

INSPECTION REPORT

BAINBRIDGE CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bainbridge, Leyburn

LEA area: North Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 121477

Headteacher: Mr D Jackson

Reporting inspector: Mr G D Timms
21038

Dates of inspection: 22-24 January 2002

Inspection number: 192575

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Community
School category:	Infant and Junior
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Bainbridge Leyburn North Yorkshire
Postcode	DL8 3EL
Telephone number:	01969 650336
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr B Brown
Date of previous inspection:	10-14 March 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21038	G D Timms	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage English Information and communication technology Religious education Art and design Physical education Design and technology	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve?
9399	R Watts	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
20714	M Carter	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Geography History Music Special educational needs Equal opportunities	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is for pupils aged 3 to 11 and is located in the village of Bainbridge, in Wensleydale, North Yorkshire. There are 49 pupils on roll, including 12 part-time children in the nursery. They mostly come from a rural, farming background and a wide part time area, many travelling to the school by bus. The school is much smaller than most primary schools. The level of mobility is not high but even a difference of one or two pupils makes a dramatic difference to the makeup of a year group. The pupils are organised into three classes: one morning only nursery class, one reception and infant class, and one junior class. There is only one pupil on the register of special educational need. No pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds or have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is very small. The attainment of pupils when they are assessed on entry to reception shows that, although there is a range of ability, with good standards in personal, social and emotional development and below average standards in mathematical development, overall standards are broadly in line with those normally found.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good and effective school. Most children make good progress when compared with their attainment on entry. The headteacher provides good leadership. His staff make an effective team and all in the school are committed to providing a good education for the pupils. Standards are at least satisfactory and high in some subjects by the time pupils leave the school. The overall quality of teaching is good, with a significant amount that is very good in the infant class. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are good in English, mathematics, history and art and design by the end of Year 2. They are good in mathematics and art and design at the end of Year 6.
- The quality of teaching is good throughout the school, with a significant amount of very good teaching in the infant class; this results in effective learning.
- Pupils' attitudes to school, their behaviour, and the relationships between older and younger pupils are particularly strong.
- Pupils' social and moral development is very good.
- The school has very good links with parents resulting in the parents having very positive views about the work of the school.

What could be improved

- The quality of pupils' writing in the junior class is below that expected and below that of which they are capable.
- Throughout the school, teachers do not always use marking and the results of assessments effectively enough to provide work that is sufficiently well matched to individual pupils' prior attainment.
- Teachers with subject responsibility and governors do not have a clear enough overview of standards and the quality of teaching and learning in the school.

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 March 1997. Since that time the staff have worked hard on a range of issues raised at the time, and other national and local initiatives introduced since then, and improvement has been good. Child protection procedures have been strengthened; links between the nursery and reception children have improved; staff have undergone further training in physical education and design and technology, and resources in both subjects have improved; the school development plan is a more practical document. The issues regarding the provision of work appropriate for pupils' abilities, the long term planning of the development of skills and the better monitoring of teaching and learning have been partially addressed. In addition, the information and communication technology teaching and provision has improved, as have standards in mathematics, science and history and the quality of teaching. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	E	C	C	E	
mathematics	E*	C	A	A	
science	E	A	B	C	

In small schools comparisons between different year groups are insecure as one pupil represents such a high proportion of the result. For example, in 2001 in Year 6, each pupil represented 20 per cent of the total. The table above shows that pupils' overall attainment in 2001 was in line with the national average in English, above average in science and well above average in mathematics. When attainment is compared with schools whose pupils are from similar backgrounds, it was well below average in English, average in science and well above average in mathematics.

Since 1999, when a year group with a high proportion of special needs caused a dip in results, to the lowest five per cent of schools in mathematics, results have improved steadily. The effects of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been positive, especially in mathematics. In reading, speaking, and listening, standards are good throughout the school but in writing, standards are below average in the junior years. The school has recognised this and has appropriate plans to address the matter. When the test results are compared to how well the same pupils did in the Year 2 tests, attainment in science was above average, while in mathematics it was well above average, indicating very good progress. However, in English attainment was below average. The school's targets are based on pupils' prior attainment and are sufficiently challenging.

When the children start in the nursery, the knowledge, skills and understanding of the large majority is broadly in line with that expected for their ages. Their personal, emotional and social development is strong. The baseline assessment of pupils entering the reception year, which forms part of the infant class, shows that since the nursery class became a regular feature in the school, attainment has improved. Pupils make good progress throughout the nursery and reception classes and by the end of reception the majority attain the expected early learning goals in all areas of learning, and a significant proportion are already working within the National Curriculum.

The Year 2 test results for 2001 were based on only two pupils, who have since left the school. They are not representative of the normal levels of attainment at the end of Year 2, or of the present Year 3. The picture over time in the tests at the end of Year 2 shows that attainment in reading is usually well above average, while in writing it is above average. In mathematics, the picture is more inconsistent but, in most years, the attainment is well above average. The teacher assessments in science indicate that all pupils reached the expected level last year but neither reached the higher levels. The present Year 2 standards are above average.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils keen to learn and very interested in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Older pupils show very caring attitudes towards younger ones.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. When they are given responsibility they take it happily, perform well, and are trustworthy.
Attendance	The attendance figures are well below average but this is due to effects of the foot and mouth epidemic. In a normal year, attendance is in line with that expected.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and when they are in lessons they are keen to learn and enthusiastic about most of the tasks they are set. There is no bullying evident and pupils feel secure and happy in the school, benefiting from the very friendly family ethos.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	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.

The overall quality of the teaching is good; a substantial amount is very good or better in the Reception Year and in Years 1 and 2. All of the teaching is satisfactory or better and this is higher than in the majority of schools. The proportion of good or better teaching is well above that found nationally. The teaching in the nursery and reception is good and reflects the improved planning and successful introduction of the Foundation Stage leading to the expected early learning goals. The teaching in English and mathematics is good, although the teaching of writing to the older pupils needs to be improved. Teachers' subject knowledge and understanding in mathematics has been increased since the successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and pupils make very good progress throughout the school. The basic skills of literacy are taught well. Teachers have worked hard and successfully to improve the quality of teaching since the last inspection.

The teachers have good relationships with pupils, which results in the pupils behaving well in lessons and remaining attentive and interested in their learning. Lessons usually have a good pace. Effective use is made of the time and the resources available. Where the teaching is particularly strong, very good use is made of the good quality support assistant and the teachers demonstrate very good subject knowledge. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is often good and the school is fully inclusive. All pupils have access to the full curriculum.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is appropriate for pupils' needs and all National Curriculum subjects and religious education are taught.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Although very few pupils need extra support, the staff are very aware of all the needs of all pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Provision for pupils' social and moral development is very good and a very successful part of the school's provision. Provision for their spiritual development is good and for cultural development, it is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has good procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare. Pupils are well supervised at all times and the school is a very caring community.

The long term planning has improved since the last inspection and now includes planning for the development of pupils' skills in most subjects. Assessment procedures are thorough in English and mathematics but less well developed in other subjects. The analysis of assessment data and its effective use in planning is at an early stage of development. The teachers try hard to enrich the curriculum, and provide extra-curricular activities, through the effective use of trips, visits and outside expertise.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher provides good leadership, despite having a heavy teaching commitment, and all staff have an important role in the running of the school; they make an effective team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governors are very supportive and committed to the school. They do not yet have a sufficiently detailed overview of the school's standards to have a sufficiently good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school is aware of the need to improve standards, especially in writing, by the end of Year 6 and has begun to analyse test results in more detail so that they can address areas of weakness.
The strategic use of resources	Typical of most schools. Specific grants have been used appropriately. Important improvements to the library are underway.

The staffing level is satisfactory and the accommodation and resources are broadly typical for a small school. The provision of computers is good and is having a positive effect on standards. Not enough opportunities are found to give subject coordinators an overview of standards, teaching and learning in the other class. The school works hard to ensure best value in its work particularly through good links with other small schools.

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 like school and they make good progress. • They would feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or problems. • The school works closely with parents and they are well informed about how their child is getting on. • The teaching is good and helps children to become more mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some would like to see more opportunities for extra-curricular activities.

