

INSPECTION REPORT

GREAT BERRY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Basildon

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 114908

Headteacher: Mrs G D Stocker

Reporting inspector: John Lilly
12487

Dates of inspection: 18 – 21 June 2001

Inspection number: 192729

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 -11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Forest Glade
Langdon Hills
Basildon
Essex

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr K Thompson

Date of previous inspection: March 1997

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			Equal opportunities	
			English as an additional language	
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27736	Jeremy Collins	Team inspector	Foundation stage	
			Art	
			Design and technology	
19026	Brian Downes	Team inspector	Special educational needs	
			Science	
			Information and communication technology	
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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7 - 11
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	12 - 14
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	14 - 16
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	16 - 20
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	20 - 23
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	23 - 24
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	24 - 27
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	27 - 28
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	29 - 32
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	33 - 52

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Great Berry is a large infant and junior school with 474 girls and boys on roll between the ages of 4 and 11. The buildings are modern and have recently been extended to meet the needs of a rising roll. Most pupils join the school aged four with slightly below average attainment and stay in the school until they are eleven. A lower than average number of pupils are on the register of special educational needs. Most of the pupils come from the locality of the school, a pleasant area of mainly modern detached and semi-detached owner-occupied housing on the outskirts of Basildon. Most of the pupils come from homes that are socially and economically more advantaged than the national average, and a smaller than average proportion is eligible for free school meals. Very few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds.

The school has the stated mission to be 'a caring place to learn and grow' and the school's aims include: to provide an education that meets the needs of pupils, parents and the community by consistent good practice, and encouragement in pupils' self-belief and a determination to succeed. The school is recognised as an Investor in People.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Great Berry is a good school. It does most things well, many very well and some excellently. Standards are high and improving. The headteacher provides very strong and determined leadership and the school is effectively managed. Teaching is good overall, and at the Foundation Stage and in Year 6 it is excellent. The curriculum meets pupils' needs and provision for personal development is very good. Pupils make good progress, in the main joining the school with slightly below average attainment and leaving with above average attainment. The school provides an excellent environment in which to learn and provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher's leadership of staff and pupils is very effective;
- The teaching across the curriculum is good, especially in the development of speaking, listening and reading; attainment in these skills is very high;
- The teaching at the Foundation Stage and in Year 6 is excellent;
- Standards in art, information and communication technology and religious education are well above expectations;
- The provision for personal development is very good, helping pupils to behave very well and develop as balanced and confident young people with high aspirations;
- The school manages its finances very well;
- The accommodation provides an exciting and stimulating place in which to learn.

What could be improved

- School's policies and planning do not provide clear enough targets or guidance for raising standards further;
- The use of assessment and marking to raise standards;
- Very good practice in teaching is not sufficiently shared amongst staff;
- The preparation of pupils for life in a multicultural society is not sufficiently comprehensive;
- There is insufficient management time to ensure that the support for pupils with special educational needs meets all requirements.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The previous inspection report (March 1997) described the school as 'successful' and it remains so. Improvement since that time has been good. The curriculum is more closely related to what the pupils should achieve, and is better planned. Subject co-ordinators play a more effective role. Teaching is much better matched to each pupil's needs, although there is still work to be done. The school's policies, procedures and planning are much improved but still need greater precision defining the standards and quality to be achieved. Standards of attainment have risen slowly, but the school reports that progress in this respect has been restricted by difficulties over recruitment of high quality staff. Staffing is now more stable, and improvement is accelerating. The school now provides good value for money.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	A	A	B	B
mathematics	A	B	A	A
science	A	B	D	D

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

In national tests and assessments for pupils aged seven in 2000, results were above the national average for reading, below for writing, well below for mathematics and in-line for science. Attainment overall was below the average for similar schools, and standards over recent years had declined. However, since last year attainment of current pupils has risen in all subjects, and attainment in 2001 in national tests and assessments promises to be above the national average and broadly in line with similar schools. Standards attained in national tests by pupils aged eleven have tended to remain static or even decline over recent years. Standards attained by pupils aged eleven in 2000 were well above the national average in mathematics, above this average in English and below in science; these matched the comparisons with averages for similar schools. Attainment of current pupils has improved significantly and promises to be well above the national average in 2001, and above that for schools where pupils attained similar standards when seven. Attainment of the very able pupils tends to be too low. Present targets do not match sufficiently the potential of the school to raise attainment.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils are keen to come to school, work hard and succeed. They have very good attitudes to their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour, with very rare exceptions, is very good. Bullying is very rare and dealt with firmly when it occurs.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils develop very well in maturity and responsibility, and become perceptive, ambitious and responsible young people. Relationships are very good between adults and pupils, and amongst pupils.
Attendance	Attendance is good.

The above comments give a very positive picture. Despite this, procedures for helping pupils understand how to improve their work are less effective than they should be.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Teaching is good overall, with many very good and excellent features. Forty-six per cent of the lessons seen were very good or excellent, almost 80 per cent good or better and virtually all were at least satisfactory. Teaching at the Foundation Stage and in Year 6 was excellent overall. Literacy and numeracy are taught well, and information and communication technology, art and religious education very well. This produces good learning as a result of which pupils make good and often very good progress. They take a growing individual responsibility for improving their work but are insufficiently aware of how best to do so. Girls and boys at different levels of attainment make equally good progress. Even so, the teaching does not provide sufficient challenge for the very able pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant to pupils' present and future lives. It is significantly enriched by activities beyond the classroom.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Although provision, overall, is good, the co-ordinator has insufficient time to manage the provision and ensure all requirements are met.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision is satisfactory.
Provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes very good provision for the personal development of pupils, particularly for their spiritual, moral and social development. However, not enough is done to prepare pupils fully for life in a society of many faiths and cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides well for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils.

With very rare exceptions, there is a very positive relationship between home and school, and parents are becoming increasingly involved in their children's learning; the school listens to the views of parents, even when there needs to be agreement to disagree. The curriculum provides a rich and varied programme of learning, well suited to all pupils' needs.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides strong and determined leadership for pupils and a committed team of staff. She is effectively supported by senior and middle managers.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors provide effective support and direction for the school, and meet their statutory responsibilities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Staff and governors approach this task rigorously. They have made a good start at using monitoring and evaluating to highlight areas for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	This is strength of the school and procedures are very good.

The school has a well-qualified and stable staff. The accommodation is excellent and the resources for learning very good. Management is strong but planning is insufficiently related to precisely specified levels of quality and targets. The school applies the principles of best value but, as yet, not in ways that are fully effective, for example when comparing the school's performance with that achieved by even more effective 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 enjoy school, make good progress and develop well;• The teaching is good;• Parents are kept well informed and can discuss concerns with staff;• The school is well led and managed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provision for special educational needs;• Homework;• Activities outside lessons;• Occasions of bullying;• Stability of staffing;• Relationships with staff and governors.

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views. They also agree that improvements are necessary in provision for special educational needs. Inspectors found that homework is set regularly and meets the pupils' learning needs. There is a good and varied range of activities outside lessons. Bullying is very rare and dealt with firmly when it occurs. Inspectors find that relationships with the very large majority of parents are very good. The school now has a stable staff, and this promises to remain the case.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Attainment and progress are good, and the attainment overall of current pupils shows improvement since the last inspection. Most children enter the school aged four with slightly below average attainment, and in most areas of their learning leave aged eleven with attainment that is above expectations. Therefore, pupils make good progress between Reception and Year 6. Progress at the Foundation Stage and in Year 6 is very good, and it is close to this level in Year 3, where pupils have had some catching up to do. Progress in Years 1 and 2 is at least good and often better. Progress is good and often very good during Year 4 and in Year 5 it is good, but very good progress is slightly less frequent. This provides a picture of an effective school very close to becoming very effective although, at present, the very able pupils receive insufficient help to attain the very highest standards. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language usually make good progress.
2. In national tests and assessments for pupils aged seven in 2000, the results were above the national average for reading, below for writing, well below for mathematics and in line for science. Attainment overall was below the average for similar schools, and standards over recent years have declined. However, attainment of current pupils in Year 2 has improved in all subjects, and unconfirmed results in national tests and assessments for 2001 promise to be above the national average and broadly in line with similar schools.
3. Standards, overall, in national tests for pupils aged eleven have tended to remain static. In tests in 2000, pupils' attainment was above average in English, well above in mathematics, but below in science. Compared with schools where pupils had similar attainment aged seven, results were above average in English, well above in mathematics and below average in science. These pupils had made good progress. However, attainment of current pupils has improved significantly and unconfirmed results in national tests for 2001 promise to be above the national average. Current pupils in Year 6 have made very good progress.
4. Past performance in tests and assessments has been significantly depressed by the school being unable to recruit and retain staff of sufficient quality, a situation aggravated by the need to recruit additional staff as the roll grew. This caused significant discontinuity in teaching, and some unsatisfactory teaching, especially in Year 2. These weaknesses have now been addressed, and the school is well placed for rapid and consistent improvement, signs of which are already very apparent.
5. The school does not address the attainment and progress of the very able pupils with sufficient precision; for example, providing teaching and learning opportunities for them to attain the very challenging Level 6 at age 11. The school's present targets do not address sufficiently the potential of the school to raise attainment. In the main they are cautious predictions, and reflect neither the increasing effectiveness of the school nor its capacity to achieve very high standards, now that staffing is more stable.

6. Attainment shows a steady improvement from Reception to Year 6. At the Foundation Stage almost all pupils are well placed to meet the goals for this stage of their learning, and most will exceed them. Attainment in Year 2 is in line with national expectations in English, mathematics, design and technology, history, geography, music, and physical education, and above in science and art, and well above in information and communication technology. Standards in religious education are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.
7. Attainment in Year 6 in English, science and history exceeds national expectations, and it is well above national expectations in art and information and communication technology. Attainment in mathematics, design and technology, geography, music and physical education meets national expectations. Standards in religious education are well above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This provides a picture of an improving and effective school. Where standards are in line, this is usually because too small a proportion of pupils exceeds the expected level, for example mathematics, or represents too narrow a breadth of attainment as in music. Current teaching and the planning that underpins it provide a very strong foundation for improvement, improvement that is already very evident. Overall, attainment and especially progress of current pupils show significant improvement since the last inspection.
8. Underpinning this positive picture are the very good listening, speaking and reading skills of the pupils and their good writing skills. These empower the teaching, drive the learning forward and raise attainment in all subjects. Equally, pupils have very secure numeracy skills and use them effectively in most subjects. The very high attainment in information and communication technology enables pupils to use computers as a powerful learning tool. The current rapid improvement identified by this inspection is the result of several significant factors. Firstly, the improved teaching throughout the school; secondly, the success of the setting arrangements for literacy and numeracy; and, thirdly, the impact of individual target setting, especially in Year 6. All of these build upon the very good ethos for learning. Areas that are not sufficiently effective are the use of assessment data to provide helpful feedback to pupils, and provision of well-matched challenge and learning opportunities for the very able pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Behaviour, attitudes and personal development were reported to be good to very good at the time of the last inspection. These standards have been enhanced, especially in Year 6 where they are now very good. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.
10. Pupils have good attitudes towards the school. They work hard and respect the school environment; during the inspection, inspectors did not see any litter in or around the school.
11. Children in the reception classes settle quickly and get involved with the tasks at hand. Throughout the school, relationships are very good and there is very good racial harmony. Pupils respect each other, teaching staff and visiting adults. This is evident in religious education, for instance, where they discuss different values and beliefs. Almost all pupils are quick to help one another in lessons. Pupils are encouraged to develop a sense of self-esteem and responsibility for themselves. Opportunities to assume responsibility around the school are good overall and very

good in Year 6. The system for selecting members of the school council is very good and all pupils are aware of this simple procedure.

