

INSPECTION REPORT

SUMMERFIELD COMBINED SCHOOL

Milton Keynes

LEA area: Milton Keynes

Unique reference number: 110385

Headteacher: Mr G Ellis

Reporting inspector: Mr J G Quinn
15676

Dates of inspection: 9 - 12 July 2001

Inspection number: 192342

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First and middle
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 12
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Downley Avenue Bradwell Common Milton Keynes
Postcode:	MK13 8PG
Telephone number:	01908 662585
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr C Rogers
Date of previous inspection:	24 February 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
1567 6	J G Quinn	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology Geography English as an additional language French Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
1096 5	P Edwards	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
2651 9	M Hatfield	Team inspector	Science Art and design Special educational needs	
2061 4	D Kimber	Team inspector	Mathematics Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
3942	K Sanderson	Team inspector	English Design and technology Physical education	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
3182 2	A Newman	Team inspector	Foundation Stage History Music	
1846 1	V Wilkinson	Team inspector		The work of the special educational needs department

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

~~This is a larger than average combined school situated near the centre of Milton Keynes. There are 368 boys and girls on the school roll aged between 4 and 12 years. The number of pupils has fallen since the last inspection. The majority of pupils come from a mixture of local authority, privately rented and privately owned housing in the immediate area. Thirty-four pupils are from families of ethnic minorities, with a high percentage who speak English as an additional language. None are at early stage of language acquisition. The main languages spoken in addition to English are Cantonese, Japanese, Gujarati and Swahili. Twenty-five percent of pupils have special educational needs, which is above average. This has fallen slightly since the last inspection. Nine pupils have statements of special educational needs which, is proportionally more than in the majority of schools. 11.4 percent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is slightly below average.~~

~~Nine pupils with specific learning difficulties are supported in a specialised unit which is attached to the school. The unit has places for 20 pupils.~~

~~Children begin in the Reception part-time at the start of the term in which their fifth birthday occurs. Their attainment on entry is similar to that normally found, although the proportion of pupils attaining average or above average standards has fallen recently.~~

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

~~This school provides a sound education for its pupils as a result of effective teaching and supportive leadership. Taking into account pupils' attainment when they begin school in Reception, the sound progress they make in their learning set against the average costs of educating pupils, the school provides satisfactory value for money.~~

~~Inspection findings endorse the positive views of parents but do not support fully the areas for improvement. The expectations for homework, when consistently applied, are in line with the recommended times provided by the government.~~ This is a larger than average combined school situated near the centre of Milton Keynes. There are 368 boys and girls on the school roll aged between four and 12 years. The number of pupils has fallen since the last inspection. The majority of pupils come from a mixture of local authority, privately rented and privately-owned housing in the immediate area. Thirty-four pupils are from families of ethnic minorities, with a high percentage who speak English as an additional language. None are at early stage of language acquisition. The main languages spoken in addition to English are Cantonese, Japanese, Gujarati and Swahili. Twenty-five per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is above average. This has fallen slightly since the last inspection. Nine pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need which, is proportionally more than in the majority of schools. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is slightly below average at 11.4 per cent.

Nine pupils with specific learning difficulties are supported in a specialised department which is attached to the school. The department has places for 20 pupils.

Children begin in the reception part-time at the start of the term in which their fifth birthday occurs. Their attainment on entry is similar to that normally found, although the proportion of pupils attaining average or above average standards has fallen recently.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This school provides a sound education for its pupils as a result of effective teaching and supportive leadership. Taking into account pupils' attainment when they begin school in reception, the sound progress they make in their learning set against the average costs of educating pupils, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve above average standards in English, science, art, design and technology, and history by the end of Key Stage 2, and by the time they leave the school at the age of 12 standards are above average in science, history, and design and technology.
- There is a high proportion of good teaching, particularly at Key Stage 2.
- The school plans links between different subjects of the curriculum to make learning more meaningful to pupils.
- It provides very well for pupils' cultural development through art, music, religious education and history.
- It makes good provision for extra-curricular activities and establishes productive links with the community and with other schools and colleges.
- Arrangements for pupils' moral and social development are good.

What could be improved

- Standards in information technology throughout the school.
- How the very youngest children who attend part time in reception are taught.
- Leadership based on the governing body's clearer vision for the development of the school in the longer term.
- The rigorous pursuit of school development in the longer term through measurable objectives which are incorporated into a school development plan covering a longer period.
- A more regular, robust and incisive approach to checking pupils' performance and to monitoring teaching and major initiatives in terms of the impact they have on pupils' learning.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in February 1997, since when improvements overall have been satisfactory. National test results have improved at Key Stage 2 broadly in line with those in all schools over the past four years and are better than they were in 1996. At Key Stage 1 improvement has been more erratic and results are not as good as they were when the school was last inspected.

In terms of the key issues from the last inspection, there is now an improved school development plan. When constructed it covered a period of three years but it is currently too short term to ensure development beyond a year. Administration by the school office staff has improved and budgetary control is now more efficient. The roles of the senior management team and co-ordinators are clearly defined in job descriptions, although some have insufficient time or influence to develop their areas of responsibility fully. There is systematic monitoring of teaching and learning, but it is insufficiently regular or rigorous to secure improvements. Schemes of work are now completed for all subjects except French and religious education, where teachers follow local authority guidelines.

New and more appropriately experienced staff are now teaching Year 7 and the quality of provision, including teaching, has improved as a result. A fluent French speaker - a teacher from another class - teaches French regularly to this year group and further developments are planned.

The school has already started to develop assessment systems for all subjects and it is intended that the recently appointed deputy headteacher will take this further as one of her responsibilities.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key Stage 2 pupils' performance in national tests has improved over the past four years in line with the national trend. English results have risen noticeably between 1999 and 2000 but have declined in mathematics and to a lesser extent in science. In the year 2000 pupils performed best in science, where results were above the national average and also above those in schools with a similar context. In English results were the same as in all schools nationally and in line with those in similar schools, but in mathematics they were slightly below those normally found. Test results for the year 2000 were adversely affected by the inclusion of a disproportionately high number of pupils with learning difficulties. Results for 2001 indicate an improvement.

National tests results at Key Stage 1 declined noticeably in 2000 and pupils performed below the national average in writing and well below in reading and mathematics. Results were well below those in similar schools in reading and writing. In mathematics they were very low and in the bottom five per cent of all schools. Although there are no national figures against which to compare pupils' performance this year, school results indicate an improvement.

Statutory targets for Key Stage 2 pupils in English in 2000 and 2001 were set too low and were achieved easily. In the current year pupils' results in mathematics were in line with targets set, and targets for 2000 were exceeded easily.

Inspection evidence shows the standard of pupils' work to be satisfactory overall. It is in line with that in all schools in English at the age of seven, above average at the age of 11 and similar to that found nationally by the time pupils leave the school at the age of 12. Standards in mathematics are average at all key stages. In science, standards are average at the age of seven but above average at the ages of 11 and 12. In religious education pupils achieve in line with targets identified in the locally agreed syllabus throughout the school. Standards in art are above national expectations by the ages of seven and 11 and similar to those in all schools by the age of 12. In history and design and technology attainment is broadly the same as in most schools at the age of seven and above expectations at the ages of 11 and 12. In geography, music and physical education pupils achieve satisfactory standards throughout, but in information technology standards are below expectations at the ages seven, 11 and 12. There was insufficient evidence for a judgement to be made on standards in French.

The majority of children in reception make sound progress overall and most meet national expectations in all aspects of their work by the time they enter Key Stage 1. Pupils with special educational needs, including those supported in the special learning department, make appropriate progress towards individual targets that are set for them. Pupils whose first language is other than English take an active part in all lessons and make good progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy coming to school. Most are keen to learn and apply themselves well in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in classrooms and in other areas of the school is good overall. Most pupils are sensible and are courteous and helpful to visitors. There have been four exclusions over the past two years.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils relate very well to one another in general, and to the adults with whom they work. They co-operate sensibly in lessons and share equipment and resources fairly. Pupils take responsibility willingly and use their initiative well when required to do so.
Attendance	Attendance for the year 2000 was in line with the national average, but that for the current year is lower.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years	aged 12 years
Lessons seen overall	satisfactory	satisfactory	good	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.

In 95 per cent of lessons teaching was at least satisfactory and in 50 per cent it was good. Teaching was very good in approximately 11 per cent of lessons. In five per cent of lessons teaching was unsatisfactory. It was best at Key Stages 2 and 3, where a high proportion was good or very good. Teaching was least successful for children taught part time in reception, where it lacked direction and did not adequately meet their needs.

In the best lessons there were many good features. Teachers have high expectations of pupils. They plan pupils' work well and share the objectives with pupils at the beginning of lessons. This contributes to purposeful teaching where pupils are clear about what they are expected to learn. As a result pupils in these lessons approach tasks confidently, work with good concentration and make very good progress. In the few unsatisfactory lessons teachers' expectations are too low. Pupils are unsure of what is expected of them, time is wasted and they make poor progress.

English and mathematics are taught successfully and pupils use their numeracy and literacy skills to good effect in other subjects. The school meets the needs of most pupils well and consequently they make satisfactory gains in knowledge, understanding and skill.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. The school successfully links different subjects together to make the curriculum more meaningful to pupils. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities and the relationship with the community and with other schools and colleges is productive.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. The management of the special educational needs department is currently unsatisfactory, but the support that these pupils receive is effective and this enables them to make sound progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The support provided by the specialist teacher is good and this helps pupils to take a full and confident part in lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This is good and the provision for pupils' cultural development through art, music, religious education and history is a very strong feature of the school's work.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes good care of its pupils, and procedures to ensure health, safety and child protection are securely established.

The school works well with parents and several help in classes during the school day. Parents are kept regularly informed of events through newsletters and there are termly opportunities for them to inspect their children's work and to discuss progress with teachers.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher, with strong support from the recently appointed deputy headteacher and other senior colleagues, provides satisfactory guidance for staff in the short term, but direction in the longer term is unsatisfactory.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils its functions through well-organised committees which meet regularly to discuss the work of the school. Although individual governors support the school well, the collective role of the governing body in setting the general direction for the school is unsatisfactory. Also visits to the school are insufficiently regular to enable governors to build up

	a corporate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
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The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has started to evaluate its performance in national tests and senior staff monitor teaching. However, this is insufficiently regular, robust and incisive to ensure that the quality of pupils' learning is raised across all subjects.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes satisfactory use of its resources and finances to improve the quality of pupils' learning.

There is a satisfactory number of appropriately qualified teaching and support staff. The school grounds and buildings are spacious and enable the curriculum to be taught effectively. The many colourful displays of pupils' work around the school help create pleasant surroundings which are conducive to learning. Resources are satisfactory overall, except in information and communication technology, where there are too few computers around the school generally to allow pupils to consolidate and develop their skills.

The school seeks to provide best value in major purchases, but the way in which it evaluates the effectiveness of major spending decisions is underdeveloped.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children enjoy coming to school. • Children behave well. • Their children are well taught. • They would feel comfortable approaching the school with suggestions or concerns. • The school expects their children to work hard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of work which their children are expected to do at home. • The way in which the school works with parents. • The information which they receive on their children's progress. • The way the school is led and managed. • The range of activities provided for pupils outside lessons.

Inspection findings endorse the positive views of parents but do not support fully the areas for improvement. The expectations for homework, when consistently applied, are in line with the recommended times provided by the government. The school works well with parents and seeks to involve them in their children's education. The information provided on children's progress is good and better than that found in most schools. The school is satisfactorily led and managed, but the governors' strategic view for school improvement is underdeveloped. The good range of additional activities provided for pupils is more than in many schools.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The most recent statutory test results for which national comparisons are available are those for the year 2000. In reading at Key Stage 1 results were well below the national average and well below those for similar schools, but the proportion of pupils which attained the higher Level 3 was above that found nationally. In writing, results were a little better but were nevertheless slightly below average, with about half the number attaining the higher level than was found in all schools. Compared to results for similar schools attainment was well below average. Mathematics results were well below average and very low - in the bottom five per cent of similar schools. As with writing, only about half the pupils attained the higher level compared to all schools. The number of pupils who were assessed by their teachers as achieving the expected standard in science was well below average and below that in schools with similar circumstances. These results are not as good as at the time of the last inspection and mark a significant decline since the previous year. Although there are no national figures against which to compare the school's results for this year, there is evidence of improvement in the proportion attaining the higher Levels 2A and 3. However, there is still a significant proportion which does not meet the expected standard, or whose attainment is not securely in line with what is expected. The school attributes improvements to new and improved teaching in one of the three Key Stage 1 classes combined with better leadership, more confident implementation of National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy and improvements to reading through the introduction of a new reading scheme.
2. National Curriculum results for Key Stage 2 pupils are better and have improved in line with national trend over the past four years. They are much better now than at the time of the last inspection. Consequently statutory performance targets for English in 2000 and 2001 have been met easily and results in mathematics correspond fairly closely with the targets that were set. This improvement has been most significant in English, where results have risen from well below average in 1999 to average in 2000, with more pupils attaining the higher Level 5 than is found in most schools. Standards were in line with those for similar schools. Results in mathematics were slightly below average and below those for similar schools, although the proportion attaining Level 5 was in line with that in all schools. In science results were above both the national average and that for similar schools, with a significant proportion attaining at the higher level and relatively few who did not meet the expected standard.
3. Results for the current year indicate an improvement on those for 2000, but as there are no national comparatives at present, the school's achievements cannot be measured against all schools.
4. Inspection evidence shows that most full-time children in reception make sound progress in all areas of their learning and attain the expected standards in all aspects by the time they begin in Key Stage 1. Those that attend part time are not taught as well and so do not make the progress of which they are capable. Pupils at Key Stage 1 achieve satisfactorily overall and make sound progress in developing skills and understanding. Pupils at Key Stages 2 and 3 receive work

that is more demanding as a result of better teaching. Most achieve well and make good progress by building on what they have learnt previously.

