

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Balksbury Junior School**

Andover

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 115852

Headteacher: Rosemary Clarke

Reporting inspector: Paul Bamber  
15064

Dates of inspection: 21-24 May 2001

Inspection number: 192172

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Floral Way Salisbury Road Andover Hampshire
Postcode:	SP10 3QP
Telephone number:	01264 365642
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	David Allen
Date of previous inspection:	February 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
15064	Paul Bamber	Registered inspector	Physical education	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school managed?
11575	Catherine Fish	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22951	Glyn Gaskill	Team inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, religious education.	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
19193	Michael Littleddyke	Team inspector	Special educational needs, science, history, music.	
11227	John Moles	Team Inspector	Equality of opportunities. English as an additional language, English, art and design, design and technology, geography.	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Balksbury is a mixed junior school on the outskirts of Andover. The school shares a site with its feeder infant school. Most children come from the immediate area, which contains a mixture of owner-occupier and rented housing. The school is becoming increasingly over subscribed. There are 267 pupils on roll (about average) with nearly an equal number of boys and girls. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs, at 23 per cent, is around the average but the six per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. Very few pupils come from other than British heritage backgrounds and there are no pupils with English as an additional language. The school's turnover of pupils at over 30 per cent is considerably higher than that found nationally. Pupils enter the school with broadly average attainment.

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

Overall, Balksbury is an effective school. Pupils receive a satisfactory education through the good teaching and range of learning opportunities offered to them. The pupils enter the school with just average standards and leave with at least average and sometimes good attainment. The school offers satisfactory value for money.

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

- Throughout the school, pupils achieve above average standards in science and history.
- Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Most pupils have positive attitudes to their lessons and to the wide range of opportunities and activities offered by the school.
- Pupils willingly take responsibilities and involve themselves in decision making because the school promotes their personal and social development well.
- The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. As a result they make good progress.

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

- Pupils' standards in information and communication technology are too low.
- Behaviour is not as good as it should be in some classes.
- The school does not meet requirements as regards its acts of collective worship.
- The role of subject co-ordinators in monitoring and raising standards is under developed.
- The school's attempts to strengthen its partnership with parents have not been wholly successful.

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

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

The school's governors have been largely successful in addressing the key issues identified at the time of the previous inspection in February 1997. The school now has comprehensive teaching programmes for all subjects, in all year groups. Assessment procedures are now good and help teachers plan suitable work in lessons. The school development plan is clear and contains relevant priorities. Teaching is considerably better and standards have risen in science, design and technology, geography and history. Standards in information and communication technology still remain too low. However, there remains work to be done to increase the amount of monitoring of standards and to improve the perceptions some parents have of the school.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	B	B	C	D
mathematics	B	D	C	C
science	C	D	B	C

Key	
Very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

In the 2000 National Curriculum tests, pupils attained higher standards in science than was the average in all schools. In English and mathematics, pupils attained similar standards to those achieved nationally. Compared with similar schools and schools locally, pupils performed less well in English but similarly in mathematics and science. Pupils' performance in the English tests was lower than expected because of some weaknesses in writing. There is evidence that the unusually high turnover of pupils (51 per cent) in Year 6, last year, caused some lowering of average standards. Results over time show that compared with schools nationally, the school's performance has been broadly average.

The findings of this inspection are that pupils attain above average standards in science and average standards in English and mathematics. Close analysis of pupils' work and standards, indicate that the school is likely to achieve the challenging targets it has set for improved performance in English and mathematics in this year's national tests. Strengths in teaching are driving standards up, but the school acknowledges that there is even more to be done to improve boys' performance in English. Standards in literacy and numeracy are at least average, and in some classes, where teaching is consistently good or better, standards are above average. Throughout the school standards are high in history. However, standards are too low in information and communication technology. In all other subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education pupils attain satisfactory standards.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Most pupils enjoy what the school offers and approach their work with enthusiasm and interest.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory overall. Although a large majority of pupils behave well in lessons and around the school, a small minority of boys, do not.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Almost all pupils relate well to each other and adults. There is little evidence of any oppressive behaviour.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance rates are broadly average and unauthorised absence is slightly above average.

Most pupils concentrate well in lessons, persevere with tasks and work at a good pace. However, in several classes the behaviour and attitudes of a small minority are unsatisfactory. In physical education lessons, for instance, there were always a handful of pupils not participating, often because they had forgotten items of kit. Some boys display negative attitudes in lessons and call out unnecessarily. The vast majority of pupils take their learning seriously and members of the School Council enjoy their role and are mature in taking responsibility. Despite some reports of bullying there was little evidence of oppressive behaviour of any kind during the inspection.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Of the lessons observed, a third were very good or better, a quarter good, one third satisfactory and only very few unsatisfactory. One or two teachers plan and implement consistently high quality lessons, which results in pupils responding imaginatively and creatively and achieving high standards. In the best lessons, teachers set challenging work for all pupils, expect high output and levels of attention and behaviour. They achieve this through their good subject knowledge, probing questions and establishing very positive relationships. Weaknesses in teaching are linked to inexperience and some inconsistencies in applying the school's behaviour policy. In unsatisfactory lessons, pupils do not behave as well as they should and the pace of learning slows.

The quality of teaching and learning is good in English (including literacy lessons), mathematics (including numeracy lessons), science, history and religious education. In information and communication technology, the quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. In other subjects, teaching and learning is satisfactory. There was insufficient evidence at the time of the inspection to make a judgement about teaching and learning in art and design and design and technology. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is good. This promotes their good progress and a pride in their achievements.

Teachers' effective use of resources, injection of humour and the way in which they often relate learning to pupils' own experiences, ensure that pupils' interest and enthusiasm are sustained through most lessons.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school's curriculum has breadth and balance and offers a good range of learning opportunities for pupils. There is a good variety of clubs and visits.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good overall. The school provides well for these pupils. This is particularly the case for pupils with learning difficulties because they are well taught and supported.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	At present there are no pupils in the school who fall into this category. There are satisfactory procedures in place to support any pupils with English as an additional language who might join the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school's provision for promoting pupils' personal and social development is a strength. Pupils' moral and social development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The educational and personal support provided for pupils, and the procedures for ensuring their welfare and protection are good.

The school's efforts to work in partnership with parents are not wholly successful. A significant minority of parents do not feel that they are particularly welcome in the school nor do they feel they have enough access to the headteacher. The school provides a good range of opportunities outside

the classroom for pupils' recreational, aesthetic and social development. The school does not meet requirements as regards its acts of collective worship.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The headteacher works successfully to build a strong and positive team and encourages all staff to take responsibility. The deputy headteacher has made a positive impact on standards through her own teaching, her work in behaviour management and the pupils' personal and social development. Subject co-ordinators, however, have had too little time provided to develop their monitoring role.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Some governors have a deep knowledge of the school's work and all governors are involved in comparing the school's results with other schools. However, they do not formally record their visits to the school nor minute their subject committee meetings. Governors have not ensured that the school meets requirements in regards to collective acts of worship.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school rigorously compares its test results with local schools, nationally and those of similar type, to challenge itself to improve. However, there is a limited programme to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning or to monitor the implementation of new initiatives such as the school's behaviour policy.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning and budget monitoring are satisfactory.

Specific grants for supporting pupils with special educational needs and for teachers' professional development have been utilised appropriately. The school makes satisfactory use of new technology. The school administration supports the work of the school very well. The school provides many good quality resources to support learning. There is no more room in the school to accommodate the increasing demand for places.

### 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>• Pupils like the school.</li> <li>• There are high expectations.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• The school helps pupils to become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li> <li>• The school work more closely with the parents.</li> <li>• The school's leadership and management.</li> <li>• The information about how their children are getting on.</li> <li>• Behaviour.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with the positive views of the parents. The range of activities outside lessons, (clubs, visits, visitors in school) is at least in line and often better than in similar schools. The quality of information provided for parents, and the opportunities provided for them to find out how their children are progressing, are better than in most schools. Inspectors agree that the headteacher should be more accessible to parents and that in some classes behaviour is not as good as it should be.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Results in the national tests over the last three years, based upon analysis of the average levels reached by pupils, show that attainment in English was above the national average and broadly similar to the national average in mathematics and science. Girls out-perform boys in English to a greater degree than found nationally. The school has set realistic and challenging targets for improvement in English and mathematics and is making good progress towards achieving them. The school is making particularly good progress towards increasing the proportion of pupils, especially boys, attaining higher than nationally expected standards in English. The trend in the school's improvement over the last five years is broadly in line with that nationally.

2. Results of the 2000 national tests for 11 year olds in English and mathematics show that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level was above the national average. The proportion of pupils reaching higher than expected levels, was below average in English and at the average in mathematics. In science, a higher proportion of pupils, than was the national average, reached the expected standard and higher levels. The lower proportion of pupils who reached higher standards than expected in English, was due to some weaknesses in writing. There is evidence that the very high turnover of pupils in Year 6 last year had the effect of lowering average standards.

3. Pupils enter the school with broadly average standards. As a result of good teaching they make at least satisfactory and sometimes good progress. Pupils leave the school with standards approaching or above average standards in most subjects. Inspection evidence indicates that the proportion of pupils in Year 6 attaining standards expected for their age is average in English, mathematics and above average in science. Standards in literacy and numeracy are also average. The standards achieved by 11 year olds in history are above those typically expected for age. Throughout the school pupils do not attain standards expected for their age in information and communication technology. This is because there are too few computers to enable pupils to regularly practise and improve their skills and too many members of staff lack confidence and expertise in teaching the required curriculum.

4. In all other subjects of the National Curriculum and in religious education, the present Year 6 pupils reach standards expected for their age. Average attainment is higher in Year 5, which contains a lower proportion of pupils with special educational needs and where teaching is predominantly good or better.

