

INSPECTION REPORT

Bowerhill Primary School

Bowerhill, Melksham

LEA area: Wiltshire

Unique reference number: 126290

Headteacher: Mr A Matthews

Reporting inspector: Mr A C Jolly
(8750)

Dates of inspection: 8th – 11th May 2001

Inspection number: 193075

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:	Halifax Road Bowerhill Melksham Wiltshire
Postcode:	SN12 6YH
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs N Hiscock
Date of previous inspection:	10 th March 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
8750	Mr A C Jolly	Registered inspector	English, Physical Education, Equal Opportunities.	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
19491	Mr R Jones	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
19897	Mr A Evans	Team inspector	Religious Education, Geography, History.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
22701	Mr C Edwards	Team inspector	Mathematics, Design & Technology, Special Educational Needs.	How well is the school led and managed?
16249	Mrs S Barnes	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage, Art.	
22489	Mr I Barker	Team inspector	Science, Information Technology, Music.	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Bowerhill Primary School was founded in 1991 on a growing housing estate near Melksham in Wiltshire. There are 320 pupils aged between four and eleven. Pupils start school in the September preceding their fifth birthday. There are very few children for whom English is an additional language. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is above the national average, but the percentage of pupils specifically with statements of special educational needs is below the national average. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Bowerhill Primary School is a caring and well managed school, which has established a secure basis for further improvement. The standard of teaching is sound overall and generally good or very good in the final two years. The headteacher, ably supported by the governors, is providing effective leadership and has a clear understanding of the school's needs. Standards are generally satisfactory in most subjects. The Key Stage 2 test results last year were, untypically, well below the national average and standards of the current eleven year olds are mainly average. The school is providing satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in physical education are good.
- Most teaching in Years 5 and 6 is good or better.
- Attendance is above the national average.
- Behaviour is generally good.
- Provision for pupils' social development is very good.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The range of extra-curricular activities is very good.

What could be improved

- The assessment of pupils' progress to enable teachers to plan more effectively.
- The influence of the subject co-ordinators on the teaching and standards in their subjects.
- More consistent provision to meet the needs of more able pupils.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in March, 1997. Standards were unsatisfactory then in design technology, religious education and information technology and, at Key Stage 2, in history and music. Standards in all those subjects have now risen and are average. Standards in geography, which were above average in the last inspection report are now average. Standards have fallen in art to be below average but they have risen in physical education to be above average.

Teachers are now using teaching time effectively and do not leave pupils too long in lessons without attention and guidance. The curriculum is now better balanced and music has more time devoted to it. There is effective coverage of the skills, concepts and knowledge in information technology, history and music, which were missing at the time of the last

inspection report. Systems have been put in place to monitor teaching and learning, as part of the performance management policy, but these are still at too early a stage to have had an impact on standards. Resources are now at least sound in science, mathematics, design and technology and information technology. Omissions in statutory requirements in the school prospectus and the Governors' Annual Report have been made good.

Thus significant improvement has been made in response to the key issues raised in the last inspection report. The test results are better in Key Stage 1 than at the time of the last inspection. The 2000 Key Stage 2 test results compared less well with the national average but the current work in Years 5 and 6 is better than these test results would indicate. The level of improvement overall is satisfactory.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	B	B	E	E*	<i>well above</i> A <i>average above</i> B <i>average</i> <i>average</i> C <i>below average</i> D <i>well below average</i> E
mathematics	B	B	E	E*	
science	C	C	E	E	

The table shows that results fell in the Key Stage 2 tests in 2000 so that standards were well below average when compared nationally and, as shown by the last column, in the lowest 5% when compared with similar schools in English and mathematics. However, the comparison is unrealistic. The "similar schools" are those which have a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals – in this instance a group associated statistically with relatively high attainment – whereas the evidence is strong that this school's intake is of only average overall potential. A more useful comparison, is with a group of schools wherein the Key Stage 1 results for the same cohort of pupils were similar. When compared in this way, the results are put in a more favourable light and were actually what would be expected in English, although still below average in mathematics and science.