5. Pupils attain above average standards in English at the age of 11 and in line with pupils in most schools at the ages of seven and 12. Standards at 12 reflect the fact that there is a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in Year 7. In mathematics standards are average across the school. Standards in science are average at the age of seven, but above average at the ages of 11 and 12, where teachers' better subject knowledge contributes to more challenging teaching, which engages the interest of pupils effectively, particularly in Years 5, 6 and 7. In religious education pupils attain in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus, but standards in information and communication technology are below expectations throughout the school. This is because pupils have too little opportunity to use computers regularly to develop the skills that they learn in the computer suite.
6. In history and design and technology attainment is similar to that in all schools at the age of seven, but above average at the ages of 11 and 12. Attainment in art is above expectations at the ages of seven and 11, and average at the age of 12. In all other subjects pupils achieve similarly to others of their age, except in French, where there was too little evidence to make a judgement on standards.
7. Pupils with special educational needs who are supported in the department for special educational needs, and those who are not, make generally satisfactory progress in most aspects of their work due to the good teaching they receive from individual teachers and support assistants. Pupils whose first language is other than English are well supported by their specialist teacher, which ensures that they are able to take part in lessons confidently, and consequently they make good progress in line with the majority of pupils.
8. Although test results indicate a difference between the performance of boys and girls, this was not reflected in pupils' past work or their work during the inspection.
9. Features of above average performance in English at the age of 11 are how pupils use their speaking and listening skills to explain their own ideas and to listen to those of others. Most pupils read accurately and many do so with good expression. They remember stories well and enjoy discussing themes and characters in books they have read. Many pupils find information from different sources effectively, with some showing a good understanding of how to skim through a text to find essential information. Where teachers stimulate pupils' imagination they put more effort into their work and are able to write at length for a variety of purposes, in a good style with a clear understanding about where and when to include punctuation.
10. A successful feature of work in both English and mathematics throughout the school is the way in which these skills are used to support other subjects. For example, pupils gather information on history topics and make notes on what they have read. They also write in connection with religious education and explain how they have carried out experiments in science. In geography, from Year 1 onwards, for example, pupils use what they have learnt in mathematics when they produce tally charts and graphs to show how roads are used by different sorts of traffic. Older pupils create more sophisticated graphs related to land use in geography and population changes in history. These links between subjects provide a more holistic

view of the curriculum for pupils. This helps them to appreciate that their learning is inter-related and encourages more purposeful and positive attitudes.

11. In science, at Key Stages 2 and 3 standards are above average. This is because pupils make good progress as a direct result of good teaching with high expectations, mainly in Years 5, 6 and 7. This extends pupils' learning well and several understand principles of thermal insulation and the saturation point of materials; for example, at a more advanced level than might be expected. Discussions with pupils at the end of the key stage reveal that most understand the processes of pollination and germination in plants. They explain the process of 'photosynthesis' with confidence.
12. Although only one science lesson was seen in Year 7, evidence from this and previous work indicates that teacher expectations are high and consequently pupils make rapid gains in their understanding. They discuss their work confidently, using correct scientific terms, such as '*omnivore*', '*producer*' and '*secondary consumer*'.
13. In art, pupils throughout the school explore ideas, working with a wide variety of materials, tools and techniques, recording their ideas with increasing confidence, in a range of media. Observational drawing is particularly good.
14. In design and technology pupils at Key Stage 2 and in Year 7 work carefully and diligently to plan and make models of high quality. They then evaluate them thoughtfully to decide whether modifications are needed.
15. High standards in history in Years 6 and 7 are characterised by pupils' good grasp of historical facts. They ask and answer questions readily and enjoy probing and exploring possible causes of events during class discussions. Very good cross-curricular links with other subjects ensure that history occupies an important place in the learning of pupils across the school. As they mature, the investigative and interpretative skills which pupils use and develop in history are used to support other subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

16. Pupils' attitudes are good. The school has continued to promote the positive values and attitudes noted at the time of the last inspection. Pupils like coming to school and are generally well motivated in lessons. This makes a positive contribution to their progress. Pupils react well to the encouragement offered by all staff. In a very few instances a small number of pupils find difficulty in maintaining concentration. These situations are handled patiently and consistently by all staff involved. Generally pupils are enthusiastic about what they experience at school and often go home and try to develop their learning. One pupil, after studying '*Macbeth*' in school, went home, researched the '*true*' story from the Internet and brought her printed version to school the next day. In lessons, there is no shortage of volunteers to answer questions, contribute to discussions and share ideas.
17. Behaviour at school is good overall. Pupils know what is expected of them and the majority follow the rules. In the dining hall, around school and outside in the playground behaviour is also good. Each class devises its own rules, and the school's behaviour policy, founded on positive behaviour and rewards, is consistently applied by most staff. Rare instances of unpleasant behaviour or bullying are dealt with swiftly and firmly. There have been two fixed term, and one

permanent, exclusions during the past year. The adoption of a whole-school approach, rather than sending pupils who misbehave to the headteacher, is generally successful in promoting good standards of behaviour.

18. Pupils' personal development is good. They are friendly and confident amongst adults. Pupils clearly enjoy working co-operatively in the friendly atmosphere the school presents. The relationships formed between class mates and between pupils and teachers are good. Pupils are comfortable chatting to adults in school about work and personal issues, and there are high levels of mutual respect. Pupils take part positively in 'circle time', which gives them the opportunity to discuss matters that concern them with one another. Older pupils appreciate the purpose of charities and take a full part in organising events for 'Comic Relief' day and in running stalls at the school summer fair. Pupils take their monitoring duties seriously, including helping younger pupils at lunchtime and assisting with the school library. Pupils benefit from visits to places of interest and local events and their sense of citizenship is well developed. Pupils mature noticeably as they progress through school and respond well to the additional responsibilities with which they are presented.
19. The level of attendance for the last reporting year was broadly in line with the national average. However, in the current year attendance has declined slightly. The majority of pupils are punctual in arriving for school, which allows sessions to start on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. The quality of teaching is good overall. It has a positive effect on pupils' learning and successfully meets most of their needs. In 95 per cent of lessons teaching was at least satisfactory, in 50 per cent it was good and in 11 per cent it was very good. Teaching was unsatisfactory in only five per cent of lessons. This marks a slight improvement on the position at the time of the last inspection. Although the proportion of satisfactory and unsatisfactory lessons is similar, the number of very good lessons has doubled.
21. Literacy and numeracy are taught effectively throughout the school and are successfully integrated into other subjects by teachers. For example, in a geography lesson in Years 3 and 4 the teacher skilfully developed pupils' letter writing abilities in connection with improvements to the school grounds.
22. Pupils with special educational needs are taught satisfactorily overall. Throughout the school, teachers work in partnership with classroom assistants and support pupils with special educational needs well, within and outside the classroom. Class teachers draw up individual educational plans for pupils with special educational needs, but the targets on these are often insufficiently precise and attainable to ensure that pupils build on previous learning systematically.
23. Pupils whose first language is not English are taught well by their specialist support teacher. She plans effectively for the individuals and groups she teaches and liaises effectively with class teachers to provide tasks that will support pupils best in their class work.

24. Teaching was best at Key Stages 2 and 3, where there were proportionally more good and very good lessons, and was least effective for children taught part time in reception.
25. Children who attend full time in reception are taught well. Here the teacher has a good understanding of the needs of children of this age and provides well-organised activities that stimulate their interest and engage their attention. This was apparent, for example, in a lesson where pupils were making boats from reclaimed materials which they then tested, to see whether their constructions would float. The teacher plans effectively and uses resources well; for example, in the computer suite, where mirrors were introduced for children to determine their own eye colour in order to create an accurate portrait of themselves on the computers. Teaching is unsatisfactory for children who are taught part time in reception. Lessons lack structure and a sense of purpose. Routines and procedures are not clearly established. As a result children do not know what is expected of them and a considerable amount of time is wasted. Consequently pupils make poor progress in acquiring new knowledge and understanding.
26. In the remainder of the school there are many good features to lessons. Overall, teachers plan effectively and learning is particularly successful where lesson objectives are shared with pupils and then revisited at the end of lessons to ascertain how far they have been met. This ensures that pupils are clear about the purpose of the lessons and consequently their learning is more productive. In a science lesson in Year 1, for example, where pupils were investigating which materials were most effective in reducing sound, the teacher's planning was very thorough and included clear opportunities to assess how well pupils understood what had been taught.
27. A feature of the most successful lessons was teachers' very secure understanding of subjects such as religious education, science and art. This enabled them to question pupils confidently and incisively, thereby challenging their thinking well and encouraging them to consider carefully before responding. This was evident, for example, in a religious education lesson in Year 6 on the teachings of Jesus, where the teacher's probing questions deepened pupils' understanding of phrases such as '*...removing the speck in your own eye*'. Similarly, in a science lesson in Year 7, the teacher's very good subject knowledge prompted pupils to use the correct scientific terminology - '*habitat, environment, predator, adaptation*' - confidently and correctly in relation to work on the environment and the survival of organisms. Also, in a successful information and communication technology lesson taught by the co-ordinator good questioning solicited terms such as '*download*' and '*scroll button*' from the class of Year 3 and Year 4 pupils.
28. Another very successful feature in a number of lessons was the good use of time to ensure a brisk and purposeful pace to learning. Where this was used particularly well teachers frequently reminded pupils of the time remaining for the completion of their work. This focused pupils' attention well and encouraged them to concentrate fully on the tasks that had been set. In a number of lessons teachers used strategies to engage the interest of pupils quickly from the outset through lively and amusing introductions which set the tone for purposeful lessons. For example, the introduction to a very good literacy lesson in a class with pupils in Years 3 and 4 involved the class teacher 'misreading' a poem. The pupils evidently enjoyed this and were engaged from the start. They listened attentively and were able to identify mistakes quickly. In a minority of lessons, where the behaviour of a small number of

pupils is challenging, the pace of learning slows as teachers deal with their inattention.

29. Where teachers assess pupils' understanding accurately, subsequent learning is most productive. This was clearly demonstrated in a numeracy lesson in Year 5; for example, where the teacher adapted a lesson to reinforce work on percentages that previous testing revealed had not been fully understood. The way in which teachers respond to pupils' work varies considerably across the school. Where it is effective there are helpful comments which not only tell pupils what is good about their work, but also give an indication of what they might do to improve. On the other hand some teachers provide little guidance and occasionally praise mediocre work too readily.
30. Good use is made of homework to supplement work undertaken in school, particularly in English and mathematics. Parents' concern at the level of homework is not supported by inspection evidence. When consistently implemented in all classes, the time that pupils are expected to spend on homework is consistent with that recommended by the government.

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

31. The quality and range of learning opportunities are satisfactory at all key stages. The curriculum is broad and balanced and the school has worked successfully to link different subjects in order to make the curriculum more coherent and meaningful to pupils. It meets the requirements of the National Curriculum, and includes provision for religious education. Education in citizenship, sex education and drugs education is provided, and is soundly linked to personal, social and health education. Good quality subject policies and schemes of work are in place for almost all areas of the curriculum. This is an improvement since the time of the last report, when several subjects lacked policies and schemes of work. The school teaches French to Year 7 pupils according to a scheme produced by the local authority.
32. The national strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy have been successfully developed. Teachers' confidence, skills, and often their enthusiasm, have been boosted. Improvements in curriculum planning in other subjects have arisen from the effective implementation of the literacy and numeracy schemes. Consequently pupils' skills in these areas are used well to support other areas of the curriculum. The school is in the process of adapting national guidelines from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority for most foundation subjects except art. The school recognises the need to develop further the way in which the curriculum is organised in order to help pupils build on their learning progressively in all subjects.
33. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. Individual educational plans have been drawn up by teaching staff, but some individual targets in these plans are too broad to measure progress effectively. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons and some are regularly withdrawn for additional support. As a result, they make sound progress.
34. There is sound provision for pupils' personal, social and health education across the school. Pupils and teachers respect each other, and the encouraging manner of members of staff helps pupils to develop high self-esteem. Pupils have

opportunities to share matters of concern in mutually supportive sessions when they sit in a circle and listen and respond to the views of others. A whole-day in-service training session on personal, social and health education is planned for all staff, including mid-day supervisors, next term, to ensure that there is a consistent approach to dealing with pupils' behaviour and attitudes.