12. Pupils take responsibility for their environment and behaviour, and value the school's system of praising positive behaviour. Pupils are enthusiastic about 'achievement stickers' and take pride in receiving their certificates for good work and praiseworthy acts. The school's system for homework is satisfactory and most pupils are keen to complete homework and do so conscientiously. This self-motivated endeavour forms a strong foundation for further development.
13. The great majority of pupils take an active interest in what they are being taught and are keen to show what they can do. Most sustain a high level of motivation, concentration and good rates of learning, especially when lessons are well structured and when they are asked to work in groups. The teaching assistants, who respect pupils' needs and help them with a minimum of fuss, discreetly target pupils with special educational needs and the pupils respond well to this perceptive support.
14. Pupils move around the school safely and sensibly. They are aware of routines, and are polite to adults, visitors and each other. Pupils are aware of the school's rules on bullying and respond well to them. The school keeps a close eye on potential bullying. However, at the parents' meeting few parents expressed concern about it. The inspection team found no evidence of bullying amongst pupils; rare instances in the past had been dealt with firmly and appropriately. There have not been any exclusions in the recent past.
15. Attendance is good and procedures for ensuring good attendance are very effective. Pupils arrive promptly for lessons and all lessons start on time. This contributes positively to pupils' learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching is good overall, with many very good and excellent features; it has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Virtually all the teaching observed was at least satisfactory, and almost 80 per cent was good or better. Forty-five per cent was very good or excellent. The teaching at the Foundation Stage and in Year 6 is excellent; virtually all the teaching in these years was at least good, and most was very good or excellent. In Years 1 and 2, the teaching was good or better in more than 70 per cent of lessons and very good or excellent in more than a third. In Years 3 and 4, more than 60 per cent of the teaching was good or better, and more than a third very good or excellent. Teaching in Year 5 was good, but has less very good or excellent teaching when compared with other years.
17. The impact of the teaching on pupils' learning over time is also good and often very good. The progress of pupils and their attainment reflect the effectiveness of the teaching. Pupils make a very good start in reception classes and this good progress continues in Years 1 and 2. Progress speeds up in Year 3, but slows a little in Years 4 and 5. Progress in Year 6 is very rapid. These judgements are based upon the evidence of previous work, assessment records and hearing pupils read. These data highlight the strengths of the teaching. Because they are consistently well taught, pupils make at least satisfactory and usually good progress in all subjects, and they do so whatever their gender, age, or level of ability. This is

a direct result of the fundamentally very competent teaching, supported by effective subject leadership and management and focused staff development. The teaching of reading supports especially good progress because it is taught systematically, and pupils learn the supporting skills of listening and speaking because teachers seek continuous ways to develop these competencies. The specialist teacher of information and communication technology, who both teaches pupils and helps class teachers develop their skills, enables excellent learning. Teaching of religious education is very good throughout the school. This is because the scheme of work provides a strong and supportive structure that allows the strengths of each teacher to shine through.

18. As a result of the good teaching, pupils of different aptitudes and characteristics generally make equally good progress in their learning, although this overall judgement hides some variations. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported both by responsive teaching and by skilled teaching support from teaching assistants; they have helpful individual education plans that teachers use effectively. This support is most effective when teaching assistants teach highly targeted groups for specific learning objectives. There are very few pupils who are learning English as an additional language and most of them have highly developed language in their home language; they make rapid progress in the acquisition of English and gain full access to the general learning because teachers are good at developing language as a whole. The teaching of pupils of below average, average and above average ability is equally effective because most lessons take account of their needs. However, in some lessons teachers do not take into sufficient account the needs of pupils of very high ability. Such teachers planned lessons in which the work overall was too easy for these pupils, or gave them insufficient time to complete the challenging work set because they first had to wade through work they found too easy.
19. All teachers plan their work carefully and perceptively. This is most obvious when teachers and teaching assistants work as a team in planning and evaluating each stage in the teaching. Class management is a strength throughout the school, and is not simply control but produces the disciplined and purposeful learning that is highly self-motivated and reflective. In the main, lessons have clear objectives for skills to be gained, and these are reviewed in plenary sessions to help both teachers and pupils to evaluate what has been achieved and what needs more attention. This helps pupils gain a pride in their achievements. Most teachers use language skilfully to probe and extend the pupils' learning, allowing them to think through answers and make extended but well-considered responses. Teachers choose a good range of learning activities to support each stage in the learning, usually selecting activities that are well matched to each attainment level. When pupils work alone or in groups, teachers move rapidly from group to group making key suggestions or giving the key information that moves the learning forward. Most teachers create clear expectations and balance the needs to teach with equal place for pupils to learn on their own. They assess work frequently and use this to adapt their teaching, but too often it is not used sufficiently to feedback to pupils how to improve. Very good displays illuminate the learning and celebrate pupils' achievements. Homework is set frequently and consistently, and provides effective extension to the learning. Resources are well selected and used effectively. Marking is conscientious, but rarely makes clear why a pupil has succeeded, where and why they met problems and what they must learn next.

20. The teaching throughout the school helps pupils to gain the skills to learn on their own; this is supported by very good records of pupils' personal development. Pupils gain the ability to keep at a task even when they find it difficult, to collaborate with others to find solutions or improve their work, and to work rapidly yet carefully. Their teachers' high expectations are reflected in the standards pupils set themselves and in their evident pride in their achievements. This ethos of shared endeavour is founded upon good relationships between teachers and pupils and amongst pupils.
21. The very good and excellent teaching is exciting and inspiring for pupils. These lessons have clear and challenging objectives, and pupils go from activity to activity with secure continuity and an excitement concerning each new stage. Pupils take joy in each new challenge and burst with excitement when they achieve what they thought impossible. When the teaching is excellent, teachers drive the learning forward by extremely skilled use of suggestions, questions, little additional problems and feedback on how and why the pupils are making progress. They work extremely closely with teaching assistants, regarding them as equal members of the teaching team. They are the most effective users of the target-setting procedures implemented by the school, keeping each pupil's eye on the ball and reminding them of what they must do to reach the goal. These teachers exude confidence and warranted authority, confident in their expertise yet engaging pupils in the shared joy of learning.
22. In the uncommon lessons when teaching is satisfactory, the learning slows and becomes lack-lustre. This leads to pupils drifting off task and chattering amongst themselves. The drop in effectiveness has several causes. In these lessons, teachers lose confidence when their subject knowledge is only just secure, especially when using planning produced separately by another. The pace slows and questioning becomes more closed and pupils begin to lose track of the meaning and the purpose of the learning, focusing only on getting the task done. Although this describes unexciting teaching and learning, even in these lessons all pupils make progress because they do not like wasting their time and efforts.
23. At the core of the teaching is the continuous development of literacy and numeracy skills. These skills are taught effectively, and run as a continuum through teaching in other subjects. Especially good are the teaching of reading and the associated language skills of speaking and listening, and the way teachers enable pupils to use their developing numeracy skills.

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

24. The curriculum provided, including that for children in the Foundation Stage, is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. It is much improved since the previous inspection. It is relevant to all the pupils and is enriched through the provision of swimming and a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The provision promotes pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development well, and is further enriched by the use of visits and visitors who provide additional experiences, for example in music and games. The links between subjects are apparent in the way literacy is used throughout the school. The time allocated to each subject is appropriate, and careful monitoring is followed by improvement; for example, a reorganisation of the school day, ensures that this time is used efficiently. The arrangements made to teach pupils in Years 3 to 6 in ability sets for numeracy and literacy is having a positive effect on learning. There are schemes of work to

support each subject and this successfully addresses a key issue from the last inspection. The new schemes of work generally ensure satisfactory coverage for all subjects, although some give insufficient emphasis on the development of skills, for example in games.

25. Teachers and teaching assistants pay especial attention to the pupils with special educational needs and this allows such pupils to have good access to the general learning. Most pupils learning English as an additional language have good development in their home language and the teachers' skills in developing language skills as a whole allow these pupils to quickly access the general learning. Teachers plan delivery of the curriculum in ways that give good access for pupils of all levels of ability, with the slight exception of the very able. In some subjects, these pupils have too few opportunities to research, investigate and extend their learning, and their opportunities to learn become too narrow.

Literacy

26. The school makes very good provision for literacy. Effective teaching develops the core skills of listening, speaking, writing and, especially, reading. This allows the pupils to access the given curriculum, make it their own, and explore beyond the confines of class teaching.

Numeracy

27. The school makes good provision for the development of numeracy, planning the National Numeracy Strategy to good effect. The school's programme for developing number is particularly effective and results in high levels of attainment, especially in Year 6. The provisions for analysing data and engaging in investigations are not yet fully developed.
28. The school's provision for extra-curricular activities is good. An extensive range of activities is available; these include sports and games, music, and a French club. The pupils appreciate the provision made by the school and make very good use of these opportunities.
29. All pupils have full access to the curriculum and no exceptions are made on the basis of gender or other personal characteristics. The planning of the curriculum and the teaching that implements it promotes equality of access; everyone involved in the work of the school is committed to ensuring that all pupils participate fully in lessons and in other activities. The strong commitment of teachers and pupils to ensuring equality of opportunity is particularly evident in the way the older pupils help younger ones during playtimes and involve them in their activities. Even so, this happens more because staff want it to happen, rather than because it is given priority in the planning of the curriculum or because provision is evaluated rigorously to check whether equality and equity are the case.
30. The school does much for pupils' personal development within a framework that reflects their culture and background. The provision for personal, social and health education is good and well supported by the school's religious education and physical education programmes and through its science curriculum. Statutory requirements for sex education and drugs awareness are fully met and, in this context, good use is made of support from outside the school. The success of the whole programme for personal education is apparent in the confident way pupils

conduct themselves and in the way all show consideration for others. This consideration extends to the care for the environment of the school, for example by not causing litter and by wearing indoor shoes in the classroom.

31. The school has good links with the community and makes good use of visits to the local area, including the local supermarket where pupils are given opportunities to see the organisation behind the scenes. Even so, the school could usefully increase the links with faith communities. The police liaison officer makes regular visits to talk to the pupils about safety and to raise drugs awareness. Issues of bullying are addressed successfully through theatre workshops and contacts with other schools in the area. The school makes good use of visits and, in particular, the residential period on the Isle of Wight for pupils in Year 6. The school is well supported by the Great Berry Friends' Association, which raises substantial amounts of money each year. There are good links with the local playgroups. The structure of the day in the Foundation Stage is the same as in some of the playgroups to enable the children to make a smooth transition from one to the other. Parents have commented that the school prepares the pupils well for the move into secondary education. The pupils transfer to various secondary schools in the area and good use is made of visits and 'taster days' to prepare them for the move.

Provision for personal development

32. The school has maintained the standard of provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development identified in the last report. Provision is very good overall. It is very good for spiritual, moral, and social development, and satisfactory for cultural development.
33. Provision for spiritual development is very good. This is evident mainly through the school's programme for religious education and the daily assemblies, but also in creative, empathetic and reflective writing and reading. The school provides an environment where the pupils are valued and developed as individuals. Success is celebrated, for example through the award of certificates and through the high quality of the display of pupils' work; these encourage a growing awareness of personal significance and worth. There are good opportunities for pupils to explore feelings, for example through considerations by Year 1 of 'Am I really different?' and for Year 6 to think about their experiences in the school. There are occasions for real reflection, for example when pupils in Year 2 are invited to look into themselves in a quiet moment before they go out to play. When considering Bar Mitzvah in Year 6, pupils were given opportunities to consider what they might feel when they came of age. The school could usefully increase quiet times for reflection, building on the way a younger pupil said, 'Praying in assembly is the best bit of the day'. Pupils enjoy positive relations with their teachers and other pupils; they remember favourite events, and birthdays are marked and celebrated. The programme for religious education includes most of the world's major religions and festivals, with some particularly good work seen in Year 2 to celebrate Divali. The school's provision for a daily act of worship meets statutory requirements and makes good use of a weekly theme to link these occasions. The theme of the week runs as a pulse through every aspect of the school's life. In the best examples good use is made of a focal point, for example a candle; pupils are more involved and are given an opportunity to reflect quietly on the theme. Even so, the assemblies, and to some extent religious education, offer too few opportunities to reflect in silence, withdrawing from the hustle and bustle of the everyday.