The school had predicted that the Key Stage 2 results for 2000 would suffer a significant dip because of the untypical ability range in that particular year group; the actual performance was better than expected. The current work in Year 6 is of a better standard than was reflected in last year's test results. Results had been in line with the national trend in English and mathematics between 1996 and 1999. The overall trend in Key Stage 1 has been upward since 1996 and last year's results improved in reading, writing and mathematics. Although targets for Key Stage 2 reflect careful analysis of different year groups, they are not always sufficiently ambitious to inspire the necessary improvement. Boys performed less well overall in tests in 1999 and 2000. As three fifths of last year's cohort were boys this had a disproportionate effect on the English test results. Boys are now performing better throughout most years in the school, particularly in Year 6 as a result of a concerted effort to raise their standards. However, too few able pupils attain the higher level in tests at the end of both key stages.

Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is average and pupils achieve appropriate standards in relation to this. Standards are average in most subjects except for art and physical education. In physical education the standard seen was above average. In art the standards are currently below average. The best work seen in the school was in Years 5 and 6 and the weakest in Years 3 and 4. The school has introduced a thorough scheme to monitor pupils' attainment and set targets, but those set for English are not challenging enough.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils show an interest in their work and enjoy coming to school. They take part enthusiastically in all activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Standards of behaviour are generally good. A few pupils, particularly in Years 3 and 4, do not live up to the otherwise high standard.
Personal development and relationships	The school provides opportunities for pupils to take responsibility. Relationships throughout the school are good.
Attendance	Attendance is above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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.

Ninety three per cent of teaching is satisfactory and just over a half of the total is good or better. The teaching is unsatisfactory in only seven per cent of lessons. This is a significant improvement on the last inspection. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught effectively and the needs of all pupils were generally met in the lessons observed. The best teaching seen was in Years 5 and 6 where the teachers employed skilful questioning and built effectively on previous experience to enlarge pupils' knowledge. Clear targets for each pupil are displayed for literacy and occasionally other subjects and teachers focus on clear objectives in their lessons. The weakest aspect of teaching is marking, which varies between teachers, but does not generally give pupils sufficient guidance on how to improve. Another variable factor in the teaching is the level of expectation of pupils. This is generally insufficiently high for pupils in Years 3 and 4. It is better in Years 5 and 6 but the teaching overall makes insufficient demands of the more able pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
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The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a broad and reasonably balanced curriculum with a wide range of learning opportunities in all three key stages. There is very good provision for extra curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very well organised and funded. Teachers and a team of dedicated classroom assistants support very well pupils with a very wide range of special needs. This is a strength of the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes good provision for all these facets of the pupils' development. The provision for pupils' social development is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Overall procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are good. There are systems for monitoring and supporting personal development and behaviour but those for monitoring pupils' academic progress are less well developed.

The school recognises the need to improve communication with parents and has taken positive action to do this.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher, suitably supported by key staff, provides calm and analytical leadership, which is giving a sound basis for the school's continued development.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil all their statutory responsibilities. They are well informed and actively involved in strategic planning.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has recognised the need to raise standards and has responded with a thorough overhaul of the curriculum and an extensive programme of non-statutory and standardised testing.
The strategic use of resources	Delegated budgets and grants are used effectively. Financial planning and control are good and benefit from the expert advice and supervision of the governors.