5. In English, 11 year olds attain average standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Higher attaining pupils use a wide range of vocabulary to argue persuasively and most pupils listen attentively, which enables them to respond appropriately to questions and take in what they are taught. Standards in reading are average. Many pupils read competently and with understanding and they access information quickly using classification systems. Although the oldest pupils attain average standards overall, in writing, they draft their work particularly well. However, there are weaknesses in their ability to write succinctly within a time limit. This contributed to the lower than average proportion of pupils attaining higher levels in last year's national English tests.

6. Strengths in the oldest pupils' mathematical attainment are in measuring and estimating accurately, using the most appropriate standard units of length. Pupils have

average competence in most aspects of the subject, but are weaker in writing reasoned solutions to problems. Pupils' mental recall of mathematics facts is accurate but lacks speed. Higher attaining pupils apply their knowledge of number patterns well to extend, for instance, their understanding of the relationship between the internal and external angles of polygons.

7. In science, pupils' attainment is above average by the time they leave the school. Particular strengths are in their knowledge of scientific concepts and in their understanding of how to set-up and conduct scientific investigations. The high standards attained throughout the school result from good provision and well taught lessons.

8. By the time they leave the school, pupils' standards in information and communication technology are too low. Because there are too few computers, direct teaching is only planned for one week per term. Teachers lack expertise and confidence in the subject. As a result, pupils fail to make sufficient progress in their manipulation of computers and keyboard skills or in their use of information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects. This is a weakness in the standards the school achieves.

9. In religious education eleven year olds attain standards in line with those expected for their age. A strength for most is their ability to compare and contrast the basic different faiths and to understand the purpose of the festivals and ceremonies celebrated within them. The development of pupils' consideration for the beliefs and values of others is a strength in the attitudes the school promotes.

10. In art and design, a strength of pupils' work throughout the school, is in their use of sketchbooks to draft and develop their paintings, drawings and models. As a result, by the time they leave the school they habitually refine their first and second attempts to improve their work. In design and technology, 11 year olds apply their skills with tools well to make increasingly sophisticated models and, as in art and design, take care to plan and draft their work in order to ensure an end product that is fit for purpose and pleasing to the eye.

11. In geography, pupils make good progress in their understanding of the use and drawing, of maps. By the time they leave the school, they use detailed keys and symbols to locate features on Ordnance Survey maps and competently use aerial and digital photographs to study physical features of rivers.

12. Pupils develop historical skills well as they move through the school. Good teaching enables them to relate what they learn in history lessons to many other areas of their learning, for example, geography, mathematics and science. This is a prime example of the good cross curricular links promoted by the school which encourage pupils to view learning as holistic rather than subject-specific.

13. Strengths in pupils' standards, in music, include confident and tuneful singing. A relative weakness is in their composition and playing of instruments. The latter weakness is linked to the limited opportunities provided for pupils for instrumental tuition. Where this does take place, pupils attain high standards.

14. In physical education, over 90 per cent of pupils swim 25 metres safely and unaided by the age of 11. Higher attaining pupils achieve much higher standards, well above the national expectation, swimming a mile or more without rest and using a wide range of strokes. Most 11 year olds use effective techniques to throw or jump the distances expected of them at their age.

15. Pupils make at least satisfactory progress in their literacy and numeracy skills and the progress they make in individual lessons is often good. Teachers promote the pupils' literacy and numeracy skills well in lessons across the curriculum. There are good examples of pupils' writing imaginatively in history and religious education and using their measuring skills and understanding of how to organise data, in tabular form, in mathematics and science. Many teachers provide pupils with frequent opportunities for challenging discussions that contribute well to their progress in speaking and listening.

16. In other subjects, pupils make at least satisfactory progress and in science and history, good progress. Pupils build well on their skills as they move through the school. Their achievements in art and design and design and technology are often good because teachers encourage them to extend their planning and evaluative skills. Pupils' progress and achievement in information and communication technology are unsatisfactory.

17. Overall, pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of the school's well planned and managed provision. Those with specific learning difficulties make better progress towards meeting the targets identified for them in their Individual Education Plans than pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. This is because in all classes, pupils with learning difficulties are well supported by learning support assistants and they have positive attitudes to their learning. In some classes, pupils with emotional and learning difficulties do not achieve as well as they should because teachers do not apply the school's behaviour policy stringently enough. The most able and gifted pupils achieve well and make the progress they should because teachers plan challenging work for them.

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

18. Pupils' attitudes at the time of the previous report were described as very positive and for many pupils this is still the case. However, there are occasions when both pupils' attitudes and behaviour fall to unacceptable levels and thus, overall, pupils' attitudes are now only good. On most occasions, pupils throughout the school respond well in lessons and have good attitudes to their work. They are keen to learn and work at a good pace. Most listen attentively to their teachers' instructions. For example, in a Year 5 science lesson about switches, pupils' responded very well to the challenge set by the teacher, showing interest and enthusiasm. In a Year 3 literacy lesson, pupils worked hard because they were interested in the task and knew they were expected to concentrate and persevere. However, there are occasions when pupils' attitudes decline. This happens, for example, when the teacher's organisation of the lesson takes too long, and thus pupils lose interest, become bored and do not make any real effort. Pupils show good attitudes to what the school offers outside lessons. During the inspection, more than 60 pupils were engaged in a variety of after school activities on one day.

19. Pupils' behaviour throughout the day is satisfactory overall. At the meeting held prior to the inspection and in the questionnaires sent to the parents, behaviour was identified as a concern. This concern has been supported by inspection findings to some extent, although it is confined to a handful of pupils, most of whom are supported by individual education plans. The school is generally an orderly, safe environment. Most pupils are very eager to behave well and to rise to the high expectations the staff set. However, as at the time of the previous report, there are a minority of pupils, mostly boys, who do not always behave appropriately in lessons and outside the classroom. This is sometimes related to teachers not applying the school's behaviour policy consistently and allowing, for example, pupils to speak out of turn and to disrupt the flow of the lesson. Teachers make reference to the rules and many pupils respond positively to their names being placed on the board. Pupils know the school's rules and have helped to develop

their own class rules. They are loathed to lose golden time and this has a positive effect, if the threat of losing it is carried through. Outside there are occasions when pupils, again mostly boys, cannot play happily with their fellows. The school council has discussed ways in which playtimes can be better organised so that everyone can enjoy them and these ideas will be implemented. Whilst three pupils were excluded last year, only one has been excluded this year, indicating an improvement in behaviour and its management.

20. Pupils are polite, helpful and ready to engage in conversation. They talk readily about the work they do, their favourite lessons and about the life of the school. They have clear ideas of what is expected of them. They are mostly respectful of the school's property, their own and each other's belongings. There are a few occasions when school equipment is not cared for properly, such as the 'baton' used in a Year 4 physical education lesson, which was broken. Outside in the playground, the majority of pupils play happily and safely with each other. No harassment or bullying was observed during the inspection and pupils spoken to by inspectors were not concerned about it, stating that 'if it happens it is quickly dealt with'.

21. Overall, pupils' personal development is good. They respect other peoples' feelings and beliefs, and enjoy celebrating each other's achievements. During the inspection, the theme for the week was 'Achievement' and this was the basis for assemblies and for circle time. As pupils get older they begin to develop the ability to talk not just about what they achieve, but also about how they feel about it. This shows good personal development. Pupils begin to develop their initiative in some areas. A pupil cleared up the 'water' tipped over Archimedes' head during the Year 5 assembly without prompting. However, there is little evidence of pupils using their initiative within lessons. The school has introduced a school council in the last two years with representatives from all classes. Pupils elected respond well to this responsibility. Pupils have responsibilities around the school. There is a house system, each with two captains, monitors, librarians and helpers, all of whom are responsible for particular aspects of the school and class life.

22. Relationships between pupils are generally good. The school has a 'buddy' system that develops good relationships between pupils of different ages. Pupils appreciate this. They offer each other support in class and work well together in groups and paired activities, sensibly sharing resources well when required. Pupils' relationships with adults in school are good. Pupils know whom to approach on the staff if they have problems or concerns and do so confidently.

23. Eighty-seven per cent of parents who completed the questionnaire sent prior to the inspection confirmed that their children like coming to school. Attendance levels are broadly in line with the national average. The level of unauthorised absence last year was in line with that nationally. The school marks any holiday taken over the ten days over which there is discretion as unauthorised. Nearly all pupils regularly arrive at school on time. This means that lessons start on time so that little teaching time is lost.

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

24. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good and makes a significant contribution to the good progress pupils often make in lessons. Of the 57 lessons observed during the inspection, a third were very good or excellent, a quarter good, a third satisfactory and only a small proportion were unsatisfactory. This represents a good improvement upon the findings of the last inspection, which identified less very good and a lot more unsatisfactory, teaching.

25. The quality of teaching and learning is good in literacy and numeracy and teachers promote pupils' literacy and numeracy skills well across the curriculum. Pupils use and extend their numeracy skills particularly well in science and physical education lessons. They compile graphs and represent data in tabular form, in science, and measure time and distance, using fractions of standard units of measure in physical education. However, teachers fail to provide pupils with sufficient opportunities to use information and communication technology to support their learning in lessons. The quality of teaching and learning is good in English, mathematics, science, history and religious education. In information and communication technology the quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. In other subjects there is satisfactory teaching and learning. There was insufficient evidence at the time of the inspection to make a judgement about the quality of teaching and learning in art and design and design and technology.