35. Pupils have the opportunity to take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including educational visits. These enrich pupils' learning significantly. This does not support the view expressed by a number of parents in the parents' questionnaire who were concerned at the range of activities available. After-school sports this year, including football, baseball, basketball, cricket club and cross-country, are open to girls and boys in Key Stage 2 and in Year 7. Music, art and drama activities include a lunchtime singing group, and brass and woodwind groups which have recently successfully performed in festivals. There are other extra-curricular activities such as those for Year 7 pupils, who were involved in an arts workshop and in a four-day residential visit to France.
36. The school adapts its timetables to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum, including - at Key Stage 2 and in Year 7 - extra-curricular activities. This includes pupils in the special educational needs department. The school ensures that those pupils receiving music tuition from visiting teachers do not regularly miss the same lessons each week.
37. The school's links with the local community contribute well to pupils' learning. Pupils visit theatres, art galleries and museums to enrich their learning. Pupils take part in the local music and art festivals, and raise funds to support local and national charities. Links such as these, together with visitors to the school and contributions from firms such as major fast food restaurants and national banks, add to pupils' learning and their understanding of the wider world.
38. The school has established productive links with the local secondary school. There is good liaison between staff, and secondary colleagues have assisted with lessons in art and dance. Pupils occasionally use the facilities of the secondary school to enhance the curriculum, and this has a positive effect on the quality of their learning.

Provision for pupils' personal development

39. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, which is similar to the position at the time of the last inspection. It makes satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual development; provision for pupils' moral and social development is good and there is very good provision for their cultural development. The school works hard to promote balanced and reasonable attitudes among its pupils, who are encouraged to make positive choices and develop a sense of personal responsibility. The headteacher and staff provide good role models for pupils and their caring attitudes are an important factor in securing the good standards of behaviour throughout the school.
40. The school provides pupils with knowledge of and insight into the values and beliefs of the Christian faith through the religious education curriculum. There is sometimes a Christian theme to acts of collective worship, where there are appropriate moments of prayer and reflection on the message being promoted. These encourage pupils to develop their spiritual awareness and self-knowledge.

However, pupils play a passive role in most assemblies and have little involvement in the preparation and presentation of the act of worship. From the reception classes upwards, pupils are encouraged to reflect on caring for the environment and for the gifts of care and love which they receive from family and friends. However, there is infrequent reference to the presence of a Divine Being in collective worship, though pupils are able to recognise the spiritual significance of Bible stories that they study in religious education lessons. Pupils have good knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths through religious education, and good cross-curricular links with art and history provide them with a greater awareness of the spiritual and aesthetic dimensions of the world around them.

41. Pupils' moral development is well promoted through the school's strong behaviour policy, backed up by the home-school agreement. The school's Code of Conduct is prominently displayed and pupils have opportunities to negotiate their own class rules. They are well aware of the difference between right and wrong and are encouraged to make positive decisions about their conduct and attitudes. Generally they show respect for each other and for adults and are happy to share in each other's achievements; for instance, during the weekly Kaleidoscope Assembly. The value which teachers place on the work of every individual fosters these positive attitudes well. Older pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for younger children and there is a good focus on the shared reading initiative between Year 2 and Year 6.
42. Pupils' social development is equally positive. They are encouraged to form constructive relationships and to work together collaboratively. From the reception classes upwards, pupils are increasingly ready to share resources and to take turns. There are good links with the local community and as a result pupils contribute fruitfully to musical concerts and art exhibitions. Their social confidence is enhanced through visiting speakers and educational visits to places of interest. These experiences help them identify with the feelings and values of other people and to develop a stronger sense of community with each other.
43. The school is very successful in teaching its pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions through its planned provision in curricular areas like art, history, music and religious education. Displayed art work contains some very good examples of painting in the style of various well-known artists, and pupils are knowledgeable about medieval heraldry and Tudor portraiture. Great care is taken to ensure that pupils are exposed to the richness and diversity of non-European cultures. In religious education, pupils examine the differences and similarities in beliefs and moral values in the major world religions, and the art of ancient Egypt and Greece is used well to extend their understanding and to increase their empathetic response. They have also had opportunities to experience an Indian feast provided by one of the school's learning support assistants and there are celebrations of Diwali and of the Chinese New Year at appropriate times. Teachers are successful in establishing meaningful links between subjects; for example, Islamic patterns are used to demonstrate mathematical principles in an interesting and relevant way.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

44. The school has maintained the effective care of its pupils reported at the time of the previous inspection. It is a caring community where pupils work together harmoniously. Teachers know the pupils well and value them as individuals. The majority of parents are happy with the care and guidance offered to their children.

They feel their children are happy in school and able to concentrate on their work, as teachers are aware of their needs.

45. The procedures for monitoring the personal development of pupils are good. Their assessment booklets contain pieces of work and an evaluation sheet completed by pupils themselves, which are supported by informal discussion with teachers.
46. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in all three key stages are satisfactory, overall. They are good in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science throughout the school. Pupils are regularly assessed in English, mathematics and science and these assessments are being used effectively to guide the planning of future work. Assessment procedures for some of the other subjects are in place and more are being developed. Therefore the use of assessment in subjects other than English, mathematics and science to guide future planning is inconsistent across the school. In some subjects; for example, in art, pupils' assessment of their own work is being developed appropriately, to give them a better understanding of how well they are performing.
47. In addition to statutory assessments, the school uses national and commercially-produced test materials to make annual assessments in English and mathematics in all years across the three key stages. The results of these are analysed and are used effectively to track pupils' attainment and progress and to identify areas for development.
48. The school has developed the '*Summerfield Assessment Sheet*', which is helpful in giving a general overview of attainment in English, mathematics and science. The '*Summerfield Assessment Booklet*' is an ongoing individual Record of Achievement for each child and contains useful samples of pupils' work, which, although they are not matched against National Curriculum levels, show progression across the year. Recording procedures are good in English, mathematics and science throughout the school and this enables teachers to track what pupils can and cannot do. However, although informal records of attainment and progress are kept by most staff in subjects other than English, mathematics and science, there are no formal records maintained consistently in these subjects and, as a result, teachers do not have a clear view of pupils' attainment and progress.
49. Good procedures are in place for the early identification of pupils with learning difficulties. Statementing procedures are appropriate. Class teachers usually complete the individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs in all key stages. These are therefore inconsistent between classes and the quality varies. In particular, the learning targets are often too broad to be useful in setting future plans. Consequently they do not identify small specific steps towards progress in pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. As a result these programmes of work do not build consistently on the progress made from one review date to the next. Plans are reviewed regularly and are effectively shared with parents and pupils. Pupils with special educational needs receive an appropriate level of support from external agencies.
50. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic development are satisfactory. In addition to the good levels of support offered by the teaching assistants, the school organises extra support sessions and '*booster*' groups in literacy and numeracy to enhance pupils' learning and to raise standards of attainment. The school sets targets for literacy and numeracy for all pupils across

the school. This is a useful development that is already beginning to improve standards. These initiatives are now beginning to impact very positively on pupils' attainment.

51. Since the previous inspection, when assessment featured as a key issue for action, the school has made satisfactory progress in addressing this issue, but further improvements are needed in subjects other than English, mathematics and science. The management of assessment is very good. The newly appointed deputy headteacher responsible for the co-ordination of assessment is very clear about future developments and is currently reviewing the policy and all procedures. She is enthusiastic and highly committed to the development of assessment across the whole school.
52. The school promotes and monitors behaviour well. There is an effective behaviour policy that is applied consistently by most staff. Pupils and parents are aware of the school rules, which are supported through the home-school agreement. Incidents relating to bullying and unacceptable behaviour are monitored carefully through activities such as whole-class discussions and the school's anti-bullying policy. Staff deal with any reported incidents swiftly and effectively.
53. Procedures for checking attendance are satisfactory, although some registers do not contain all the required information and not all registers are marked regularly at the beginning of each afternoon session. The education welfare officer visits the school at least every half term and is always available to the school should there be any urgent matters for discussion.
54. The school's child protection policy is satisfactory. Procedures comply with those of the area child protection committee, and all staff are fully aware of how these are to be followed. There is a comprehensive health and safety policy. Regular risk assessment is carried out and findings are acted upon. The arrangements for first aid, including the recording of accidents and informing parents, are good. First-aid boxes are fully stocked and appropriately sited. Lessons on sex education and drug awareness form part of the school's programme for personal, social and health education. This is well supported by outside agencies.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

55. The school works hard to maintain a positive relationship with parents, as found at the time of the previous inspection, and the majority of parents indicate that they are pleased with what the school provides and achieves.
56. The quality of information provided by the school is good. The regular newsletters and termly year-group letters keep parents well informed about developments and of the curriculum to be covered each term. There are regular parent and teacher consultation meetings and an open evening at the end of the summer term when parents have an opportunity to look at their children's past and current work. A minority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire expressed concern at the amount of information they receive on their children's progress. However, inspection findings do not support this view as pupils' annual progress reports are clear and informative on how pupils have progressed and suggest ways in which they might improve. The prospectus is detailed and attractively set out. It provides parents and carers with a useful practical guide to the school. The school has consulted parents regarding the home-school agreement and the review of the

school sex education policy. A workshop has been held for parents to explain the recently introduced reading scheme.

57. In the survey of parents prior to the inspection, a minority of did not feel well informed regarding the amount of homework expected. The inspection findings do not support this as homework is set regularly in most classes and is closely linked to class work, and the amount is in line with government recommendations.
58. Parents' involvement with the school is good and has a positive effect on pupils' learning. Most parents think well of the school and the majority would feel comfortable about approaching staff with any questions or concerns. Inspection evidence has established that the school encourages parents to help in school and a regularly reliable number assist in class with reading, information technology, sewing and cooking, by playing the piano and on educational visits. This help is greatly appreciated by staff.
59. Most parents of pupils with special educational needs are appropriately involved in reviewing individual education plans and in setting future targets.
60. The school association organises fund-raising and social events which are well supported by parents and raise considerable additional funding which is used to enrich pupils' learning. For example, it has bought new playground equipment and contributed to the development of the information and communication technology suite.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

61. The school is soundly led and managed. The headteacher provides satisfactory guidance for staff in the short term and is very strongly supported in this by senior colleagues, including the recently appointed deputy headteacher, who is already making a significant contribution to the work of the school. Strong guidance in the longer term is less effective and hindered by the lack of a clear educational vision for the future. Together, with the support of governors and staff, the senior management team has worked to address the shortcomings identified in the last inspection, with the result that satisfactory progress has been made on the issues raised.
62. Inspection evidence does not reflect parental concerns about leadership and management, as there is a satisfactory focus on improving aspects of pupils' learning. For example, the school has started to evaluate the performance of pupils in National Curriculum tests and from this it has established that pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 last year did not perform very well. In order to help raise the attainment of these pupils an experienced teacher from Key Stage 2 transferred to teach a mixed-age class of Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. Also a new reading scheme has been adopted which has engaged pupils' interest, given greater structure to reading at Key Stage 1 and meets with the approval of parents. There is evidence that these arrangements are beginning to have an impact. Although these are positive developments, the school has yet to analyse performance data closely enough to determine how well pupils of different abilities are performing.
63. The headteacher and his senior colleagues check the quality of teaching and there is clear guidance to direct their observations. However, this has not been entirely effective. It has been insufficiently systematic or rigorous, with the result that not all staff have been seen regularly and there remains a proportion of unsatisfactory teaching which adversely affects the learning of a particular group of pupils.
64. The school has policies and procedures to govern most aspects of its work, but not all policies are implemented consistently throughout the school.
65. The headteacher delegates some of his leadership and management functions effectively to curriculum co-ordinators and to other senior staff. Whereas some co-ordinators are well established in their roles, others are relatively new and have yet to become fully effective. The co-ordinator for special educational needs is involved in formulating policies and procedures, and in checking individual education plans and reviews for pupils with special educational needs in all key stages. However, she does not have an overview of the classroom organisation of special educational needs throughout the school. The management of the special educational needs department is currently unsatisfactory. Due to the absence of the teacher in charge the department lacks firm direction based on her specialist knowledge. However, these pupils are supported effectively by those that currently teach them and as a result most make satisfactory progress in their learning.
66. Governors support the school well individually and are keen for it to succeed. Most are new to their roles since the last inspection. They meet regularly as a full governing body and have formed themselves into well-structured committees in order to carry out their work more efficiently. These also meet termly and report back to the full governing body at one of its regular meetings. However, the governing body has no clear corporate view of how it wishes to see the school

develop in the long term. To this end it has included the formation of a mission statement, which reflects the essential character of the school, as an objective in its development plan. The school development plan covered an appropriate period when it was devised initially, but it is currently too short term to ensure the improvement of the school over a period longer than a year.