The school benefits from good staffing, accommodation and resources. The school applies effectively the principles of Best Value. The school's aims and values are well reflected in its work but co-ordinators influence insufficiently the standards and teaching of their subjects.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Their children make good progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school could work more closely with parents.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching is good. • The school has high expectations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons. • Information about their children's progress. • The right amount of homework.
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The inspection team agrees that the children like school and respond to what is expected of them to make appropriate progress. The school acknowledges that it needs to work more closely with parents and provide more information about children's progress. It has already started to improve communication. The inspection team judged that the new homework policy and schedule provide broadly the right amount of homework. They considered the range of activities provided outside lessons was actually very good when compared with other primary schools.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Results in the key subjects of English, mathematics and science in Key Stage 2 were well below the national average in 2000. These results represented a significant dip after steady improvement from 1997 – 1999. When compared with schools in similar situations the results for science were well below average and those for English and mathematics placed the school in the lowest 5 per cent of these schools for performance. However, the comparison, based on entitlement to free school meals, does not appear to be truly indicative of the school's performance, as explained in the Summary above.
2. When these results are compared with prior attainment, standards are just below what would be expected in mathematics and science and in line with what would be expected in English. Almost one half of that particular cohort was on the school's register of educational needs. The average points score was affected adversely by the low percentage of pupils who attained the higher level, Level 5. This is partly explained by a smaller number of pupils entering the school with above average standards of literacy and numeracy than would be found nationally.
3. Results improved in the Key Stage 1 tests last year to reach the national standard in mathematics and writing and just below in reading. Test results have been erratic over the last four years but these are the best so far.
4. The school has recognised these results are not good enough and has introduced a sound system to monitor the attainment of pupils and ensure they achieve standards of which they are capable. It has also introduced diagnostic tests to improve target setting towards better performance in tests. Sound targets have been set for the future in mathematics and science but they are insufficiently ambitious to ensure the school meets the national target for English in 2002.
5. Attainment on entry to the school is clearly average, judging by baseline tests for the last two years, with fewer pupils attaining higher levels that would be expected nationally. Pupils make sound progress in reception and attain all the early learning goals. This progress is maintained in Key Stage 1 where standards in English, mathematics and science, and information technology are average. Standards in religious education have improved throughout the school from the last inspection report and meet the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.
6. Standards in English and mathematics are average by the time the pupils leave the school. The school gives considerable emphasis to the teaching of basic skills and standards of literacy and numeracy are sound throughout the school. Standards in science are average at the end of Key Stage 2.
7. Standards have improved in design and technology and information technology throughout the school. They have also improved in history and music so that all these subjects are now of average standard.
8. Standards have fallen in geography from above average to an average standard but they have risen in physical education and are now above average. Standards in art are now below average.

9. Thus overall standards in subjects have improved. The school is aware that test results need to improve and there is a strong shared commitment to make that happen, which is backed by sound strategies and analysis.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and generally show a keen interest in their lessons and other school activities. They are eager to answer questions and not only contribute their own opinions and experiences but also listen to the views of others, for example in Circle Time. In a key Stage 1 literacy lesson they listened quietly while one pupil outlined the plot of a story he intended to write. Pupils say that they enjoy coming to school, which their parents confirm. Attendance levels are above national averages and pupils arrive punctually.
11. Behaviour around the school is good on occasions such as assemblies, break times and dining. It is also generally good in lessons, although in Key Stage 2 there is some minor disruptive behaviour by a small number of pupils which requires frequent checking by teachers. Pupils are friendly and polite. They treat the school site and property with care. The school has worked hard to improve standards of behaviour through the introduction of revised policies incorporating a variety of rewards, "sharing success" assemblies and golden rules which are understood and accepted by pupils. There are very few exclusions.
12. Relationships throughout the school are also good. Pupils work well together in small groups, for example undertaking a survey of playground activity as part of a project on the local environment, or in pairs, sharing calculators for a numbers game or numeracy lesson. At times older pupils help younger ones with reading. Although some name-calling does occur on occasions, bullying and other forms of oppressive behaviour are not major issues. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated with their peers.
13. The school provides a variety of opportunities for pupils to become responsible. Residential visits, which broaden experience, are organised for Years 5 and 6. Pupils undertake many jobs in class and around the school. They contribute to the development of class rules and projected environmental improvements around the school, as well as participating fully in the range of extra curricular activities and undertaking some charity work.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

14. The quality of teaching was a major weakness in the last inspection report when twenty five per cent of the teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching has now improved and only seven per cent of teaching is unsatisfactory. Just over one half of the teaching is good or better and one fifth of the total is very good or excellent.
15. The teaching in the foundation stage is at least sound and sometimes good. The management of the pupils is good and there are clear routines so that pupils know what they have to do. The teaching of information and communication technology in the foundation stage is a strength.
16. The teaching in Key Stage 1 is always at least sound and sometimes good. Pupils again are well managed and support assistants make a valuable contribution to the pupils' learning. Clear targets are set for the pupils in each class, which aids

individual progress. There is effective use of white boards and overhead projectors as teaching aids.