34. Provision for moral development is very good. Pupils are encouraged to have a sense of right and wrong and to help others. Reasons why behaviour is right or wrong are discussed in many contexts. The school has a clear policy for behaviour management and each class has its own set of rules for behaviour. The pupils respond very positively and, consequently, very few incidents of inappropriate behaviour occur. Pupils appreciate the chance to win certificates for good behaviour and are really excited by the award for the best 'lining up' in the week. Teachers help pupils to have a good understanding of the need for fairness and honesty and of the need to help others. For example, they are learning to 'sign' in order to make a new child with hearing difficulties welcome in the school. Older pupils enjoy responsibility for looking after younger ones, for example in the swimming pool and at playtime; during one lunchtime, pupils of all ages played well together enjoying a good range of sporting and social activities. The quality of provision for this area of development is assured through good use of 'circle time', rewards and praise, and in the mutual respect between teachers and pupils.
35. Provision for social development is very good. The school works well as a community where pupils are encouraged to be independent and to take the initiative, for instance when clearing up after a lesson. There is a good sense of community and pupils take a real pride in their school and in their own achievements. They elect their own prefects and enjoy the benefits of the school council, which meets regularly and considers issues brought to its attention through a 'suggestions box'. They appreciate the way in which their efforts are celebrated through displays, and take care of the school through their avoidance of litter and by wearing indoor shoes around the building. The whole programme for social development prepares the pupils well for life as citizens and culminates successfully in the residential opportunities for Year 6. The school has made a good start in enabling pupils to agree targets, and then measure their achievements against them; this strategy is very effective in Year 6. It successfully helps pupils to take responsibility for their work. However, the school has yet to give pupils sufficient opportunities to set their own intermediate targets so that they plan how to meet them and then evaluate success at the end of the week, recording their growing achievement. Consequently, opportunities are missed for pupils to increase and deepen their understanding of their learning and achievements. Opportunities for debate are a good introduction to the way citizens must consider and weigh-up arguments.
36. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. It is promoted through subjects including religious education, art, music and history. Pupils learn about other cultures through religious festivals and special occasions. Their work in history includes learning about famous people, such as Ghandi, and learning about the contribution of past eras to our culture, for example the Tudors in Year 5 and a Victorian living room in Year 1. The travels of 'Barnaby Bear' are helping to raise pupils' awareness of the world in which they live. However, insufficient attention is paid to making pupils aware of the multi-cultural nature of the world and preparing them for life in a multi-cultural society. For example, there are insufficient opportunities in music, art and literature to learn about the achievements and creativity in cultures other than European. Similarly, the school does not use its skills at display sufficiently to express the cultural diversity present among world peoples and British society.
37. Taking the provision as a whole, these aspects of personal development have a very positive effect on the development and the learning of all the pupils. Whilst this

provision is evident in much of the school's work, it is not yet sufficiently explicit in curricular planning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. The last inspection found that the school provided satisfactory levels of support and guidance for pupils. Good improvement has been made since then; however, the management of the assessment, targeting and review of pupils' special educational needs are only satisfactory. Overall, procedures provide good support for pupils' welfare and guidance, and there are some very good features.
39. Adults and pupils feel safe in the very attractive and well-secured environment. The headteacher and staff are available before and after school and the great majority of parents value their support. The teaching assistants and midday assistants provide well for all pupils and give effective support, especially for pupils with special educational needs.
40. Health and safety procedures are very good and classrooms provide a stimulating and calm atmosphere in which to work. The Year 6 facilities are excellent. The display is of a very high standard and stimulates curiosity and a desire to strive towards even higher standards. The outdoor area, though pleasant is not yet completed; at present there is insufficient large equipment or shaded areas for pupils just to sit quietly. Members of the school council at break and lunchtimes bring out baskets with soft balls and skipping ropes, young pupils are given responsibility in choosing from the baskets and prefects are willing to join the activities, helping and encouraging the younger ones when requested. Current supervision at lunch and break time is very good.
41. Procedures for child protection are good and comply with locally agreed practices. Measures to promote good behaviour are effective and the school deals well with any inappropriate behaviour when this occurs. The school council provides a very good forum for the discussion of behavioural issues.
42. Pupils receive good personal guidance. Personal, social and health education lessons, 'circle time' (a session when pupils can discuss their feelings openly) and debating enable pupils to discuss a range of issues that are important to them. This is especially well managed in Years 1 and 2, where young pupils behave in a mature way. During the inspection week, the assembly theme, 'Actions speaks louder than words', formed part of daily discussion for the whole school, and pupils contributed effectively to the lessons that picked up the theme. Pupils appreciate the time that staff give to this aspect of their learning.
43. The school takes special care to provide an excellent environment within which pupils grow and learn. All appreciate the very good relationships within the school community and pupils comment on this positive aspect. A well-developed system of rewards provides many opportunities for pupils to take pride in their personal and academic skills and to develop a sense of responsibility towards each other; Year 6 pupils speak of the way their social understanding deepened during their residential visit to the Isle of Wight. Teachers' good personal knowledge of individual pupils is clear from pupils' individual educational profiles. Some individual lesson plans, however, are not clear enough to provide adequate guidance for pupils with special educational needs and, in some cases, the very highest attainers. Assessments and targets for all pupils are not yet fully in place and are therefore not sufficiently

matched to their needs. The system has already made a significant impact but is not, as yet, working to full effect because targets tend to be for too long a term. Some pupils with English as a second language and special educational needs are not identified early enough. In exceptional cases, targets for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are not used consistently enough in planning their work.

Support and guidance for pupils with special educational needs.

44. In the main, pupils with special educational needs are well supported and achieve well. They attain good standards in relation to their prior attainment and make good progress towards their individual targets. However, since the co-ordinator for special educational needs has insufficient time to meet her responsibilities, the relationship between the school and parents is not always secure, and the close checking that pupils are on the correct stage and receive the right nature of support cannot always be of sufficient precision.
45. Teaching provides good support for pupils with special educational needs. Teachers and teaching assistants know their pupils well and generally provide work that is challenging and at an appropriate level, providing perceptive guidance. Teachers have had sufficient but not extensive training for this aspect of their work. In the main, there are appropriately specific targets in most pupils' individual education plans that enable teachers to prepare work at a suitable level for pupils' individual needs. There is effective teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants, who provide effective, caring and skilled support for these pupils. Consequently, pupils with special educational needs show good attitudes to their work and behave very well in lessons and around the school.
46. Individual education plans are, in the main, good. They contain suitably specific and challenging targets, although not always based upon sufficient diagnosis of pupils' needs. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to all curriculum and other opportunities offered to pupils. There are satisfactory procedures in place for tracking their attainment and progress. These enable new targets to be set where appropriate. There are generally good formal and informal contacts with parents, but inspection evidence indicates that this is not invariably the case. There is a link governor for special educational needs and statutory requirements in this respect are met. Even so, the school's co-ordinator for special educational needs has insufficient time to meet her responsibilities in full. Consequently, the process for identifying pupils with special educational needs is too slow and they are often not identified at an early enough age for provision to be fully effective. In the case of some individual pupils, information from other agencies is not checked sufficiently against the information gathered in school and from parents. As a result, pupils are sometimes not at an appropriate stage of support for their needs to be met, as they grow older. The co-ordinator for special educational needs is a class teacher for four days a week. Bearing in mind that there has been an increase in the number of pupils with special educational needs, this does not allow her sufficient time to fulfil the role, especially in monitoring of teaching and pupils' progress, and the administrative tasks that are an essential part of the co-ordinator's role. There is also lack of clarity about the respective roles of members of the senior management team and the co-ordinator for special educational needs, which leads to confusion on the part of some parents.

Support for pupils learning English as an additional language

47. Pupils learning English as an additional language are very few in number, although the school believes their number may increase. Even if they arrive in the school with little English, most have good language development in their home language and good prior education. Consequently, well supported by teachers' general skills in language development, they rapidly acquire English skills and access to the curriculum. When necessary, the school receives expert support from the local education authority. However, at present, the school does not have sufficient expertise in diagnosing such pupils' needs.

Assessment

48. The school's arrangements for assessing and monitoring pupils' attainment and progress have improved markedly since the last inspection and are now good overall. However, the school recognises it still has some way to go; assessment is well developed in the core subjects but much less developed in the foundation subjects. The school now uses a range of assessment tools including regular assessment tasks in English, mathematics and science and national optional tests, and they are giving staff a good view of the overall effectiveness of the school. Samples of work arising from these assessment tasks are analysed so that targets for improvement can be identified. Although this work has led to effective improvements in the way the curriculum is organised, for example in the introduction of setting for literacy and numeracy, the impact of such analysis on other subjects is insufficient.
49. Records of assessment results are compiled for each year group, and increasingly teachers spot when a pupil's progress slows. Profiles of pupils' achievement are well developed in Year 6, with targets used to inform planning, and these are discussed with pupils; this constitutes good practice for others to emulate. Even so, there are insufficient interim and short-term targets for pupils to take as guidance and then accept responsibility for meeting day-by-day. Consequently, pupils do not sufficiently understand their own learning and how to improve. The extensive data accumulated for other year groups in assessment folders are not used sufficiently, in particular to identify and support individuals who excel, in order to provide consistent support.
50. Insufficient and inconsistent use is made of the National Curriculum Levels of attainment to define targets for improvement. As a result, targets based upon assessment, for the school as whole and individual years, tend to be cautious predictions rather than the challenging targets that ask the questions, 'are our results good enough?' and 'are they as good as achieved in the very effective schools similar in context to Great Berry?'. Targets tend to be based upon continuing present practice as teachers and pupils, rather than what could and ought to be achieved after improvements in teaching and learning.
51. Staff do, however, use assessment data to set targets for each pupil. These are agreed with each pupil, and invigorate, focus and motivate effective learning. This is a powerful tool for raising attainment in Year 6 but, even though teachers have made a good start, is less effective in other years. At present the school provides insufficient ways for pupils to do this frequently, continuously and systematically. Consequently, pupils receive insufficient feedback concerning where and why they succeed, why they meet problems and what they need to learn or do next. This is particularly the case with marking, and the teachers give pupils much better

guidance orally. This effective use of 'formative' assessment is particularly evident at the Foundation Stage and in Year 6.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

52. The last inspection report stated that relationships between the school and parents were 'sound' and that parents were involved appropriately with the school. Relationships with most parents are now very good, and their involvement in their children's learning good. Improvements have been made to the information parents receive about their child's work and progress throughout the year. Consultation evenings are well attended and the informative newsletters are a good source of communication between school and home. Opportunities for parents to view their children's work and become involved in their learning on a daily basis are good. There are useful books that go between home and school, and these keep parents informed as to their child's progress and allow them to make their own comments.
53. The annual report to parents is well written and contains satisfactory targets set by pupils and teachers. With rare exceptions, the reports give a picture of good relationships between home and school, underpinned by mutual respect and pride in the school's success.
54. The school is seeking to improve further these links between home and school. Parents responded well to a consultative questionnaire from the headteacher and the school is now analysing the results as part of the school's development planning. A few parents felt that a letter concerning behaviour, and action following misbehaviour, appeared to criticise parents. This was not intended, but better ways need to be found to involve some parents in solving such problems.
55. Parents are keen to help in the school and the school has worked hard to ensure that the parents assisting in the school are well informed through workshops and consultations with the teaching staff. The Parents Task Force supporting literacy and numeracy is well served by parents, and makes a significant contribution to the pupils' achievements. Teachers value the help parents are able to give and parents recognize this. The Great Berry Friends' Association is well organized and it makes a considerable and much appreciated financial contribution to the school's resources.
56. The building itself is warm and inviting. The entrance is attractive and the excellent display is welcoming and provides an introduction to the pupils' work and achievements. Parents are invited to celebration assemblies and attend in good numbers. These are followed by good opportunities for informal discussion. A room is set aside for community contributions and meetings for parents.
57. At the pre-inspection parents' meeting, through letters and in individual meetings with inspectors, a very small minority of parents expressed their concerns about the school's approach to complaints; individuals felt the school was overly defensive. The school has taken this on board and is hoping to have a consultation with parents in order to bring about a clearer relationship. A few parents were concerned about the way the school implemented the review procedures for parents within the Code of Practice for support for pupils' with special educational needs. The school's approach to special educational needs is, at present, satisfactory. However, there are areas of the involvement of parents in their annual reviews that do not meet requirements. The school is addressing this inadequacy.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