26. There are several common aspects of the very good teaching which promote pupils' learning extremely well. In the best lessons, teachers plan work to challenge pupils of all abilities. They use resources skilfully to explain concepts clearly, and set interesting activities which motivate pupils to strive for improvement and maintain concentration. Teachers share the purpose of lessons with pupils and make clear their expectations about how much work pupils should complete in a given time period. All these attributes were present in a Year 6 literacy lesson relating to the use of synopsis. As a result of the teacher's clear explanation and use of telling examples, pupils acquired new knowledge about the purpose and use of synopsis and applied these creatively in their writing about the theme of 'fear' in 'Moby Dick'. In a Year 5 religious education lesson about icons, the teacher's good subject knowledge enabled her to present demanding concepts for pupils to understand. For instance, she helped pupils interpret the facial expression of Jesus as 'carrying the weight of the world's sins'. The teacher's use of resources to reinforce these concepts made a significant contribution to the pupils' progress in this lesson.

27. Vibrant teaching was observed in a whole school assembly in which all pupils in Year 5 combined song, verse and prose to illustrate what they had learnt in their work in history about the Ancient Greeks. The enthusiasm and skill with which the teachers had prepared the Year group resulted in very high quality learning. The pupils performed very professionally and confidently to demonstrate high standards in speaking and in their understanding of scientific and mathematics discoveries of Archimedes and Pythagoras.

28. Where teaching is satisfactory, lesson objectives are clearly stated which means that pupils know what they have to do and why. Relationships between pupils and adults are generally positive and this results in a purposeful atmosphere for learning. However, even when learning is satisfactory for most pupils, one or two pupils are not controlled sufficiently well when they misbehave. One of the main reasons for this is that not all teachers consistently apply the school's behaviour policy. Often this slows the pace of learning and lessons do not run as smoothly as those in which teaching is good or better.

29. Shortcomings in teaching which contribute to unsatisfactory learning are often linked to inexperience. Less experienced teachers do not always plan carefully enough, or exert firm enough control over the small minority of pupils in their class who misbehave. As a result a few lessons are ill conceived and some pupils disrupt the learning of all. This was exemplified in a physical education lesson in Year 4, in which pupils were introduced to baton changing in relay races. Because the teacher had not sufficiently thought through the organisational sequence of the lesson, pupils were required to change over batons without having instruction in or the opportunity to practise the proper technique. This resulted in pupils making little or no progress, in a lack of motivation and in some a decline in their standard of behaviour.

30. Overall, teachers assess pupils' work well and use these assessments to plan suitably challenging work for their pupils. In the best examples of marking, teachers write very helpful comments in pupils' books which provide pointers on how they might improve their work. It is clear from looking at pupils' subsequent work, that they act upon this advice to improve their standards. This was well illustrated in Year 6 where several pupils wrote more succinctly as a result of their teacher's comments. Most teachers use homework well to reinforce and extend pupils' learning. During the inspection challenging work in English, mathematics and history was set for older pupils and they responded well to this stimulus.

31. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is good. As a result they make good progress. Almost all pupils who have Individual Education Plans meet the short-term targets contained within them and are well motivated to attack more challenging ones as a result. Two observations of mathematics teaching, by the special educational needs co-ordinator, included the recognition of different kinds of angles and the use of a programmable toy, confirmed very good teaching. Teachers' use of easily understood language and of pupils' experiences encourage them to take an interest in their work. They plan, sequence and pace activities well in order that these pupils understand the purpose of what they do and work productively. All teachers and other staff who work with these pupils are positive and encouraging with them which promotes their very good progress. Observations of learning support assistants' interactions with pupils in class also confirmed good practice. Individual educational plans for pupils with special educational needs are closely focused to the individual needs of pupils. These are implemented by learning support assistants and class teachers and monitored by the special educational needs co-ordinator. Pupils are given targets, including a suitable combination of sanction and praise in the case of behavioural difficulties, to encourage progress. However, when pupils, who have difficulty behaving well, are not directly supported their behaviour often declines.

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

32. Since the last inspection, the school has made significant improvements in the curriculum it teaches. With the exception of information and communication technology, the school provides a broad and balanced curriculum. The school meets National Curriculum requirements in all subjects, except information and communication technology where there are gaps in provision. Religious education meets the requirements of the locally Agreed syllabus. The curriculum is having a positive impact on standards.

33. The school makes use of a "curriculum map" which gives a useful overview of what is taught during each term, to each year group. This overview outlines: subject content, Personal, Social and Health Education and planned visits and visitors to bring relevance to lessons. More detail of what is to be taught is described in separate schemes; all National Curriculum subjects and religious education have suitable policies and schemes to guide teachers' planning.

34. Schemes of work for teaching English and mathematics through the National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy are well established and effective. All schemes of work are under some level of review to identify what improvements should be made. For example, the mathematics scheme is being developed to provide for higher-level work in Year 6. Teachers of the same year group plan lessons together using the "map", schemes of work and a recently introduced planning format. This joint planning is a good feature. Total teaching time is close to the recommended minimum of 23.5 hours. There is a reasonable allocation of teaching time to subjects, except information and communication technology, which does not have enough.

35. Procedures for the support of pupils with special educational needs are good and pupils make good progress as a result, as evidenced by a number coming off the register or moving down through the stages of the code of practice in recent years.

36. Provision for Personal, Social and Health Education is very good. The very well structured "circle time", dedicated lessons and the science and religious education curricula all contribute positively to the pupils' development. Appropriate provision is made for sex education and for instruction about the use and misuse of drugs. Pupils are given appropriate responsibilities through the house system, working as monitors and through the School Council. Whilst some of these systems are relatively new, they are having a positive effect on pupils' social attitudes and their personal responsibilities.

37. Several parents feel that the range of activities provided outside lessons is not sufficient. The inspection team found good provision in this area. There are several well-attended sporting activities and there is appropriate provision for music, cycling proficiency and writing. Governors, teaching and support staff run these activities with very little direct support from parents. Provision for homework is good and is particularly helpful in promoting pupils' progress in English and mathematics. It is set, collected in and marked on a regular basis.

38. Procedures for the transfer of pupils from the infants' school are satisfactory. Year 3 teachers visit the neighbouring infant school on an annual basis and informally note curriculum issues. The school takes part in a good range of sporting competitions with other primary schools. Students training to be teachers work in school on a regular basis. The school finds this arrangement useful in gaining new ideas and having an extra adult in the classroom.

39. Planning for assemblies is very thorough and contains all the required components for worship. Pupils experience good quality moments of quiet, personal reflection on relevant social and moral issues during the week. However, the school is not meeting the requirements to provide a daily act of collective worship, as there is no reference to God or Jesus in prayer.

40. Overall, equality of access for most pupils is satisfactory. The school has made good provision to improve the attainment of the majority of boys and raise standards. However, there is still a minority of boys who find it difficult to behave and the lack of experience of appropriate management strategies for these pupils, by some teachers, result in these boys not achieving as they might. In addition, some pupils are withdrawn from the act of collective worship for additional literacy support. Whilst this support is very effective and helps pupils to raise their level of attainment, it denies them opportunities to take part in collective worship.

41. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Assemblies make a satisfactory contribution when pupils think reverently about issues such as achievement. They relate their thoughts to their own and others' experiences. Musical presentations bring a high note to pupils' shared appreciation of human endeavour. Religious education lessons give pupils an insight into the similarities in the rituals and stories of different religions.

42. Provision for pupils' social and moral development is good. Pupils have a good understanding of what is acceptable behaviour. They appreciate the need for rules and value the house system. They are very familiar with how house points are won and lost. Most class teachers promote this system well and the celebration of the award to the

highest scoring house in a whole school assembly is a highlight of the week. Pupils are very familiar with the award of “golden time”, when good behaviour is rewarded, and appropriate sanctions are given for unacceptable behaviour. However, not all respond as positively as most to this. There is a general ethos of respect for individuals of all ages. Pupils are polite to visitors in their conversations and actions, for example, in opening doors for them. Pupils support local and national charities on a regular basis.

43. Provision for pupils’ cultural development is satisfactory. Religious education lessons reinforce highlights of the Christian year and make pupils aware of the traditions of other faiths, such as Hinduism and Islam. In English lessons, pupils write poetry after a traditional Japanese style. Pupils appreciate the contribution made to mathematics by the Ancient Greeks. In geography, pupils make a study of their own locality and compare it with others in India. They dress up and become very involved in a great jamboree of Greek culture during a “Greek Day”. Although there is a general lack of musical instruments from different countries, pupils have studied native North American music and use instruments used in Indian music in Year 3. Pupils study the work of famous Western artists but non-Western art does not feature in their studies.

44. The school makes satisfactory use of the community as a resource. A visitor provides first hand information of life in India, to give geography lessons particular relevance. A visiting drummer played a range of percussion instruments from different countries. The community police person is a regular visitor, providing valuable instruction in personal safety. Students and staff from the local college assist in a school based “art week”. The school organises educational visits, including residential stays for most of the oldest pupils, which bring relevance to the curriculum. For example, pupils visit local places of worship to support their work in religious education. Visits to the theatre give a stimulus for work in English and result in a small number of pupils becoming involved in the local college theatre club.

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

45. The previous report showed that the school’s provision for the personal support, guidance and welfare of its pupils was generally satisfactory. This has been well built upon and is now good, overall.

46. There are good procedures in place to ensure pupils’ safety at all times. Risk assessments are undertaken on the buildings, throughout the curriculum, especially in subjects such as physical education and science, for any trips undertaken and also as regards the pupils’ safety. Accidents are well handled and recorded. There are good details of how to contact a parent if needed. Letters are sent home with any pupil who receives a bump to the head. Good procedures are in place to ensure that pupils with specific health concerns are protected. The school is currently a ‘nut free’ zone. Fire appliances and alarms, together with equipment, such as physical education equipment, are regularly checked and fire drills held each term. Child protection procedures are good. The headteacher is familiar with the requirements placed on the school and about the need to attend case conferences. She is also aware of the school’s responsibility to pupils looked after in the community. Pupils are well supervised throughout the day.