17. The teaching is more variable in Key Stage 2. In Years 5 and 6 it is at its best: over half of the lessons are good, very good or excellent. There is a very clear target setting process, which is at its best in one Year 5 classroom where the teacher has columns next to the individual targets saying '*Getting Started*', '*Nearly There*' and '*Got It*'. In Year 6 the teacher's knowledge and understanding of the pupils helped her to motivate them to perform a complicated dance routine. In one excellent lesson on Ancient Greece with Year 5 pupils, the teacher involved all of them with her questions. An excellent stimulus for their learning was an activity requiring the pupils in pairs to judge attributes as Athenians or Spartans.
18. The teaching is least strong in Years 3 and 4 and in three out of every twenty lessons it is unsatisfactory. The management of sometimes challenging pupils is less effective and lessons often lack the pace that characterises the teaching in Year 5, particularly. The marking of pupils' work, which is variable throughout the school, is least satisfactory for this mixed age group. Mediocre work is often accompanied by a brief, complimentary comment and insufficient guidance is given on how pupils can improve. In Years 3 and 4 insufficient demands are often made of higher attaining pupils, in contrast again to the teaching in Years 5 and 6.
19. The numeracy and literacy strategies have been introduced satisfactorily and introductions, main activities and plenary sessions are generally well taught. Most classrooms have clear targets for both individuals and groups in literacy and numeracy. The teaching generally meets the needs of all pupils and learning is consistently fostered by the clarity of lesson objectives and good relationships between pupils and teachers. The new homework policy and schedule have ensured that arrangements are satisfactory.

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

20. The school provides a broad curriculum, offering the pupils a sound range of worthwhile learning opportunities. Total weekly teaching time meets national recommendations. Although there is a heavy emphasis on the teaching of English, all subjects, including music, receive an appropriate share of teaching time. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection report. About eleven pupils are currently taking advantage of opportunities that exist for instrumental music tuition. The school meets its obligations to provide a daily act of collective worship, which was not the case during the previous inspection. The school is implementing the National Strategies for Literacy (NLS) and Numeracy (NNS) satisfactorily.
21. Planning of the curriculum is satisfactory and this represents an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection report. The teachers in each year work closely together to plan the work, which the pupils will do each term. English and mathematics are soundly planned according to the NLS and NNS, whilst planning in other subjects is based on national guidelines, adapted to the needs of the school. The headteacher monitors this planning regularly.
22. The school takes effective steps to ensure that all the pupils, regardless of gender, academic or physical ability can benefit from what the school has to offer and achieve their full potential. The school monitors the achievement of different groups of pupils well. Strategies for improving the performance of boys in Key Stage 2,

which was found to be relatively weak, have resulted in higher standards, with boys even slightly outperforming girls now. Accommodation for pupils with severe mobility problems is very good and these pupils are very well integrated into daily school life.