67. Governors receive regular informative reports from the headteacher on aspects of the school's work. Although individual governors visit the school whilst it is in session, the system of *'twinning'* governors with individual classes, reported in the last inspection report, no longer applies. Therefore most have little first-hand experience of the work of the school and so have developed no coherent view of its strengths and shortcomings.
68. All statutory requirements are met, except for the content of daily collective worship, which does not regularly acknowledge the existence of a supreme deity. Also the governors' annual report to parents contains insufficient information on the professional development of staff, lacks information on access to the school buildings by pupils with disabilities and does not include a statement on progress with the action plan from the previous inspection.
69. The school has a satisfactory number of teaching staff whose qualifications and range of teaching experience broadly match the demands of the National Curriculum. There are a satisfactory number of support staff who meet regularly with teachers, are briefed well and make an effective contribution to pupils' learning, including those with special educational needs. Across the school staff are committed and hard working. They have detailed job descriptions and are clear about their roles. The school meets the requirements for the performance management of teachers, and all teaching and support staff receive opportunities for professional development and training to help increase their skills. The school provides mentoring for newly qualified and newly appointed staff. Administrative staff and lunchtime support staff contribute well to the smooth running of the school.
70. The accommodation is good. Classrooms are of a generous size with suitable storage space. There are attractive displays celebrating pupils' achievements which support pupils' self-esteem well and provide an environment that is conducive to learning. The school site is clean, tidy and well maintained by a hardworking staff. The playgrounds and fields are spacious, but the surface of the Key Stage 1 playground and some of the paving slabs around the school are uneven in places and could cause an accident. The amount of vandalism has decreased since the installation of a security fence.
71. Learning resources throughout the school are, overall, satisfactory for the school's curriculum and range of pupils. There are good resources in the Foundation Stage, in art, design and technology and history, and also to support pupils with special educational needs. Resources for information and communication technology are unsatisfactory. Although the recently established computer suite is a valuable asset and facilitates whole-class teaching, there are too few computers around the school generally to support the skills that pupils have learnt in lessons. Since the last inspection there have been improvements in resources to support learning in Year 7, and these are now of an appropriate quality.
72. School administration staff are very efficient and support the school's main functions of teaching and learning well. The school uses new technology effectively to

produce budgetary information and regular reports to the governors on the state of the school's finances. The recommendations of the previous audit report have been acted upon and reported to governors.

73. The school makes satisfactory use of its resources and finances in the short term, but due to the lack of a long-term vision, strategic deployment beyond a year is limited. The school has sensibly invested funding in major initiatives such as an information and communication technology suite in order to help raise standards in the subject. However, it has not evaluated the impact of such investments sufficiently to determine whether they provide best value in terms of their impact on pupils' learning.
74. Taking into account the attainment of children when they enter the school, the progress they make as a result of good teaching, and the standards they attain when they leave at the age of 12, set against the average costs of educating pupils, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

75. The governors headteacher and staff should:
1. improve standards in information and communication technology throughout the school by ensuring that all pupils have regular access to computers in order to consolidate and develop skills learnt in the information and communication technology suite; *(see paragraphs 5, 153, 154, 156 and 158)*
 2. improve provision for the part-time youngest children in the school in order that their work is more purposeful and productive; *(see paragraphs 25, 85 - 94)*
 3. provide more purposeful leadership based on a clearer vision for school development in the longer term, to which governors, staff and parents subscribe. The school has identified the need to develop a mission statement in its school development plan; *(see paragraphs 61 and 66)*
 4. rigorously pursue school development in the longer term by:
 - identifying clear and measurable objectives, which can be incorporated into a longer-term closely costed school development plan; *(see paragraph 66)*
 - checking regularly and frequently to ensure that any policies and agreed procedures are consistently implemented; *(see paragraphs 17, 30, 34, 52 and 64)*
 - adopting a more regular, robust and incisive approach to checking pupils' performance, the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of new initiatives, including major spending decisions. *(see paragraphs 62, 63 and 73)*

Minor issues:

In addition to the areas identified above, the school should also consider including the following less important issues in its development plan:

- improve targets in individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs; (see paragraphs 22, 33 and 49)
- work in consultation with the local education authority to maintain suitable provision for pupils supported by the special educational needs department, as the nature of the local authority special educational needs provision changes; (see paragraphs 65 and 79)
- ensure that statutory requirements are met in terms of collective worship and the information contained in the governors' annual report to parents. (see paragraph 68)

THE WORK OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS DEPARTMENT

76. The school has a designated special educational needs department which can support up to 20 pupils who have Statements of Special Educational Need. Pupils have specific learning difficulties, particularly in the areas of literacy and numeracy. Currently there are only nine pupils supported by this provision and in September, because the oldest pupils will have transferred to secondary school, there will only be three pupils.
77. The school receives additional funding for the department from the local education authority. Although there are currently only nine statemented pupils being supported, the local education authority is continuing to provide funding for 20. However, this funding is due to cease in August of this year, although it is possible that it may continue until March 2002. The local education authority is currently reviewing the provision it makes for statemented pupils and it is unclear what the future for the department will be. Due to this uncertainty the school has not felt able to plan for the further development of provision for these pupils. Although the school has consulted the local education authority to ascertain what its future role could be, it has not firmly established a long-term plan for the support of the remaining three pupils or considered how it will retain the expertise of the department staff if, and when, the funding is withdrawn.
78. A teacher and a learning support assistant staff the department. Pupils are withdrawn from their classes each morning for reading and spelling activities as well as literacy and numeracy lessons. Department staff provide support for them in other lessons during the day if it is felt to be necessary. As there are only nine pupils currently identified for support, department staff are also providing help for pupils on Stages 3 and 4 of the national Code of Practice statementing procedures. The last inspection in 1997 indicated that the resources in the special educational needs departments were not being used effectively across the school. The school has adequate, good quality resources to support learning and these are easily accessible to all staff. However, they have been appropriately purchased to meet the needs of pupils with specific learning difficulties and so they are not totally suitable for other pupils. However, inspection findings indicate that teachers make appropriate use of the resources available, and staff expertise is now used more effectively to support a wider range of special needs across the school. Teachers also make effective use of department staff to help less able pupils when they are in

lessons to support statemented pupils. For example, in a computer lesson for pupils in Year 7 the learning support assistant worked effectively with a group of less able pupils, which included a statemented pupil, to select and present information about the Crusaders. As pupils receive appropriate reminders and good encouragement they complete tasks set and make satisfactory progress.

79. The statutory procedures for statemented pupils are carried out appropriately and all pupils have an individual education plan, which identifies learning outcomes in the areas of literacy and, for some pupils, numeracy. Pupils are provided with a suitable range of learning opportunities. This enables satisfactory progress to be made in relation to what they have been taught and the targets in their individual education plans. However, these targets are too broad. They do not clearly identify the small steps in knowledge, skill and understanding that each pupil is expected to make. For example, a target such as *'to improve literacy skills'* does not provide enough information about what the pupil *can* already do and *what they need to do next* in order to improve. This limits their effectiveness and makes it difficult for staff to ensure that work is closely matched to individual needs. Learning is generally planned for an ability group and does not always provide opportunities for individuals to make good progress. For example, in a literacy lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6 the reading text and work sheet were too difficult for two of the pupils and they were not able, despite support, to make as much progress as other pupils.
80. Currently the management of the department is unsatisfactory and the provision made for pupils over the last year has been severely disrupted by the long-term illness of the teacher in charge. However, a learning support assistant who has considerable experience of working with pupils who have special educational needs has adequately supported pupils and this has enabled them to continue making satisfactory progress. The school's co-ordinator for special educational needs has also provided support for the department, which has ensured that there has been adequate provision for pupils, but the monitoring of teaching, learning, and the quality of individual education plans has been inadequate. The learning support assistant, although very experienced, has not had sufficient support in terms of planning lessons or work for individual pupils.
81. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The activities planned for each session provide suitable opportunities for pupils to learn and for them to practise skills. However, lessons are not planned formally. The learning support assistant plans lessons *'in her head'* and relies on her experience of what has been successful in the past and her memory of what pupils have done before. This makes it difficult to monitor what experiences pupils have had over time, and because pupils' individual needs are not identified in relation to the activities planned it is difficult to ensure that their needs are addressed through each learning experience they have.
82. Whenever possible, learning closely reflects what pupils are doing in class and this provides good opportunities for them to make progress because they have suitable opportunities to rehearse their understanding. Activities are also provided to address specific areas of weakness identified by the class teacher. For example, pupils in Year 5 have suitable opportunities to practise 'estimating' during a numeracy session. Clear explanations and interesting activities engage pupils' attention and they concentrate well. As a result of the sensitive support they receive pupils have the confidence to contribute even if they are unsure. Good use of questions encourages pupils to share what they know and provides the learning

support assistant with the opportunity to assess their understanding and quickly rectify mistakes. Pupils clearly enjoy activities such as the game to estimate how much money they will need to buy items from the seaside shop. Due to the fact that they enjoy learning and try hard they make satisfactory progress and by the end of the lesson are clear that you round numbers up if they are over five and down if they are under.

83. In a literacy lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6 the learning support assistant monitors pupils' work effectively and marks it with them, which enables them to correct and learn from their mistakes. Good use of praise helps pupils to recognise their achievement and they are clearly pleased when they do well. However, the activity is not sufficiently well matched to the needs of all pupils and because they find it difficult and are not successful when they try to complete the work sheet the behaviour of two pupils deteriorates and their opportunities to make progress are restricted. The learning support assistant has not fully considered the suitability of the task for all the pupils in the group and despite a clear explanation of what they need to do some pupils have not understood. The support provided for numeracy is more effective than the support for literacy which, although satisfactory, is insufficiently focused on individual needs.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	80
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	11	50	34	5	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	368
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	43
Special educational needs	YR -Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	91
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	27
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	27

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.2
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	21	17	38

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	15	13
	Girls	16	16	12
	Total	28	31	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (83)	82 (89)	66 (87)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	13	18
	Girls	16	12	10
	Total	30	25	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (76)	66 (87)	74 (91)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	26	24	50

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	19	25
	Girls	19	17	22
	Total	38	36	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (58)	72 (81)	94 (98)
	National	75 (70)	72 (68)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	20	24
	Girls	18	18	22
	Total	36	38	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (65)	76 (81)	92 (100)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	8
Black – other	3
Indian	10
Pakistani	4
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	7
White	295
Any other minority ethnic group	7

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	1
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR - Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.2
Average class size	26.3

Education support staff: YR - Y7

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	153

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	752,726
Total expenditure	754,029
Expenditure per pupil	1,827
Balance brought forward from previous year	8,094
Balance carried forward to next year	6,791

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	374
Number of questionnaires returned	92

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	52	42	2	2	1
My child is making good progress in school.	37	47	9	5	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	26	59	10	1	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	40	23	9	1
The teaching is good.	30	58	7	1	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	30	48	17	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	48	38	10	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	46	40	9	3	2
The school works closely with parents.	26	43	21	7	3
The school is well led and managed.	26	39	12	15	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	32	50	9	7	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	11	20	27	29	13

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

84. Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage are appropriately based on the recommended Early Learning Goals. Children attain the expected standards in all six areas of learning overall and the majority are well prepared to begin the National Curriculum in Year 1. At the time of the last inspection children achieved good standards overall.

Personal, social and emotional development

85. Children's attainment in personal and social development is as expected for their ages in the full-time reception class but is less secure where children attend on a part-time basis only. Most children are well behaved, polite and generally prepared to obey class rules when they are made clearly aware of the teacher's expectations. Routines are less well established for children attending part time and consequently they are less prepared to co-operate and their levels of collaboration are unsatisfactory. For the majority of children attending full time, social skills are developing well; children learn to take turns, and to choose and share resources in the full-time reception class. Children show increasing levels of confidence and imagination in their role play. Those attending for the full day are secure and happy; they are eager to share their ideas and experiences with others. Children in the part-time reception class, on the other hand, do not make satisfactory progress in developing their social skills and forming positive relationships with one another.
86. The focus of the teaching for full-time pupils is appropriately targeted at helping them become more independent and confident; a good range of planned activities encourages children to make decisions for themselves and to take the initiative in some situations such as imaginative play. Where teaching is less well planned and rigorous, children are often unsure of what they are expected to do or of how they are expected to behave and this limits their personal and social development.