The parents are very supportive of the school and happy with its work. Even those who want to see more out of school activities are realistic about the small size of the school and how hard the staff work. The inspectors agree with the parents' positive feelings about the school. Pupils like the school and progress is good. The teaching is good and the staff accessible to parents. Reports on pupils are very detailed.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. When the children start in the nursery, assessment evidence indicates that the knowledge, skills and understanding of the large majority of them is broadly in line with that expected for their ages. A particular strength is their personal, emotional and social development and this is evident in the way they quickly settle into the new routines and enter the room happily, showing no distress at leaving their parents and carers. The baseline assessment of pupils entering the reception year, which forms part of the infant class, shows that since the nursery class became a regular feature in the school, attainment has improved and children are now much more settled and quickly become good learners. The strengths in personal, social and emotional development are built on effectively. However, in mathematical development standards are below those normally found for children of this age, while in the other areas of learning, including communication, language, and literacy, children are attaining broadly average standards. They make good progress throughout the reception year and by the end of reception the majority have attained the expected early learning goals in all areas of learning, and a significant proportion are already working within the National Curriculum.
2. The school has very small year groups, at times consisting of only two pupils, as, for example, happened last year in Year 2. This makes any conclusions drawn from comparisons between year groups insecure. However, test results are still a useful indicator of how successful the school is, especially if individual pupils can be tracked through their school career. The national test results for the Year 6 pupils in 2001 showed a good improvement over the previous year in mathematics but a slight fall in English and science. The trend over the last five years is below that found nationally but this is due to a steep fall in the results in 1999, explained by the level of special needs in that group.
3. When the Year 6 test results are compared with other schools nationally, standards in English were in line with the average; in science, they were above average while in mathematics they were well above average. The evidence of the inspection shows that the teaching of mathematics in Year 6 is likely to produce more success, especially for the higher attaining pupils, than it is in science and English. In English, although all pupils reached the expected level, none reached the higher levels and this is below the standard reflected in the national results. The reason for this weakness lies in the standards of writing, rather than in reading where standards are often good. The school has analysed the results well enough to recognise that writing is a weakness and it forms an important part of the school's priorities for improvement. When the results are compared with those from schools with pupils from similar backgrounds standards are still well above average in mathematics and they are average in science. However, they are well below average in English.
4. The overall picture from test results and from the evidence of the inspection is that learning is at least satisfactory, and often good, in mathematics and science. However, pupils' skills in writing, both in content and in presentation do not improve to a sufficient extent through the junior years. When the test results are compared to how well the same pupils did in the Year 2 tests, attainment in science was above average, while in mathematics it was well above average, indicating very good progress. However, in English attainment was below average.
5. The Year 2 test results for 2001 were based on only two pupils who have since left the school. They are therefore not representative of the normal levels of attainment at the end of Year 2, or of the present Year 3. The picture over time in the tests at the end of Year 2 shows that attainment in reading is usually well above average, while in writing it is above average. In mathematics, the picture is more inconsistent, but in most years, the attainment is well above average. The teacher assessments in science indicate that all pupils reached the expected level last year but neither reached the higher levels.
6. Over the past five years, once annual variations have been smoothed out, the boys tend to do better than the girls in reading, writing, and mathematics by the end of Year 2. However, in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6, taking the past five years together, this trend has been reversed and the girls outperform the boys. This is not the case in science where the boys still outperform the girls. The school has analysed the results but, apart from the small size of the cohorts and thus large variations between year groups, there appears no reason for this difference. No reason for any differences became apparent during the inspection and it remains something into which the school needs to continue to research and, where appropriate, address.

7. The current standards of Year 6 pupils in the school are similar to those shown in the test results last year, with similar strengths and weaknesses, although the present cohort do not have such a good level of attainment in science. In mathematics and art and design, standards are above average. In English, science, information and communication technology, religious education, design and technology, history and geography standards are broadly in line with those expected. There is not enough evidence to make a secure judgement about standards in physical education and music. In Year 2, although a very small year group, standards are high and results this year should be above average. In English, mathematics, art and design and history standards are above average. In science, information and communication technology, religious education, and design and technology standards are broadly in line with those expected. There is not enough evidence to securely judge standards in geography, physical education, or music.
8. There is currently one child with special educational needs and another under assessment. Their progress is generally good and they learn well in lessons because of the consideration and personal knowledge that their teachers have of their needs. However, despite some extra support, the particular needs identified in their individual education plans are not always specifically taught and progress in these is variable.
9. The overall standards in reading and numeracy are rising following the successful introduction of aspects of the National Literacy and the National Numeracy Strategies. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are good, as are the majority of the reading skills, although at times older pupils lack care and accuracy in their reading and do not have enough opportunities to use the research skills they are developing. However, writing skills are under developed throughout the junior years and this remains an important focus for the school's work. Although pupils have a number of opportunities to write in different styles and for different purposes, they do not do enough re-drafting of their work, or have enough opportunities for writing extended pieces of work in different subjects. Too often, they do not take enough care over their writing, spelling, or the presentation of their work, although work in religious education books shows that they do have the necessary skills.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils have very good attitudes towards school. All parents who responded to the questionnaire said that their child enjoys school and this is borne out by conversations with pupils. They appreciate the informal family atmosphere, small size and the opportunities it gives them to learn with pupils of all ages. Children in the nursery leave their parents without fuss, keen to get on with the activities provided. When it is time to go home, they are still engrossed and some are loathe to leave. Older pupils move quickly to start their individual or group work after lesson introductions because they enjoy it and are keen to learn more. They concentrate well and work hard to solve problems. They are keen to answer questions and make perceptive suggestions to stimulate discussion. Pupils take a very practical attitude to doing small jobs, seeing them as part of their responsibility to help the smooth running of the school. They are enthusiastic about doing things outside the classroom, taking part in extra-curricular activities provided.
11. The behaviour of pupils is very good. In lessons pupils respond well to encouragement and praise. A quiet word is occasionally necessary to keep pupils focused on their activity but generally, teachers need to spend very little time on this and can concentrate fully on their teaching. This has a very positive impact on the good rate of learning seen in the majority of lessons. Some of the older pupils occasionally lack discipline and call out before asked, or talk at the same time as the teacher, but this does not detract greatly from the learning. Their behaviour as they move around the school is exemplary. Behaviour at dinnertime is also very good and the meal is a pleasant social occasion. Whilst they have no hand in setting them, pupils have the opportunity to discuss the reasons behind school rules and fully accept their validity. There were no exclusions of pupils from the school last year. Pupils treat all the things they work with and the property of others with great care.
12. The personal development of pupils and the relationships within the school are very good. In class, the strong rapport between adults and pupils is a very noticeable feature of all lessons. Pupils are confident that the teachers are there to do their best for the pupils. They strive in the relaxed yet orderly atmosphere. Pupils work well to support each other, discussing problems and making suggestions to each other about their solutions. In the playground, pupils of all ages play well together and older ones respect the needs of younger pupils. Pupils recognise that, although theirs is a mono-cultural school, there are other ways of life and beliefs and that these should be respected. They recognise that their actions may have an impact on others and are keen to adopt the rule 'do as you would be done by'. Pupils willingly accept responsibilities given, for example, to clear up or help around the school. Some volunteer to help younger pupils with their work or with practical things like getting ready for playtime. No incidents of bullying or social exclusion were observed during the inspection and pupils confirmed that these are very rare. They are confident that, should any occur, staff would quickly sort them out.

13. Attendance last year was very low in comparison with the national average for primary schools. In earlier years attendance had been above average. The reason for this drop was the outbreak of foot and mouth disease in the area, which confined a high proportion of pupils from farming families to their homes for periods of up to a month. There was no unauthorised absence in the last school year.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

14. The overall quality of the teaching is good. All of the teaching is at least satisfactory. The amount of good or better teaching, 92 per cent, is better than that found nationally. Fifteen per cent is very good. These figures represent a good improvement since the last inspection where 93 per cent of the teaching was satisfactory or better and only two per cent very good. Weaknesses found at the last inspection, including the need for better teaching in design and technology and physical education, have been largely addressed although there is still a need to plan work more closely matched to all pupils' prior attainment.
15. In the nursery class and for the reception children all of the teaching is good. This has been maintained since the last inspection. The teachers in the nursery and of the reception children make a very strong team. They plan together well to ensure children are taught the skills and knowledge necessary for them to acquire the expected early learning goals for each of the areas of learning. The small size of the age groups enables teachers to have a very good knowledge of each pupil and their abilities and potential. The activities for both the nursery and reception pupils are appropriate and well planned, and the resources are used effectively. For example, children have very good access to computers and this is having a very good impact in developing their confidence and skills; this is a strength of the school that is also recognised by the parents. In addition to the independent activities, the teacher in the nursery leads a focused activity each day, such as a cooking session or work on shape and number. The relationships between the teacher and the children and their parents are a particular strength. The classroom is very crowded with furniture, as the teacher tries to make all expected activities available to the children, and there is little available space for many larger activities such as construction toys although good use is made of the hall for these activities. The school has plans to expand the accommodation in the near future. Although the group is small at present, the teacher would benefit from some extra support to enable full use to be made of the outdoor provision.
16. In the infant class, reception children benefit from both the extra challenge of working alongside Year 1 and 2 pupils and from well-planned and appropriate work targeted at the attainment of the early learning goals. The class teacher works very hard to ensure that the lesson planning includes activities appropriate for the reception children. In literacy lessons, very effective use is made of extra support assistant time to provide the reception children with specifically targeted work. This extra help is not available in numeracy lessons although during afternoon sessions there is more support available. Very good use is made of the resources in the empty nursery classroom in the afternoons to give reception children good opportunities to develop their independence in selecting activities and their social skills in playing together. The assessment procedures for children in the nursery and reception are good and enable teachers to track children's progress towards the early learning goals accurately.
17. In the infant class, Years 1 and 2, all of the teaching is at least good and in the junior class, Years 3, 4, 5, and 6, it is good in 83 per cent of lessons. The teachers plan lessons for their own classes based on the long-term plans for each subject. Appropriate decisions are made about how to adapt the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies for classes with so many different age groups. However, the provision of work that is appropriately matched to pupils' abilities, especially for the older pupils, is less successfully planned. Too often the work is pitched at a middle level and does not sufficiently challenge the more able pupils or provide the younger ones with clear enough development of the basic skills. The marking of pupils' work is often insufficient to give them a good idea of how well they have done and what they need to do to improve further. Some good target setting has been introduced but this is not yet regular enough, or apparent in enough subjects for it to have a real impact on standards.
18. The strengths in the teaching include the very good relationships created between pupils, and pupils and adults. Lessons contain a lot of direct teaching and practical activities. This helps involve pupils in their learning although the teachers do not always effectively share learning objectives with the pupils and this hinders their understanding of exactly what they are intended to learn. A very good teaching assistant, who has very good relationships with the pupils, supports the teachers. The teaching of pupils with special needs enables them to take a full part in the lessons. However, the specific targets in the individual education plans are not sufficiently the focus of the teaching to ensure that good progress towards the targets is made.