58. The school challenges itself to be a 'caring place to learn and grow', and this vision colours every aspect of the school's life and work. Governors, senior management and all staff are not satisfied with the simply good, but strive to achieve the very good and then the excellent. Consequently, improvement since the last inspection in the efficiency and effectiveness of leadership and management is good, and the school is well placed for future improvement. Especially in Year 6, pupils catch this strong ambition from their teachers, and pupils as a whole are proud of their school and the part they play in its success. Governors and staff have addressed the areas for improvement identified by the previous inspection with determination and produced an effective action plan. There has been good improvement in most areas. However, some managers have yet to gain the very high level skills necessary to achieve their very high aspirations, although they are keen to do so. The school could usefully consider additional training for middle managers.
59. The governors meet their responsibilities well and work in an effective and businesslike way. They are very well led, and are closely involved in the life and work of the school. They are well informed about the work of the school. This awareness is strengthened by the high proportion of governors who are parents of children in the school, but governors are rightly considering increased membership from outside the parent body to provide a better external view. Governors provide many opportunities for parents to voice concerns and their annual meeting is well attended. Governors ensure that there is policy to cover all sides of the school's work and that the school improvement plan is comprehensive and coherent. They have been particularly successful in ensuring that the finances of the school are very well budgeted, extremely well controlled, and invested prudently.
60. In their stated search for 'total quality', continuous improvement and then excellence, governors and senior management decided to work towards the Investor in People standard, and the school was recently recognised as meeting that standard. This development has made a positive impact on the learning of the pupils, for example through teaching assistants who say that it has increased their effectiveness. The school's development towards the standard improved the way teachers received feedback on their teaching; this helped them see more clearly what worked, what worked less well and what skills they needed to learn next. Consequently, teaching has improved and is still improving. The school has built upon these strong foundations through successful introduction of performance management procedures.
61. Recently, governors and senior management have begun to use a very helpful local education authority quality framework for the performance of the school. This framework describes clearly the quality levels a school needs to move through. So far, the school has used this framework to test how good it is, but intends to use it too as a structure and blueprint for future improvement. Looking at the way the school has benchmarked performance against these standards as part of its self-evaluation, the estimates tend to be optimistic.
62. This imprecision of evaluation relates to imprecision in the overall policies, procedures and planning of the school. At present, they are very comprehensive, coherent and clear. However, policy and planning tend to voice aspirations, rather than set precise quality levels and achievements to meet. This is the area for

improvement highlighted in the last inspection that has been least well addressed. A full school example of this insufficient link between targets and finding ways to improve is in the governors' targets for overall improvement in attainment. They are careful predictions rather than the challenge of the highest standards reached by schools in similar circumstances. Therefore, they are set in the context of continuation of present practice, rather than the expectation of what could or ought to be achieved, once key improvements are made.

63. To balance these judgements, the school has interpreted assessment data effectively when deciding to teach English and mathematics in groups of higher and lower ability in Years 3 to 6, and provide specialist teaching for information and communication technology; both strategies have led to significant improvement and greater consistency across years and classes.
64. The headteacher provides strong leadership for pupils and staff alike. This leadership has created a strong team spirit and shared determination to succeed. The deputy headteachers support her effectively, providing strong and credible role models for others. The school has recently formed a school management team, and each member has clearly defined roles and shared responsibility for school improvement. The benefits of this sharing of responsibilities are beginning to show, for example through a curriculum that is more cohesive and coherent. Leadership and management of subjects are usually good and always at least satisfactory. Subject co-ordinators monitor and evaluate standards and support colleagues, but opportunities to work with colleagues in class are too limited. As a result, there are insufficient opportunities to share best practice.
65. The differences in effectiveness of subject leadership relate, in the main, to the precision with which co-ordinators specify the quality to achieve and how to get there. An example of how effective this clarity can be is in religious education. The co-ordinators provide strong and enthusiastic leadership and ensure that management is efficient and effective; this is a quality of all co-ordinators. However, in religious education teaching is usually good or better, and attainment above expectations. When asked to say why the subject was so successful, they said it was because whilst the locally agreed syllabus inspired, it did not make clear the quality to be achieved or the ways to achieve it. The scheme of work was a different matter. It laid down a clear action plan, made clear very precisely what needed to be achieved and gave clear guidance as to how teachers could achieve these challenging objectives. The findings of this inspection confirm the co-ordinators' view.

Equality of opportunity

66. The school has a carefully thought through policy for providing equality of opportunity. However, although equity is one of the main values and aims of the school that staff share, the policy has yet to move to the stage where checking effectiveness becomes a passion, assuring that opportunities for all pupils are indeed equal.

Accommodation

67. The accommodation is excellent and is very well managed; it has a major and very positive impact on the quality of learning and the pupils' personal development. The school opened with modern well-designed buildings, which since that time, working

in partnership with the local education authority, have been extremely well extended and developed. They provide an excellent place in which to learn. The staff have built upon these benefits through excellent displays and effective management of teaching spaces.

68. The outside environment is also very good, with good hard and green play areas, and especially good areas for pupils in reception classes. The accommodation as a whole is safe, secure and well cared for by the site agent and cleaners.

Staffing

69. The school has sufficient qualified staff to meet the requirements of the curriculum and the learning needs of the pupils. Governors have invested in teaching assistants so that all classes have support in key lessons. This has brought significant benefits to learning and has raised attainment. Staff development procedures are good and have benefited from work towards the Investor in People standard. One result has been that learning and development for teaching assistants has improved, and the team is effectively led. Staff are effectively deployed, although the expert co-ordinator of special educational needs increased time away from class responsibilities to meet requirements of the Code of Practice in full. As a consequence of this lack of time, management of the support of pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory in this respect.
70. Where teamwork actually means one person doing one part, and the other another part, the effectiveness of teaching declines because each teacher does not equally understand the planning. Considering the high investment in teaching assistants, they are not always used effectively. Examples of this are in full class sessions taught by the class teacher. Too often, the teaching assistant sits behind the pupils, and consequently can neither enhance the teaching, for example joining in with the teacher's actions to increase interest and focus, nor maintain eye contact to maintain the pupils' concentration. The administrative staff are very skilled and highly competent, and underpin the effectiveness and efficiency of the school. The site agent ensures that the school is clean, safe and sparkling in appearance. There are adequate numbers of staff for the supervision of play and lunchtimes.
71. Matters of staff discipline and grievance are dealt with firmly, and in complete compliance with local education authority policies and procedures.
72. Over recent years, the school has faced considerable problems over the recruitment and retention of staff of sufficient quality. These problems have been made worse because the school needed to recruit additional staff as it grew in size. Analysis of past assessment data shows that these problems have had a considerable impact on standards, especially in the year 1999-2000. However, the present staffing situation is more stable, and provides a good foundation for improvement.

Resources for learning

73. The quality and range of resources are very good overall and contribute substantially to the standards being achieved. Resources are accessible and well used throughout the curriculum. There are some examples of resources reflecting different cultures in the libraries but these are not systematically nor sufficiently provided and, therefore, harnessed to explore cultural and linguistic diversity.

Efficiency and effectiveness

74. Underpinning the improving success of the school is the very good, and in some aspects excellent, way that governors and staff manage their resources. This has enabled the school to grow whilst minimising potential loss in performance. Funds are very effectively invested and excellently controlled, and the funds the school receives for specified purposes are spent appropriately. Although the balance of funds at the end of each year has reduced significantly, this has been carefully budgeted. Governors and staff take account of guidance of others, and challenge present practice in ways that highlight areas to improve. The school does compare its performance rigorously with other schools, but again in ways that tend to affirm their success, rather than set a level of performance exemplified by even more effective schools. The school uses the advice and guidance of others, especially through taking part in improvement partnership initiatives. The school, backed by excellent administration, ensures that purchases gain maximum quality at lowest price. Considering the above average revenue, the quality of education provided and the good attainment and personal development of the pupils, the school offers good value for money, a significant improvement since the previous inspection.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

75. Since the previous inspection, the school has worked very hard and successfully to improve the quality of what it does and the standards it achieves. Although this has been successful, to some extent factors beyond its control have hindered improvement, for example difficulties in recruitment and retention of staff as the school has grown in size. However, now the school has achieved its full size, there is a need to learn ways that assure quality in all areas of its work, and ensure that the very high standards achieved in some areas are achieved in all.
76. In their efforts to improve further the standards achieved by pupils, governors and staff should:
1. Improve the ways in which the school's policies and planning specify the quality and targets to achieve by:
 - setting targets for pupils' attainment that better reflect standards achieved by even more effective similar schools; (paragraphs 50 and 62)
 - ensuring that policies specify clearer quality standards to be achieved and agreed procedures to achieve them; (paragraphs 62 and 65)

- making greater use of the quality frameworks already used by the school, for example the local education authority's quality framework and Investor in People, in order to provide a more secure framework for better informed improvement. (paragraphs 61 and 62)
2. Increase the sharing of best practice amongst teachers by:
 - increasing opportunities for senior managers and subject co-ordinators to work along side and observe teachers in lessons; (paragraph 64)
 - ensuring that work is planned, evaluated and then improved in even stronger partnership with others. (paragraph 70)
 3. Increase the effective use of assessment to raise standards by:
 - using assessment more rigorously to evaluate planning and teaching; (paragraphs 49 to 51)
 - using assessment more effectively to feedback to pupils, for example through marking, why they succeed and how they can improve; (paragraphs 19, 43 and 49)
 - developing more effective ways in which pupils can use this feedback to increase their understanding of their learning and to plan individual ways to improve. (paragraphs 19 and 51)
 4. Improve the preparation of pupils for life in a multi-cultural society by:
 - ensuring that the planning of the curriculum addresses this objective more systematically, precisely and rigorously. (paragraph 36)
 5. Improve the management of provision for pupils with special educational needs by:
 - ensuring that the co-ordinator for special educational needs has sufficient time to implement and conform to the Code of Practice effectively and in full. (paragraphs 44, 46 and 69)
 - checking more rigorously that specific support offered pupils actually meets accurate and early diagnosis of their needs. (paragraph 29)

When addressing the above, governors and staff should:

- Improve provision for the highest-attaining pupils by ensuring that learning objectives for lessons and subsequent activities always consider their needs. (paragraphs 5, 18 and 25)
- Increase the opportunities for pupils' spiritual development through quiet reflection. (paragraph 33)
- Improve the precision of support for pupils learning English as an additional language. (paragraph 47)
- Ensure that the implementation and outcomes of the equal opportunities policy are rigorously monitored and evaluated. (paragraph 66)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	92
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	17

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
15	30	34	20	1	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	474
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	25

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	29

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	32	36

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	29	25	27
	Girls	36	34	35
	Total	65	59	62
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (85)	87 (95)	91 (88)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessment		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	26	27
	Girls	33	32	34
	Total	59	58	61
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (93)	85 (92)	90 (98)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	31	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	27	28	29
	Girls	28	29	27
	Total	55	57	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	87 (92)	90 (79)	90 (98)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	28	27	27
	Girls	31	29	27
	Total	59	56	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	94 (89)	89 (82)	86 (97)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	0
Any other minority ethnic group	3

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)	17.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.9
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	19
Total aggregate hours worked per week	389

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	2000-2001
	£
Total income	883669
Total expenditure	917016
Expenditure per pupil	2002
Balance brought forward from previous year	60767
Balance carried forward to next year	27420

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	483
Number of questionnaires returned	161

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	39	3	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	44	2	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	35	58	0	1	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	21	64	14	1	0
The teaching is good.	51	47	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	27	57	12	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	50	36	7	3	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	35	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	28	58	9	3	2
The school is well led and managed.	57	36	2	1	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	45	4	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	22	40	17	2	19

Other issues raised by parents

A small number of parents were concerned about provision for special educational needs.

A very small number of parents felt the school did not listen to their views.

A few parents were concerned about cases of bullying.