Communication, language and literacy

87. Most children attain the expected standards in communication, language and literacy by the time they enter Key Stage 1. Speaking and listening skills and the development of reading skills are generally well established amongst full-time pupils and their progress in these areas is good. Children attending part time do not listen and speak to one another confidently; oral contributions in class are brief and listening skills are underdeveloped where procedures are not firmly established. Most pupils enjoy reading activities; they handle books appropriately and know that print explains what is happening in the pictures. A significant number are developing good strategies to work out unfamiliar words in their reading books. The daily emphasis on the development of reading skills has a positive effect on progress. The most proficient readers in reception read confidently; they talk about their stories and are beginning to discuss characters. Most children identify the initial sounds in words and talk appropriately about the illustrations in their story books. Standards of writing are more variable; above average attaining children have sound and often good pencil control; they form letters accurately and can record their learning in words and pictures. A number are developing the confidence to compose simple sentences independently; they write descriptions and

instructions and are able to set out letters correctly. However, average and below average attaining pupils, especially those who attend school on a part-time basis, have less secure writing skills and their letter formation is underdeveloped. Many lack the confidence to attempt forming letters under the writing of teachers. Most children recall and recite a number of rhymes and have a satisfactory understanding of the order in which things happen.

88. Where teaching is good, the purpose of the tasks set is clearly explained and children are aware that the teacher has high expectations of them. Children are given a varied and interesting range of tasks, and regular marking identifies areas which require further reinforcement. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, learning objectives are not clearly shared with children. They become confused about what they are expected to achieve and lose concentration, and the quality of their work is inconsistent.

Mathematical development

89. Children's attainment is similar to that expected for their age. The majority of reception children count accurately and order numbers up to 20. They can categorise, sort and match objects and use their counting songs to extend other areas of learning. Children in the full-time reception class recognise numbers well and they identify missing numbers on a number line; however, this skill is insecure in the class for part-time children. Above average and average attaining children understand the concepts of '*more than*' and '*less than*,' '*longer*' and '*shorter*', and '*bigger*' and '*smaller*' and they count in twos confidently. Children understand addition skills but are less confident in handling problems that require subtraction. They use plus and minus symbols accurately and recognise basic shapes, such as circles, squares, rectangles and triangles. Work with money is satisfactory overall; some children are uncertain of coin value when using coins of more than one denomination. Children use mathematical vocabulary increasingly accurately and some pupils are beginning to estimate outcomes with greater confidence. Water play ensures that children understand the basic principles of volume and capacity. Most full-time children write numbers in the appropriate size and shape. There is only limited use of information and communication technology tools to extend mathematical understanding.
90. Full-time reception children are well taught in this area of learning; well-planned tasks to match pupils' abilities ensure that they learn at the appropriate level in relation to their abilities. The teacher introduces a brisk pace to learning and provides challenging activities. As a result children persevere with their tasks and use resources well to support their learning. Teaching is less successful for part-time children, for whom the pace is slow, time is not used well and the management of the lesson is insecure. Teachers' questioning lacks crispness and purpose, and children have too few opportunities to share their own ideas and to work collaboratively.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

91. Full-time reception children have a sound knowledge and understanding of the world around them; standards for part-time children are unsatisfactory. Children bring their knowledge of their own families and backgrounds to their imaginative role play. Most understand the concept of '*old*', '*older*' and '*oldest*' when considering toys; they are aware of the passage of time and know what is meant by '*beginning*'.

'middle' and *'end'*. Some of the part-time children are able to retell the story of the *Good Samaritan* at a satisfactory level, showing an understanding of the order of events. When working with construction toys, children make wheeled vehicles and helicopters; most work well together on these tasks, but the part-time children do not engage with one other and tackle their activities independently. Through an observation of bean plants growing in pots, most children acquire sound knowledge of the basic parts of growing plants and know that they need food and water to sustain life. Children are aware of the different seasons of the year and describe the changes in the weather. Water play gives them a sound understanding of the principles of floating and sinking. Children have only limited opportunities to develop their computer skills. However, when they do have access to the computer suite, and show good skills in controlling the mouse and using the keyboard; they open and close the drawing program, which they use confidently.

92. Teaching is good in this area for full-time children; they are challenged with a range of interesting activities which stimulate them to explore and to ask pertinent questions. Colourful displays in the classroom support children's learning and prompt further enquiry. The teacher asks children searching questions which encourage and extend their curiosity and interest. Where teaching is less successful the pace of learning is more pedestrian, and questioning techniques do not go far enough to encourage children to extend their knowledge and understanding and to become more confident and independent in their work.

Creative development

93. The majority of children attain standards which are similar to those found nationally by the end of their time in reception. Their jungle paintings indicate well-developed skills of colour mixing and the ability to choose appropriate shades to convey the atmosphere and impression they have planned. Children use a good range of brush techniques, and produce a variety of strokes, including dots and swirls, to convey the texture of jungle plants. They prepare their tables, assemble their resources efficiently and are helpful in clearing up after the activity ends. When given the task of drawing and designing boats, the full-time children show initiative in seeking out illustrations of boats in their reference books and can give precise oral descriptions of their ideas and what they are attempting to achieve in showing that the boat has different parts. They are developing a good evaluative approach to their design work and choose appropriate reclaimed materials to begin to translate their drawings into a model. Their cutting and sticking skills develop appropriately. Children using a remote-control car, design and construct an appropriate track and bridge from linked blocks so that they can test out the car's performance and set it on an effective course. Children are given satisfactory musical experiences; they sing enthusiastically in whole-school and key stage assemblies with an average sense of tone and pitch. Most have a sound sense of rhythm and recall words well in their small repertoire of songs. They perform appropriate hand and body actions to their songs and some are keen to show their dancing skills, demonstrating a good sense of beat and rhythm.
94. Teaching in this area of learning is good overall for the full-time reception children. Teachers ask questions which are designed to extend and engage children in the activity and to encourage them to evaluate and find ways to improve their performance. Teachers enable pupils to learn well and children are encouraged to choose and use resources sensibly and responsibly, sharing and collaborating well. Where questioning techniques are less searching and the purpose of the planned

task is more limited, children's experiences in this area of learning do not open up the full range of possibilities for them and they have less confidence in exploring techniques and ideas for themselves.

Physical development

95. Children's physical development by the time they leave reception is as expected for their age. They use materials such as play dough and plasticene and simple play equipment with growing confidence. Children have a good awareness of space and can use their body movements to demonstrate their sense of rhythm. Their cutting, folding, joining and building skills are satisfactory; they use scissors appropriately and are aware of safety considerations. Pencil control is satisfactory overall, although there are inconsistent standards in the sizing, spacing and formation of letters and numbers. Children develop other skills appropriately. They climb, run, hop and jump with confidence and can ride their tricycles and other wheeled vehicles without colliding with others. Children are able to throw and catch small balls and bean bags with growing accuracy, although part-time younger children are not always encouraged to build on their ball control skills sufficiently and this limits the progress that they make..
96. Teaching in this area of learning is sound overall, especially in the full-time reception class. Teachers' plans are focused on the development of a range of skills, and children are encouraged to develop the confidence to evaluate their performance and to seek ways in which they can improve. Collaboration and co-operation with the rest of the group are strongly encouraged and children are challenged to become more independent in dressing and undressing for physical activities. Teachers are patient and supportive, and expectations of behaviour and performance are high. Where teaching is unsatisfactory for the part-time children, the teacher's expectations are not communicated clearly enough to children. Consequently, they do not know what they are expected to do or what the norms of acceptable behaviour are. Routines are not well enough established and resources are not appropriately prepared before the lesson. The teacher does not ensure a measure of urgency in preparation and as a result too much time is wasted on organisational and incidental matters such as changing into appropriate clothing and going to the toilet, and too little attention is paid to the lesson itself.
97. Assessment procedures in reception are well designed to ensure that what children attain in their work informs the planning of subsequent tasks. Individual needs are clearly identified and addressed in the full-time reception class. The assessment of pupils shortly after they begin in reception is good means of identifying individual strengths and weaknesses, and most of the planning by teachers in the early years of children's schooling is carefully focused upon ensuring that tasks are adapted to meet individual needs. Where this assessment information is less well used and analysed, children do not make sufficient progress in their learning.

ENGLISH

98. Standards in English are average at the ages of seven and 12 and above average at 11. This is broadly the same as at the time of the last inspection, but results in national tests are not as good as they were then.

99. National tests results for seven year olds in 2000 showed a decline since the previous year. Although there are no national figures against which to make comparisons, this year's results are slightly better in both reading and writing. For 11 year olds the national test results showed an improvement in the Year 2000. The percentage of pupils gaining the expected Level 4 was close to the national average and the proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 5 was well above the national average. Results have risen over the past four years, and targets for last year and for the current year have been exceeded easily.
100. Current inspection evidence indicates that most pupils reach standards that are broadly average in speaking, listening, reading and writing. This is better than results in the Year 2000 tests and reflects improvements in teaching basic skills. Standards by the age of 11 are above average in reading, writing, speaking and listening as a result of predominantly good teaching. There were no obvious differences between the work of boys and girls at Key Stage 2, despite trends in National Curriculum tests.
101. By the age of 12, standards of work are satisfactory, but with some above average reading and writing demonstrated by a significant number of pupils. Although teaching is good, standards reflect the composition of the age group, where a high proportion of pupils have special educational needs.
102. Standards in speaking and listening are average overall for seven year olds, with the majority developing satisfactory listening habits. Teachers question pupils well and as a result many respond eagerly and their answers are generally relevant, indicating that they have listened and understood appropriately. Pupils listen carefully to stories and follow instructions carefully. This is very evident when they move from one activity to the next in a lesson. Older pupils know how to explain their opinions and ideas about stories and so, by the age of 11, speaking and listening skills are good, having been developed well earlier in the key stage. For example, in a Year 4 lesson the teacher caught pupils' interest well by purposely misreading a poem. Pupils listened attentively and said, *'You put no feeling into it. There was no expression'*. Later in the same lesson, when asked whether the poem was easy to read, one pupil confidently asserted, *'No, because it was funny and I kept wanting to laugh!'* Similarly, in Year 7 a play reading depicting a discussion amongst teenage friends was so effective that the class teacher commented on the degree of realism. Adults are sensitive in their approach and this helps pupils to develop confidence. Teachers are quick to praise the contributions made by pupils with speech problems when they address the whole class, and are equally supportive when more-able pupils occasionally struggle to express their ideas.
103. Pupils have positive attitudes to reading. Given the well below average standards shown in national tests in 2000, pupils are now doing well to attain satisfactory standards by the age of seven. The approach to the teaching of reading is now more structured through the adoption of a new reading scheme and this has contributed to improved standards. The reading scheme meets with the approval of pupils, staff and parents, and contributes to teachers' records being more detailed, informative and constructive. Comments such as *'has more understanding about what makes a sentence'* or *'could add to alliterative list'* demonstrate teachers' awareness of pupils' progress. Pupils read with improving fluency and accuracy and, by the age of 11, they have encountered a range of fiction and non-fiction texts, including myths and legends, autobiography, humorous poetry and stories. This enables them to become more aware of differences in layout and the style of vocabulary needed when writing for different purposes. Most pupils read accurately

and many do so with good expression. They remember stories well, and more-able pupils enjoy discussing themes and characters in books they have read. Many pupils find information well from different sources, with some showing good understanding of how to 'skim' a text to find essential information. Pupils in Year 7 understand the themes and the nature of characters in fiction and are introduced to a wide range of literature including such classics as 'Macbeth', 'Beowulf', 'The Pardoner's Tale' and '101 Dalmatians'. The practice of pairing older and younger pupils to assist with reading motivates pupils well. Reading records are now much improved since the time of the previous inspection. In addition to keeping detailed, factual records, teachers conduct a reading interview with each pupil which helps to develop reading skills.

104. At Key Stage 1, writing is mainly sound and the most able pupils write very well. Stories based on 'The Fish who could Wish' and 'The Dog who Dug', read in literary sessions, showed imagination and the composition of well-sequenced sentences. Many pupils show that they know the basic rules of grammar and punctuation. Some use interesting words and dialogue, and their increasing knowledge of phonics aids the spelling of polysyllabic words. Pupils improve their spelling skills by identifying a range of letter combinations to make different sounds and begin to use dictionaries to check spellings and meanings. Many pupils are developing a joined script and take care with the presentation of work.
105. By the age of 11, pupils understand grammar and punctuation well. Teachers have particularly good subject knowledge at Key Stages 2 and 3, and as a result there is effective teaching of word and sentence work. In Year 3, for instance, pupils spontaneously provided good examples of rhyming words such as 'tickle' and 'pickle', and 'Daniel' and 'spaniel', after looking at poems by Tony Bradman. Where teachers stimulate pupils' imagination effectively they are able to write at length enthusiastically. For example, some of the older pupils writing a summary for a story based on 'Snow White in New York' ask, 'Will she survive....?' and say, 'Snow White's back in the act, but this time she is back in the bright lights of the Big Apple!'. Pupils also use different forms of writing appropriately, such as when identifying features of a leaflet, writing a letter of argument or composing appropriate questions for an interview, such as that for Snow White seeking a job. Year 7 pupils develop ideas well and choose words imaginatively and for effect. For example, in poetry they write, 'The silent blue river gleams as it follows its path, with the roaring red sun streaming hot above' and 'A cast of rain gushes down from the sky'. Most pupils present work neatly in a well-formed hand.
106. Teaching is satisfactory overall at Key Stage 1, with some good teaching of basic skills. Overall, teaching is good at Key Stage 2. As part of their everyday practice teachers share what they want pupils to achieve in their lessons and how this links to what has been learned previously. As pupils are clear about what is expected they approach their work confidently, engage well with the task and make good progress in their learning. Through purposeful and closely targeted word and sentence work in literacy lessons teachers demonstrate a secure knowledge of the literacy strategy and reflect the training they have received. Teachers know their pupils and plan appropriately to match the abilities of all of them, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language.
107. Teachers are resourceful at helping pupils to make connections across subjects. As part of their work on Egypt, Year 4 pupils read the story found on a piece of papyrus 'The Prince and the hungry Crocodile'. Pupils were asked to write their own ending as the original had been lost. They were stimulated, worked enthusiastically and

then presented the story through mime and commentary to the whole school in morning assembly. Pupils in Year 5 wrote movingly of their 'experiences as evacuees', as part of their history work on the World War II.