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

19. The curriculum is broad, balanced and very effectively enriched by a number of visits, visitors and events, although these have been limited during the recent period of restrictions due to foot and mouth disease. However, the quality of lessons and the good background knowledge that the teachers have help to ensure that the curriculum is taught in an interesting and informed way. The overall time available for the juniors' lessons is lower than average but time is used effectively and most lessons have a good pace. The planned curriculum fulfils the statutory requirements concerning the National Curriculum, religious education, and collective worship. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are effectively implemented and support the pupils learning of basic skills well, particularly in the learning of mental calculations with numbers. There is a lack of emphasis on listening and appraising in music and control and monitoring aspects of the information and communication technology curriculum. In practice, the pupils' progress is also weaker in scientific experimentation and data handling. However, long-term curriculum planning has improved in response to issues in the last inspection report and most plans now include a sufficient emphasis on progression in gaining skills and understanding. This is particularly good for history, but is insufficiently improved for science and design and technology.
20. The long-term curriculum plan has an appropriate balance between revisiting aspects of each subject and promoting the teaching of all the learning indicated in the National Curriculum programmes of study. Planning for the infants follows a two-yearly plan while that for the juniors is on a four-yearly rotation. The Foundation Stage is appropriately planned from the recommended early learning goals. Collaborative planning between the reception class and the nursery class teachers has improved greatly since the last inspection, when this was a key issue. Furthermore, a doorway has now been created between these classes, allowing flexible use of the rooms and more contact between the reception and the nursery children.
21. The curriculum is enriched very well through a good number of visits and activities that help the school to teach the whole curriculum in a lively and interesting way. For example, a residential visit for junior pupils helps with their learning about Tudor architecture and life; visiting artists have introduced pupils to aspects of art and design and techniques used in cultures around the world such as aboriginal art. Such activities are very influential on the pupils' learning and usually of high quality. There are a small number of extra-curricular activities offered, sometimes in the lunch period, and they include sporting clubs such as football and netball. Overall, the number is appropriate for the school and its situation. Parents and people from the local community make a good contribution to the pupils' learning. For example, the local vicar takes assemblies and parents occasionally come to talk with the pupils. Very good use is made of local artists and craftsmen. Personal, social and health education are taught through a number of topics within appropriate subjects. For example, within science lessons, the pupils have completed a project raising their awareness of the use and abuse of various drugs. The local school nurse helps to provide sex education for the older pupils. The pupils' musical curriculum is enriched greatly through tuition for playing, recorders, brass instruments, and guitars. Many pupils take part in these lessons, which are partly done as clubs. Music is also enriched by a volunteer from a local brass band and the good number of opportunities for pupils to perform. In this and other ways, collaboration with other local schools helps to enrich the pupils' education, for example through joint music events and through teachers' discussion of aspects of the curriculum.
22. The curriculum for any pupils having special educational needs is not restricted in any way and full access is maintained through extra adult classroom support and by the good awareness and careful questioning of the class teacher to help the pupils express themselves, gain self-esteem and learn. The appropriate code of practice is met fully and the identification of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Individual education plans are carefully devised with targets to help overcome the special educational need. In the junior class, such targets are met as well as possible within the course of class lessons but no specific tuition is planned to help progress towards the specific targets. Consequently, progress in meeting these is slow where the general progress in the rest of the curriculum is good for pupils with special educational needs.
23. There is little time for subject coordination in the school and consequently the time spent on different aspects of each subject is not monitored systematically, although the teachers are very aware of the need to maintain balance in the subjects. For example, the planning of lessons for the nursery class notes many aspects of learning that may be gained from one lesson and is clearly well linked to the stages of development identified towards meeting the early learning goals. Higher up the school there are a few occasions when pupils are withdrawn from lessons. This may lead to the pupils missing aspects of teaching although informal methods of monitoring are used to try and avoid this.

24. The provision made for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. It reflects the school's creed and the teachers' emphasis on a caring, moral and understanding climate in which each individual person matters.
25. Provision for the pupils' spiritual development is good. Assemblies provide strong emphasis on the value of each individual. In practice, there is a good concern on respecting each other and this helps the pupils to have a sense of their own worth. There is a strong emphasis on the value of each person and the quality of love and giving as human qualities of high value. Prayer is used and a little time is made for pupils to reflect upon their own existence and the things that affect them emotionally. Religious education lessons, visits and visitors make some use of opportunities to help the pupils understand about Christianity and other religions in promoting the sense of a deity. In a number of lessons, the good teaching leads to exciting learning in which the pupils gain a sense of wonder.
26. The pupils learn through assemblies and through the way they are treated, that each individual counts and there are reasons why their actions may matter to others. They gain a good sense of right and wrong and this is accepted well because of the way in which they care and feel responsibility for each other. For example, they have specific duties to care for younger pupils. There is a good impact of these responsibilities because, in this small school, the pupils can easily see the effects of their work and how "doing it properly " is the only way. The provision for the pupils' moral development is very good and helps the pupils to have a mature sense of living with others in a community. For example, many stories read in assemblies have a moral message, which the pupils accept well. The school also acts with a corporate conscience, for example, by sponsoring a child in India and by considering the implications of topical issues, such as the disaster of a volcanic eruption, and the implications of the events on 11 September 2001. Teachers and staff act as good role models.
27. There are very many opportunities for the pupils to help others. These are very effective in promoting a good sense of living, learning and socialising together. The impact is shown in the pupils' good consideration and concern for each other. Many of these opportunities are planned through duties such as helping the younger pupils to collect and eat their dinner or preparing the hall for assemblies or the classroom for lessons. Pupils do these tasks with good independence and conscientiousness. They do not need to be monitored in these roles. In addition, the pupils show a good consideration for each other and play happily together on the playground, developing strong friendships, and interdependence. They are concerned that others feel socially at ease and are upset if another feels left out or is hurt. To some extent, the pupils are aware that their contribution to the school's social harmony and smooth running is essential and valued. The pupils and staff form a good community of mutual dependence. Provision for the pupils' social development is very good.
28. Provision for the pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. It is promoted, for example, through visits made and the visitors to the school, such as a visitor who had been to Amala, who was able to show pupils a great deal about life in India and the different social and cultural circumstances. In addition, pupils have visited different places of worship. However the school does not make pupils aware of multicultural life in Britain sufficiently strongly and has, for example, no links with a school having pupils from ethnic-minority groups. However, teachers help pupils to be aware of the situation of others around the world.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

29. The school has good procedures for ensuring that its pupils are cared for. These result in a school characterised by its supportive, family atmosphere in which pupils want to learn. The shortcomings identified at the time of the previous inspection have been rectified. All staff are trained in first aid and if pupils are ill or have accidents at school they are well looked after. Systematic health and safety risk assessments and equipment checks are carried out and the school is a generally a safe environment. Child protection procedures now meet local guidelines and the designated teacher has been trained in their use. Cases are very rare but the school is aware of support available if required. The absence of bullying is a consequence of the school's appropriate emphasis on teaching pupils the ethos of caring for each other.
30. Behaviour is generally only informally monitored but these procedures are, none the less, very effective. Staff use the very good rapport they have with pupils to maintain the very good behaviour with a minimum of fuss. Sanctions are rarely needed and pupils respond very positively to praise and simple reward and recognition. Registers are completed correctly for each session. During the foot and mouth disease outbreak last year, the school went to considerable lengths to support those pupils who were confined to their farms for extended

periods. Work was regularly delivered to and collected from their homes so that the effect of pupils' learning was minimised.