Many parents were concerned about the high turnover in 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

77. Provision in the reception classes builds a very good basis for pupils' future learning. The findings of the last inspection indicate that the provision was good at that time and since then there has been improvement. All children will be starting in September 2001 together, some on a part-time basis, a decision based upon evaluation of current staged arrangements that led to adapted arrangements to increase continuity of learning. On entry to the school, the children show good social skills but in other areas, such as number and language, they are slightly below average. Children quickly settle into the warm and friendly atmosphere of the reception classes, and they soon begin to enjoy activities and demonstrate what they can do.
78. The teachers and the teaching assistants in the reception classes work very well together and plan a good variety of interesting activities and experiences that support children's development. The teaching in reception classes is very good overall and often excellent. The co-ordinator and the other teachers have a very detailed system of assessment and identify the children's individual needs very well. From their findings, the staff are able to set individual targets for the children. These are explained to the parents and the staff build up a very good relationship between home and school. The high quality teaching and learning, combined with the assessment and the close links with parents, mean that children successfully attain and in some cases surpass the standards expected of them before starting the National Curriculum. The staff take particular care of children who have special educational needs so that they are able to make good progress in their first year in school. Levels of work are carefully gauged to challenge all children at all levels of attainment.

Personal, social and emotional development

79. All staff provide consistent, positive and encouraging role models and treat children courteously and respectfully. As a result, the children learn quickly to have confidence in the staff, to behave very well in lessons, and to get along together exceptionally well. This was demonstrated when a child was accidentally trodden on, and two others rushed up to comfort her. Staff constantly praise the children and this builds up their self-esteem and encourages them to give praise to others, for instance applauding other children's efforts in assembly. In going to and from assembly, children's self-control is exemplary and during the assemblies they are very alert. Assemblies are of the highest quality, prayerful and reflective, yet perfectly gauged to suit the young children. During play with tricycles and larger equipment, the youngest children willingly take turns. There are a few children who are sometimes reluctant to participate, and sometimes tearful, as happened during a physical education lesson. The teacher was very gentle with the child concerned, building up her confidence to partner a child who was not her special friend. Independence is a keynote of the teaching and the children move very purposefully from one activity to the next. The children's social experiences include being part of the larger community as they share playtimes with some of the older pupils. The children respond very well to all the opportunities offered and become confident individuals who relate easily to adults and to other children.

Communication, language and literacy

80. The teaching in this area of learning is very good. Children rapidly develop an interest in listening to stories and sharing books with their friends. They like to retell the stories from the books they read or know well. Staff read the 'big books' very expressively, which keeps the children interested and also increases their enjoyment when reading their own books. The children find the learning of words and sounds very exciting. They read simple words such as 'man', 'dog' and 'log' well. The older children learn to blend more difficult sounds. Many of the older children surpass the reading levels expected for their age, and begin to write sentences with capital letters and full stops. Over the year, the children have made satisfactory progress in their writing and achieve the level of competence expected for their age. They show good skills in the formation of letters. As the children love rhyming words the staff use these very well to extend the children's spelling. The children's speaking and listening are very good. They listen to adults most attentively and listen politely to other children. The teachers give them plenty of encouragement to speak, which they do most happily. The children are very confident speakers when they begin the National Curriculum Programmes of Study.

Mathematical development

81. The teaching of mathematics is very good. Staff emphasise the language of number, size and shape throughout the daily routines. The younger children can count up to 10 and can count on from numbers between zero and ten. The older children count up to 20 very well, counting on from any number. They also do subtraction sums. Teachers have high expectations. They challenge the children by presenting them with mental mathematics in addition of single numbers. The teachers are very skilful in using a shopping bag with bricks so that the children have to work out their answers mentally. In one class there is a well-stocked 'shop' and the children use this to experience using money. Very good provision includes sorting shapes into their categories, and the children can recognise basic shapes such as rectangles, circles and hexagons. A small group of children were observed using a jigsaw and working it out together very well. The children work well, writing independently the numerals one to nine on their worksheets, although the youngest frequently write them round the wrong way. Many appropriate activities ensure that most children attain or exceed the standard expected of them when they start work in the National Curriculum Programmes of Study.

Knowledge and understanding the world

82. Provision for information and communication technology is excellent. Children can switch on, load, use the mouse competently and use tools such as the circle, pencil, colour and thickness. They also have good opportunities to share and take turns. At least three quarters of the children reach Level 1 and some Level 2 in the National Curriculum. Children know where equipment belongs in their classrooms, because staff are well organised and emphasise independence. Staff use many topics to extend understanding of living things, for example observing a butterfly emerge from its chrysalis. This is a strength of the planning and teaching. The children gain a great deal of first-hand knowledge from the topics. They have discovered, for example, that spiders have eight legs. Overall, the very good provision and gains made by the children, the level of language use and of curiosity mean that most children begin the National Curriculum Programmes of Study with attainment that is above expectations for their age.

Physical development

83. By the end of the reception year children reach the level of co-ordination and physical skill expected for their age. Their 'fine motor skills' are well developed and they show good facility in using pencils and colours. They use scissors well. Imaginative teaching involves the children in many outdoor and indoor activities. They have a very exciting new climbing frame and the use of tricycles and a car. They propel these well and the exercise builds up their leg muscles. The children have many opportunities for movement. In an excellent lesson, the teacher set a really rapid pace and the children were kept moving all the time. In 'follow-my-leader' games children show good skills in skipping, striding and hopping. They show good spatial awareness, though their ball skills in catching still need considerable practice.

Creative development

84. Children have many and varied opportunities to be creative. They have produced very colourful and durable flower paintings. During World Book Week, children dressed up as other people and role-played. They were particularly successful in building a large 'junk' wall for Humpty Dumpty. There are also the opportunities to become aware of symmetry through the use of butterfly paintings from the computer. The children paint their self-portraits. These are full of verve and show many of their own characteristics. By the time the children move on to the National Curriculum Programmes of Study, they have attained the standards expected of them.

ENGLISH

85. Provision for learning is very good, and by the time current pupils are eleven their attainment overall is high. Standards have improved since the last inspection.
86. Results in the 2000 National Curriculum tests showed that standards attained by seven-year-olds in reading were above average, indicating an improvement over the last three years. In writing, results were below average, which represents a decline compared with results over the same period. When compared with similar schools, results were respectively below and well below average. Results in these tests in 2000 for eleven-year-olds, showed standards were above the national average and in line with those of similar schools. This also represents a decline when compared with results obtained in the three previous years. Attainment of present pupils aged seven indicates an improvement since 2000, notably in writing but especially in reading and in speaking and listening. Similarly, attainment of current pupils aged eleven has improved. Standards at age seven and eleven are above national expectations and promise to go on improving.
87. Throughout the school, well above average and improving standards of listening, speaking, reading and writing underpin and empower good learning in all subjects. Girls and boys at all levels of attainment make good progress, except that the very high-attaining pupils do not always make the progress they should. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress, as do those learning English as an additional language.
88. Pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is above the national expectation for seven and eleven-year-olds, with standards being maintained since the last

inspection. Pupils in Year 2 listen carefully and speak confidently in a wide range of contexts, take an active part in discussions, and share their work with their peers, for instance at the end of literacy sessions. In these instances, pupils demonstrate good levels of awareness of their peers as an audience, and adapt their speech well according to the task in hand. A common thread in most classes is the spontaneity with which pupils use talk for collaborating on tasks and when they interact in support of each other. Opportunities for listening and speaking are regularly planned by teachers and extended through the presentations pupils make for their peers when they share their news. The majority of pupils speak clearly, confidently and are aware of ground-rules like turn-taking and responding to others' contributions. In Year 6, pupils respond well in discussion. They offer well-considered contributions, comment on particular aspects they like and applaud each other's creative efforts. Opportunities for speaking and listening are extended for older pupils through well-devised debates where pupils develop skills in arguing for and against a motion and where panels of pupils present their point of view. This was shown when pupils had to debate the merits of building a new secondary school in the town. This is an example of how the subject makes a significant contribution to the pupils' personal development. They discuss topics in depth, asking questions about the real world and exploring their own beliefs and emerging opinions in a range of creative and probing ways. At present, they have insufficient opportunities to read literature from other cultures.

89. Attainment in reading is above the national expectations by the ages of seven and eleven. Pupils in Year 2 read a range of texts with fluency, accuracy and good expression. They tackle words by using the sounds of letters (phonics) and read for meaning on the basis of contextual clues. Consistent teaching of letter and sound patterns and of phonological awareness has a positive and direct impact on reading standards. High-attainers recognise the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary and express preferences. The majority of pupils are familiar with the organisation of non-fiction books, and use the contents and index pages to find information. In Year 6, pupils are highly motivated, confident and read extensively in a range of genres. They cope well with demanding material, read independently and use non-fiction material for research purposes. Pupils' progress in reading, including that of pupils with special educational needs, is very good. All pupils keep a record of their reading in a home/school diary. Library facilities are of good quality and are supplemented by well-maintained and well-stocked class libraries. The pupils benefit greatly from the support of parents, many of whom come to hear pupils read on a regular basis.
90. Attainment in writing at the age of seven is in line with national expectations and by the age of eleven it is above these standards. By the age of seven, the majority of pupils develop their ideas in sequence and use capital letters. They use vocabulary appropriately, with the higher-attaining pupils writing extended pieces in a range of ways, including narrative, news, instructions and persuasive writing. Standards of handwriting and spelling vary but most pupils make good progress over time and reach above expected standards for their age. By the age of eleven, the majority of pupils write extensively and produce a variety of narrative and non-narrative texts. There are many good examples of writing of different kinds, including diaries, non-narrative pieces such as leaflets, and poetry. Writing is imaginative, extensive and varied, showing a good grasp of paragraphing and structure. Pupils achieve well relative to their prior attainment. Standards in handwriting and spelling are above average and the majority of pupils have good study skills and work is always well

presented. The school has extended time for pupils to have more sustained opportunities for writing and this is improving standards.

91. The quality of teaching is good overall, with outstanding practice in Year 6. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of English and have modified and developed the teaching of literacy creatively, for instance by extending opportunities for writing, speaking and listening. Lessons are clearly focused on specific themes. Effective use of questions enables pupils to consolidate knowledge and respond critically. This was well illustrated in a Year 1 lesson dealing with how information is presented in non-fiction texts. The questioning in this lesson was of high quality because the teacher took account of pupils' previous knowledge of similar texts and combined excellent examples of how pupils could extract specific information when dealing with unfamiliar vocabulary. The lesson was carefully structured so that when pupils came to tackle independent tasks, they knew exactly how to cope with them autonomously. Where teaching is good, very good or excellent, teachers ensure that pupils understand what they have learned. On a few occasions where teaching is less effective, although still satisfactory, learning objectives are not shared carefully with pupils, nor used at the end of the lesson to check that the main points in the lesson have been grasped.
92. The leadership and management of the subject are very effective in raising standards; the co-ordinators have a very clear understanding of where the school is and where it needs to go. The use of specific interventions, for example additional literacy support (ALS) and the Early Reading Research (ERR) scheme, are used very well to improve the progress of targeted pupils. Teachers use the literacy framework effectively and strategies for continuous development have led to clear identification of improvement targets. Literacy skills are used well in some areas of the curriculum but insufficient opportunities are provided to extend the pupils' literacy skills through other subjects. Monitoring by both the co-ordinators is comprehensive and very rigorous, and is appropriately focused on specific aspects of the subject; this has identified areas for improvement. A very effective system for assessment, including the use of baseline assessment and optional tests, is used to track pupils' progress. There is an effective target setting programme for the school, classes and individual pupils, but this has not yet sufficiently involved pupils in ways that inform their learning on an on-going basis. A wide-ranging and well-focused programme of staff development ensures that teachers keep abreast with developments in the subject. Information and communication technology is not widely used to enhance learning in English, although a good start has been made.

MATHEMATICS

93. Provision for learning is good with some very good features and pupils make good progress. In 2000, attainment recorded in National Curriculum tests for pupils aged eleven was above the national average for pupils reaching the expected level and exceeding this standard. Overall, the results compare favourably with those from schools in similar circumstances. Attainment in National Curriculum tests has risen steadily since 1997 in line with the improvements made nationally. There is little difference in the attainment of boys and girls.
94. In 2000, attainment recorded in National Curriculum tests for pupils aged seven was well below the national average. Most pupils reached the nationally expected standard, but a lower than average proportion exceeded this standard. Results

declined in 2000, mainly due to unsatisfactory teaching. The performance of boys and girls in mathematics has been similar since the last inspection.

