and this does not encourage pupils to consider geographical evidence. Pupils' map work skills develop steadily, and tasks increase in complexity as pupils move from class to class, so that Year 6 pupils are able to identify features on Ordnance Survey maps. Pupils in Year 6 study India, and their work shows a good appreciation of aspects such as the different climate and culture. In the early part of the key stage, however, work about other countries does not focus clearly enough on identifying similarities and differences compared with pupils' own locality. There are a number of good examples of pupils completing projects at home, which enrich their geographical work.

84. The quality of teaching is sound overall. It was good in two of the four lessons observed, sound in one, and unsatisfactory in one. In the best lessons, teachers had researched their subject well so that they could lead informative discussions. For example, Year 3 pupils discussed life in Cairo, as a class and in small groups, with the teacher gradually introducing new ideas through a well-chosen series of questions. This helped the pupils to understand features of life in Cairo, and enabled a group of higher attainers to suggest why people from

the rural areas of Egypt might want to move to the city. The content of the best lessons was planned carefully, with clear objectives and interesting tasks; as a result, pupils make good gains in learning. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, weaknesses in the teacher's subject knowledge resulted in misleading information, and the organisation of pupils' tasks was weak, with inappropriate behaviour not managed well enough.

85. The curriculum is generally broad and balanced, with a strength in the work completed by pupils during residential and day visits, for example when Year 4 pupils carry out a study of the village of Mickleham. The immediate locality is not used enough to encourage pupils' skills in observing geographical features, or to make comparisons with similar sized localities, both in the United Kingdom and abroad, which would help pupils to place their own locality in its geographical context. There is too little use of IT to support geographical work. The subject makes a sound contribution to pupils' cultural development, but this is not as strong as work seen in history. Co-ordination of the subject across the school is sound. Although the teacher who manages the subject has only recently assumed the responsibility, she is developing a clear view of strengths and weaknesses through looking at pupils' work and discussing planning with colleagues. This will enable the school to identify targets for improvement.

## **HISTORY**

86. Pupils make good progress and, by the end of the key stage, their attainment is above that expected for their ages. Their understanding of chronology develops well, with the various periods studied located on a time line in each classroom. Pupils engage in valuable historical enquiry as they are posed key questions and seek answers from a range of sources of evidence. For example, pupils in Year 3 have used a CD ROM to find out about Ancient Egypt, and Year 4 have worked with part of a local census to find out about Chertsey in the past. Year 5 study the picture of Field of the Cloth of Gold, and Year 6 work with Victorian artefacts. Pupils are interested in history, ask and answer questions confidently and concentrate well when recording their work in a variety of ways.

87. Pupils' knowledge and understanding develop well. Pupils in Year 3 devised a useful questionnaire for their grandparents, analysing the results to see how lifestyles have altered. Pupils in Year 4 understand why the Romans invaded Britain and why they left. Year 5 pupils learnt valuable detail about Tudor times as they studied the picture of 'Field of the Cloth of Gold'. They recognised who was involved, where and why, using prior knowledge to inform suggestions. Similarly, Year 6 have good understanding of Victorian times and the living conditions of the different classes. They use this knowledge to predict what types of holidays each would take.

88. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teaching was at least satisfactory in all the six lessons observed, good in two and very good in one. Enthusiastic, knowledgeable teachers bring periods of history to life for their pupils, ask good questions, use resources well and have high expectations. All teachers mount stimulating displays of the pupils' work, with useful labels asking further questions and encouraging interaction. Various strategies are used to sustain pupils' interest and many useful cross-curricular links are made. In art, for example,

the Celtic and Tudor jewellery made by Years 4 and 5 is of a good standard. Pupils' literacy skills are developed well through history. For example, Year 6 pupils have written a speech as though made by the Earl of Shaftesbury, and a diary entry by a young working class child, in both using an appropriate style effectively. Their arguments about the advantages of disadvantages of the development of railways and letters home describing the excitement of riding on the railway for the first time are of a very good standard.

89. The history curriculum is enhanced by visits and events, which reinforce learning most effectively. For example, Year 3 visit the British Museum and Year 4 undertake a local village study. The study of Tudor times in Year 5 is enriched by visits to Hampton Court and The Mary Rose. Year 6 experienced a Victorian school day recently, which they enjoyed in spite of the harsh regime. Assessment of pupils' achievement is made at the end of a unit of study and this marks a good improvement since the previous inspection. Co-ordination of the subject across the school is sound, though the school is aware that the subject policy requires revision. Resource provision is satisfactory and is enhanced by study boxes from the local museum.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT)**

90. At the last inspection, pupils' skills in using IT were below national expectations, and attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 was below average. Evidence gathered during this inspection shows that attainment is still below national expectations, because pupils do not spend enough time on IT and do not experience the full range of work required by the National Curriculum.