31. The school has satisfactory procedures in place for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. Assessment is thorough in English, mathematics, and science but less well developed in other subjects. In the nursery and reception, assessment is good and clearly shows progress towards the early learning goals. Good use is made of baseline information when planning work and the staff are aware of pupils' strengths and weaknesses. The national tests at the end of Year 2 are carried out appropriately and good use is made of links with a local school to moderate the findings and agree levels awarded. More detailed test information is now available in the juniors as all pupils do national tests. This has only happened recently and the results of these are yet to be fully used when planning work for individual pupils. Target setting has been introduced but has not yet been sufficiently extended to enough aspects of pupils' work.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

32. Parents are very satisfied with what the school provides and achieves. A high proportion of parents returned the questionnaire and the views expressed there were very positive. The strongest positive responses were that the parents felt happy about approaching and working with the school. Parents strongly agreed that teaching is good, leading to good progress about which they are well informed. The only very minor concern was the provision of extra-curricular activities. The parents who attended the meeting before the inspection were also very enthusiastic about the school and had few, if any, concerns. These positive views are confirmed by the inspection. Extracurricular activities are appropriate for this size of school.
33. The school has very effective links with parents, building well on the close relationships within the local community. The quality of information the school gives parents is good. Parents of children starting nursery are offered home visits to answer questions and to start to familiarise the child with staff. When children start, parents are given information about how their child will be taught and advice on supporting them at home. Parents find this very useful. They are kept well informed of what is happening in school with newsletters and parents find all staff very approachable at the beginning and end of the school day. The school ran a well-attended workshop on the National Numeracy Strategy when it was implemented. Pupils' annual reports meet statutory requirements and give good information about what the pupil has achieved that year in the main subjects. Those for the older pupils are especially informative and give very good, detailed information describing each child as an individual. Comments for younger pupils in the non-core subjects tend to be too brief or describe attitudes or content covered by the class rather than progress for the individual. Reports also provide a good insight into the pupil's personal development. Parents are also able to support their child through extensive formal discussions with the class teacher.
34. Parents have a good impact on the progress of their children at school and at home. Most parents support their child's learning by hearing them read at home, although this tails off for some as the pupils get older. However, many parents of older pupils support homework. The school has issued a home-school agreement which most return. There is a strong parent-teacher association that raises substantial amounts for the school and organises social events. Funds have been used to provide, for example, additional computer software and new curtains for the hall. Few parents help regularly within the school, but can always be relied on to give additional adult supervision for special occasions.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

35. The leadership and management of the school by the headteacher and the other key staff are good. This has improved since the previous inspection when the leadership was found satisfactory. Although he has a very heavy teaching commitment, the headteacher provides a very clear lead in giving the school its positive, hard-working and caring ethos. All staff are appropriately focused on raising standards and in providing the best education possible for their pupils. More needs to be done to monitor the standards achieved and to analyse ways of raising standards further to avoid complacency. A major strength of the leadership has been the appropriateness of the school's recognition of its weaknesses and areas for development.
36. The management of the school gives all staff responsibility for a number of subjects and for the age group they teach. However, subject leaders do not do enough to assess standards in the other classes on a regular basis. There are many opportunities for informal discussions between the staff about their work, the planning, and the outcomes of their teaching but fewer formal opportunities to evaluate and review teaching methods.

The headteacher has a clear understanding of the backgrounds and needs of the pupils. The school has an appropriate set of aims and these are clearly reflected in its work. The principles behind the aims are fully accepted and understood by all staff and governors. In particular, the school has a strong, central place within the local community.

37. The staff have clear job descriptions. They all work well as a team, supporting each other and sharing planning issues that arise. The arrangements for performance management and the appraisal of teachers' work are satisfactory. A particular strength has been the recent developments in using information and communication technology as a management and teaching tool. For example, good use is made by teachers of web sites that provide appropriate lesson and assembly plans. Computers are used by teachers to create worksheets and by the secretary for communication via email and financial planning and monitoring.
38. Since the last inspection the headteacher and staff have worked hard to address the key issues raised and to improve standards. The majority of the key issues have been addressed successfully although some work remains to be done in others. Training in aspects of physical education and design and technology has been received. The procedures for child protection have been improved. Changes to the accommodation and planning have improved links between the nursery and reception teachers. The school development plan better addresses how improvements are to be made and measured. However, the success criteria are still not always very specific or measurable. Further work remains to be done to address in full the issues surrounding the match of work to all pupils' prior attainment, the planning for the development of skills in all subjects and the further extension of monitoring the teaching, learning and standards achieved by pupils.
39. The governing body provides good support for the school. Most of them regularly visit the school and those who can help on a regular basis. The meetings are held appropriately and all statutory requirements are fully met. Committees are used to do some of the detailed work including the tracking of the budget. They have recently taken on responsibilities for various subjects and other aspects of the school's work such as special educational needs. Time needs to be found for governors to gain a better overview of the school's work from a variety of sources, including more formal visits to see the school working and a deeper analysis of standards, and not to rely too heavily on the headteacher for such information. This would enable them to have a greater understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the school's provision.
40. The analysis of assessment data has improved since the last inspection. The problem of comparing cohorts is well understood by staff and they are aware of the need to track individual pupils' progress. However, the school does not yet fully analyse the responses to questions to see which areas in tests pupils find most problem with. On the other hand, staff have a good understanding of the need to improve standards in writing due to the disappointing standards and degree of improvement over prior attainment found recently. The target setting process is appropriate and targets are based on pupils' prior attainment. The work done to achieve the targets is largely successful.
41. The management of the school's provision for special educational needs is satisfactory. The requirements of the code of practice are met fully and the school is well ahead in preparations for the new system to be implemented. Parents are invited to review meetings and kept informed of progress. There are good links with external agencies and specialist advice when it is needed. Financial allocations are used fully for their purpose. However, the targets in the individual education plans are not always directly taught or make best use of the support available.
42. As it is in all small schools, the income and expenditure per pupil is very high. However, the school and the governing body work hard to ensure that best value is obtained in all aspects of the school's work. In particular, purchases are made with a correct emphasis on educational priorities. Planning is based largely on the expected expansion of the nursery provision and to provide an extension to the accommodation and staffing to cope with this. An appropriate budget surplus is being built up to support this development. Expertise from the local authority is used well when setting the budget and the secretary provides effective and efficient administration. Grants, such as those for the provision of computer resources and associated training, have been very well used and are having a positive impact on standards.
43. The accommodation is satisfactory. Good use is made of the central hall, which, although small, provides good opportunities for teachers to use extra space for groups, and for the nursery pupils to have more space for some larger activities. The outdoor space is very good and provides good opportunities for learning in a variety of subjects. Resources are satisfactory overall. The school is addressing the need for a better and more accessible library by using new shelving in the hall. The improvements in the provision of resources in information and communication technology have been very good and resources are now very effectively used,

resulting in improved provision and learning by all pupils. The storage of resources is poor and in need of some attention and this is recognised in the school development plan. Too many out of date and unused resources are crammed into the limited space available. There are too few artefacts to support teaching in history and religious education. There are sufficient teachers for the numbers of pupils but they would benefit from more teaching assistant support time to enable them to plan for and work closely with particular groups of pupils.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

44. The school has shown good improvement since the last inspection. In order that these advances are built upon and taken further, the headteacher, staff and governing body should:

- ❑ Improve the standard of writing by the end of Year 6 by: **
 - improving the presentation of pupils' work;
 - improving pupils' handwriting skills;
 - improving pupils' spelling;
 - ensuring pupils' punctuation skills reflect more accurately their knowledge of grammar;
 - providing more opportunities for extended writing;
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to edit and redraft their work;
(Paragraphs 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 40, and 59-65)

- ❑ Develop the use of assessment information and thus improve the match of work to pupils' prior attainment by:
 - improving the quality of teachers' marking;
 - setting more regular and rigorous individual targets for pupils;
 - developing the analysis of assessments and test results better to identify areas of weakness
(Paragraph 31)

- ❑ Ensure the governing body and subject coordinators have a better overview of the strengths and weaknesses in standards, teaching, and learning by developing more effective strategies for the gathering of information about the school's performance.
(Paragraphs 35-43)

*** This issue has been recognised by the school and is part of the current improvement planning.*

45. In addition, the governing body may wish to include the following minor issues for improvement in their action plan:

- ❑ improve the long term planning so that the progress in skills development in all subjects is clearly identified (paragraph 19).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

13

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

29

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	2	10	1	0	0	0
Percentage	0	15	77	8	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	6.0	36
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	1

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	10.5
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

** The high proportion of authorised absence is due to the effects of the recent foot and mouth outbreak in the area.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	36
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16
Average class size	18

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	10

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	13
Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	00 / 01
	£
Total income	149 897
Total expenditure	141 363
Expenditure per pupil	3 050
Balance brought forward from previous year	8 221
Balance carried forward to next year	16 755

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	49
Number of questionnaires returned	36

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	36	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	72	28	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	64	28	3	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	50	42	6	0	2
The teaching is good.	83	14	3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	83	14	3	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	94	6	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64	33	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	86	11	3	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	78	19	3	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	83	11	3	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	39	36	14	3	8

Other issues raised by parents

Although some parents felt that the school did not provide a very wide range of extra curricular activities they clearly understood that this was due to the small size of the school and its resources, rather than any lack of ambition on the part of the staff.