95. The previous inspection found that standards attained by pupils aged seven and eleven were satisfactory with some good aspects. The school has maintained these standards and current inspection evidence shows that standards are again satisfactory with particular strengths in aspects of number work. Significant improvements are teacher assessments for seven-year-olds and the challenging work in number for eleven-year-olds. The progress evident is associated with effective use of setting by attainment, careful assessment of progress and the effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. Attainment of pupils aged seven in this year's National Curriculum tests has improved with a greater percentage reaching standards above the national expectation. This represents an improvement over last year's results and is due to improved teaching and more accurate assessments during the year. The attainment of pupils in Year 6 is likely to be similar to that of 2000.
96. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make good progress and attain good standards in number and satisfactory standards in other aspects of mathematics. Overall, the attainment of pupils currently in Year 2 is satisfactory; it is good in number but there are insufficient opportunities to develop the use of mathematics in other areas of the curriculum, which is inhibiting progress. Pupils in Year 2 add two-digit numbers accurately and use numbers to 100, with higher-attaining pupils extending this to work with numbers over 100. Most pupils know a range of two-dimensional shapes and measure accurately using centimetres. Pupils in Year 1 make good progress and are achieving some good results. They add numbers accurately using tens and units well, with the higher-attainers doing additions up to 100. They know and use number patterns in their tables work and recognise 'odds' and 'evens'. The work includes knowledge of simple two-dimensional shapes and symmetry. The good level of challenge and creative use of activities to support the teaching of mathematics is having a positive effect on the learning of pupils in Years 1 and 2.
97. Particularly strong teaching is helping pupils acquire secure numeracy skills between the ages of seven and eleven. Most pupils in Year 6 have achieved the expected standard (Level 4) and many are achieving the higher standard (Level 5). Overall, their attainment meets national expectations, with a significant proportion of pupils exceeding this standard; pupils have good standards of numeracy. They compute accurately with numbers in the thousands and know the differences between means, medians and averages. They calculate angles in a triangle, measure accurately in a variety of units and are beginning to use the 24-hour clock in some work on timetables. Work on calculating surface areas and volumes shows an accurate use of square and cubic measures. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make steady progress in their number work. Pupils in Year 3 have made particularly good progress and have compensated for their underachievement of last year. Their work in number includes calculations in thousands and tables up to eight times. They use decimals to two places in solving problems involving money and use simple fractions accurately. Pupils in Year 4 work with numbers up to 1000 accurately. They measure with precision in centimetres and know the equivalence between fractions and percentages. The level of challenge in Year 5 is high and some higher-attaining pupils can calculate the length of the hypotenuse in a right angle triangle using Pythagoras' theorem. They calculate volumes accurately, recording their work in cubic centimetres correctly and in square centimetres for surface areas. Pupils in this year group collect data and record it in a variety of

different graphs, but they do not interpret this data and come to too few conclusions about its relevance. Although standards from Year 3 to Year 6 are high in aspects of number work there are insufficient opportunities to apply this knowledge and, above all, to pursue individual lines of enquiry and to solve problems, for example in number patterns. There is evidence to show that pupils have had experience of a range of methods of displaying data, for example in a variety of graphs and in Venn diagrams. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to collect data from everyday occurrences, and then to interpret it in order to make generalisations and decisions. A greater emphasis on data collection and interpretation, and on investigational work is needed to ensure that standards are equally high in all aspects of mathematics in the school.

98. Throughout the school, pupils enjoy their mathematics. The high quality of teaching ensures that they concentrate well, respond positively to challenging teaching and behave extremely well; only very occasionally are they noisy and do not work as well as they should. They work well together when asked to do so, and share their ideas willingly. This is apparent in the way they explain their methods to others when finding missing numbers in a number square problem and checking timetables to find an appropriate train for a journey.
99. Overall, the quality of teaching of mathematics throughout the school is good. In Years 1 and 2 it is very good and there is excellent teaching in Year 6. The standard of teaching is never less than satisfactory. In the effective lessons, and they are the majority, teachers have very good subject knowledge and use it well to motivate their pupils. The level of challenge in these lessons is high and this encourages pupils to work hard and aspire to high standards. These lessons are well organised and have a brisk pace, which means that pupils know what they are doing and precisely what is expected of them. When teaching is less effective but still satisfactory, there is a lack of pace, time is not used very well and, as a result, pupils make progress but too slowly.
100. The pupils follow a good curriculum, which is based on the National Numeracy Strategy. Mathematics links effectively with other areas of the curriculum, for example with graph work in science, but these links are not yet fully exploited and many opportunities are missed, particularly with reference to data collection and analysis. Teachers use a variety of strategies effectively to involve pupils in the introductory whole class session, manage the main part of the lesson well and use the plenary to good effect. A wide range of assessment procedures is used well throughout the school. The data are analysed well to make decisions about the curriculum, grouping arrangements and to set targets. These assessment arrangements involve the pupils but not sufficiently to enable them to make decisions about what they need to do to improve. Good support allows pupils with special educational needs, and those pupils learning English as an additional language good access to the learning; these pupils make good progress.
101. The co-ordinators lead the subject well and provide good support for the other teachers in the school. They have a clear idea of what needs to be done to improve provision and are well placed to implement their ideas and further raise the standards in mathematics. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to the pupils' social development through opportunities for pupils to work together and help each other.

SCIENCE

102. Provision for learning is good, and standards are above the national expectations both at age seven and eleven. There are no significant differences in attainment between boys and girls or across the different aspects of the subject. At the time of the previous inspection, pupils were reported to find it difficult to plan and set up their own experiments. They are now able to do so with confidence. Pupils achieve well overall. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs receive effective support in lessons and, therefore, they achieve well and make good progress towards their individual targets. The highest-attaining pupils do not always achieve the best standards of which they are capable. Inspection evidence shows that attainment has risen steadily since the previous inspection.
103. Teacher assessments in 2000 for pupils in Year 2 show that the number of pupils who attained the expected standard was close to the national average. However, the proportion exceeding this standard was well below average. Provisional results for 2001 indicate a return to a pattern of rising standards and that the 2000 results were a one-year dip in the trend of rising attainment. Inspection evidence also indicates that standards are above average in the current Year 2. By age seven, pupils are beginning to develop the basic vocabulary of science. Pupils in Year 1, for example, are able to use terms such as 'rough', 'smooth', 'transparent', 'opaque' and 'translucent' when they are sorting materials into groups. They are able to distinguish between living and non-living things, and can identify parts of both the human body and also of plants. Pupils carry out investigations and can make sensible predictions about what may happen. They respond to suggestions about how to find things out. For example, pupils in Year 2, as part of their studies into forces and friction, carried out experiments to explore how far a toy car will travel on different surfaces. Pupils generally and appropriately write up the results of their investigations on tables and worksheets prepared by the teacher. The highest-attaining pupils, however, are not given sufficient responsibility to decide on their own methods of recording the results of experiments and investigations. This would give them more scope to develop independent learning skills and improve their writing techniques.
104. In the 2000 tests at age eleven, results were close to the national average at the expected standard but the proportion of pupils exceeding this standard was below average. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in the present Year 6 are now above average. By the age of eleven, pupils develop a good factual knowledge and a range of scientific vocabulary that they use with confidence. Pupils in Year 6, for instance, can describe the main features of food chains, the characteristics of plants and the various methods of pollination. When they are conducting experiments, pupils recognise the need for fair tests and they use equipment with care. They describe the most important factors in making sure that tests are fair, and sensibly predict what the outcomes may be. This was seen in an investigation carried out by Year 6 pupils into the factors that affect pulse rates. They were able to set up a range of fair tests to demonstrate the effects of exercise, test resting pulse rates and again after exercise, and clearly record their results. Higher-attaining pupils were able to discuss what may happen if the variables in a test are altered, and what they might do to improve the consistency of some of the tests.
105. The quality of teaching, and the learning it promotes, are good. As a result, the pupils make good progress. In the last inspection, teaching was reported as 'sound

with some good features'. It is now good in more than half the lessons and this is a strong contributory factor to the rise in standards. Teachers have good class control, that is achieved without fuss and with good humour. As a result, the working atmosphere in classes is relaxed and businesslike. Teachers plan their lessons carefully and have good organisational skills so that all aspects of the practical work are carefully thought out and prepared in advance, and any health and safety aspects are covered. Pupils are given clear instructions about what to do and no time is lost during lessons. Where equipment is being used, teachers emphasise its proper use. Good planning and teamwork between teachers and classroom assistants contributes to raising standards, especially for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. Teachers plan different levels of work suitable for the range of attainment found in classes. However, this is not always so for highest-attaining pupils who are not given sufficient opportunities to plan their own work, initiate research and write up their own results using their choice of methods, graphs and tables. This is not the case in Year 6 where teaching is strongest. Pupils behave very well in lessons and have very good attitudes to work. Where they work together in groups, relationships are very good. In lessons where pupils discuss the work of others, it is done so sensitively and with respect for their feelings.

106. Science makes a good contribution to the development of pupils' basic skills, although literacy development receives too little attention; this restricts, in particular, the development for higher-attaining pupils. Pupils learn a good range of scientific vocabulary which they enjoy using. Some of their investigations are recorded using a variety of graphs and tables, and this contributes well to their numeracy development. There is good use of information and communication technology to enhance and enrich the curriculum. Under teacher supervision, pupils increasingly make use of websites to gain information and carry out research, and use sensors and data-logging.
107. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are encouraged to study, and reflect upon, the world and the environment, and this makes a strong contribution to their spiritual development. There is a strong moral dimension in lessons and pupils are taught right from wrong. The adults in school provide good role models. In discussions, pupils learn to listen to and appreciate the views of others. Their social development is further enhanced by opportunities to work together, share and take turns. Although cultural development is good overall, there is insufficient emphasis on the wide range of traditions and cultures from which scientific thinking and ideas have come.
108. The previous report drew attention to a lack of consistent assessment. There are now good procedures in place for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, and for ensuring that there are no gaps in the curriculum provided. These procedures are based on the national scheme of work being used. This is providing the good continuity that was lacking at the time of the last report. The subject managers have too limited opportunities to work with other teachers and support teaching in the classroom. This lack of monitoring and support means that the possibilities of sharing good practice are less than they should be.
109. The joint subject managers have shown good leadership and management in addressing the issues raised in the previous report. They have sensible and

realistic priorities for further development. Teaching has improved and standards are rising. The subject has made good progress since the last inspection.

ART AND DESIGN

110. Provision for learning is good with some very good features and, as a result, standards attained by seven-year-olds are above national expectations. They are well above this standard for eleven-year-olds. This shows a very good improvement since the last inspection when some of the work was considered to be unsatisfactory. The impact of the displays throughout the school is impressive and extends the pupils' artistic awareness. Artwork is used extensively to illustrate other subjects in the curriculum and an excellent display on the important events of the last millennium greets visitors as they enter the school. The miniature portraits of the Tudors are particularly fine.
111. In the reception classes, in addition to the many paintings planned by the teachers such as self-portraits and those related to their stories, the children produce many pictures of high quality on the computers. Their lacquered flower paintings are very bold and colourful. Six-year-old pupils, inspired by their teachers, have painted very atmospheric pictures of winter woodland scenes, which are instantly recognisable as such. The pupils have also produced similarly misty chalk-drawn pictures about a fox that had been spotted one day. Their work relates to the teaching of other topics and there was a good display of painted trains. The teachers are responsible for introducing many forms of media in later stages and seven-year-olds have the opportunity of designing ceramic tiles from their observational drawings of houses. In Year 2, there is a wealth of colour to be found in displays of 'Joseph's Coats'. In the hall there is a large and most interesting work on Egyptian hieroglyphs.
112. As the pupils progress through the school, the teachers introduce them to many renowned artists. The quality of the Monet-inspired chalk drawing is outstanding, as are a group of mixed media townscapes based on Cézanne. There are fun drawings too, miniatures on 'wanted posters' and many historically inspired and colourful Roman mosaics, which have been very well executed.
113. Eleven-year-old pupils participated in a truly inspiring lesson. They listened with rapt attention as a teaching assistant gave an outstanding and highly structured demonstration of how to make a clay mask. Basing their work on designs from different cultures, the pupils produced results that were most exciting, with bold and interesting features and all excellently finished. Even so, the school could usefully extend opportunities to study artistic achievements from a wider range of cultures.
114. The pupils have teachers who find the subject vibrant and rewarding. The quality of teaching throughout the school is very good and the pupils' response is good or very good. This is a very great improvement since the last inspection when teaching was not satisfactory. All pupils make very good progress, including those with special educational needs, who receive good support.
115. Leadership and management are good. The art policy has been revised well to reflect changes in the curriculum. There has not been any staff in-service training recently, but the teachers plan across their year groups, together with the co-ordinator who also monitors the planning. There are, however, no formal assessment procedures and these might have a further positive impact on the work

of the pupils. The accommodation for resources is good, as are the resources themselves.