23. Although a significant proportion of parents responding by questionnaire feels that the school does not provide enough activities outside lessons, provision for extra-curricular activities is, in fact, very good. There are numerous clubs which enhance the curriculum. These include football, netball, tennis, table tennis, cricket, dance and drama, choir, design and technology, French, art, computers, a book club and a story club. Many of these are open to pupils of all ages. Football and netball matches are played against local schools, often with success. The football team lost in the league cup final during the inspection and the netball team recently reached the play-off final. Pupils participate in a local cricket tournament. The curriculum is further enhanced by many school visits to places within the locality and further afield, including Bath, Portsmouth, Weymouth, Bristol Zoo, Lackham Countryside College and residential visits to South Wales and Dorset.
24. The headteacher recognises that more links with the community would enhance the pupils' learning further. However, the links are already broadly satisfactory. The knowledge and expertise of visitors is used whenever possible and parents often help out with activities such as art and craft. The teachers use the locality well to enhance learning in subjects such as geography.
25. There are good links with the adjacent pre-school playgroup, which uses the school's facilities and which sometimes attends school assemblies. Links with the local secondary school are satisfactory. There are opportunities for the Year 6 pupils to visit the secondary school in the summer term and, in order to smooth the transition to Key Stage 3, they begin a project in Year 6 and finish it in the secondary school.
26. Provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education is satisfactory. There is a planned programme of work in Circle Time, when the pupils are encouraged to develop confidence and self-esteem and to discuss issues of concern to them. Human growth, health education and attention to the dangers of drugs misuse are taught as part of science, with due regard to the pupils' age and maturity. Formal sex education is provided for Year 6 pupils before they leave the school, sometimes with help from the school nurse.
27. Provision for the pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory, which is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection report. The pupils celebrate festivals of the Christian calendar and the local curate has led some acts of collective worship. In some lessons, particularly in religious education, the teachers give the pupils a chance to stop and think about ideas. In a Year 3 and 4 Circle Time session, the pupils talked responsibly about people and things which were special to them and about worries that they had. Year 1 and 2 pupils have written simple poems thanking God for animals and pets. The teachers try to instil a sense of awe and wonder into learning. This was apparent in a Year 1 and 2 science lesson, when the pupils were excited at the freezing of some liquids. The teachers regularly select a 'special person of the day', in order to celebrate achievement and this is further celebrated in a weekly 'sharing successes' assembly. Acts of collective worship make a satisfactory contribution to the pupils' spiritual development on themes, such as thinking of others and helping one another.
28. The school makes good provision for the pupils' moral development. A clear

behaviour policy includes guidelines for promoting good behaviour through a system of positive rewards and a statement on the school's policy regarding bullying. School rules and 'golden rules' are clearly displayed in all classrooms and the pupils are made well aware of the differences between right and wrong. Some individual education plans for pupils on the special educational needs register include targets for improving behaviour and the school has also made effective use of the local behaviour support service.

29. Provision for the pupils' social development is very good. Most parents feel that the school helps their children to become responsible. The teachers encourage the pupils to carry out a variety of tasks in classrooms and around the school and older pupils are encouraged to help younger ones. The pupils have supported many charities, including the Trowbridge Family Centre. They can develop social skills in many extra-curricular clubs, in school productions, in class assemblies and on visits, including, for Year 5 and 6 pupils, residential visits. Pupils in Year 6 can develop road safety skills on a cycling proficiency course. In geography, the pupils think about environmental pollution and the need for conservation and recycling. Pupils in Years 3 and 4, for example, have conducted a survey of rubbish discarded in school. In many lessons, such as science and physical education, the pupils are often encouraged to work collaboratively.
30. There is good provision for the pupils' cultural development. The pupils have listened to an author and have participated in poetry workshops during a book week. Theatre groups have visited the school. Visits to museums and Swindon's Wyvern Theatre enhance cultural development. In art, the pupils learn about the work of a variety of well-known artists and there is a good display of Victorian canal art. In history, they learn about the cultures of ancient Greece and the legacy of the Romans in Britain. In geography, they learn about aspects of life in a West African country. Provision for multicultural awareness is less pronounced. Work in art, for example, is almost exclusively based on Western Europe. However, provision is broadly satisfactory. In literacy, Year 5 pupils have looked at stories from around the world and younger pupils have celebrated the Chinese New Year. In religious education, the pupils learn to develop respect for peoples of different faiths and cultures.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31. This is a caring school where the well being and support of pupils is a priority. The school provides a stable and safe setting in which learning can take place. Pupils with special educational needs are particularly well integrated into the school and the provision for them is very good. Pupils also receive pastoral help and advice from visitors including the school nurse, police and road safety experts.
32. There are effective procedures to deal with child protection. The necessary steps to comply with the requirements of health and safety legislation have been taken and a member of staff and a governor undertake termly inspections.
33. There are sound arrangements involving all staff for monitoring the personal development and behaviour of pupils. Incidents are logged and if necessary information recorded on the pupils' annual reports. Records are also kept of the various rewards that pupils have earned as part of the policy to promote good behaviour. These systems are underpinned by a strong informal network for the exchange of information between staff who know the pupils well. Comprehensive attendance records are maintained and unexplained absences are always followed up.