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

46. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage, which comprises the nursery class and reception children in the infant class, is good. This has been maintained since the last inspection, although the nursery is now run as a daily morning class. The nursery class, although small, is organised into structured learning areas and provides a good range of activities. The teaching in both classes is consistently good. Planning is of good quality and provides an effective link between the two classes as the teaching follows the five areas of learning leading towards the achievement of the nationally agreed early learning goals. The admission arrangements are very good. Opportunities are provided before pupils start in the nursery for parents to meet staff, and home visits that enable the teacher to talk with parents and children in their homes.
47. At the time of the inspection, there were 12 children part-time in the nursery class. This is due to expand over the next few years. There were seven children in the reception year. There is access to a secure outdoor area although it is not directly from the classrooms. This area is used, when the weather permits, for children to have access to large wheeled toys and other outdoor equipment and to take a range of the indoor activities outdoors. In addition, they are able to grow plants in part of the garden. At present, there is not enough staffing to enable the outdoor areas to be used in full.

Personal, social and emotional development

48. By the end of the reception year, most children achieve better than expected in this area of learning. The teaching is good in the nursery and in reception. Teachers and other staff are effective role models and provide many opportunities for children to learn to share, co-operate, and collaborate through a range of planned activities. The children are happy and secure in school. All of them, including the youngest three-year-olds, settle to activities quickly in the mornings and are confident to leave their parents and carers. In the nursery, the teacher has created appropriate routines and many activities that are intended to develop the relationships between children. For example, children make decisions about which activities need aprons, which they then wear without needing to refer to an adult.
49. In the infant class, the reception children continue to build on earlier good work and have the opportunity to build relationships with older pupils in Years 1 and 2. In addition, the school provides many opportunities for junior pupils to help the youngest, through playtimes and lunchtimes, and before registration times in the nursery.

Communication, language and literacy

50. The majority of the children are likely to attain the early learning goals in speaking, listening, reading and writing and standards overall are good. The teaching in both classes is good. In the nursery children learn to listen to stories and rhymes. They listen to the teacher and to each other with growing maturity. For example, when playing, children discuss their games and individual roles. Displays are used to illustrate stories and children learn early writing skills through a range of early writing activities. Children can recognise their names and they use books confidently. For example, they can retell the story of the three little pigs from the illustrations in a book.
51. In the reception class, children are reading at a good standard, and are making good progress through the school reading scheme. Good questioning by the class teacher encourages children to think about the story and to make sensible inferences from the text and the illustrations. Children are familiar with the main characters in the books. During literacy lessons the reception children receive separate tuition in phonics and are already familiar with more complex sounds, such as that made by 'ie', which they learn to trace and then write. In both classes, children are articulate and able to express themselves well.

Mathematical development

52. By the end of the reception year the majority of the children will attain the early learning goals expected of them. This represents good progress, as a result of good teaching, as most children have less developed mathematical skills when they start school. Teachers provide a good range of activities. In the nursery, the teacher makes good use of the computer to create shape and colour books with photographs of children helping to personalise their learning. Children know the difference between circles and semicircles and the

names of other shapes. Some opportunities for counting are missed although they do, for example, count claps when celebrating birthdays. In reception, children know their number bonds to 10 and they have a sound knowledge of mathematical language such as 'taller than' or 'shorter than'. The scrutiny of children's work since September shows good progress in the addition and subtraction of numbers.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

53. By the end of the reception year, most children will attain the expected early learning goals. The teaching is good and provides planned opportunities to build on previous knowledge about the world around them. In the nursery class, children learn how ingredients are mixed and cooked to make a cake. They are aware of the need to weigh ingredients. Children know the names of most common colours. They use computers confidently and with appropriate care to listen to stories, click and drag pictures and the more able can follow instructions on an adventure game. Reception children are developing a good sense of past and present through their study of old toys but when sorting toys they only use one of the possible criteria. For example, they select old toys due to their wear and tear, rather than their style or materials. Their ability to recognise such differences improves with models of things within their own experience, such as horse boxes and Land Rovers.

Physical development

54. Most children are likely to attain the early learning goals in this area of learning. It was not possible to observe children taking part in larger physical activities such as games. However, the planning shows that this work does happen, especially in the warmer weather. In the classroom, the nursery children are provided with a good range of activities that develop their manipulative skills such as, for example, painting, the use of pegboards, drawing and the use of the mouse. Reception children use construction apparatus with broadly appropriate manipulative skills. They all go swimming on a weekly basis during the spring term, and this provides a sound basis for further lessons in other years.

Creative development

55. Most children are likely to attain the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. In the nursery, soft materials such as dough provide children with opportunities to create imaginative shapes and models. Painting opportunities are regularly provided for all children and their work is valued through displays and the opportunity to take it home. In reception, children are challenged by the provision of a range of creative opportunities. For example, in one art lesson they were able to use wood or stone to create imaginative sculptures, which they painted. Most are able to speak articulately about their work and why they made the choices. For example, one girl likened her work to the ruined walls of a local castle.

ENGLISH

56. Standards throughout the school are in line with those found nationally. However, standards are strong in speaking, listening, and reading and this hides the weaknesses in writing in the junior years, which the school has recognised and intends to address. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection at a broadly average level but this does not reflect accurately the hard work put into the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy or the changes to test results each year caused by the small number of pupils taking the tests. For example, in 1999 standards fell sharply due to a year group with a high proportion of special educational needs. Standards in 2000 rose again to be broadly in line with the national average.
57. The results of the national tests taken at the end of Year 2 in 2001 were lower than usual but not linked to teacher ineffectiveness. Over the previous three years, standards in reading and writing at the end of Year 2 were above or well above average. In particular, the present Year 4 had reading standards that were very high and in the top five per cent of schools nationally.
58. At the end of Year 6, a broadly average number of pupils attained the expected level in 2001 but none attained a higher level. This reflects a lack of appropriate achievement among the more able pupils, especially in writing. When compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, standards were well below average and not enough pupils made satisfactory progress when compared with their results at the age of seven.
59. The small size of each year group makes any year-on-year comparisons unsafe but there are lessons to be learned from the test results. The school has shown it is willing to do this through its recognition of the need to

address standards in writing, which is where the major weakness in standards lies. In the tests for seven-year-olds, girls over the past five years have consistently performed at a level below the boys, although there were no evident differences in provision or attainment during the inspection. At the end of Year 6, these differences are currently less evident and there is no significant difference in the provision or the attainment for different groups within the school.

60. Children's speaking and listening standards are broadly average when they enter the school. Opportunities to develop these skills are provided regularly in English and other lessons, and in assemblies and pupils make good progress throughout the school. Many of the pupils are articulate and speak clearly and well whether to adults or to other pupils. They listen well to each other, as demonstrated very effectively in the infant class assembly. Discussion with pupils demonstrates they have good skills when describing work they had done in previous years and when talking about their books. In lessons they are attentive and sit quietly when teachers are explaining things but respond willingly and often enthusiastically when questioned.
61. Pupils' reading skills are good and reflect their good phonic skills and knowledge. This is demonstrated by the high level of phonic work being covered by the reception children who are already capable of sounding and writing 'ie' sounds within words. Throughout the school, pupils show that they enjoy books, they read a lot at home and at school, and they can talk intelligently about the books they have read. However, their skills in the use of the library for research purposes are less well developed. This reflects the fact that the school's library is undergoing refurbishment and it is not being fully used at present. In addition some pupils, such as those heard read in Year 5 are careless in their approach and although their skills are at an appropriate level, they do not take enough care in their reading to ensure that the meaning of the text is accurately understood. However, most pupils have a good knowledge of how information books work and how to use the contents and index facilities. The teachers have adapted the National Literacy Strategy appropriately to reflect the difficulties of teaching the mixed age classes. In particular, the junior class has pupils from four of the year groups and the teacher works hard to provide appropriate reading materials for each year group. Good workbooks, made by the teacher, provide opportunities to extend pupils' reading skills through a range of comprehension tasks that require pupils to make inferences from the texts and respond to the texts in a variety of ways.
62. The quality of pupils' writing is below average by the end of Year 6 and does not improve sufficiently during the junior years. The school has recognised this and is working to address the problem quickly and effectively. Although pupils have sound basic skills, can form letters correctly, write for a range of purposes, and occasionally demonstrate a good choice of vocabulary in their writing, their work has a number of weaknesses. These have resulted in the test results not being at the level of which pupils are capable. For example, the presentation of pupils' work is untidy and their handwriting does not show enough pride in their work. The spelling in their work often contain careless mistakes and their writing contains immature errors, such as anachronisms, which demonstrate that they are not approaching the tasks with a clear enough idea of the intended outcomes of the exercise. Displays show that pupils are capable of producing good poetry following the input of a day visit to a local school where a well-known poet led work in writing imaginatively. Pupils use a word processor to produce writing with different layouts and fonts. Other writing to indicate a sense of time was often thoughtful and sensitive. For example, one pupil wrote about her old friends after moving school 'I will not forget you even if I make new friends'. Pupils are able to create good imaginative and well-written work but the teaching does not always give them a clear objective and expectations for the learning intentions of each piece of work.
63. The pupils have good attitudes towards the subject and their behaviour in lessons is very good. They generally listen well, especially in the infant class, and they move between groups and tasks quickly and quietly. They also work well with a range of adults, including the teaching and special needs assistant who provides teachers with very good support in lessons and with volunteer parents and governors who regularly help in school.
64. The quality of the teaching is good throughout the school. In the infant class much of the teaching is very good and enables very effective learning to take place. Very good use is made of the teaching assistant and the work provided is challenging but appropriate. For example, in one lesson, children learned to understand the ways information is presented in library books through captions, labels, and diagrams. In the junior class, the teacher works hard to adapt the literacy strategy creatively and find work at an appropriate level for all year groups. However, expectations are not always sufficiently challenging for the higher attaining or the older pupils.
65. Teachers have worked very hard to introduce, and make appropriate for the school, the National Literacy Strategy. The planning is sound but is not always based closely enough on pupils' prior attainment.