47. The school has recently concentrated on its provision for ensuring good behaviour. The school has appropriate policies for promoting good behaviour and for eliminating bullying. Incidents of inappropriate behaviour are well recorded, with the pupil involved, as well as any ‘witnesses’ asked to write about what happened. Pupils are expected to explain their behaviour to the headteacher or the deputy headteacher. House points,

awarded for a number of reasons, have been re-introduced and pupils eagerly anticipate the awarding of the cup each week in the whole school assembly.

48. Pupils' personal development is well promoted through 'circle time' and by the school's personal, social and health policy. The philosophy and principles are clear and relevant and the skills to be developed are clearly identified. Although personal development is not formally monitored, it is evident from the good quality of the comments made within reports that pupils are well known to the teachers.

49. Attendance is appropriately recorded and monitored by one of the administrative assistants. Very good procedures are in place to establish reasons for absence and this has a positive effect on the correct identification of absences. Records are kept of the amount of holiday taken by pupils. Despite the school making it clear that any absence for holidays of more than ten days duration taken in term time, will be unauthorised, 40 per cent of parents have chosen to take their children out of school for holidays. Lateness is also very well monitored. When pupils are frequently late a letter is sent to parents to remind them of the need for punctuality. As a result most pupils arrive on time. An educational welfare officer can be contacted if any serious problems are identified over attendance.

50. Monitoring and assessment procedures within the school are good. The school implements a full range of standardised national tests in English and mathematics at the beginning and end of each year to assess and monitor pupils' attainment and progress. The school uses these assessments to identify those pupils who need extra support, to estimate their likely performance in National Curriculum tests and to set targets for improvement. The standardised mathematics test results are also used to identify specific areas of weaknesses in classes or year groups to inform planning and teaching. National Curriculum test results also provide measures of pupils' attainment. The Local Education Authority provides assessment data from similar schools in the county for comparison. Assessment and identification of pupils with special educational needs is thorough and systematic, being informed by the standardised tests, as well as by analysis of pupils' behaviour by teachers and the special educational needs co-ordinator. Higher attaining pupils are also identified during these assessments and teachers also consider the needs of these pupils by planning for increased challenge in their classroom provision.

51. Subject co-ordinators monitor standards in their subject by analysing work in pupils' books and offer appropriate advice to class teachers. However, there is little systematic monitoring of teaching by co-ordinators, to enable teachers to appraise and improve their practice in the various subjects. There are also few opportunities for sharing successful teaching strategies so that teachers may learn from good teaching within the school.

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

52. The need to establish a more positive partnership with parents in order to enhance pupils' progress was identified in the previous report. The school has worked towards achieving this, but it has not been wholly successful, although some good, new initiatives and procedures have been introduced. As a result of these inspection findings, the school has already planned a course of action to establish what the parents want and how the school may work productively with parents for the benefit of the pupils.

53. Although the result of the analysis of questionnaires sent to parents before the inspection highlighted several areas of concern, there are a number of aspects with which parents are pleased. These include their children like coming to school, the good teaching, that their children are expected to work hard and the high expectations set for them.

Parents feel that the children make good progress and the school helps them to become mature and responsible. Evidence from the inspection supports these positive views.

54. Some parents expressed concerns about the provision of activities outside the classroom, the level of homework, the information, particularly about progress, provided by the school and the poor behaviour of some pupils. They also feel the school does not work closely with them, that it is not being well led nor is it approachable. Inspectors looked at all these concerns during the inspection.

55. It was found that the provision of extra-curricular activities is good, with a good proportion of pupils taking up the opportunities offered. The use of homework, to reinforce and extend pupils' learning, was judged as good. Expectations are clearly set out for each year group and pupils know when homework is set and when it is to be handed in. The quality of information provided by the school is good. An innovation, since the previous report, is the interim reports sent to parents in the first half of the spring term. These provide assessment on pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics, science and their personal development. They are of good quality. They are sharp and relevant and include any test results. The ensuing discussion between teachers and pupils, about the report, results in agreed targets being set for each area. The whole report forms the basis of discussion at the subsequent formal parents' meeting. These meetings are generally very well attended and provide a good opportunity for parents and teachers to talk about how best to support children in their learning. The interim report is followed in the summer by a full report of good quality overall; it also includes details of any test results. Other information is in the form of letters and newsletters. The news sheet produced by the pupils, with support from a parent, is particularly good. It includes a good selection of work and articles produced by the pupils. Brief information is provided in newsletters about topics for each year group; the school plans to expand this information

56. Parents other major concerns relate to management and the approachability and closeness with which the school works with them. However, the school acknowledges that contact between home and school is not as good as it would like. It has already planned to call a meeting with parents to try to resolve this problem by finding ways in which contact can be improved. There are clear and established routines to enable parents to talk to members of staff at mutually convenient times, together with the routine formal and informal opportunities available throughout the year. Many parents do not bring or collect their children from school, but it is always possible to telephone to make an appointment.

57. Parents are asked to a variety of events in school and those relating to, and directly involving, their child are generally very well attended. However, the governors' annual meeting and curriculum evenings are poorly supported. The school used to be well supported by the Balksbury Schools Association (jointly with the infant school), but due to lack of support from parents it has closed. Similarly, the school has difficulty in getting parents to support the school in the classroom or with activities such as swimming. Where they are able to support the school during the day, they have a positive effect on pupils' learning. About three-quarters of the parents signed the home school agreement. Some parents declined the invitation. Many parents support their children's learning through homework and with their reading.

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

58. Overall, the quality of the leadership and management of the school is satisfactory. This is a similar judgement to that made at the time of the previous inspection. Strengths in the headteacher's leadership are her ability to build a strong team spirit amongst the staff and in identifying what needs to be done to improve standards. A weakness is her inability

to forge close links with some parents, which means that a significant minority feels that she is unapproachable and often unavailable. The deputy headteacher, who has only been in post since September 2000, has made a significant contribution to improving behaviour in the school and the provision for pupils' personal, social and health education.

59. The staff responsible for leading and managing subjects provide useful advice to colleagues through writing policies, conducting meetings and recommending relevant resources which will support teaching and learning. However, the school has not provided subject co-ordinators, apart from those for English and mathematics, with any time to monitor standards of teaching and learning. This means that some weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge are insufficiently identified and that the very good practice, in teaching, is not disseminated widely across the school.

60. Governors contribute satisfactorily to the management of the school. Several are actively involved in supporting learning in the school. The governing body and its committees meet regularly to review the school's progress and procedures. Governors monitor the school's results in National Curriculum tests and are informed about strategies for improving aspects of the school's provision. However, few governors monitor this provision directly through visiting classrooms. Additionally, the governing body has not ensured that the school meets requirements regarding acts of collective worship. Governors have fully implemented required arrangements for performance management in the school. These include annual assessments of the degree to which the headteacher and all teaching staff meet targets set for them. This has a positive effect upon standards of teaching and learning.

61. The school evaluates its own performance satisfactorily to identify its strengths and weaknesses. A particular strength is the degree to which pupils' progress is tracked and national test results analysed. As a result the school is able to set realistic and relatively challenging individual and whole school targets for improvement. These contribute to improvements in pupils' learning and higher standards. A relative weakness in the school's monitoring procedures, is that little monitoring of teaching and learning has taken place. Between them, the headteacher and deputy headteacher and representatives of the local education authority have observed all staff teaching literacy and numeracy lessons. Strengths and weaknesses in different teachers' performance were identified as a result, and areas for development identified. Most teachers have worked hard to meet the targets identified for improvement and their teaching has improved as a result. However, no lesson observations have taken place in other subjects and, as a result, weaknesses in pupils' standards, and teaching in information and communication technology, have not yet been addressed.

62. Over the last two years, the school has spent more than its income. This has been due to circumstances beyond the school's control and governors and the headteacher have worked hard to ensure that by the end of this financial year the school will eliminate any overspend without restricting the opportunities available to pupils. Financial planning is well linked to the relevant priorities in the school development plan. These priorities reflect the school's aims to promote pupils' independence and confidence, to attain high standards and to provide a broad and balanced curriculum. The school's administration provides very good value for money and contributes significantly to the smooth running of the school.

63. When purchasing services the school actively seeks best value for money. The school rigorously compares its standards, as reflected in national test results, with school's nationally, locally and of a similar type. Through the school council, pupils are given opportunities to voice their opinions about the school and to influence decision making. As a result of pupils' suggestions, changes to playtime and lunchtime arrangements have had a positive impact on behaviour outside lessons.

64. The leadership and management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs are good. The special educational needs co-ordinator has established rigorous assessment procedures for identifying pupils' needs and for setting appropriate targets to ensure their good progress. These procedures are also used to identify the needs of more able or gifted pupils as well as those with learning or emotional and behavioural difficulties. There is good communication between the special educational needs co-ordinator and class teachers to ensure pupils' needs are met. However, there is little evidence of monitoring of teaching and learning of pupils in classrooms by the special educational needs co-ordinator. While out-of-class observations of pupils indicated that their behaviour in such situations is usually at least satisfactory, in-class behaviour of some of these pupils is sometimes disruptive of their own and other pupils' learning, which also adversely affects other pupils' behaviour.

65. There is an appropriate number of suitably qualified staff. Overall, teacher's subject knowledge is satisfactory, but there are weaknesses in information and communication technology, music and physical education, where some teachers have insufficient knowledge and confidence to develop pupils' learning and skills. The school has sufficient midday supervisors and cleaning staff currently, but experiences considerable difficulties in recruitment to these posts.

66. Resources for learning are satisfactory, overall. The deficiencies in design and technology have been rectified. However, resources for information and communication technology are now inadequate. Furthermore, those that are available are still under-used, as at the time of the previous report.