116. Through the encouragement for pupils to use their imagination and emotions to probe and respond to the world around them, the subject makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. However, the current curriculum provides insufficient opportunities for pupils to experience artistic creativity from cultures other than European.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

117. Provision for learning is good and improving, and standards of attainment throughout the school meet national expectations. Design and technology is taught as a discrete subject, allowing an appropriate emphasis on the subject's specific skills and understandings, and this is a strategy that the recently appointed co-ordinator wishes to promote. The improvement since the last inspection lies in the well structured approach to the subject, based on the National Curriculum and national guidance. This structure has now addressed the weaknesses found in the previous inspection and improvement is satisfactory. Teachers now have confidence in teaching the subject. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily, although the programmes are not, in general, sufficiently challenging for higher-attaining pupils. An exception to this is a highly complex project of setting up a manufacturing company by the pupils in Year 6. In the developmental stage of a task, even the children in the reception classes understand how evaluating their work leads to improvement in their designs; they decided to combine their efforts in making a strong wall for Humpty Dumpty in their junk modelling session.
118. Six and seven year old pupils now evaluate their work under the guidance of their teachers. Pupils make good progress, and develop well from making and experimenting when finding out the best paper with which to make paper fans. The pupils also came up with some imaginative ideas on how it to use pivots and levers to make fish fins and clouds move in the sky. The older pupils were observed during their initial design session. Here they were to make robots with moving parts (mechanisms) and they were working out how best to incorporate hinges and pivots into their designs. The teaching clearly promoted the pupils' independent learning and imagination well. In addition to the usual 'sci-fi' robots, mini-beasts were also featured.
119. Nine-year-olds practising their sewing skills were highly focused as they wished to make a high-quality product, in this case a fabric purse or wallet. The teacher led the plenary session very well and, consequently, the pupils described clearly how they had found out the different strengths to be found in stitching, and how, to be really effective, the stitches had to be close together and also over-stitched. The boys were achieving as much as the girls. Pupils in Year 5 had designed a very good science display. Eleven-year-olds in Year 6 worked very carefully to produce some very effective and well-finished wooden structures in the form of mountain shelters or chalets; this work was extremely challenging.
120. The quality of the teaching is good. In the early stages of the National Curriculum, the teachers introduce effectively the process of planning. The pupils' learning reflects this and, by the time they reach the end of Year 2, they are competent in systematic planning and realise its importance. Because teachers emphasise

safety, the pupils themselves discuss safety issues and the need for care when using sharp tools. At present, the teachers prepare their own satisfactory schemes of work, which show how well the teachers now understand and present the requirements of the curriculum.

121. There is now a very expert co-ordinator for the subject, who was appointed at the beginning of 2001. This in itself is an improvement in provision, as previously this task was shared between two art co-ordinators who felt unsure about the requirements of design and technology. The subject policy is being updated and the investigation of links with other subjects is a good development. The teachers assess the pupils' work through observations and weekly evaluations, and future planning relates well to the outcomes observed. Resources are good and well accommodated. They are clearly labelled and easily accessible to the staff.

GEOGRAPHY

122. Provision for learning is good, and attainment for most pupils is in line with national expectations by the ages of seven and eleven, and a significant number of pupils exceed this standard. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils throughout the school make good progress, including pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language.
123. In Year 1, pupils carry out a demanding survey of car parking in the school, and show good skills in investigating its use. They draw sensible conclusions by noting which cars are parked for the whole day and those that are parked only for part of the day. In Year 2, pupils studying a seaside resort in the past, identify specific features using photographs and note significant differences about important items like clothing, the use of the facilities by bathers and changes in the use of toys. High-attaining pupils use books skilfully to seek information and show effective skills in using it to write a simple report. Lower-attaining pupils group items to be found in a seaside resort with good understanding and identify correctly other items they might find today. Work in the school has been positively enhanced by the use of 'Barnaby Bear' for exploring a range of places; this results in good pieces of writing, especially by younger pupils.
124. Pupils in Year 5, studying European countries, use research skills sensibly and collect information from a range of sources to answer questions, for instance on the population, currency and traditional costumes. Pupils show good skills in communicating information and awareness of a potential audience; they present the information gathered on a poster clearly, with a view to exchanging it with peers in a later session. In Year 6, pupils recognise how decisions about environments and places affect the quality of people's life. They consider in depth how a site they visited could be redeveloped by sharing ideas, taking due account of the needs of the community. Pupils demonstrate good skills in discussion, showing confidence in speaking and using geographical vocabulary. They made good progress in the lesson because the teacher had good subject knowledge and made good use of information from the field trip on which the lesson was based; this enabled pupils to reinforce their learning. This unit of learning is a good example of how the curriculum as a whole makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal development, and how the effective teaching challenges even the highest-attaining pupils.

125. Pupils make good progress. This is due to a large extent to the way the pupils' positive attitudes and their responses to questioning take full benefit of the teaching. They listen attentively during lessons and collaborate well when required. They behave and apply themselves well.
126. The quality of teaching is good overall. There is a consistent focus on providing pupils with opportunities to develop investigative skills. This is reinforced by the use of resources such as photographs and by the use of stimulating questioning that encourages thinking and drawing conclusions based on what pupils observe. This makes a significant contribution to their personal development. Good use is made of fieldwork and discussion to heighten pupils' awareness of how decisions are made about the environment. Where teaching is less effective, this is due to objectives for the lesson focusing on information to cover rather than geographical skills to gain.
127. The geography curriculum is enhanced by fieldwork experience and this is well exemplified in the work produced by pupils in Year 6 following their residential stay in the Isle of Wight. Assessment procedures have been developed for younger pupils in Year 2 but this is not consistent across the school. As a result, some teachers do not have sufficient awareness of the standards each pupil should achieve and, consequently, all pupils tend to attain the same standard. Leadership and management of the subject are improving standards. There is good understanding of the subject and shared enthusiasm. Pupils' work is monitored, as are teachers' planning and, occasionally, lessons. Targets for developing the subject are focused on improving standards but the success criteria are not easily measurable to help assess their impact on learning.

HISTORY

128. Provision for learning is good, and standards of attainment are in line with those expected of pupils aged seven, and above those expected of pupils aged eleven. Standards have risen since the last inspection, especially in Years 3 to 6. There are no significant differences in attainment between boys and girls. However, because of inconsistencies in teaching, higher-attaining pupils do not always achieve the standards of which they are capable. Pupils achieve well overall, and pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make good progress.
129. By the age of seven, pupils are able to distinguish between past and present and they understand that different events happen in different periods of time. They know that changes occur over time. Pupils in Year 1, for example, can recognise the changes that have occurred in railway trains over the years, comparing those that were drawn by horses with the high-speed trains of today. Pupils in Year 2 study a local seaside town to look perceptively at changes in seaside holidays over the years. Pupils study aspects of the lives of their families and other people in past times and develop a sound understanding of the lives of others. There is, however, little evidence of pupils starting to use a range of historical sources for their own investigations into historical questions. In the Year 1 lesson on trains, for example, pupils were simply told much of the information that they could have found out for themselves, and this reduced the potential effectiveness of their learning. Higher-attaining pupils, in particular, have too few opportunities to develop the skills of interpretation and the more advanced skills of working with evidence.

130. By the age of eleven, pupils have developed an understanding of a number of periods of history, including those of the Romans, the Tudors, the Vikings, the Victorians and World War 2. Most pupils have a good knowledge of the main characters in the periods they study. This was clearly demonstrated by pupils in Year 5 who could identify Henry VIII and name each of his wives and their fates. Pupils are able to explain some of the reasons why people acted as they did. Pupils in Year 4, for example, were able to explain why the Vikings came to Britain and could describe aspects of their lives beyond the fact that they were feared invaders. They were able, for instance, to describe some Viking beliefs, such as that of Valhalla, and the fact that they were skilled farmers and craftsmen. Despite these strengths, there is insufficient emphasis on pupils' producing individual work that involves their own research. In this respect, practice is best in Year 6, where pupils write at length about topics such as rationing in World War 2 and the lives of evacuees.
131. The quality of teaching and learning in history is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are often able to add extra interesting facts about the periods studied, which generate extra interest for the pupils. A strong feature of all the teaching is very good class control that is achieved with quiet authority and with respect for the pupils. As a result, pupils are very well behaved in lessons, and relationships amongst pupils and with their teachers are very good. Pupils show interest in history and have very good attitudes to work. Teachers plan their lessons carefully and share the objectives of the lesson with their pupils so that no time is wasted and everybody is clear about what to do. There is good teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants who provide very effective support for pupils, especially those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. Overall, history provides good opportunities for literacy development, although this is not always the case for higher-attaining pupils who have limited opportunities to develop their own research and writing skills. Although pupils' books are marked and corrected, there is little use of informative comment to help pupils improve their work.
132. The handbook and schemes of work have been extensively revised to introduce a national scheme of work in line with recommended changes in the curriculum. These provide a progressive programme for pupils, but there is, nevertheless, evidence of some inconsistency in teaching between classes in the same year group. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, by enabling pupils to consider the thoughts and feelings of people from other times and to learn about their heritage and the heritage of people from other parts of the world. Trips out of school and the residential trip each year add to pupils' social and cultural development as well as supporting their learning in history. The last inspection report drew attention to the lack of a clear system for assessment. There is still no consistent procedure across all classes and years. This is recognised by the school and a system based on National Curriculum Levels is now being developed with Year 2 classes. The subject managers show good leadership and management. They have adapted and revised the schemes of work in line with new curriculum requirements, and monitor and support teaching by checking teachers' planning, looking at pupils' work and through discussions with teachers. However, there is no consistent practice for monitoring and supporting teachers in the classroom and this makes it more difficult to identify and share best practice. The subject has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

133. Provision for learning is very good, and standards are well above those expected of pupils aged seven and eleven. There are no significant differences in attainment between boys and girls. Pupils achieve very well, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Attainment has risen significantly since the last inspection.
134. By the age of seven, pupils are familiar with most of the skills of using a computer. They can, for example, use all the basics of mouse control. They retrieve information, log in and out and can save and print when necessary. Very young pupils are familiar with the basic skills. Children in the reception class, for example, were able to use a circle tool to draw pictures of Humpty Dumpty to which they added a face, arms, legs and hair with draw programmes, and then coloured the various features they had added. Pupils understand that information can be presented in many forms and routinely use information and communication technology to produce work in other subjects. Pupils in Year 2, for example, produce pictograms of the results of surveys they have carried out about favourite foods and the colours of pupils' hair in the class. Pupils in Year 1 use a range of skills to produce laminated 'books' of pictures of types of transport and of insects.
135. By the age of eleven, pupils build on these skills and can produce and print quite sophisticated work using various fonts and styles. For example, pupils in Year 6 designed and produced a presentation about the Imperial War Museum, using Powerpoint and designing and producing their own graphics as well as the text. Pupils are able to enter data and produce charts and graphs such as those drawn by Year 5 pupils on the reports of their science investigations. Pupils are able to discriminate between useful and unhelpful information, when they are working with websites, for example, and can use a range of databases to record their information. There is good use of information and communication technology across the subjects of the curriculum. Interesting word-processed work by Year 5 pupils was seen on display, where 'rap' rhythms had been used to write poems as part of the work in literacy. A useful development of pupils' work is that they produce reviews of the value of various websites they have visited.
136. All pupils have discrete lessons in the computer room, and the quality of teaching by the specialist teacher is very good. The development of the computer suite and the very good teaching in the discrete lessons are the main factors in the steep rise in attainment. Taking into account learning within ordinary classrooms, teaching, overall, is good. The teachers have had good professional development in the use of computers, both in information and communication technology lessons in the computer suite and as a means of enhancing the curriculum in other lessons. However, teachers still tend to be over reliant on the subject manager to teach parts of their subjects, and they now need to use her more as a consultant to help them rather than to teach lessons for them. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology to improve pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. The use of computers and information and communication technology to enhance pupils' research and independent learning skills is developing well. Pupils show great care for the equipment when they are working in the computer room and their behaviour is very good. Where pupils work together on their projects, there are excellent relationships in the groups and pupils are always ready to help each other if someone is having difficulty. This makes a very good contribution to pupils' moral and social development.