Opportunities to use reading and writing skills in other subjects need to be clearer and planned more effectively. The subject coordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic but does not have enough opportunities to get an overview of the work in the junior class. Resources have improved and very good use is made of links with another local small school to share books and reduce unnecessary spending.

MATHEMATICS

66. The pupils' attainment is good in the infants and in the juniors and this has improved since the last inspection. This is because the teaching is good with teachers having a good knowledge of the subject and the lessons being well-focused and having a brisk pace. The National Curriculum test results over the last five years have fluctuated considerably in both key stages, as is often the case with very small numbers of pupils. However, the overall trend is upwards and broadly in line with the national picture. In 2001 the Key Stage 2 results were well above average and they showed that the progress that these pupils made in the juniors was well above the average when compared with pupils who had similar results at the age of seven. Although the pattern is irregular, more often than not the girls out-perform the boys. The school monitors this but since there is no identifiable pattern, no reason has been found. At the ends of each key stage, there is a small degree of underachievement by the pupils with highest attainment. This is because the teaching is planned for the age groups and sometimes insufficiently takes account of the ability of some individual pupils. However, younger pupils often profit from the teaching and expectations made of their older classmates.
67. The current seven-year-olds have a very good knowledge of the numbers that together make 10 and they are very quick at using this knowledge to help them combine larger numbers mentally. For example, during the inspection they quickly learnt how to add 9 by adding 10 and subtracting 1 and they could easily calculate $34+9$ and went on to sums such as $54+11$ using a similar strategy. The good knowledge of number combinations is taught to the six-year old pupils who were learning how to find the complementary numbers to 10 and that they may be added either way round. The standards of attainment of pupils entering the infants is often a little below average, but they learn well because of the good teaching and, by the time they are seven, standards are good.
68. The seven-year-old pupils often work with numbers up to 100 and understand the basic ideas of adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing. They have started to learn the multiplication tables and know how to use a range of strategies for working out numbers including a hundred square and number line. They understand how numbers can form patterns and have a reasonable knowledge of the importance of position when writing numbers above 9. The pupils have a sound understanding of other aspects of the subject, for example, of shapes, money and time, and have learnt ways of collecting data, although there is little recording of this in a graphical form. Although currently there is little attainment at a higher level than that expected for the age group, the pupils in the infant class are learning well and all are likely to achieve at least average standards, with a good proportion above this by the end of Year 2.
69. The eleven-year-olds have generally good attainment and a particularly strong knowledge of numbers. They are able mentally to calculate number problems such as 8×0.8 , $180 - 87$ and one eighth of 3200 quickly and accurately. They have worked with numbers up to one million and understand what a square number is and, for example how to find the square of 143, also knowing about square roots and some ways to calculate them. They have worked with fractions, percentages and ratios and know well how to multiply and divide numbers by 0.01, 0.1, 1, 10, 100, 1000, etc. They know about appropriate shapes and angles and their names and identifying features. They have worked with positive and negative co-ordinates and translated shapes. Some of what they have learnt is of an above average standard, but in some aspects the higher attaining pupils have not yet learnt enough to achieve above average standards. For example, while the pupils quickly extrapolated their knowledge of the angles of a triangle and could work out corresponding angles, they have not yet gained the accuracy of skills to measure to the nearest degree. From the work seen, the eleven-year-olds are already close to the standards expected of their age. However, they have had few opportunities to use their knowledge in new situations such as algebraic investigations or the presentation of data.
70. Although sometimes untidy, the pupils' work indicates a good interest in the subject and the pupils have completed a good amount of work. This is reflected in their keenness to answer the teachers' questions and the way that they usually concentrate well on their tasks. They behave well in most instances but a minority of the juniors occasionally chat during class discussions or during the teacher's explanations. In the infant class, the pupils often work in groups of the same age and collaborate to help each other to solve problems while the teacher helps another group. However, if they still have doubts they are reliant upon the teacher and interrupt her work with others.

71. The quality of teaching is good and occasionally very good. This is because of the teachers' good knowledge of the subject, the interesting methods used and the fast pace of instruction. In a lesson in the juniors, there was a series of quickly asked questions as a mental start to the lesson. The questions were at a challenging level and pupils needed to concentrate to respond. Some questions were easier than others and appropriately directed at particular year groups or individuals. They were asked using the correct terminology and the pupils responded very well, especially in a timed question and answer game in which the questions were carefully arranged to challenge appropriately the pupils of different ages. In the infant class, the pupils are skilfully taught to use appropriate strategies to calculate mentally and the teacher uses the class computers effectively as an aid to the teaching of one age group while using her time to teach another. However, in the infants, the pupils have not yet been taught how to be independent when the teacher is helping others and in the juniors the pupils are not all taught to refrain from chatting during whole class sessions. However, these weaknesses are insufficiently strong to affect the overall learning in the classes, which is generally good. The basic skills are well taught throughout and the pupils' tasks are interesting and challenging usually at the correct level for pupils of different ages. On occasions the work for the older pupils is planned appropriately for their age but underestimates the abilities of the most able.
72. The school keeps appropriate records of the pupils' progress and there are regular tests, which now include the use of an annual assessment to identify each pupil's level of attainment and any weaker areas of learning in the subject. The National Numeracy Strategy has been effectively introduced and the teachers have had a good amount of staff development. This has resulted in more teaching that is effective since the last inspection and, in turn, the pupils learn at a faster rate and standards are higher. Each class teacher evaluates the development needs for the subject in their own class and there is much informal discussion but little formal analysis of the whole school's provision or monitoring of work by the subject coordinator. While the teachers use the resources well and many lessons involve practical work or the use of computers, support materials for aspects of learning are untidily stored and require reorganising and updating.

SCIENCE

73. The standards of the current eleven-year-old pupils are satisfactory and similar to those expected. No lessons were observed for the infants but the work seen and discussions with the seven-year-olds indicate that standards are satisfactory. Throughout the school, the pupils' have a sound knowledge of most aspects of the subject but their understanding of experimental methods is under-developed. This is because the planned curriculum insufficiently promotes the pupils' progression in the skills and understanding needed to develop investigative methods well. The results of the National Curriculum tests were above average in 2001 and showed that the pupils had made better than average progress through the juniors. However, the number of pupils involved was too small for reliable comparisons between different years' results to be made. With only two pupils the results of the teacher assessments of seven-year olds is even less representative. However, despite the fluctuation typically found with small numbers, the results of the eleven-year-olds show a positive trend of improvement with more pupils achieving the expected standards than at the time of the last inspection.
74. The seven-year-olds remembered experiments they had carried out to discover how to make a bulb light with a battery and two wires; trials they had performed that demonstrated pushing and pulling forces; and how far a toy vehicle goes when running down ramps of different steepness. Although they were clear that only two wires were needed to light the bulb, they found it harder to explain the purpose or conclusions of the other experiments. Their ideas about making tests fair were limited to sharing the tasks involved equally between them. However, their past work has often been recorded on well devised worksheets, prompting some good predictions and allowing a good degree of interpretation. The work of the six-year-olds is appropriately simpler and indicates, for example, involved seeing how an elastic band stretches when greater weights are suspended from it. On entry to the school the pupils have broadly average attainment in their understanding and knowledge of the world and by the time they are five their attainment in science is usually satisfactory with the large majority of the pupils achieving the expected standards.
75. By the age of eleven, the large majority of pupils achieve the expected standards and an average proportion achieves highly. The current eleven-year-olds have a good sense of safety issues and a wide range of experiences of experiments they have observed and recorded. The curriculum has included an effective project about the use and abuse of various drugs. The pupils' work includes topics about forces of different types such as friction, gravity and water pressure, and about material changes either chemical or physical. The pupils' work records these experiments that they have either taken part in or observed. They record descriptions of what happened and the outcomes, but they are weaker in explanations and conclusions, despite the teacher's

occasional written comments such as “Why was that”. The work of older and younger pupils in the junior class is of little difference in its level of difficulty. In a lesson about dissolving and solutions, mixed-age junior groups boiled a concentrated sugar solution to see what was left. Other groups tried dissolving sugar in water at different temperatures. The oldest pupils knew something of the ways in which the test could be made fair, but this was at a simple level, for example, “one spoonful of sugar each time” but not how full the spoons should be. The pupils were shown how to record their findings on a line graph and they are able to answer questions well about the significance of points on the graph. This work and the pupils’ past work in books indicate that they have a wide range of experiences from which they have gained a broad knowledge and interest of the subject. However, the pupils’ understanding of designing a test and of scientific methods is under-developed.