91. Few pupils were observed using IT during the inspection. This report is based on those few observations, discussions with pupils and teachers, a scrutiny of pupils' work across the curriculum to look for the use of IT, and examination of teachers' records and plans. Since the last inspection, the IT policy has been revised. Arrangements now include provision for each class to have a demonstration lesson, led by the class teacher, for 30 minutes each week. This lesson is to be followed by each pupil having at least 20 minutes access to a computer, working on a related task. A timetable for pupils to work in pairs on their given tasks is drawn up by each teacher but, in practice, all pupils do not receive this minimum entitlement. Planning for IT is not well linked to subjects across the curriculum, so opportunities are missed for pupils to work on computers. Each half term, all class computers are pooled into the hall for one week, to enable each class to have one half-day session. The overall access to computers is still insufficient for pupils to develop appropriate skills across the key stage, and this is reflected by the small amount of work recorded in their IT books.

92. Overall, the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory, with insufficient emphasis on follow up work from lead lessons, and too few opportunities taken to link IT to other subjects. A number of demonstration lessons were observed during the inspection. In one lesson involving younger pupils, the teacher soon abandoned her demonstration due to a problem, and asked the class to evaluate their previous task. Another class watched a demonstration of a procedure using Logo, which many found difficult to follow, and were not given a specific task to complete during the week. Teachers' confidence and knowledge of the software is not always secure, and demonstrations rely on a whole class crowding around a small monitor.

One lesson gave a clear demonstration, but only lasted 16 minutes, with no pupils used to run through the instructions for the whole class to consolidate their learning. Another lesson focused on designing a simple brochure, rather than demonstrating how to use desktop publishing packages or multi-media applications appropriate to Year 6 pupils.

93. Too little use is made of CD-ROMs to research and retrieve information during lessons, and the school is yet to exploit its Internet links in teaching. Some good use is made of word processing, but it is not used consistently, with sufficient emphasis on teaching skills. Pupils are taught to use databases and spreadsheets, but these programs are not used enough to support work in mathematics and science. Too little use is made of computer graphics programs in art. Pupils' experience of controlling, monitoring and modelling is weak and not all of the National Curriculum requirements of these aspects are taught.

94. The organisation of the subject across the school is unsatisfactory, though the co-ordinator has worked hard to assess the school's current provision, raise teachers' confidence and skills, and develop plans to improve the school's facilities and resources. These include the planned provision of a purpose-built IT suite, which will include 15 new, networked computers. The co-ordinator has not observed lead lessons given by teachers yet. The school's resources are unsatisfactory, and problems frequently arise with old hardware. Software provision is satisfactory but under used. The school has very little in terms of additional IT resources, such as a digital camera, scanner or video camera. Pupils' attainment and the provision for IT was a key issue at the last inspection and the school has made unsatisfactory progress in raising standards in this important core subject.

## **MUSIC**

95. Since the last inspection, there has been a significant improvement in the teaching of music and pupils' attainment. It was a weak subject, but it is now a great strength of the school. By the end of the key stage, pupils' attainment is above that expected for their ages. Year 6 pupils read simple staved notation, as well as working confidently in graphical notation. Pupils know the names and values of notes, and they can read a simple tune and play it. Most lower-attaining pupils play by ear but can name the notes of the stave. Almost all pupils can play a tune on pitched percussion using two beaters, while higher attainers can work out chords and play them on a keyboard. Higher attainers are able to work out and play variations on a simple tune, such as 'Twinkle Twinkle Little Star', as seen in Year 6. Pupils develop a good musical vocabulary, and can listen attentively to a piece of music and respond reflectively. They have good knowledge of the instruments of the orchestra and can identify them in a piece of orchestral music.

96. Good quality specialist teaching has had a positive effect on raising standards in music. Teaching was of good quality in all four of the lessons observed and excellent in one. These teachers have good subject knowledge and musical skills, which help to make their lessons well structured and their learning intentions clear. Pupils are taught to play simple tunes early in the school and then build on these abilities across the key stage. They are taught graphic notation soundly and this provides a basis for understanding traditional, staved notation. Teachers use recorded music thoughtfully for analysis and for opportunities to reflect. Despite the significant improvements in music the singing heard was mediocre, lacking sparkle.