67. Accommodation is adequate and is used effectively. There is little spare space in school and this places limitations on improving provision for information and communication technology. The school has a small non-fiction library on the ground floor; well-graded reading books are also available in this area. There is a satisfactory fiction library on the top floor for the use of older pupils. Neither area is large enough to be used by a full class at the same time. The outside accommodation is spacious and attractive, although there is a lack of shade.

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

**In order to raise standards further the governors and headteacher should:**

### **1. Improve standards in information and communication technology by:**

- providing more computers;
- reviewing present arrangements for teaching;
- enhancing teachers' competence and confidence through high quality training.

(paragraphs number 3, 8, 16, 25, 32, 34, 61, 65, 66, 67, 77, 89, 115-120)

### **2. Improve the behaviour of the small minority of pupils who at present do not behave well enough by:**

- ensuring that all staff implement the school's behaviour policy consistently and rigorously.

(paragraphs number 17-20, 28, 29, 31, 40, 42, 70, 75, 76, 86, 96,108,130)

### **3. Ensure that acts of collective worship meet requirements:**

(paragraph number 39)

### **4. Further develop the role of subject co-ordinator by:**

- providing more time for them to monitor standards.

(paragraphs number 51, 59, 61, 64, 98,102,105,109,114,125,132)

### **5. Renew efforts to strengthen the school's partnership with parents by:**

- organising specific times when the headteacher is able to meet with parents to discuss issues and concerns;
- increasing the number of parents who support the work of the school and attend meetings designed to inform them about their children's curriculum and to enable them to voice their concerns.

(paragraphs number 52-57, 58)

**As well as the main areas for improvement, the following issues should be considered by the school:**

- Governors should consider recording more formally their monitoring visits to the school and the proceedings of their sub-committee meetings.

(paragraph number 60)

- Enhance teachers' expertise and confidence in aspects of physical education and music by providing good quality training.

(paragraphs number 65, 125,130, 132)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	57
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	63

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	32	26	33	7	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)	267
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	14

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	61

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	51
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	24

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.4
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

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

## Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	21	19	40

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	15	19
	Girls	16	17	18
	Total	33	32	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (77)	80 (64)	93 (76)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	14	16
	Girls	15	16	17
	Total	29	30	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (81)	77 (69)	83 (75)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	266
Any other minority ethnic group	1

*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	3	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)	13
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	29

#### **Education support staff: Y3 – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	109

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	443775
Total expenditure	466115
Expenditure per pupil	1935
Balance brought forward from previous year	-2964
Balance carried forward to next year	-25304

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

**Questionnaire return rate**

**36per cent**

Number of questionnaires sent out	264
Number of questionnaires returned	94

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	35	52	11	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	31	52	11	1	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	14	48	23	11	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	15	63	15	5	2
The teaching is good.	21	64	9	2	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	11	52	26	11	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	37	41	16	4	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	33	54	9	2	2
The school works closely with parents.	11	40	33	13	3
The school is well led and managed.	12	37	31	12	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	19	63	12	4	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	7	30	33	17	13

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

### **ENGLISH**

69. Analysis of the school's 2000 national test results for eleven year olds shows that, compared with all schools, standards are average. When compared with similar schools, standards are below average. The percentage of pupils attaining the expected level was above the national average but a lower percentage than that found nationally, and in similar schools, reached higher levels. Taken over the period 1997-2000 the school has steadily increased or maintained its standards.

70. Over the period 1998-2000, girls have out-performed boys by more than the national trend. Inspection evidence shows that the majority of boys are now performing equally as well as girls. The exception to this is where the behaviour of a minority of boys, in some classes, means that they do not learn as well in lessons as they might.

71. The findings of this inspection are that the proportion of pupils, in the present Year 6, attaining the national expectation for age is average. The proportion of those pupils attaining above the expectation for their age is also in line with that expected nationally. This is an improvement on the standards in last year's national test results and reflects the school's efforts to raise standards. The school is likely to exceed its target for 73 per cent of the Year 6 pupils to attain the national expectation for age in the 2001 national tests. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of the support they receive.

72. In speaking and listening, standards are average at 11 years of age. Pupils are willing to express opinions and they respond with pertinent answers to questions that show they have been listening to the discussion. They use an appropriate range of vocabulary to express their ideas. They frequently relate what they have to say to facts previously learned, satisfactorily extending their learning of what is being covered in the lesson. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson, some pupils gave brief synopses of stories they had read, drawing on their previous reading of published synopses on book jackets and book lists. Other class members challenged speakers if they had given too much of the ending away, or had used too little persuasive language. Such mature argument helps pupils develop ideas thoughtfully and deepens their understanding of particular styles of writing.

73. The school devotes a considerable amount of time to reading. Several 11 year old pupils demonstrate reading and comprehension skills above those expected for their age. The majority are secure and confident readers and read as would be expected. All older pupils read fluently and with good expression. Most pupils describe the plot of a story, comment on characters and make reasonable predictions about how the story will develop. Teachers of older pupils are working hard to improve pupils' skills in this area through, for example, the type of synopsis work outlined above. Throughout the school, most pupils are competent in using the classification system in the library to locate reference material. They use the contents and index sections of books accurately to find specific information.

74. Standards in writing are in line with the national expectation for age. By the age of 11, pupils use grammatical structures and punctuation correctly. Their vocabulary is frequently imaginative and they write sentences to develop themes consistently. The drafting of writing by pupils is commonplace. Pupils are adept at sketching out a sequence and putting their ideas on paper in draft form. They are experienced at working these drafts up into finished pieces. This is good practice. What could be improved is older

pupils' ability to plan in their heads and write quickly and succinctly against the clock. Boys' writing is improving and is now broadly equal in quality to that of the girls. Handwriting is generally satisfactory, most pupils use a fluent joined style and their presentation is appropriate to the context. Some class books the pupils write, such as 'A Book of New Fables', are of a high standard.

75. The quality of teaching and learning is good. In two-fifths of lessons observed it was very good. These lessons were predominantly in the upper school. There was no unsatisfactory teaching observed. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. Since that time the National Literacy Strategy has been implemented more fully by teachers in the upper school and is now used imaginatively to challenge higher attaining pupils. This is raising standards attained by these pupils. However, even within the upper school, the effect of good teaching is marred by the unsatisfactory behaviour of a minority of pupils in classes where teachers lack the experience to manage them effectively. Providing support for these teachers is an area for improvement, if the school is to raise standards further. However, throughout the school good teaching is characterised by challenging work, accurately matched to pupils' prior attainment, especially those with high prior attainment and by good classroom management. A good pace of learning, successful completion of the planned tasks and meeting learning objectives marks pupils' achievements in such lessons. Pupils' understanding of what they learn and why, is satisfactory. Teachers plan interesting activities for pupils, such as writing letters to the Borough Council objecting to development of a local playing field site. Initiative is encouraged both in the content and setting out of work. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

76. Throughout the school pupils' attitudes to the subject and behaviour in literacy lessons are good. In some classes they are very good. Linked with overall good teaching this has a significant impact on the quality of pupils' learning in most classes. Most teachers engage in a wide range of lively discussion. They explore, for example, use of persuasive and emotive language, in letter writing, and how a rhetorical question focuses a reader's attention on a significant point in an argument. They learn to sequence arguments logically to present a persuasive case. Pupils practised this skill in preparation for writing a letter to the local council. Most pupils behave in a sensible manner and the mature responses help increase their knowledge and understanding of different styles of writing. A minority finds self-control and accepting responsibility for their own learning difficult. This is a relative weakness and disrupts teaching and hinders progress.

77. The subject curriculum is broad and balanced and provides a satisfactory grounding in the use of English. The use of writing to support work in other subjects is satisfactory. Pupils successfully use conventions and styles that they learn in English to support work in history, science and religious education. The use of information and communication technology is limited and does not sufficiently aid pupils in gaining confidence to write succinctly and at speed. There is a satisfactory range and quantity of resources to support classroom teaching. The library contains books of good quality and of an appropriately broad range to cater for all ages and the main subjects studied. Most pupils are confident in the use of the library. Additional literacy support is used well to raise the standards of pupils in Years 3 and 4. The provision for all those pupils who have special educational needs is good because their work is well planned and they receive well targeted support. The support assistant is knowledgeable and works closely with teachers to provide a flexible programme of work, which carefully matches the specific needs of various pupils. The school organises 'Booster classes' to help pupils in Year 6 to attain the expected standards for age by the time they leave the school. This has helped raise standards amongst pupils, especially boys, who have the capacity to attain at higher levels. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils who show much higher attainment than is expected for their age.

78. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The very experienced and well qualified co-ordinator provides good support to colleagues and enthusiastically encourages a curriculum that has both depth and breadth. Assessment procedures are good. Teachers use a range of tests and assessment strategies to assess pupils' attainment and progress and to set short-term targets for individual pupils. The co-ordinator has monitored teaching in the upper school and has herself been monitored by a local education authority officer. This is good practice and has helped to secure the recent improvement in standards attained by pupils aged 11, when compared with the national averages.

## **MATHEMATICS**

79. The analysis of the school's 2000 national test results for pupils aged 11, showed they were in line with both the national average and schools in similar contexts. The trend in these results has broadly followed, and been in line with, the steady upward improvement in standards nationally. The average of the results of the standard assessments at age 11, over the last three years, indicate there has been no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. Prior to that time, boys were performing significantly better than girls.

80. Inspection findings indicate that, by the age of 11, both boys and girls attain standards that are average for pupils of this age. By the time the pupils move to secondary education, they have generally made steady progress during their time in school. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress due to the specific help and guidance they receive.