76. Although some of the pupils’ written work is untidy and not improved after the teachers’ comments when marking, they are interested in the subject and enjoy carrying out experiments. The infants are able to make good predictions of what will happen and the juniors often write a good amount in describing what has happened. The pupils are aware of many of the safety issues in practical lessons and are very sensible with equipment taking suitable care in carrying out their tests. Their behaviour is at least satisfactory and often good and they collaborate well. Any pupils with special educational needs are fully included and given help in carrying out their tasks. They are also skilfully drawn into whole class discussions through careful questioning.
77. The quality of teaching is satisfactory for the juniors, but cannot be judged in the infants as none was observed. A great deal of enthusiasm is transmitted to the pupils, who respond well. Teaching transmits a good amount of information and explanations are of good quality. Many lessons involve practical work and this helps the pupils to learn well. However, there is too little emphasis on the pupils’ progressively gaining an understanding of scientific enquiry and this is because of weaknesses in curriculum plans. The children have too few opportunities to plan their own experiments and predict which variables should be controlled. Much of their practical work has demonstrated scientific phenomena but seldom has it helped them to explore and to discover. The level of class discussion is usually of good quality and questioning is used very well to help pupils remember and reflect on their learning. For the most part the correct terminology is introduced and quickly learnt by the pupils. While the level of challenge for the younger pupils is good, the thinking of the oldest and higher-attaining pupils is not engaged fully in discussions and tasks that result in coming to conclusions and gaining generalisations about the subject. Such aspects of the school’s provision are currently limiting the degree of high attainment at the ends of each key stage. The school has rightly identified the subject as a focus for review and will need a whole-school emphasis on scientific enquiry, which is then monitored in practice.

ART AND DESIGN

78. Pupils aged seven and eleven achieve standards that are above those expected nationally. This is partly due to teacher expertise and partly due to very good use of outside expertise and local artists with a good variety of skills. Standards have improved since the last inspection. Evidence for the current inspection has been drawn largely from displays and children’s work, as it was only possible to observe one lesson. Pupils in all year groups achieve well and all make equally good progress.
79. The one lesson in Year 1 and 2 provided pupils with a good opportunity to build on earlier work about sculpture. Children had worked on a very good almost life size model of a running man made from card, boxes and silver foil. In addition, they had made small ‘sculptures’ using lollipop sticks and card. The teacher now provided the opportunity to use wood and stone, from fallen branches and from the garden, to create imaginative structures that they then painted. This work was somewhat over directed and this resulted in pupils trying to produce a recognisable object rather than a more imaginative creation, but they made good progress in understanding how the materials can be used and how one thing can be seen in the shapes of something else. For example, one child turned a long tapering slate into an elephant’s face and trunk.
80. The pupils worked with concentration to produce something of which they could be proud. They made improvements in their learning about how different surfaces can be fixed and how they accepted paint. Pupils were well behaved and attentive while the teacher explained the task and they showed a good level of appreciation of each other’s work. The teaching was good. The teacher had well prepared resources available for pupils and the teaching assistant provided good support. There was a missed opportunity to develop pupils’ knowledge and understanding of famous artists while introducing the lesson, but this is an aspect of the school’s work that is normally strong.

81. Other evidence shows that a good range of materials is used in lessons. Year 1 and 2 pupils have made salt dough faces which they painted. There is a good link to mathematics in the creation of well-made snowmen to be used as a number line and for counting and calculating activities. Clay has been used by older pupils through the making of thumb pots, and through making tiles with a local potter. These have formed a very imaginative and colourful decoration in the school entrance hall. With a local felt artist, pupils created a very good frieze of felt showing a landscape. All of these examples of work show the good progress pupils make in acquiring a range of skills. The use of sketchbooks is a recent development and they are not yet used regularly or to their full potential. More opportunities for observational drawing need to be sought. Good work based on aboriginal patterns and paintings has been carried out and this gives pupils a good enrichment of their cultural understanding about the art from different countries and times. In addition, work on Indian patterns and the link to the paisley design is good. Another artist has talked about her painting of Noah's Ark and this has helped older pupils to understand some of the creative processes required in starting a work of art. They then created good pictures of their own magical creatures. Although having a very good range of artists in school the pupils do not have the opportunity to visit art galleries. This is an area of weakness that the coordinator has recognised and plans to address.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

82. It was not possible to observe any lessons during the inspection. However, evidence from photographs and displays of pupils' work shows that standards are broadly in line with those expected by the age of seven and eleven and this has improved since the last inspection. Weaknesses found in the planning of the curriculum to ensure that all aspects were covered have been addressed appropriately. A typical range of skills is taught and pupils meet the full range of activities expected in the subject.
83. In the junior class, a rolling programme of food technology provides pupils with a different theme each year linked to the class topic. For example, the present scheme makes room for work on Tudor food, making healthy soup and, most recently, making Christmas cakes with icing and marzipan decorations. This was linked to a further design topic through the designing and making of a box to put pupils' individual cakes in. Computers were used to create labels for the boxes. Other work linked to topics is also evident. For example, pupils make Victorian toys to learn about the assembly of different mechanisms for movement. More effort recently has been put into using soft as well as hard materials. Younger pupils designed and made Christmas hats from an appropriately limited range of materials and colours.
84. The planning has improved but still does not contain a clear progression of skills to ensure that the activities chosen have a purposeful focus and build appropriately on that which has gone before. Good photographic records are kept of pupils' work. In a good link with outside agencies, the school took part in a Young Engineers project run by the local Business Partnership. In addition, a visiting creative arts teacher helped the pupils to design and make shadow puppets, with which they then performed short plays.

GEOGRAPHY

85. Standards attained by pupils at the end of Year 6 are satisfactory. There was insufficient evidence available during the inspection to judge the standards in the infants. This was the situation at the time of the last inspection. From the work seen and one lesson observation, the eleven-year-old pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the course of a river and learnt associated words such as source, meander and tributary. They can interpret maps and use four-figure grid references, for example, to locate local well-known landmarks, using contour lines. They have studied an Indian village and made many comparisons. A pupil from the local secondary school who had been to this village shared a very good selection of photographs as well as telling the pupils about the village. This has also helped with the development of pupils' social and cultural understanding. Their work shows careful interpretations of the social, climatic, built environment and other differences and similarities to an English village. Work recorded in photographs and writing in project book format indicates that the pupils have satisfactory learning in a small number of additional topics.
86. Teaching is good and this is supported by good subject knowledge and exciting lessons that are made relevant to the pupils. The long-term planning has improved since the last inspection and now helps the teachers to plan lessons that provide progression in their understanding and skills as well as to providing knowledge and this feature promotes progress strongly. However, the oldest and most able pupils could be challenged more to reach above average standards. The school has a satisfactory set of resources that are used well to provide practical lessons in which the activities are interesting and informative. More are borrowed

or found during a topic. However, sheets and materials to support the pupils' learning are untidily stored and retrieval is difficult. The marking of the pupils' work does not encourage the pupils to make their work neater and this leads to undated work, in some cases, that is untidy. Any pupils with special educational needs are appropriately supported by the use of appropriate questioning.

HISTORY

87. Attainment is good at the end of the infants and satisfactory at the end of the juniors. One lesson was seen in each key stage and much evidence of the pupils' past work and projects was reviewed. Because the teaching is very knowledgeable, enthusiastic, and brisk, and the content is made clearly relevant to the pupils and their situations, their learning is of good quality particularly in the infants and the lower half of the juniors. Overall, the school's provision has improved since the time of the last inspection and standards in the infants and lower half of the juniors are higher. This is largely because of the improvements to the long-term plan, which now promotes progression in skills and understanding.
88. The seven-year-old pupils have a good understanding of representing the passing of time on time lines and know how to place a number of events in the latter half of the twentieth century. They have gained skills to compare the ages of objects, such as toys from different periods, and have a good sense of their own growth and the changes over time. Such relevant and practical experiences have helped the pupils to gain a good sense of the passage of time. In a lesson, the junior pupils used a Victorian map and census information to research aspects of people who lived in properties in the village. Several of the pupils were able to identify the houses in which they currently live. They were able, in an interesting and lengthy class discussion, to make deductions about these Victorians' roles and some about aspects of their lives. These discoveries also linked with a previous lesson in which the school's logbook had been used. For example, a vicar visiting the school in the 1880s was found to have lived next door to the house in which a current pupil lives. The pupils were quickly able to investigate independently and were taught the common terminology and abbreviations used in the period allowing further interpretation of the sources. For the younger pupils there was a high level of enquiry but the older pupils did not extend their thinking to evaluate the relative strength of different forms of evidence, or discuss the reasons for the changes in the built environment or social context since the period.
89. All the pupils show a good deal of interest in the subject and are keen to find out more about the past. The juniors were eager to discuss with their classmates aspects of how the village had changed and the identification of well-known buildings and their use in Victorian times. This discussion was sometimes during the teacher's explanations and occasionally distracting, however, the pupils remained on task and were good at helping each other. Generally behaviour is satisfactory and the interest that the pupils have is evident in discussions about past visits and projects they have undertaken.
90. Teaching is good. This is largely because of the good subject knowledge of the teachers and because the long-term planning puts a strong emphasis on the key skills and understanding that the pupils will gain. This emphasis on the key aspects of skills and understanding is translated well into practical lessons in which the pupils use primary evidence to gain knowledge as well as skills and understanding about historical processes. In the infant class, lesson planning cleverly combines the needs of the different aged pupils and provides challenge for all. In the junior class, there is a very good level of discussion and the pupils are taught much historical information. However, the understanding and skills of the older, higher attaining pupils are sometimes not challenged enough for them to evaluate the nature of different forms of evidence. The teachers use artefacts very well although the school owns few. They are often borrowed or collected by staff and pupils and provide pertinent evidence. This is complemented by a sound stock of papers and books with information from the past. Pupils with special educational needs receive good help and support from their class teachers. The subject is occasionally used for pupils to write at length and practise literacy skills.
91. The subject is considerably enriched by a good number of educational visits and visitors. Such experiences are recorded, often by photographs and written work, to enable the pupils to remember and reflect on their experiences. The number of such trips has been reduced because of the impact of foot and mouth disease in the area but past visits have included a residential visit involving learning about Tudor buildings and life, a stately home and a Norman Castle. Many of the photographs indicate that the learning has been practical and this has been effective in helping the pupils to remember many of their experiences. Assessment, recording and the monitoring of attainment are currently under-developed and largely informal, but the pupils are known well by the teachers and their work is often shown to the other staff.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