137. The school governors and Great Berry Friends' Association have shown an excellent commitment to developing information and communication technology resources, which are now very good. However, the school recognises that resources will need further development and has sensible priorities to expand the number of computers in classrooms as well as keeping those in the computer room up to date. At present, there is no formal, consistent assessment procedure to track attainment and progress in information and communication technology across all classes. The school recognises this weakness and assessment procedures are being developed. The subject manager has shown outstanding leadership and management skills in organising the computer suite, in setting very high standards of teaching to pupils and in providing professional advice for teachers. The previous report drew attention to the lack of a structured scheme of work for the subject. A very comprehensive scheme is now in place that not only provides for discrete information and communication technology teaching, but also contains very helpful suggestions and possible teaching methods for information and communication technology across all curriculum subjects. The subject has made excellent progress since the last report.

MUSIC

138. Provision for learning is satisfactory with several good features and attainment by the time pupils are seven and eleven meets national expectations. Teaching is competent and effective, and sometimes excellent. Pupils have a good attitude to their musical learning, and the subject is effectively led and managed. The co-ordinator and music specialist was absent during the inspection, and her leadership was missed. Judgements made during the inspection should be viewed in this context. Improvement since the last inspection is good.
139. Girls and boys make satisfactory progress as they move up the school. They gain a sound understanding of how music has structures such as melody, beat and considered sequence within an overall piece. They learn how dynamics, rhythms and phrasing aid the expressive quality of performance, and how different pitch and sounds can harmonise in different ways. They learn how to listen to music critically, reflecting upon the meaning and feelings the performer and composer wish to project, and can take these skills on to enliven and improve their own creativity and performance. This is a particular strength in their learning. Singing in assemblies enriches their learning, as do opportunities to take part in the choir, learn a good range of individual instruments, join the recorder group, and take part in public performances outside school. In the main, pupils of different abilities and attainment make equivalent progress but, since the learning is mainly as a group or class, individuals with especial gifts and talents have too limited opportunities to achieve very high standards. Overall, even though pupils have chances to listen to and appreciate the music of major European composers, they have insufficient opportunities to listen to and perform music from other world cultures. Singing in assemblies is melodic and controlled, yet lacks sufficient expressive power. The choir is well supported and well trained.
140. During the inspection, pupils in Year 2 showed their deep enjoyment of music, singing a range of songs associated with the seaside and the sea. They linked their singing to movements of their own bodies very well and then investigated how they could make sounds using their own bodies, for example by clicking and clapping. All the pupils got completely inside the performance, totally involving themselves in

the mood of pieces, both exciting and also more reflective. In Year 5, most pupils showed their good rhythmic sense and appreciation, adding sounds using a range of percussion instruments. They went on to investigate ways they could write their own compositions using pictures and diagrams to show how their music used dynamics and blended various sounds and musical textures. They understood how musicians use formal notation to write down music more precisely. In Year 6, most pupils used their well-developed critical listening skills to compose and perform very good group dance routines to very demanding music concerning a world disaster. In this lesson, most pupils showed high attainment and some very high standards of musical appreciation and performance, creating very expressive musical tableaux. This lesson made a major contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development.

141. Teaching is usually good and on occasion excellent. Teaching in each lesson and over time is well planned, and even non-specialist teachers teach with confidence, adequate subject expertise, and a sense of pace and challenge. Specialist teachers of instruments teach well, and the choir and recorder groups are competently led.
142. The subject is well managed and led, and teachers have a good scheme of work to follow and are well supported. The expert co-ordinator's presence was missed, and yet music lessons observed showed that other teachers could continue effectively on their own, even though they regretted the absence of the particular skills and enthusiasm of the team leader. Assessment procedures are underdeveloped. Resources for learning are satisfactory, with an adequate range of tuned and untuned instruments, and other resources such as tapes. A room for small group work and another for instrumental teaching significantly enhance the provision. At present there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to become involved with musical creativity from cultures other than European, and insufficient opportunities for the gifted and talented, since in most lessons the teaching tends to generate the same standard of attainment for all pupils.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

143. Provision for learning is good, and by the ages of seven and eleven, most pupils attain standards that are in line with national expectations. The school has maintained the standards seen in the last inspection. This has been achieved through the good use of expert teachers and other adults who provide specialist training.
144. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are developing a good range of gymnastic movements. They move well around the hall and perform a good range of movements both on the apparatus and also on the floor. They use space well and most of their movements are controlled, although the quality of their landings is sometimes clumsy. In games, they develop running skills through a game of 'stick in the mud' where they have to avoid being caught. The opportunity to go swimming enables pupils in Year 2 to become confident in the water and some are able to swim short distances in the training pool. They develop imaginative dance skills and respond well to music. Pupils are active in most lessons, but occasionally time is not used well and pupils are inactive, and become restless and start to misbehave.
145. All pupils in Year 6 can swim at least 25 metres with confidence and many use a variety of strokes. This year the school has a record number of entries in the local

swimming gala, which is testimony to the work of the teachers and instructors at the pool. They develop their athletics skills through training in running and, specifically, relay techniques. Pupils in Year 5 have good throwing and batting skills and apply them well in games of rounders. Throwing and batting skills are also a part of the provision in Years 3 and 4, but these pupils are less skilled in applying them. For example, those in Year 4 find it difficult to keep a ball in the air when using a paddle-bat in tennis. They also have difficulty maintaining a rally in a game of mini-tennis and pupils in Year 3 experience difficulty in batting in cricket due to some confusion about how to hold the bat. The good progress between Years 3 and 6 shows the way that the effective teaching helps pupils gain in skills.

146. Pupils enjoy physical education and display good attitudes to the subject. They are keen and listen to their teachers; an excellent example of this was seen when a Year 1 class was enjoying their work on the school field. All pupils treat equipment with care and use it well. They show a high level of responsibility, especially when helping younger pupils at the swimming pool. All pupils have a good knowledge of how exercise affects their body and know the importance of effective warm up and cool down sessions.
147. The quality of teaching is good overall with some very good teaching across the age range. In the best lessons, teachers display a high level of subject knowledge and expertise, use demonstration well and give clear guidance for improvement. The lessons have good pace and teachers manage their pupils well. In one lesson, the teaching lacked pace and the pupils became restless, even though they still made progress. Only one unsatisfactory lesson was seen during the inspection, when pupils were shown the incorrect method of holding a bat.
148. The subject benefits from the good leadership of an experienced and well-qualified teacher to co-ordinate the subject. She provides support for other staff and leads by example through high quality teaching and specialised subject knowledge. All areas of the National Curriculum are taught, including outdoor and adventurous pursuits during the residential experiences in Year 6. Pupils are able to participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activity, including line dancing and a skipping club, and the school enjoys success in competitive sports. There is a good scheme of work to support the subject but there is some lack of detail in how to develop skills, for example in gymnastics and games. In consequence, the planning for these aspects needs to be improved and then the assessment of pupils' progression through these skills can be accurately tracked. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development through opportunities to work together and for the older pupils to support younger ones, especially in swimming and lunchtime activities. Teachers give good emphasis to aspects of health education, such as the effects of exercise on the body and the importance of 'warm up' and 'cool down' exercises. Accommodation is very good and the school makes very good use of the facilities available. There is a good level of resources to support the subject and the school makes very good use of the expertise of other adults.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

149. Provision for learning is very good and standards are much improved since the last inspection. Most pupils by the time they are seven attain standards that are above those expected by the locally agreed syllabus. By the time pupils are eleven most attain above expected standards and a significant number of the more able pupils well above. The strengths of the learning throughout the school are the very good attitudes of the pupils to their learning and the way they investigate and understand not only the facts about religions but also the way faith and belief play important roles in people's lives and, more significantly, their own. The subject is well led and managed, and teaching is very good. The subject makes a very significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
150. The pupils' previous work and the learning in lessons show that they make very good progress as they move up the school. Almost all pupils gain a very good factual knowledge and do not confuse one religion with another, treating each as special. They take what they learn and express their own feelings, increasingly able to see into the lives of peoples of other faiths. Their learning reflects a curriculum that is broad and deep, and highly relevant to pupils' present and future lives; the curriculum meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus in full. Although separate from class learning, the pupils' depth in understanding enhances and in turn is enhanced by assemblies of great power.
151. In Year 1, pupils consider in considerable detail Muslim patterns of prayer, learning how prayer enlivens stages in each day. They go on to learn how times in their own days have especial significance. In Year 2, they consider with great perception the way Hindu stories help people grapple with the 'really big' questions of life, and how this links with festivals such as Divali. In Year 3, pupils see and understand how Hindus place their beliefs at the centre of life through Puja. In Year 4, pupils pick up a theme from the school's assemblies, 'Actions speak louder than words', and relate this to the special places, practices and objects of peoples of faith, linking this to learning about the place and meaning of Shema and Mezuzah in Jewish religious life. In Year 5, these older pupils build on these ideas, relating but not confusing what they know about Hindu and Christian religious lives. In Year 6, pupils learn in great detail how young Jews enter adult religious life, and they reflect in considerable depth upon the feelings these events might generate, and look deeply into their own feelings as they approach adulthood.
152. Teachers help girls and boys of high and very high attainment to investigate areas that demand very considerable maturity, and yet equally value the learning needs of pupils of average and below average ability. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported, and gain good access to the learning of their peers. Pupils at all levels of attainment make at least good progress over time, and most make very good progress. Pupils from different faiths and cultures are highly valued by teachers and pupils, as they bring especial insight into the lives of Hindus and Muslims. The strength of the teaching and learning is the way almost all pupils attain the expected standards, most exceed them, and significant minority go well beyond.
153. Teaching is strong throughout the school, with no significant differences between years. More than 80 per cent of teaching observed was at least good, and 60 per cent very good or excellent. Teachers are confident in their own subject knowledge

and share their enthusiasm with the pupils. Lessons are well planned and provide a range of learning opportunities that are well matched to all levels of attainment. Teachers' use of language explains things clearly and leads the pupils to deeper and deeper levels of understanding and personal reflection. This in turn develops the pupils' listening, speaking and then writing skills. Above all, teachers show the teaching expertise that is unique to this subject. Previous work in books shows that these high standards are the norm.

154. The subject co-ordinators lead others effectively through careful management and their own enthusiasm and understanding of the subject. They understand the locally agreed syllabus and have put in place a very good scheme of work that gives their colleagues confidence by making clear the learning objectives for each lesson and how to help pupils achieve them. They advise colleagues but recognise that they need to build upon colleagues' present expertise in ways that allow even deeper reflection by pupils in episodes of 'stillness'. At present they check planning, but have insufficient opportunities to work with colleagues in lessons so as to share best practice. They are considering better ways of assessing attainment and progress but, rightly, understand that priority is better placed on helping teachers and pupils evaluate the learning at the end of each lesson. This self-evaluation is already an effective way of improving both teaching and learning, and is a strength to build on. There are links with a local church, for example a minister contributes to assemblies, but there are insufficient links with other faith communities; this misses opportunities for pupils to gain first-hand experience of other cultures. Resources for learning are adequate, although there is too limited a range of authentic artefacts and stimulus material such as videos and tapes.