81. The steady rise in results and the overall satisfactory progress made by all pupils is due to the well thought out curriculum. The subject curriculum meets statutory requirements. The school makes effective use of the National Numeracy Strategy and the commercial schemes that it uses. There is a good structure to guide lesson planning in mathematics as pupils move through the school. The plans for each lesson contain work set at different levels of appropriate challenge. Effective use is made of these plans in nearly all lessons.

82. By the age of 11, the majority of pupils have a broad understanding of all the relevant aspects of mathematics. These oldest pupils make appropriate use of technical terms, such as reference to numbers as 'prime' and 'factor'. Pupils' recall of number facts and use of methods to calculate are accurate but lack speed. They construct and correctly interpret simple line graphs to convert different units of currency and distance. For example, pounds (£) to French Francs (FF) and kilometres to miles. Year 6 pupils apply their mathematical knowledge to practical situations to calculate, for example, profit or loss in cake production. Year 5 pupils carry out a good range of activities involving the practical application of division. Pupils in Year 4 use the correct units to measure length in different situations. For example, they decide a large field could be measured in hectares, whilst a carpet would be measured in square metres.

83. The oldest pupils are familiar with the properties of common shapes. For example, they accurately calculate the perimeter of rectangular shapes; all calculate areas by counting squares, with the more able using multiplication of side lengths, and they are familiar with the terms 'acute', 'obtuse' and 'right angle'. Pupils generally present their work well and lay out calculations neatly. Pupils choose and apply the correct mathematics in their problem solving but their written reasoning is either non-existent or very brief and difficult to follow.

84. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. Over half the teaching is good or better and often very good. It is, on occasion, unsatisfactory. In lessons where teaching is good or better, pupils' attainment is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge. This enables them to challenge higher attaining pupils, teach at good pace and explain concepts clearly. Teachers of the same age group plan together, to ensure that pupils of different prior attainment are suitably challenged. They use the assessments of pupils' work well to inform planning. This is a very positive aspect of teaching and learning.

85. Teachers give clear introductions and conduct mental warm-up exercises that are relevant to the main focus of the lessons. However, the pace of these mental sessions is not always sufficiently brisk to challenge all pupils. Introductions are mainly productive in getting the lesson underway, without being over-long and losing pupils attention. As a result, pupils know what they have to do and work with enthusiasm. Good use is made of the overhead projector to explain, for example, how to measure angles or to plot points on graphs and grids. This gives pupils a clear understanding of what they have to do. Teachers stimulate a positive response in pupils by their own enthusiastic approach to the lesson. Teachers use questions skilfully to challenge pupils' thinking and to probe their understanding.

86. Pupils have good attitudes to their learning but there are occasional instances of unsatisfactory responses in class. The youngest pupils in the school work very sensibly and productively when they have the freedom to work in small groups, without constant direct supervision. Where teaching is satisfactory or better, pupils apply themselves to their work well. Behaviour is satisfactory overall. Pupils respond well to regular routines and familiar systems of reward and sanctions. In several classes, there is a small number of boys who find difficulty concentrating on their work and who on occasions, disrupt learning.

87. The school's rigorous analysis of national test results is having a positive effect on standards. The school assesses all pupils, using a common system of tests, at the start and end of each school year. The results of these assessments are used to match the work set for pupils to their prior attainment and to set targets for their improvement. Systematic and thorough use is made of this system.

88. Individual teachers make their own arrangements to assess pupils' work during each term. There are some very effective examples of the use of this on-going assessment but its effectiveness varies between classes. Pupils' work is always marked, with encouraging comments made. Whilst there are examples where teachers give specific guidance for pupils to improve their standards, this is not always the case.

89. As reported in the last inspection, insufficient use is made of information and communication technology to promote learning. This is due to some shortcomings in teachers' expertise and a lack of suitable hardware and software. There are limited examples in the use of information and communication technology to promote pupils' knowledge and understanding in mathematics. One very good example was observed in a Year 3 class when pupils used programmable robots to reinforce and extend their understanding of 'turn'. They used the terms 'right angle', 'clockwise' and 'anticlockwise' in a very precise manner. Teachers rarely use computers to support learning in mathematics. Despite this, teachers promote pupils' numeracy skills well across the curriculum.

90. All pupils have the equal access to the mathematics curriculum. The school has identified the highest achievers and, for the oldest, entered for national tests, which demand much higher standards than typically expected for their age. These pupils gained in personal confidence from the experience. For a short period of time in Year 6, an additional teacher was employed to create three different classes for mathematics. This

“booster” programme gave additional support to all pupils, particularly those who were just below average and to the most able pupils. In Year 5, pupils develop their appreciation of ancient cultures when they learn about the contributions made to mathematics by Pythagoras and Archimedes. Homework is set on a regular basis and helps pupils make progress. Other areas of the curriculum make good use of numeracy, such as data gathering, manipulation and presentation in tables and graphs. For example, pupils keep a regular record of weather patterns and also use tables and charts in their investigative science.

91. The co-ordinator has recently and temporarily been given the responsibility for the subject. She is well qualified and knows the pupils’ strengths and weaknesses. The arrangements for monitoring teaching and learning are satisfactory. Although limited mainly to checking work completed by pupils, during the autumn term 2000, all staff were observed teaching numeracy lessons. There is evidence that targets set for teachers, as a result of these observations, have improved teaching. Individual teachers have benefited from courses, and about half the teaching staff have visited another school to observe teaching. They have gained in confidence and ideas from these visits. Learning resources adequately support teaching and learning.

## **SCIENCE**

92. Results of the National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds for 2000 showed that the proportion of pupils who reached Level 4 or above was above the national average. When compared with similar schools, standards were average. The percentage of pupils achieving Level 5 was also above the national average. The trend in the school’s results in science over the period 1998-2000 was broadly in line with improvements nationally.

93. This good level of attainment is being maintained this year and represents a good improvement since the previous inspection. Evidence during the inspection from across the school indicates that pupils have a good understanding of scientific concepts and are confident in procedures for practical investigations. A range of interesting scientific topics is taught, which cover the whole National Curriculum for this subject. All pupils, whatever their prior attainment, are suitably challenged and make good progress as a result. The work of pupils in Years 5 and 6, in particular, contains some very good accounts of investigations. These demonstrate very good development of pupils’ scientific skills and understanding of the associated concepts. For example, investigations into dissolving materials in Year 6 and investigations into the properties of sound in Year 5.

94. Evidence from analysis of pupils’ work and displays show that they understand the central scientific concepts and confidently carry out investigations in the range of topics studied. For example, in Year 3 pupils understand the transparent, translucent or opaque properties demonstrated by a variety of materials. In Year 4, pupils know the different parts of a plant and their functions, what a plant needs for growth and conditions needed for germination. In Year 5, pupils know and understand how to build an electrical circuit to incorporate switches and draw circuit diagrams accurately. Pupils in Year 6 know the components of the Solar System and the movement of the Earth and other planets to explain the seasons, light and shadows.

95. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good and this makes a significant contribution to the high standards pupils achieve. Of the lessons seen one-third was satisfactory, one-third good and one-third very good. All lessons were well planned, with clear objectives to ensure a coherent sequence of activities. Teachers’ introductions to lessons build upon pupils’ previous scientific learning and new concepts are carefully demonstrated and explained. Teachers encourage pupils to use equipment and good

quality resources to reinforce their understanding and to discover scientific facts through practical investigations. In the very best lessons, the quality of discussion between teachers and pupils about the results of investigations, reflects the very good quality learning taking place.

96. In the most successful lessons, which were observed in Year 5, teachers demonstrated very good class management skills, holding pupils' interest by linking ideas about electrical circuits and switches to pupils' experiences of everyday examples. Practical activities included very good levels of challenge for the full range of abilities. Pupils co-operated well in class discussions and group work and, as a result, developed very good scientific skills and very good understanding of the concepts. Of the satisfactory lessons observed, better results were sometimes inhibited by poor behaviour. For example, in a Year 3 lesson, some pupils showed poor concentration for the whole lesson. Although the majority of pupils in the class made satisfactory progress in their learning, about reflection of light, through a range of interesting and well-planned activities, this was not the case for the minority who did not concentrate.

97. Overall, the leadership and management of the subject are good. This ensures that the well-planned science curriculum is effectively taught throughout the school. The co-ordinator has good scientific understanding and supports her colleagues well. Standards are monitored across the school by satisfactorily assessing pupils' work from each class and providing subsequent feedback to class teachers. Pupils are given tests regularly to monitor their progress. However, little or no time has been provided for the co-ordinator to observe lessons.

98. There is an adequate budget for the subject and a satisfactory range of well-organised resources to support teaching and learning. A commercially prepared scheme of work provides a useful basis for the school's planning. However, the co-ordinator plans to review the curriculum, to evaluate its precise match with the requirement of the National Curriculum and to incorporate elements of the national guidance for teaching science. However, day-to-day assessment of pupils' progress is less regularly used to inform short-term planning. There is also little evidence of the use of information and communication technology in science lessons. This is a relative weakness in provision.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

99. Due to timetabling arrangements it was only possible to observe a very limited number of art and design lessons during the inspection. It is not possible, therefore, to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching and learning. However, evidence from the lesson observed, pupils' work on display around the school, analysis of sketch books, portfolios of work, photograph albums and discussions with the co-ordinator, indicate that overall, pupils achieve standards in line with the national expectation for their age by the time they leave the school. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. This is a similar judgement to that made at the time of the previous inspection.