108. The subject is managed well. The co-ordinator has worked very hard to promote literacy and improve standards. She monitors teachers' planning and correctly offers advice and suggests areas for development. As a result teachers' objectives for lessons are clearer, they make greater use of a wider range of books to help in literacy lessons and they are more confident in applying more widely methods which have worked well in previous lessons. Resources have been improved, especially for Key Stage 3 pupils. However, there is a need for more fiction and non-fiction books in the school library.

MATHEMATICS

109. Standards in mathematics are in line with the national average in Years 2, 6 and 7. This is similar to the position at the time of the last inspection but is an improvement on to last year's Key Stage 1 National Curriculum test results. The Key Stage 1 results for the year 2000 were well below the national average and also very low in comparison with those in schools in similar contexts. The improvements have arisen partly as a result of new staff at Key Stage 1 and more confidence in implementing the national strategy for numeracy. Although there are no national figures against which to compare, the school's results for the current year show an improvement on those for last year at Key Stage 1. Results are not as good as they were four years ago when the school was last inspected. At the end of Key Stage 2, statutory targets for pupils in 2000 and 2001 were set at an appropriate level and were met. The school's performance was close to the national average in the year 2000 and has improved over the past four years. It was also close to that of schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. As with Key Stage 1, results for this year indicate an improvement, which has occurred principally as a result of more confident teaching of the National Numeracy Strategy.
110. Most pupils at the age of seven achieve standards broadly in line with national expectations. Pupils aged 11 and 12 also achieve standards in line with those in schools nationally, and all pupils make satisfactory progress and build their skills and understanding successfully due to predominantly good teaching. The way in which pupils use their skills in numeracy to support other subjects, such as by line graphs, bar graphs and tally charts in history, geography and science, is a strong feature which supports pupils' learning well and helps them to appreciate that different aspects of learning are connected.
111. The school is nearing the end of the second year since the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. This has been successfully and enthusiastically introduced, and there is evidence that the enhanced enjoyment of the subject by both pupils and teachers has helped raise standards, not least in pupils' ability to use a range of mental strategies. There have also been improvements in planning and in the development of a curriculum which provides for more consistent development through the school of number skills. These have had a positive impact on the quality of pupils' learning and on the standards they attain.
112. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Teachers plan work for the different abilities of pupils and pupils are sensitively supported in their class work. Those pupils whose first language is other than English are well

supported in literacy skills by their specialist teacher and this enables them to take a full and active part in all lessons.

113. The evidence gathered during inspection shows that by the age of seven many pupils demonstrate an appropriate understanding of the value of numbers, and know how to sequence numbers to 100. Year 1 pupils use counting aids well, when counting on in twos, and calculate simple sums to ten quickly and easily. Many pupils in Year 2 add or subtract two-digit numbers, and can recognise odd and even numbers. They make and use tally charts and graphs, and many work well, successfully telling time in quarter-hourly intervals. They are starting to develop problem-solving approaches by turning problems into number sentences such as, "*Aidan had seven books on the shelf, and four on the bed; how many did he have altogether? $7 + 4 = 11$* ". Some pupils work successfully with number sentences which involve multiplication, (*lots of*), and division, (*shared by*).
114. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have extended their knowledge of the value of numbers effectively and use the four number operations with increasing confidence. The mental mathematics at the start of lessons helps pupils to develop numeracy and calculating skills well, and most are confident about sharing their methods for working out problems with the rest of the class. Many Year 3 pupils add and subtract two-digit numbers, and can read and write three-digit numbers. Many Year 4 pupils order a set of decimal numbers to one decimal place, and some can do this to two places with reasonable confidence. Working with percentages, Year 5 pupils apply their knowledge to work out the savings when shopping for sale goods; for example, how to calculate discount of 25 per cent on £16. They also develop calculator skills and use them to check their answers.
115. Many Year 6 pupils choose one or more of the four operations to solve problems with money, and understand equivalent fractions, decimals and percentages. Some apply their understanding of graphs appropriately in other subjects. Although pupils undertake mathematical problems, there have been insufficient opportunities for investigational work. The school is addressing this. Similarly pupils have had limited experience of practical activities, such as measuring, and using information and communication technology in connection with mathematics.
116. Pupils in Year 7 continue to build on their mathematical skills at an appropriate rate. Most readily discuss the methods they use in multiplying by two-digit numbers, such as 30, and many demonstrate a good level of accuracy in their answers. When discussing cuboids, pupils understand dimensions and area, and most know about volume. Some explain clearly what it means, showing a level of understanding above that normally expected for their age.
117. The quality of teaching is good at all key stages. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when the quality of teaching was satisfactory. Teachers present lessons well and as a result most pupils have positive attitudes to the subject. They are interested and are prepared to work hard. Teachers have adopted the National Numeracy Strategy successfully to help pupils learn skills and develop knowledge and understanding systematically. The commonly established approaches which encourage pupils to feel confident and to '*have a go*' have enhanced their learning. Good planning underpins the lessons, and usually lesson objectives are clearly outlined to pupils. This ensures that they are clear about where they are going and as a result they approach lessons confidently. Teachers' careful questioning techniques, which challenge pupils to think hard about their responses, contribute

well to pupils' learning. There is especially good assessment of pupils' understanding in some lessons, where teachers recognise the need to review the previous day's work and adjust subsequent lessons accordingly.

118. There is a good range of resources, many of which have been acquired recently since the start of the National Numeracy Strategy. These are used well in lessons to support and enliven teaching and learning. The school is now better placed to increase the use of computers in mathematics.
119. The subject is managed well. A comprehensive system of assessment and recording of pupils' progress has been developed, and there are plans to extend this further through the use of an assessment program on the computer. The continuity now provided for pupils' learning in mathematics has improved since the last inspection.

SCIENCE

120. No overall judgement on teaching quality at Key Stage 3 can be made as, during the inspection, it was possible to see only one science lesson at this key stage.
121. Inspection evidence reveals that most seven year olds attain expected standards in scientific knowledge, and that their skills of enquiry are developing satisfactorily, with many exceeding expectations. Standards are similar to those found at the time of the previous inspection. This has improved since 2000, when teachers assessed Key Stage 1 standards as low compared with those of other schools nationally. The inspection found that most 11 year olds currently meet expectations in science, with a good number attaining higher-level skills. This reflects the above average standards maintained in the 2000 statutory test results, and in 1999. At Key Stage 3, overall standards of pupils currently in Year 7 are above average in all aspects. Standards at Key Stages 2 and 3 have improved significantly since the last inspection. This is because of good teaching, effective planning and good subject leadership and management.
122. Pupils' standards in the current Year 2 are average overall. A scrutiny of pupils' past work reveals that their knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things are above average for their age. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and challenge them well. Most understand principles that are normally introduced in the next key stage, such as understanding the importance of a suitable and varied diet to maintain good health. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of 'sound' are in line with expectations. Teachers extend pupils' thinking appropriately and many pupils know that some materials can stop sound travelling. An analysis of pupils' work at Key Stage 1 shows that they make satisfactory progress overall. Their achievement in developing skills of enquiry, in understanding materials and their properties and in physical processes is satisfactory. The majority achieve well in their knowledge of aspects of life processes and living things. Through effective practical investigations many develop a sound understanding of what makes a test 'fair'. They use simple apparatus effectively and record findings in a variety of ways.
123. By the age of 11, pupils' standards are above average in all aspects of science. They make good progress as a direct result of good teaching, mainly in Years 5 and 6. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 develop a satisfactory understanding of some aspects of the earth and the planets. However, some are confused about this concept and lose interest, because levels of challenge in the work are inappropriate. As Year 5 work on thermal insulation, teachers extend pupils' thinking well through skilful questioning and as a result several understand this principle at a more advanced level. Teachers' high expectations of Year 6 ensure that pupils have a good knowledge of conditions affecting the point of saturation when dissolving solids in liquids. Discussions with pupils at the end of the key stage reveal that most understand the processes of pollination and germination in plants. They explain the process of 'photosynthesis' with confidence. Skills of enquiry are emphasised strongly. An analysis of pupils' work at Key Stage 2 shows that pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory at lower Key Stage 2, and good at upper Key Stage 2, reflecting the quality of both teaching and of learning. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils achieve well, using their knowledge and understanding to predict, carry out investigations, and repeat and check measurements accurately. They draw conclusions and identify how to improve their ways of working.

124. Currently, the attainment of Key Stage 3 pupils in Year 7 is above average overall. In the lesson seen the teacher's very good subject knowledge enabled her to challenge pupils' thinking well; for example, in learning about environmental and inherited causes of variation within a species. They discussed their work confidently, using correct scientific terms, such as '*omnivore*', '*producer*', and '*secondary consumer*'. In their work over time, teachers' high expectations ensure that pupils' thinking is extended. Most develop good knowledge and understanding in recognising that matter is made up of particles, and can relate changes in state to energy transfers; for example, the formation of igneous rocks from molten lava. An analysis of pupils' work at Key Stage 3 shows that most achieve well in their understanding of all aspects of science, as a direct result of good teaching over time.
125. At all key stages pupils record and communicate their findings in a variety of ways, including written work, simple charts, tables and graphs, using their literacy and numeracy skills successfully. However, pupils across the school do not use computers often enough to support the recording of evidence and the presentation of results. Throughout the school, teachers place increasing emphasis on the investigational aspect of the subject. This is leading to improving enquiry skills in all aspects of science. All pupils enjoy investigative work. This is especially beneficial to those who speak English as a second language, and to those pupils with special educational needs, who receive good support from classroom assistants and other adults in class. This enables them to make sound progress in their knowledge and understanding of all aspects of science.
126. The quality of teaching and learning overall is good. At Key Stage 1 it is satisfactory. At Key Stage 2 it is generally good, and better in Years 5 and 6 than in Years 3 and 4. In the one lesson seen at Key Stage 3 teaching was very good. Across the school, in the best lessons, good class organisation encourages pupils to work both collaboratively and independently. This was noticeable when Year 2 pupils worked well in groups and also organised their own work to investigate how some materials can stop sounds travelling. When teachers' good subject knowledge enables them to ask probing questions to make pupils think, pupils deepen their understanding of a scientific approach to solving problems. This occurred in a Year 5 lesson on thermal insulation, when the teacher emphasised the importance of accuracy in repeating and recording measurements in controlled tests. This led to careful checking of measurements and good recording of results of the investigation. Where teachers plan tasks with clear learning objectives, well matched to differing levels of pupils' abilities, they ensure that pupils build on what they already understand, and this enables them to make good progress. A good example of this was a Year 7 lesson on organisms adapting to various environments and habitats. At all key stages, teachers plan together well in year groups, so that they regularly share ideas about what works well in lessons. Where teaching is less effective, levels of challenge are inappropriate, reducing the progress pupils make. Where introductions to lessons are over-long, pace is lost and pupils lose interest. Although work presentation is good at all key stages, marking is inconsistent and does not always show pupils how they might improve. Throughout the school, good relationships and interesting lessons motivate most pupils well and contribute to positive attitudes towards science.
127. Since the previous inspection the school has made good progress in improving its provision for science. The curriculum has improved, particularly at Key Stage 3. This was a key issue at the time of the last inspection. Pupils are assessed

regularly and information gained is recorded and effectively used to plan what pupils should learn next. Subject co-ordination is good, marked by the joint planning that occurs within year groups. Year 7 pupils have benefited from very effective support and specialist guidance from the local secondary school.

128. The subject is currently led by the headteacher in the absence of a co-ordinator. Although standards in pupils' work at Key Stages 2 and 3 has been looked at closely, there has been insufficient attention given to checking how well the subject is taught. Science resources throughout are adequate, well organised and accessible to all, an improvement since the last inspection, when they were unsatisfactory at Key Stage 3. The grounds are used effectively as a resource for investigative work. Good use is made of visits to enrich the curriculum. For example, pupils have visited Milton Keynes museum to see Victorian science apparatus. There is also a good range of visitors, such as members of the Parkland Trust, who discuss wild life and conservation with pupils.