97. The school has a strong orchestra, with 15 musicians playing a variety of instruments. These pupils listen to each other carefully to match their parts, follow the conductor attentively and play music of a good standard. The school also has a choir, which is currently rehearsing songs for one of the two regional music festivals in which pupils participate. Co-ordination of the subject across the school is very good. The co-ordinator has been responsible for the introduction of specialist teaching and the small team of music teachers plan together to ensure that pupils' skills develop step-by-step as they move through the school.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

98. Pupils' attainment is close to that expected for their ages, with some higher attainment in dance and gymnastics. In dance, Year 6 pupils interpret a variety of words about 'water' with a range of imaginative movements and gestures, for example using facial expression, hands and bodies to depict 'frozen' and 'drizzle'. They use space well, and link together a series of movements with precision. Their ability to evaluate their own work and that of others is particularly impressive, and this helps them to improve the quality of their dance. In gymnastics, pupils devise a range of movements to pull their bodies around the hall, and then work very well in pairs to create balances in which pushes or pulls are used for stability. Pupils work particularly well co-operatively, as was noted at the last inspection, and this enables them to practise and refine their performance. In games, most Year 6 pupils can send and receive a small ball, in a variety of ways, with reasonable accuracy. Higher attainers are more ambitious, catching and throwing at pace, and making tasks demanding. Standards in swimming are as expected for pupils' ages, with most being able to swim 25 metres by the end of Year 6. At the time of the last inspection, attainment was judged to be above national expectations in the lessons observed.

99. The quality of teaching is sound overall, with a number of strengths, and best near the end of the key stage. Teaching was at least satisfactory in all the lessons seen, and good, sometimes very good in just under a half. Teachers organise lessons well and this enables pupils to improve their skills systematically. Teachers dress appropriately for physical activity and provide useful demonstrations that help pupils to learn new skills and to understand what is required. The best teaching injects urgency in to the lesson. Tasks are challenging, pupils put a lot of effort in to their work, and they are kept active for most of the time. In a few lessons, however, instruction and organisation take too long, so that pupils do not have enough time to perform, practise and improve their skills. Some lessons do not start on time, so teachers are unable to complete the planned activities. Teachers make good use of examples of pupils' performance to stimulate improvement. Some teachers have better expertise in the subject than others, but all plan lessons carefully and have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. As a result, pupils clearly enjoy their physical education lessons, work sensibly, and try hard to improve their performances.

100. The school provides a varied physical education curriculum, covering a broad and balanced range of activities, and including swimming in Year 5. A very good range and quality of extra-curricular sporting activities enriches the curriculum still further, some using outside expertise to complement teachers' skills. Involvement in sporting activities makes a valuable contribution to pupils' social and moral development. Co-ordination of the subject

across the school is good, even though the subject manager is only fairly recently appointed. It is a strength that she is able to teach classes across the school, and she is gradually gaining a clear picture of how work in the subject can improve. A good scheme of work sets out a clear programme of activities for each year group, and shared planning provides consistency.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

101. Pupils of all abilities make good progress and, by the end of the key stage, attainment in the first attainment target, 'Learning about religion', is broadly in line with the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. In the second attainment target, 'Learning from religion', attainment is above expectations. Attainment overall is higher than at the last inspection.

102. Pupils learn about religion in some detail, especially about the Christian faith. By Year 6, they have a good understanding of Christian traditions and the church year. They know a variety of Bible stories and can use some traditional prayers as well as being able to write their own prayers. They also have a good understanding of Judaism and are familiar with its holy writings, traditions and artefacts, and they know the key features of Hinduism and Islam. They understand complicated concepts such as prayer, the Trinity and sacrifice.

103. The great strength of religious education in the school is that pupils learn from religion so that, by the end of the key stage, they know how to reflect on the things that move them. They understand what it means to be calm and still and are able to respond to these feelings in places of worship. Pupils are developing a sense of the spiritual. They can translate their feelings of awe into expressions of gratitude, which are expressed in sensitively written poetry, prose and prayers. They can share their feelings and understand the feelings of others.

104. The quality of the teaching is good overall, and was very good in both of the two lessons observed. Planning is clear so that work becomes progressively more challenging across the key stage for pupils of all abilities. Well-structured lessons, such as that seen on baptism, lead to very good learning. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to ask questions, to explore spiritual matters, and to reflect and respond with awe and wonder. As a result, even the younger pupils are able to share their thoughts about destiny and heaven. Teachers build on pupils' previous learning well, and make good opportunities for increasing pupils' vocabulary. In some lessons, however, the work does not always match the needs of all pupils, as was noted at the last inspection. Younger, low-attaining pupils are sometimes set the same work as higher attainers and so encounter difficulty with the inaccessible language of religion. The school is aware of this weakness and is addressing it. In some classes, less care is taken with the presentation and marking of religious education books than in other subjects.

105. Good links are made between religious education and many other subjects, and opportunities are taken in lessons to develop literacy skills. The curriculum is enriched by visits to local places of worship and from members of local faith communities. Teachers make good use of the school's collection of high quality artefacts. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. Co-ordination of the subject across the school is good. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and their assessment evaluations. She is responsible for the organisation and deployment of the school's increasing stock of resources and artefacts, and provides strong leadership and support.