92. Pupils' levels of attainment are broadly in line with those expected at the ages of seven and eleven and this has been maintained since the last inspection. However, although computer resources have been updated and are now good, older pupils' experiences with aspects of the curriculum have been limited by the lack of certain resources in the past. This is particularly true for the use of computers to monitor and control external events. However, this has now been addressed and the purchase of new resources means that the school is now able to plan the teaching of these skills into the curriculum. E-mail facilities are now available for pupils but have yet to be used. A school web-site is newly up and running and is intended to display more examples of pupils' work in the future.
93. A strength of the provision is the way the computers are used effectively as a tool in various subjects. For example, in one good geography lesson in the junior class, pupils used an environmental database to research the definitions of vocabulary used in a river study. They were able to access the information well and their knowledge of terms such as 'watershed' and 'source' improved. The teacher provided effective worksheets that were matched to the pupils' different ages and abilities well and this enabled pupils from four of the year groups to make appropriate use of the same resource.
94. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use a range of software to support their work in different lessons. They can click and drag pictures in sequencing activities and answer simple number problems. They follow the text from a reading book on the screen while listening to the book on headphones. This gives them confidence in their reading of the 'real' book. Older pupils use word processing software to produce a range of written work, including newspaper style reports and poetry. They can change font shapes and sizes and show satisfactory ability in cutting and pasting. By the age of eleven they can edit their work well and correct passages of writing with deliberate errors.
95. Pupils observed using the computers throughout the school did so enthusiastically but also with a good level of respect for the hardware. They look after the computers and listening centres well and no examples of carelessness were evident. They share well when two pupils are using the software at the same time. Pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 persevere when given tasks on the computer and they show pride in achieving the learning expected of them.
96. Although no specific information and communication lessons were observed, the effective use of computers in other lessons resulted from good teaching. The teachers and support staff have a good understanding of how the resources can be deployed effectively and it was rare to see a lesson that did not involve some appropriate computer use. Teachers make good use of the digital camera as a resource and for the recording of pupils' work. Not enough work is planned with a programmable robot and this would help further improve pupils' skills in control technology. Teachers are also using the computer appropriately as an aid to producing professional looking worksheets for pupils and as a resource for occasional lesson plans and schemes of work.
97. The resources have improved dramatically since the last inspection. Both classrooms now have a range of networked computers and the ratio of pupils to computer is above that usually found in primary schools. The teachers have undergone training and are more familiar now with both hard and software. Very good use has been made of the opportunity to work within a cluster of small schools with the support of staff with superior technical expertise at the local secondary school. This offers effective and safe access to the Internet and to e-mail and represents good value in the use of available funds.

MUSIC

98. During the inspection, no lessons were seen and no overall judgements can be made. This was the situation at the time of the last inspection. The subject is taught throughout the school by an enthusiastic coordinator and there are good opportunities for learning to play instruments and for performing. Parents feel that the subject is a strength of the school.
99. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn to play recorders, brass instruments, and guitars and in playing these most pupils quickly reach a competence appropriate for playing with others and performing harmoniously. The National Curriculum programmes of study are planned for and often they are taught in lessons alongside aspects of religious education. In assemblies, the quality of singing is good generally and the pupils playing guitars and recorders do so well with a good sense of rhythm. They are enthusiastic about playing and the other aspects of the subject.
100. The co-ordinator has some musical training but, as a part-time teacher, finds it difficult to secure further training. There are few means to monitor standards in the school overall, but the pupils having instrumental tuition are able to use these skills within lessons that teach the National Curriculum programmes of study. However, planning is weaker for aspects of listening and appraising and this is partly because the school has a very limited collection of recorded music from around the world, different cultures, and different periods. While the pupils have good experience of folk music, opportunities for widening the range of recorded music available are limited.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

101. At the last inspection, the quality of teaching was criticised. It was not possible to observe any physical education during this inspection but there is evidence that the weaknesses found then have been largely addressed and improvements through training for teachers and better resources are clear. As no lessons were observed, it is not possible to make an accurate judgement about standards. However, all pupils regularly go swimming and, although this takes up a large part of the time allocated for physical education, it means that all achieve the expected standards by the time they leave the school.
102. After the last inspection, the school received a high level of support from a local advisory teacher. This was intended to extend the knowledge and expertise of the staff and the evidence is that this has been successful. Resources have been improved by specific equipment for games and an accompanying scheme, and very good value for these is achieved through sharing them with other local small schools.
103. Good use is made of outside expertise to support that of the teachers. Coaches in a range of sports such as cricket and basketball are welcomed into the school to work with pupils. The school provides pupils with opportunities for team and competitive games. These have been hindered recently because of travel restrictions due to the foot and mouth epidemic. Teams play football and netball with pupils from other schools. The staff encourage pupils to extend their skills by joining local sports clubs, although this tends to support the boys achievement rather than the girls as there are fewer opportunities for them locally. Within the school, the headteacher has made very good use of the grounds by setting up an orienteering course. This activity provides the older pupils with good opportunities to both compete and collaborate.
104. The school has always taken junior pupils on residential visits. These represent an important broadening of horizons and provide opportunities well beyond those available in the school. Recent visits have provided opportunities for hill walking, canoeing and orienteering. The small size of the school hall limits the indoor opportunities available to pupils, but this is balanced by the good playing field and hard play areas.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

105. It was not possible to observe any lessons but evidence from talking to staff and pupils, and the scrutiny of pupils' work enables judgements about standards to be made. By the ages of seven and eleven most pupils have standards that are broadly in line with those expected for their ages, and with the objectives set out in the locally agreed syllabus. This has been maintained since the previous inspection. Evidence from previous year groups shows that by the end of Year 6 standards are often above average. In particular, the presentation of pupils' work and the neat and tidy writing and illustrating of their work provides a very good role model for their work in other subjects.

106. The curriculum planning is good and makes a good contribution to pupils' achievements. The scheme of work, largely devised by the subject co-ordinator, and divided into a four year rolling programme, ensures that all statutory requirements are met and all areas of the agreed syllabus are covered. Major religions other than Christianity taught include Islam and Judaism. Good extensions to the curriculum are planned through visits to places of worship, including a mosque while on a residential visit, and a Quaker meeting-house. Visitors to the school also provide a good and effectively used resource. For example, local clergy regularly take good quality assemblies. During the inspection, one vicar made good use of pupils acting a story on the theme of sharing. Dance is used to teach aspects of spirituality and reflection.
107. The work evident in books and on display shows that the teaching is good with very high expectations of all pupils. Writing about specific topics is often thoughtful and the balance between the use of worksheets and pupils doing their own writing is good. In Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 pupils' learn about famous people such as Florence Nightingale, in work linked to history topics but with the emphasis on the person's spiritual dimension and the good works they performed. In Year 3, writing about Bible stories shows a good understanding of the parable of the lost sheep. Junior pupils also study a good range of festivals from different faiths and cultures. For example, recent work includes learning about Eid, Diwali, Remembrance Day and the Christmas story.
108. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have good opportunities to develop writing skills when creating their own version of the life of Mother Teresa. They have a sound understanding of aspects of Hinduism and the festival of Diwali, together with stories about gods. They know the story of Joseph and the Christmas story. Younger pupils cover the same work and learn the same topics and stories but receive good extra support with their written work to make it more appropriate.
109. The subject co-ordinator, who teaches in the school on a part time basis, has worked hard to plan an effective curriculum covering all necessary aspects of the agreed syllabus. Great efforts are made to extend pupils' horizons and give them a good overview of the diversity of faiths found nationally. In addition, good use is made of local resources and clergy. Overall, the subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.