ART AND DESIGN

129. At Key Stage 3 it was not possible to observe art lessons during the inspection, so no overall judgement can be made about teaching and learning. Judgements about attainment and progress at Key Stage 3 are based on a scrutiny of pupils' displayed work, sketch books, portfolios of work samples, teachers' plans and discussions with pupils and teachers.
130. Art is a strength of the school. Overall standards of attainment are above expectations and are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. The attainment of seven year olds and of pupils aged 11 is above that expected for their age. At the age of 12, pupils' overall standards meet expectations, with most attaining above average standards in observational drawing.
131. Throughout the school, pupils explore ideas, working with a wide variety of materials, tools and techniques, and recording their ideas with increasing confidence, in a range of media. Teachers' planning enriches the curriculum. They present good levels of challenge in stimulating activities, enabling pupils to make good, and often very good, progress. For instance, pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well when investigating clay, creating simple tiles and demonstrating a good use of texture, colour and pattern. Year 4 pupils work on rotational symmetry patterns. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils incorporate greater accuracy in attempting more detailed representations. They create effective prints using string and linoleum, and working carefully with precision. Teachers use art well to support learning in other subjects, such as mathematics and in history, where they produce work of good quality representing the reign of Henry VIII in collage. Information technology is used effectively in art. For example, Year 2 pupils explore 'paint' software, making pictures of fireworks at night, and Year 6 pupils produce effective patterns in the style of William Morris. After visiting an exhibition of Sigma Polke's work, Key Stage 3 pupils effectively work in his style. They are taught techniques in a wide range of media, developing appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding of how to use the elements for differing purposes for example in observational drawing and in collage using various materials.
132. The overall quality of teaching is good, with very good teaching in Years 5 and 6. Teachers build on and extend pupils' creative skills successfully. Pupils gain knowledge and understanding at all key stages in a structured way. Their

observational drawings are particularly well developed, reflecting teachers' high expectations, good subject knowledge, and very good teaching of art techniques. Teachers provide very good opportunities for pupils to explore art in other cultures. Pupils create Rangoli patterns, make clay Divali pots, design 'ancient Roman' plates, and study a wide range of artists' work. This extends pupils' range of experience, styles and traditions well. It also enhances spiritual, cultural and multicultural development. Key Stage 1 pupils are given opportunities to work with textiles. However, textile work is limited for older pupils. In their sketch books, pupils practise techniques with growing skill, but these books are not used enough to assess attainment. Good class management encourages pupils to take pride in how they present their work. Most pupils enjoy art and have very positive attitudes to the subject.

133. Art is very well managed. The enthusiastic co-ordinator has collected useful examples of work at each key stage. Recent in-service training has been effective, notably a course on 'Using art and design in numeracy'. Pupils' art work is displayed around the school with flair and imagination. This encourages them to have pride in their work and significantly enhances the learning environment. Pupils' own assessment of their work is developing appropriately, but assessment and recording of pupils' attainment and progress are inconsistent across the school. This has been identified as an area for development by the co-ordinator. Some informal monitoring has taken place, but the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are underdeveloped.
134. Resources, including a kiln, are good, well organised, accessible and used well. The curriculum is enriched by visitors, such as a secondary art teacher who works regularly with pupils, by visits to galleries and through involvement with Milton Keynes Art Education Forum. The school has very good relationships with its neighbouring secondary school, which has supported it well in its development of art.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

135. Standards are in line with expectations at the age of seven and above expectations at the ages of 11 and 12. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
136. By the age of seven, pupils have built on their knowledge and skills well. They are introduced to the different stages of designing, from the initial idea, through simple sketches and a consideration of materials to be used, to the finished product. The culmination of this process was seen in a wide range of musical instruments designed and made by pupils in Years 1 and 2. Almost without exception these were well constructed. They showed that pupils had used appropriate joining techniques with materials suitable for the purpose and decorated the finished products to a high standard. Pupils take care with their work, thereby reflecting the high expectations of their teachers.
137. At Key Stage 2, whilst there is an appropriate focus on planning and constructing, there is also a greater emphasis on evaluating the finished products. Pupils' *biscuit project* provided considerable enjoyment as well as a valuable learning experience. Different types of biscuits were identified and sampled, data was collected, labelling and packaging were evaluated and biscuits which the pupils had made were then tested. Very effective links with science were established when pupils had to design and make a moving toy for a younger child, using a 'cam' mechanism. Pupils first

learned how cams work, drew up detailed designs including precise dimensions of materials to be used, and showed final designs with modifications. Without exception, every product worked, was a strong sturdy construction and was completed to a high standard. Pupils' final evaluations showed good understanding of key elements of the process. In their project to make siege machines Year 7 pupils first researched the history of the *mangonel*, the *crossbow* and the *trebuchet* as part of their work in history. Detailed designs with precise measurements and different views and illustrations to show each phase of construction preceded pupils making models with precision and skill in cutting, joining and assembling. At all key stages finished products are evidence of the good progress pupils make, the positive attitudes that have been fostered, and the clear objectives and high expectations of teachers.

138. One issue arising from the previous inspection related to the planning of the curriculum. This is now much stronger. The school has adopted the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's (QCA) subject guidelines and has adapted them to fit in with topics in other curriculum areas such as history and science. The school has now produced a well-planned, balanced programme with which staff feel more confident. The co-ordinator is used more by staff as a planning 'resource' for ideas, and this improvement in planning is a key factor in the rise in standards. It was only possible to see one lesson during the period of the inspection so no judgement can be made on the quality of teaching overall. An examination of planning, an analysis of past work, pupils' planning and evaluation sheets, and incidental discussions with pupils confirm that an appropriate curriculum is followed.
139. The subject is well led by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator. She works hard to support other teachers and has been influential in improving standards. Although she has an overview of standards, from the evidence of work around the school, from work shown in assemblies, and from pupils' planning sheets, there are no formalised systems for monitoring and assessing pupils' learning. These are targeted as areas for future development. Resources for the subject are good.

GEOGRAPHY

140. Standards in geography meet national expectations at the ages of seven, 11 and 12 as they did when the school was last inspected.
141. By the end of Year 2, pupils have developed a satisfactory knowledge of places local to the school. Too few lessons were observed at Key Stage 1 and in Year 7 to enable a judgement to be made on the quality of teaching overall. Additional evidence on standards is provided through discussions with pupils and in an examination of past work. A good feature of the school's provision in geography at Key Stage 1 is the emphasis that is placed on practical experience. For example, pupils in Year 2 have carried out simple traffic surveys in the school vicinity and from this they suggest ways to make their streets safer. Pupils' past work indicates a good standard of simple route planning and map making in Year 1, where the pupils benefit from having the geography co-ordinator as their class teacher. The work in Year 2 occasionally demands too little of pupils, given their previous experiences in Year 1, and teachers sometimes praise sub-standard work too readily in pupils' books. Consequently pupils do not build sufficiently on the promising start they have made in Year 1.

142. Pupils make sound progress throughout Key Stage 2, where the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers generally have appropriate expectations and present pupils with work that asks more of them. Year 6 pupils have developed satisfactory levels of understanding in terms of their work on rivers as a result of the predominantly sound and sometimes good teaching they receive. They know about flood plains of rivers and the water cycle. Pupils understand that the water from the River Severn is used in many ways and know how the water is recycled before use. Overall, pupils apply themselves well to the tasks that are set and work with good concentration. The skills of literacy and numeracy feature strongly in the pupils' work and teachers take opportunities well to develop these key abilities further as pupils pass through the key stage. This was apparent, for example, in a class of pupils in Years 3 and 4, where the teacher asked them to write letters to different influential people for help in improving the school playground. Pupils approached the lesson positively and were able to give constructive ideas such as '*a butterfly garden*', '*trees for shade*' and '*more seats*' as well as the expected improvements to play equipment. Teachers generally plan tasks to match the different abilities of pupils, which ensures that those with special educational needs and those whose first language is not English make satisfactory progress. However, past work indicates that the same tasks are sometimes undertaken by all pupils, regardless of ability, which adversely affects the progress of more-able pupils particularly. Teachers in all classes respond to pupils' work regularly in their marking, but often not fully enough to give them a clear idea of what they must do to improve.
143. By the time they reach Year 7, pupils have built on their previous learning well. They study climactic regions of the world, explore the idea of 'settlement' and understand the main advantages of joining the European Union. Pupils present their work well, which reflects the high expectations of teachers in this respect.
144. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory guidance to staff but does not monitor standards closely enough to ensure that work in all classes is sufficiently challenging.

HISTORY

145. Standards in history are in line with national expectations at the age of seven and above those normally found at the ages of 12 and 13. This is similar to the position at the time of the last inspection. Teachers' plans and schemes of work are appropriately linked to the development of the historical skills found in the key elements of the National Curriculum.
146. At Key Stage 1 most pupils sequence events and stories accurately and are familiar with the concepts of '*old*', '*older*' and '*oldest*' through their work on toys past and present. They understand that toys were made of different materials in the past. Pupils have a growing awareness of the different nature of life in the past; they compare and contrast houses and household objects from the Victorian period with those commonly found in today's homes. Pupils become increasingly aware of change taking place over time and provide some reasons for these changes. They begin to understand how historians know about events in the past by looking at pictures and other sources of evidence. Visits to experience such events as Victorian days in local museums foster pupils' interest well, and contribute effectively to the quality of pupils' learning.

147. In Key Stages 2 and 3, pupils build successfully upon the knowledge, understanding and skills acquired in Key Stage 1. They develop their skills of historical enquiry through an examination and evaluation of a range of artefacts related to, for instance, World War II. By Years 5, 6 and 7, pupils have good levels of background knowledge and recall and select relevant information effectively. Pupils' extended writing on the Tudors and on Tutankhamen in Years 3 and 4 shows their ability to find and use relevant information from books and from the Internet. They know about the religious and political practices of the Pharaohs, and describe the process of mummification and the reasons for it very intelligently and thoughtfully. Pupils compare different sources of evidence in order to reach the most reasonable conclusion. Pupils in Years 5, 6 and 7 write increasingly confidently, organising their material well to produce extended pieces of writing that are often of very good quality, being eloquently expressed and mature. Pupils' historical language is developed well by teachers, and the older pupils find information from a range of sources to support their research. The work of pupils in Year 7 on the medieval period shows good understanding of the problems of that particular society and of the role of religion and the church. These pupils develop a sense of empathy with the values of people in the past, as seen in their work on the Black Death and the Peasants' Revolt. Many pupils are beginning to think historically and to ask pertinent historical questions; for example, in relation to work on Henry II.
148. Pupils make good progress, especially in Key Stages 2 and 3, where teaching tends to be good. There is evident interest in the subject and a determination to produce work that is of good quality. Oral discussions are interesting and wide ranging. Very good cross-curricular links with a large number of other subjects ensure that history occupies an important place in the learning of pupils across the school. As pupils mature, the investigative and interpretative skills which they use and develop in history are used to support other subjects.
149. Teaching in history is good overall, especially in Key Stages 2 and 3, and this is reflected in higher standards. Teachers are enthusiastic and have good subject knowledge; their planning identifies the development of the historical skills in a structured sequence. This gives pupils a firm foundation in the subject and has a positive impact on the quality of their learning. The best teaching is characterised by the role that teachers play in encouraging pupils to find information and to investigate and interpret their findings. Teachers in Years 5, 6, and 7 respond constructively to pupils' work in their marking; pupils are made fully aware of areas requiring further attention and they know what they need to do in order to improve their next piece of work.
150. Teachers use a variety of additional strategies to enliven teaching and to capture the interest of pupils. Visitors come to the school; for instance, to talk about their memories of life in the area during the last world war; pupils question them intelligently and value the experience. Visits linked to the history curriculum, to museums and to other sites of historical interest help to extend pupils' experiences. A day of Tudor music held in the school provided pupils with a valuable insight into court life and extended their understanding of the values and pleasures of people in the period they were studying. Consequently pupils show strong interest in and enthusiasm for history. They ask and answer questions readily and enjoy probing and exploring possible causes for events during class discussions, putting forward their case articulately and convincingly.