100. A wide range of work is displayed in the school and recorded in photograph albums. Pupils study the work of well-known artists, such as Kandinsky, and produce work showing a satisfactory grasp of his style. They use paint and collage techniques and computer art packages to explore the use of geometrical shapes and bright colour, that was central to his work. Pupils successfully draw on monotone digital photographs of themselves to explore through three colour prints, the tonal effects of those photos. They make clay models of athletes, clearly showing an understanding of the movement involved in throwing a javelin, lifting a weight or sprinting. Pupils produce models of fantastic environments as

part of an overall art, design technology, geography and a literacy project. In the one lesson observed, pupils created paintings of reflections in water using folding and printing techniques. They use a symmetrical pattern application on the computer to produce a mirror image of a river bank, which they then successfully adapt by smudging the lower image to give the appearance of a reflection in water. Significant to the development of this work is the use of sketch-books. This aspect of the art curriculum is above the national expectation in most classes. Pupils sketch ideas, amend and adapt them, try out techniques using different media and paste ideas into their books.

101. The curriculum meets statutory requirements. The subject contributes well to the spiritual and social development of pupils. Pupils have the opportunity to appreciate the wonder of nature when they draw naturally occurring objects, to experience the uplifting sensation of placing bright colours alongside each other in their work on Kandinsky. They gain an understanding of their own and others talents and learn to work well together. However, whilst pupils study the work of famous artists, these are mainly artists from Western culture.

102. The overall quality of the leadership and management of the subject is satisfactory. The school has carried out some assessment of pupils' work at the end of Year 6 to ensure standards are in line with those expected nationally. Otherwise, the co-ordinator has had limited opportunity to monitor teaching and learning throughout the school. This is a weakness in the leadership and management of the subject. There is a satisfactory range of resources readily available for use. The careful display of pupils' work in classrooms and corridors of the school clearly demonstrates that their work is valued.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

103. Due to timetable restrictions it was only possible to observe one lesson during this inspection. It is not possible, therefore, to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching and learning. However, evidence from the lesson observed, analysis of pupils' work, displays around the school and discussions with pupils and teachers indicate that overall, pupils achieve standards in line with the national expectation for their age by the time they leave the school. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. This is an improvement on the unsatisfactory standards reported upon at the time of the previous inspection.

104. Discussions with pupils indicate their enthusiasm for the subject and their willingness to amend and adapt processes they use to achieve a desired end. For example, pupils devised ways of marking up their work to ensure timber, when cut to length, would fit back into the intended structure. They willingly dismantle earlier work if it did not successfully meet their needs. Throughout the school, pupils' standards are those expected for their age. Pupils make a range of products including musical instruments, small-wheeled buggies and construct shelters and model environments. Skills, such as how to cut and construct a strong chassis in timber accurately, are taught through planned tasks. Pupils investigate and evaluate products, such as purses and money holders, and create their own designs based on their findings. They draft out initial and final designs, using clear diagrams, annotated sketches and written evaluations. They identify processes to be used, amendments and the reasons for them and then critically evaluate their final product. Pupils safely and accurately use an increasingly wide range of tools, equipment and materials. The subject contributes well to the development of pupils' writing. They write reports and notes, when describing processes for designing and making, label diagrams and use imaginative language to describe their 'environments'.

105. The quality of leadership and management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has a clear understanding of how to develop the subject and has been working in close conjunction with the local education authority on a project designed to raise the status of design and technology in the area. The school has had some work published as part of the project. The nationally approved scheme of work is supplemented by work from the local project, to provide a structured approach throughout the school. This gives breadth and balance to the pupils' curriculum. Some specialist teaching of the subject takes place when the co-ordinator exchanges classes with a colleague. This is good use of expertise and enhances the quality of teaching and learning. The co-ordinator has very limited opportunities to monitor the teaching and learning taking place in other classes. The range and quality of resources to support teaching and learning in the subject are satisfactory.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

106. By the time they leave the school, pupils attain standards that are in line with those typically expected for their age. This is an improvement on the judgement made at the time of the previous inspection. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In two lessons observed it was very good. From lessons observed and analysis of teachers' plans, lessons have clear objectives which teachers share with the pupils. Teachers' plans identify key skills and set out an appropriate structure, which enables pupils to develop their geographical skills. In one lesson observed, where teaching and learning were judged to be very good, the teacher introduced the lesson with a lively analysis of current and historical maps of Andover. She drew skilfully on pupils' previous knowledge of geographical terms such as 'residential', 'industrial' and 'agricultural' to identify changes in land use. Pupils extend their study of the influence transport routes had on the development of the town. In this lesson, techniques from the National Literacy Strategy were used well to extend pupils' skills in speaking and listening when they discussed their work.

107. Throughout the school, pupils, including those with special educational needs, learn and apply new skills successfully. For example, following a river study, younger pupils analyse digital photographs to ascertain their location on a plan of the centre of the town. They take into consideration such features as road size, building type and surrounding trees and vegetation, to give clues about the position and orientation of the photograph. Older pupils link their study of the area to an examination of the likely effect on the environment if building took place on playing fields. They link their geographical study to persuasive writing, in literacy lessons, to draft letters to the Borough Council.

108. Pupils' attitudes towards geography are satisfactory. Behaviour in the majority of classes is good. This allows teachers to engage in debates that help pupils clarify their thinking and understanding of geographical concepts. However, a minority of pupils in some classes disrupt teaching and prevent these valuable exchanges taking place and this slows the pace of learning in those classes.

109. The curriculum meets statutory requirements. The subject contributes well to the social development of pupils. They gain a good understanding of how humans may influence the environment positively or negatively. Pupils in Year 5, consider the tensions created by the need to build more houses and the consequence on the environment. Pupils in Year 3 study life in the Indian village of Kesharpur. They are fortunate to be able to interview a person who has worked in this village and this gives a very personal element to their study. Through question and answer sessions pupils develop their speaking and listening skills and gain a good understanding of another culture. The co-ordinator has been unable to monitor provision of teaching and learning throughout the school. This is a weakness in the leadership and management of the subject. There is an appropriate range

of resources that are readily available for use. Too little use is made of information and communication technology to support teaching and learning.

## **History**

110. Standards of attainment in history are generally above average, with pupils making very good progress, particularly in their investigative skills in Years 5 and 6. This is an improvement on the standards reported in the previous inspection when they were broadly in line with national expectations.

111. History topics are well planned to cover skills, concepts and attitudes linked to the requirements of the National Curriculum. Evidence from analysis of pupils' work and displays shows that pupils experience an interesting history curriculum to enable them to develop good understanding of the historical concepts from interpretation of evidence. Throughout the school, pupils develop an understanding of the lives of people through time. They compare their own circumstances with those of children in Ancient Greece and in Victorian Britain to gain an understanding of the different ways in which children were brought up and educated. Younger pupils accurately relate historical events. The oldest pupils have a clear grasp of the comparative reliability of different historical sources and understand some of the influences determining the way in which events in the past were recorded.

112. Evidence from lessons observed and the analysis of pupils' work indicate that the quality of teaching and learning is good overall. In the two lessons observed in Year 5 the quality of teaching and learning were very good. In both these lessons there was very good teaching, with clear planning and organisation, interesting activities and a good level of challenge for all abilities of pupils. Pupils in Year 5, achieved empathetic understanding of life in ancient Athens and Sparta through writing a letter, whilst drawing on sources of evidence of life in ancient Greece to complete the details. CD-ROM computer activities to investigate ancient Greek life, a range of pupils' history books and sheets of relevant information were used as resources in the lesson. 'Hot seating' was used very successfully to summarise the findings of the pupils' investigations.

113. Pupils' historical knowledge and understanding is enhanced through very well planned provision. This includes a range of stimulating visits, and activities designed to bring history 'alive' to pupils throughout the school. The school regularly organises visits to museums and local historical sites, for example, to study Victorian life. The school's links with the local museum and its use of the local education authority History centre, greatly enhance opportunities for pupils to handle historical artefacts. As a result, they respond well to history lessons and have a genuine interest in the past. The school promotes this interest amongst pupils by organising 'historical days' during which pupils and staff act out in costume, historical events from Greek, Celtic, Roman, Tudor and Victorian times.

114. The quality of leadership and management of the subject is good. The development of history is well supported in the school, with comprehensive schemes of work to guide teachers. There are effective procedures for monitoring standards of pupils' work. Because the school has provided little time to monitor classroom teaching there is no effective system that ensures good teaching ideas and practice are shared across the school. This is a relative weakness in the leadership and management of the subject.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

115. During the inspection, there was no direct teaching of information and communication technology. Talking to pupils and looking at their work on display, in books

and in folders, shows significant gaps in their knowledge and use of information and communication technology. At the age of 11, standards in information and communication technology are below those expected for their age. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make unsatisfactory progress. This represents no improvement since the last inspection and is a weakness in the school's provision.

116. The highest attaining and oldest pupils in the school load and run familiar computer programs, for example, for word processing and artwork. They correctly use basic word processing skills, such as capital letters, different fonts and deleting. Use of more demanding word-processing skills, such as pasting text, is not familiar to them. Whilst they know how to use drop-down menus and scroll bars, they do not know these terms. Pupils from Year 3 onwards are competent in using painting programs with some very imaginative work produced by most of the oldest pupils. The oldest pupils in the school have been gathering data about their own personal performance in athletics. They need a great deal of guidance to enter this information into a database. These oldest pupils know the principles of e-mail but are not competent in its use.

117. Whilst there are examples of pupils' work using information and communication technology in several areas of the curriculum, it is only completed by a relatively small proportion of a class. The reason for this is that there are insufficient, suitable computers.

118. There was no direct teaching of information and communication technology during the inspection. There are weaknesses in teachers' subject expertise, and in the quality of training they have received to improve their knowledge of the subject. Together with deficiencies in equipment this means that the quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. Teachers use information and communication technology resources to support several subject areas but with limited success.