151. Resources in history are good overall. There are a variety of reference books accessible in classrooms and pupils can examine artefacts and other source material. Older pupils make good use of the Internet and CD-ROMs to access information for their project work. Wall displays are imaginative, colourful and inviting; they add a further dimension to pupils' knowledge and understanding.
152. The procedures for checking pupils' progress are sound and results are recorded in a way that is helpful for teachers in planning future work. Good and sometimes very good cross-curricular links with other subjects such as literacy, art, mathematics, geography and religious education serve to extend and enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding. A new history co-ordinator is shortly due to take up the appointment; the monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom is currently underdeveloped and there are no formal systems to ensure that all teachers have a clear, common understanding of the expected levels of attainment in history.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

153. When the school was last inspected standards were below expectations at the end of Key Stages 2 and 3. Standards have not improved and now pupils' attainments are below expectations at the ages of seven, 11 and 12. Pupils have varying degrees of confidence, and this is often related to whether they have access to a computer at home. Although the quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory and is very occasionally good at Key Stage 2, there are too few computers in classrooms and in other areas of the school for pupils to consolidate and build on skills they have learnt during their regular weekly sessions in the recently installed information and communication technology suite.
154. At Key Stage 1 pupils know how to use the '*mouse*' to select colours and designs for their pictures. They choose their colours carefully, using the symbols at the top of the screen, and work well with their partners to decide how their pictures are to look. They understand how to open and close programs and recognise the symbol for *print*. However, several are not confident in using these operations. Few are able to say how they might save what they have created, by selecting a command from a menu.
155. Teaching has improved since the last inspection. As pupils work, teachers reinforce their understanding of the correct terminology by introducing words such as *icon*, *brush tool*, *spray tool* and *flood fill*. Teachers are sufficiently confident to be able to guide pupils through the simple processes and they praise individual pupils frequently to encourage them to be even more adventurous. As a result pupils have positive attitudes overall and most share resources sensibly. Teachers make good links with other subjects such as art and mathematics, and use open-ended questions well to encourage pupils' understanding of the correct terminology for parts of the computer and the program that they will use. Consequently pupils make satisfactory gains in their learning and there are expressions of delight and surprise as their newly created work emerges before their eyes.
156. At the age of 11, pupils know how to load and save the program on which they are working and understand the implications of closing the computer down incorrectly. However, few know how to preview their work before printing. In conversation they suggest only a limited number of uses for the computer in everyday life and only a minority can suggest advantages and disadvantages of electronic compared to normal postal services.
157. The use that pupils make of computers in connection with other subjects such as art and history is a strong feature of information and communication technology work throughout the school. In Year 6, for example, pupils use computers in connection with previous work in personal and social education to design posters aimed at preventing vandalism. They choose the colours they wish to use and manipulate the '*mouse*' in order to produce appropriate wording. In Years 3 and 4, pupils enter Internet addresses to find out about the Egyptians and understand how to use the scroll bars to move around the web page and how to revert to previous pages. Pupils in Year 5 use spreadsheets to support work in mathematics, and those in Year 7 interpret information related to life in the Middle Ages and represent this in different ways.
158. At Key Stage 2 most pupils make satisfactory progress largely as a result of the sound and occasionally good teaching they receive. However, the arrangement

whereby they work in groups of two or three to one computer is not always successful if the teacher is insufficiently vigilant to ensure that pupils share the equipment fairly. This sometimes results in more diffident pupils having too little 'hands on' experience to enable them to make the progress of which they are capable. Also, this arrangement means that each pupil spends only a limited amount of time in each lesson actually developing his or her skills first hand. Year 7 pupils have computers available to them outside their classrooms and so they have more opportunity to practise skills learnt. Consequently they make slightly better progress than pupils in other classes. Overall, however, pupils' experiences in word processing and in controlling devices by using computer commands are limited and consequently the progress that they make in these aspects of their work is unsatisfactory. Where teachers are particularly confident and knowledgeable they question pupils incisively, and as a result pupils develop a clear understanding of technical terms such as '*download*' and '*icon*'. This was particularly evident in a good lesson with a class of pupils in Years 3 and 4, where the class teacher was also the co-ordinator.

159. The co-ordinator understands the subject well and this enables her to provide effective support for staff whenever difficulties arise. However, she is allowed no time to check on the quality of teaching, and the school has so far made no attempt to measure the impact of its major investment in a computer suite as a new initiative.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

FRENCH

160. At the time of the last inspection French was judged to be unsatisfactory, mainly due to inadequacies in teaching. It was only possible to see one lesson during this inspection and there was insufficient work in pupils' books on which to make a judgement on standards and teaching overall. However, from the lesson observed it is clear that the school's new arrangements ensure that the teacher's lack of fluency in French, which was an impediment to pupils' learning previously, has been overcome.
161. The lesson seen involved Year 7 pupils. This is the only year group in the school to be taught French. The teacher was a fluent French speaker from another Key Stage 2 class. Her very good command of the language, combined with the brisk pace to teaching, provided a very good model for pupils and ensured that learning was productive. Consequently pupils built on previous knowledge well and made very good progress in acquiring new vocabulary by linking prepositions with familiar objects. The teacher spoke in French throughout most of the lesson, which encouraged pupils to attend closely to what was said. Although some pupils were hesitant at the outset, the teacher praised them frequently in French and was perceptive in directing the easier questions to the more diffident pupils. This increased their confidence sufficiently to enable the majority to contribute well by the end of the lesson, without fear of censure or ridicule.
162. Year 7 pupils have recently been involved in a residential trip to France which they clearly enjoyed, but they say that the opportunities for them to practise the language were limited because many of the people they spoke to replied in English.

MUSIC

163. Standards of attainment in music are in line with national expectations at the ages of seven, 11 and 12. They are not as good as they were at the time of the last inspection.
164. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 clap a steady beat to a piece of music and make good suggestions as to how they can use different parts of their bodies to create sounds and demonstrate rhythm. They have a satisfactory sense of tempo and rhythm in reproducing the sound patterns made by their teacher. Pupils enjoy discovering how to produce sounds from a variety of interesting percussion instruments and distinguish the differences in tone produced from different parts of the instruments. In Year 2, pupils use chime bars successfully and match the pitch and tone of their voices to reproduce the sounds. They choose appropriate levels of pitch, including whispering, when singing the chant, 'Say boom, chicka boom', and follow the leader's choice to good effect. Pupils can sing a variety of words to the tune, 'Polly put the kettle on', counting the beats well as they do so and adapting their performance to sing in two groups.
165. Pupils' past work shows that they recognise the major musical instruments in an orchestra and know how each is capable of making sounds. Teachers use the correct musical vocabulary regularly, which increases pupils' understanding through familiarity and ensures that they become more confident.
166. In Key Stages 2 and 3, pupils develop a more secure understanding of pitch, tone and the dynamics of a piece of music. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 choose appropriate instruments to make particular sounds, such as drums and maracas, when working on the Mars section of Holst's *Planets Suite*. They understand that musical symbols and notation are used to record their individual compositions. Pupils' listening skills are generally satisfactory, though their skills of evaluation are underdeveloped. By Years 6 and 7, pupils recognise Victorian popular songs from the use of musical devices and the lyrics used. They have good background knowledge of the popularity of marching songs from World War I and of songs from the music halls. This emphasis makes good links with the poetry which pupils study in their literacy lessons. Standards of singing are good overall; pupils perform enthusiastically and competently in two-part harmony. They detect the patterns in the lyrics and recognise the effect that repetition has on the impact of a piece of music. They can plot the pattern imposed by the lyricist and recognise how this gives the verse rhythm. Pupils talk about their work, and are learning to evaluate their performances and to suggest ways in which it might be improved. By Year 7, pupils can record their performances in simple notation and have a more secure understanding of musical symbols.
167. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers often tell pupils what they are expected to learn in lessons, although they do not regularly refer to these intentions at the end of lessons to ensure that the lesson has been successful and that the objectives have been met. Teachers generally plan lessons well and deliver them at a lively pace which secures pupils' attention. Consequently most pupils respond positively in music lessons. They enjoy the opportunities to sing and play instruments and make satisfactory progress in increasing their musical knowledge and skill. However, they have too few opportunities to sing during school assemblies. Older pupils work together co-operatively in groups to produce work of satisfactory quality. As they mature, their listening skills improve and they make more definite progress in appraising their own performances and those of

others. Teachers use the range of resources well and questioning techniques are used appropriately to encourage pupils to describe their reactions to a piece of music such as the *Planets Suite*. Teachers generally manage pupils effectively during these interesting, practical sessions. However, some younger pupils take advantage of the opportunity to misbehave when they are using percussion instruments; time is wasted and pupils' progress is adversely affected. Some pupils are taught to play brass, woodwind and stringed instruments well and they make good progress; several of them show promise in their performance.

168. The music co-ordinator has produced a well-structured scheme of work and makes every effort to support those of her non-specialist colleagues who lack the expertise and confidence to deliver the music curriculum. Planning ensures that the key elements in the music curriculum are appropriately covered and pupils have good opportunities to learn to play a range of instruments. Resources are satisfactory and are accessible to pupils and teachers. Visiting performers to the school enhance pupils' experiences and encourage them to take part in public musical performances for the local community and for parents.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

169. During the period of the inspection it was not possible to observe all aspects of the physical education programme. An examination of planning documents shows that pupils are taught all aspects of the subject.
170. Evidence is drawn from an observation of lessons during games, gymnastics and athletics. By the ages of seven, 11 and 12, standards in these elements are what would be expected of pupils of that age. This is a similar position to that at the time of the previous inspection.
171. Pupils in Key Stage 1 work enthusiastically. They show increasing control when balancing and jumping. Many show contrasts in shape, such as '*wide*' and '*thin*', when balancing or jumping in the air. However, opportunities to watch others' performance are limited, and some pupils run out of ideas and are unsure how to develop their work. Work is of a similar quality at Key Stage 2.
172. Teaching was satisfactory overall, and in one lesson where teaching was good expectations were higher and pupils were prompted to improve their movements to good effect. In an athletics lesson, which was brought indoors because of inclement weather, the teacher quickly adapted the objectives appropriately to ensure that pupils had the opportunity to improve their jumping and running skills. They were taught skills systematically throughout the lesson and provided with valuable opportunities to better their own previous performance. Consequently, by the end of the lesson the majority of pupils were jumping higher and further, and were showing more control in running and turning quickly.
173. In a games lesson, Year 7 pupils achieved satisfactory standards, demonstrating appropriate skills when using a bat to hit a ball away, and a small number demonstrated throwing and catching skills which were better than those normally found.
174. Year 6 pupils have regular swimming lessons for two terms in the school year. By the time they leave school nearly all pupils are able to swim and 80 per cent achieve the required distance. More-able swimmers are given lessons in stroke

improvement and work towards an award for confident swimmers. Year 3 pupils also receive training in water safety as part of a day's general safety training.

175. Pupils are given opportunities to attend extra-curricular clubs for football, cricket and basketball, and have the chance to compete in various competitions at local level, including cross country, athletics, football, netball and rounders. They also benefit from the coaching given by outside groups in basketball, hockey and creative dance and this enhances pupils' physical performance well. Facilities for physical education are good with a generously sized hall, hard play areas, and a very large school field. Resources for both indoor and outdoor activities are satisfactory.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

176. Standards of attainment at the end of both key stages are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. During their time at school, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress overall. Standards have been maintained since the time of the last inspection.
177. By the age of seven, pupils consider their own importance and that of the family. They know some of the stories from the Bible, as Year 1 pupils showed when they readily recalled some stories told by Jesus - *The Lost Sheep*, *The Lost Coin*, and *The Good Friend (Good Samaritan)*. It was clear that they enjoyed hearing these stories. Year 2 pupils hear similar stories. They also show how they respond to stories with moral message such as *The Soupstone*. In this story villagers were encouraged to provide different vegetables for a traveller in order that he might add them, with his magic stone, to a pot of water in order to make soup for everyone. Pupils were asked the point of the story. Responses included 'Sharing', and 'If people had not shared, others would not have had enough'. Pupils respond well to spiritual aspects of stories, and recognise good and bad examples set by different characters.
178. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils acquire new knowledge and understanding of religious traditions. Pupils in Year 4 study topics on *Rights and Responsibilities*, the *Role of Leaders*, and *Celebration*. They consider stories about Moses, and learn about Ghandi, Mother Teresa, and the Islamic new year. When learning about the traditional celebration of *Raksha Bandhan* in northern India, pupils showed how they understood the significance of water and its symbolism within faith communities. Year 6 pupils, studying founders and prophets, suggest ways in which Jesus was an inspiration to followers during his lifetime: *He mixed with vagabonds - the homeless, and 'thieves'*. Also *'He would forgive anybody'*, and *'helping people think they could do things they thought they could not do'*. Good opportunities are frequently given to pupils to reflect and to respond to their knowledge of religions in relation to their own lives and experiences.
179. In Year 7, pupils extend their knowledge of religious traditions satisfactorily with the study of topics, including the Easter story, the *Four Noble Truths (Buddhism)*, and the *Five Pillars (Islam)*.
180. The quality of teaching is predominantly good. Teachers make good use of a variety of strategies and resources to engage pupils' interest and promote learning. This fosters good attitudes, and the thoughtful discussion and sharing of ideas are a frequent occurrence. There is also successful story telling and role play in Year 1, recording by way of writing and designing a symbolic bracelet in Year 3, and the use

of video extracts in Year 6. Good management and supportive teaching styles enable pupils to share their ideas confidently and openly with each other.

181. The subject is soundly managed. Religious education makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development. There are good links with other areas of the curriculum, especially with literacy, and with personal, social, and health education. Pupils' learning is enriched by visits to local places of interest and by visitors to the school, including Muslim and Hindu speakers, the Anglican minister and religious groups, to perform assemblies. Resources are satisfactory. At present there is no systematic school procedure for assessing and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning and this has an adverse effect on pupils' progress in the subject.