119. There are several computers in the school but many of them are old and will not operate printers. On average, there is one up-to-date computer in each class. The subject co-ordinator arranges for all these computers to be in the hall for one week each term. This enables teachers to cover aspects of the subject whilst all pupils in the class have access to the computers. Whilst this is a praiseworthy arrangement, it is not sufficient to cover National Curriculum requirements. The school lacks appropriate hardware and software to teach aspects of control and the use of sensors to log physical data such as temperature.

120. The co-ordinator knows what is needed to raise standards in the subject. She has good subject knowledge and is enthusiastic about the subject. There has been little time allocated to monitor standards and assessment in the subject is unsatisfactory. The limited amount of equipment, accommodated in separate classrooms, restricts access to all pupils. After the relative success of grouping all the available computers in one place, the school is looking for additional accommodation and is planning to obtain more computers.

## **MUSIC**

121. Pupils achieve satisfactory standards of attainment in music, which are in line with national expectations for their age. Three music lessons were observed during the inspection. Two lessons, observed in Year 4, were satisfactory. Pupils developed awareness of rhythm through using their voices and percussion instruments as accompaniment to recorded music. A third lesson, observed with Year 5 pupils, who were rehearsing a musical on Ancient Greece for a school assembly, developed their singing ability well. This was the result of the teacher's very good direction and her expectation of a high standard of performance from the pupils. The actual performance in assembly achieved an excellent standard and was inspirational to teachers and pupils alike.

122. There are opportunities for pupils to sing in the very well managed choir, which achieves a very good standard, as evidenced in the performance of Year 5 pupils to the school assembly. The school production of 'Slack Jack' gave all pupils a chance to take part as actors or to sing in the choir. Some Year 6 pupils participated in a local musical production the 'Lollipop Proms', which the entire year group attended. This enhanced their musical appreciation.

123. Opportunities for pupils to learn instruments are limited. A peripatetic cello teacher teaches four pupils, who show very good progress in their development of instrumental skills, musical awareness and reading from a musical score. Apart from class music lessons there are no other instrumental opportunities, which represents a limitation in the range of musical experiences offered by the school.

124. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory, with suitable, well-managed resources and schemes of work, which cover the requirements of the National Curriculum. These schemes of work are to be evaluated and reviewed by the co-ordinator as part of a monitoring and review process. The co-ordinator instigated 'composer of the week' in morning assembly in which pupils hear music at the beginning and end to extend their musical experiences. There is evidence of pupils listening to music from around the world to extend their awareness of other cultures, but this could be extended through increasing the school's musical resources in this area.

125. There is presently no confident practising musician in the school who is able to teach an instrument or lead music in assembly. Also, many teachers have limited experience and lack confidence in teaching music. This limits its development in the school. This is rectified, in part, by use of an advisory music teacher, who teaches alongside class teachers on a regular basis. There is, however, need for further training in the teaching of music for class teachers, as well as more systematic monitoring of teaching and assessment of pupils' standards. There is insufficient use of information and communication technology to support teaching and learning.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

126. By the time they leave the school, pupils attain standards typically expected for their age in athletics and swimming. Due to the school's timetabling arrangements observations during the inspection were limited to these two areas of the physical education curriculum. Standards in athletics and swimming remain similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in developing their skills as they move through the school.

127. Around 90 per cent of pupils in Year 6 safely swim 25 metres unaided. Higher attaining pupils swim much further, employing a range of different strokes to achieve this. These include front crawl, backstroke and butterfly. A strength of the lower attaining pupils is their confidence in the water. Despite deficiencies in their swimming techniques, and the limited range of strokes they employ, these pupils fully submerge and jump into the water without fear.

128. In athletics activities, pupils in Year 6, run with good technique, using their arms to help increase their power. They synchronise knee-bends, arm swings and forward leaps to achieve long standing jumps. Their techniques in hurdling are less well developed. Higher attaining pupils (boys and girls) throw the javelin, discus and a small ball good distances because they co-ordinate their body position, leg and arm movements to achieve maximum

effect. Lower attaining pupils fail to throw well because of their incorrect body position, limiting the distance they attain.

129. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Where teachers are confident and have good subject knowledge, they enthuse pupils by personal demonstration and clear instruction. As a result, pupils make good progress in lessons. This was observed in swimming lessons throughout the school. In a Year 4 lesson the teacher encouraged less confident pupils to submerge by using 'ring-o-ring-o-roses, we all fall down' rhyme to inject humour and fun into the activity. The pupils responded by forgetting their misgivings and achieved full immersion. The use of humour and fun is a positive feature of the teaching of less confident swimmers. In good athletics lessons, teachers clearly explain and demonstrate techniques to help pupils improve their performance. In the best lessons, teachers organise classes and groups well and set high expectations of pupils' behaviour and commitment. This has a positive impact upon the quality of learning because pupils settle to their activities quickly and with a clear understanding of what they have to achieve. By introducing some competition into activities, teachers motivate pupils' interest and individual pupils are very keen to improve their personal best performances. They do this sensibly even when they are not the direct focus of teaching or support.

130. In less successful lessons a lack of planning and organisation, combined with more lax control, results in unsatisfactory learning. Pupils remain inactive during too lengthy introductions and are required to participate in activities for which they are ill prepared. For instance, in a Year 4 lesson pupils took part in a relay race without being taught the fundamentals of changing batons. This meant that they made little progress in their relay techniques. Most pupils enjoy lessons and take them seriously. However, in nearly every lesson observed a small minority did not participate for one reason or another. In some cases these pupils were involved in the lessons, acting as markers, judges and timers, or in evaluating their classmates' performance. In other cases non-participants were left to read and not participate in learning.

131. The quality of resources provided to support pupils' learning is good and contributes significantly to the progress they make in lessons. In an athletics lesson, in Year 6, pupils all had sufficient rubber javelins and discs to practise their skills safely. The good quantity of stop watches and measuring tapes enables pupils to be involved in the evaluation of their own progress and motivates them to strive to achieve their own personal targets in throwing or jumping.

132. The quality of the leadership and management in this subject is satisfactory overall. The newly appointed co-ordinator is knowledgeable and has a clear vision of what needs to be done to improve pupils' skills. She has organised training for staff in the use of new equipment and for improving their teaching of gymnastics and dance. A weakness in the leadership of this subject is the lack of monitoring of the quality of teaching in lessons. This means that some relative weaknesses in planning, organisation and control, noted during the inspection, have not been sufficiently addressed. A strength in the school's provision is the use of more confident and competent teachers of swimming to teach more than one class. As a result pupils make good progress in refining their techniques.

133. The provision the school makes for after school physical activities is a strength. During the inspection, 60 pupils participated in three different activities on one afternoon. Pupils from all year groups were involved, led by five members of staff, in well-organised ball skills, basketball and swimming clubs. The swimming group consisted of Year 5 pupils whom the school encourages to participate because they require more practise to improve their skills. This is a good example of the school's resolve to meet its targets.

134. The school enters teams in local and area sporting competitions with some success, in hockey, girls cricket, swimming and kwik cricket. A local professional football club provides coaches to work with pupils over a six-week period to improve their skills and tactics. Annually, Year 6 pupils attend a residential centre. Many activities in which they participate contribute significantly to their physical development. Residential visits, competitions against other school and after school clubs, promote pupils' moral and social development well. Pupils' numeracy skills are enhanced when they measure time and distance during lessons.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

135. By the time they leave the school, pupils attain standards in line with the requirements of the Locally Agreed syllabus. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.

136. Pupils use appropriate terminology, such as 'pilgrimage', 'sacred place' and 'holy book' when they compare different religions. Several of the oldest pupils in the school make thoughtful comparisons of the ideas and feelings of Christian and Muslims pilgrims. When prompted, pupils compare the similarities and differences of the significance of such places as Lourdes and Mecca, to these pilgrims. These oldest pupils are familiar with several aspects of the Christian year, particularly Christmas and Easter. They make appropriate comparisons with Christian and Islamic beliefs and customs such as the supreme deity and holy book.

137. Younger pupils are familiar with the similarity of the stories of Noah, Manu and the great flood in the Hindu and Christian religions. Pupils in Year 5 make very thoughtful observations of icons and use their knowledge of the life of Christ to interpret the expressions of Mary and Jesus. Standards attained by these younger pupils are good. Several of the youngest pupils in the school know about prayer and rites of passage, in both the Christian and Hindu religions.

138. Pupils take a keen interest in their work and achieve well. They are keen to do well and offer their personal thoughts and perceptions regarding different aspects of the subject. Younger pupils react to the teacher's thought provoking questions with an uninhibited discussion of how a deity can speak to humans. The oldest pupils in the school respond to prompts from the teacher to act out situations when they take on the role of people from different religions. They carry this out well, where teaching is good, and try their best when guidance is lacking. Overall, pupils' behaviour is good. However, a small number of younger boys find it hard to concentrate and sometimes do not derive full benefit from their lessons.

139. The quality of teaching and learning is good, overall. There are examples of very good teaching but, on occasion, it is unsatisfactory. The subject has a high profile in the school. In the main, lessons are well planned but, on occasion, the lesson does not make best use of pupils' time, as the teacher has not checked their previous work. Good planning ensures that the oldest pupils make best use of their role-play. They are given a good grounding in the underlying skills needed, such as background knowledge and questioning techniques. Whilst there is joint planning within each year group, the quality of work contained in their books varies significantly between parallel classes for the youngest and oldest pupils in the school.

140. The recently appointed co-ordinator is astute, enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the subject. She has taken the initiative to monitor standards of pupils' work by

creating time to talk with pupils from different classes. This has given an overview of standards in the school and has been formally recorded to inform senior management. An early attempt to assess pupils' work has been carried out in one year group. Assessment and its use are underdeveloped. Learning resources are adequate and plans are in hand to develop them in a methodical manner.