34. There are weaknesses in the current systems for the monitoring and recording of academic progress but these are being actively addressed. Pupils now take a variety of nationally recognised tests each year and the information from these is being incorporated into a computerised database. Analysis of this is intended to enable individual academic targets to be set so that pupils can be appropriately supported.
35. All assessment information relating to literacy, numeracy, science and information and communication technology will also be drawn together into an individual Record of Achievement for each pupil, which will also include personal development targets. However, there are no plans to develop systematic monitoring of progress in other foundation subjects.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

36. Overall the links with parents are sound. Most parents believe that the school is approachable, although significant minorities do have reservations about the information that they are given and the way that the school works with them. The school is aware of these concerns and has introduced a number of measures to improve communication. As well as sending out regular newsletters the school has recently organised specific meetings on numeracy and Standard Assessment Tests, which have been well attended, and provided opportunities for parents to see their children's work in class assemblies. There are still some inconsistencies between classes in the way that parents are informed about curriculum issues. The school is in the process of introducing a comprehensive Record of Achievement for each pupil that will provide parents with a very detailed picture of progress in literacy, numeracy, science and information communication technology.
37. The school is keen to consult with parents and involve them in their children's learning and the life of the school. For example it has produced a guidance booklet for parents to help their children to read and a revised homework policy informs parents about the activities which pupils will take home and how these should be approached. A number of parents regularly help in school with reading, computers, cookery and making resources. An active Parents' Association has raised significant sums of money for the purchase of new computers and other equipment. Such support makes a valuable contribution to the learning opportunities and facilities available to pupils.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

38. Since his appointment in 1999 the headteacher has provided calm analytical leadership. He identified the need to provide a clear staff management structure, which is now in place and working well, and to developing teams of teachers to share their wide range of experience and expertise. Most of this has been achieved but an unavoidably high turnover of staff has limited the hoped for stability. The headteacher has overseen a complete overhaul of the curriculum and now all subjects have useful programmes of study, although some policy documents are still required and further work is necessary on assessment procedures. He has a clear vision for the school's development and is aware of the need to raise standards. The headteacher is well supported by the deputy headteacher. She plays a valuable role in pastoral and curriculum development, as well as managing the school's resources efficiently. The school's management of and provision for pupils' special educational needs is very good and enables some pupils, who in the past would have been educated separately, to be happily integrated into school life.

39. The Governing Body fulfils all its statutory duties. Most governors have received suitable training and are generally well informed about educational developments. They have a system of school visits and they receive regular reports from the headteacher and key members of staff. They are aware of the challenges facing the school and take a full part in formulating the development plan and setting and overseeing budgets. They are a “critical friend” to the school and encourage its efforts.
40. The school has systems to track year groups and individual pupil attainment in English, mathematics and science and the results are used to establish priorities when planning the curriculum and establishing teaching groups. This is not yet sufficiently used to identify and address areas of concern within each subject. Each subject has a co-ordinator but their role is directed too much towards curriculum maintenance and development and too little to rigorous monitoring of teaching and standards achieved by pupils in all classes. The school's development plan has appropriate priorities and includes a rolling programme of curriculum development.
41. Financial management is very efficient and ensures that good value is obtained in all dealings. The governors provide an unusually high level of expert advice and guidance in all financial matters. The school had a high carry forward from the previous financial year but was able to explain the reasons for this satisfactorily. The headteacher and deputy headteacher ensure that all teachers and subjects receive funds to support the priorities set out in the development plan. The office staff manage the day-to-day financial management well and play a key role in the smooth running of the school.
42. There are sufficient qualified teachers who receive appropriate training within a professional development programme tailored to the school's identified needs. A large team of skilled learning assistants supports them very well. The accommodation is good and in many areas is enhanced by attractive and informative displays. Specialised rooms promote computer education and music and the main building's airy corridor is well used for small group teaching. The school hall is very suitable for class activities but is cramped for whole school assemblies or productions. The four temporary classrooms are of a satisfactory size but are uncomfortable during hot weather. The playground is not large enough for the whole school when the field and other areas are unavailable. Resources in all subjects are sufficient.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to raise standards the school should:

Improve the use of assessment information (paragraphs 18,34,35,40,62 and 72) by:

- making more consistent use of information gained in lessons and tests;

- providing more constructive comments when marking pupils' work to show them how to improve.

Strengthen the influence of subject co-ordinators, as identified in the current School Development Plan (paragraphs 18,40,54,70,75,81,90 and 104) by:

- improving their effectiveness in monitoring standards of work and teaching of their subjects to ensure greater consistency in pupils' attainment.
- ensuring the tasks set in their subjects more consistently meet the needs of higher attaining pupils.

Other less important weaknesses, that should be included in the action plan (paragraphs 77,78 & 81):

- Raise standards in art.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

57

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

15

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	16	34	40	7	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	320
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	19
Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	74
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1
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	11

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	95.7
National comparative data	94.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	20	15	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	18	18
	Girls	10	13	14
	Total	27	31	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77(73)	89(70)	91(85)
	National	83(82)	84(83)	90(87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	17	18
	Girls	12	11	10
	Total	29	28	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83(65)	80(60)	80(65)
	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	38	27	65

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	20	29
	Girls	22	18	24
	Total	43	38	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	66(82)	58(75)	82(84)
	National	75(70)	72(69)	85(78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	18	24
	Girls	22	16	21
	Total	41	34	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	63(73)	52(57)	69(77)
	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	5
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	1
White	267
Any other minority ethnic group	

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)	13
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25 : 1
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	173

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups		

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
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	£
Total income	567,790.00
Total expenditure	524,641.00
Expenditure per pupil	1,553
Balance brought forward from previous year	55,278.00
Balance carried forward to next year	43,149.00

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	320
Number of questionnaires returned	94

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	48	44	7	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	33	55	5	1	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	18	69	11	1	11
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	16	57	17	9	1
The teaching is good.	29	63	3	1	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	15	53	27	5	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	27	55	14	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	31	59	4	2	4
The school works closely with parents.	16	44	34	5	1
The school is well led and managed.	16	52	13	6	13
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	22	62	9	2	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	12	53	24	9	2

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

43. Children's attainment on entry is average. This is borne out by the analysis of baseline assessment and reflects the findings of the previous report. As at that time, a significant number of the children have had some experience of pre-school education. There is a good induction programme, which offers parents the opportunity to meet the early years' co-ordinator to hear about the school's routines and expectations. Visits are arranged for parents and children to visit the two classrooms three times before the children start school. All of the aspects of the curriculum for children under five are appropriately promoted in the reception classes. There are suitable activities to develop literacy and mathematical skills so that currently children are working at the expected standard for five year olds by the time they move into Year 1. Most of the children are on course to achieve the early learning goals by the end of term. This represents sound progress. Those children who have special educational needs are quickly identified and offered suitable support so that they make good progress towards their learning targets.
44. Teaching is sound overall. During the week of inspection some good teaching was observed, particularly in information and communication technology (ICT). Teachers have a suitable knowledge and understanding of the way young children learn. They establish clear routines, which provide the children with a safe and secure learning environment. Planning ensures that all areas of learning are covered and they are well linked together to provide appropriate learning experiences. Management of classes is good. As a result children show good levels of interest, concentration and independence. Good relationships exist and teachers and teaching assistants interact well with the children to create a relaxed and happy learning environment.

Personal, social and emotional development

45. Personal, social and emotional development is promoted effectively through all areas of learning. Teachers have appropriately high expectations and children quickly learn to listen without calling out, to put hands up, and to share and take turns. They are provided with activities that interest them and motivate them to learn. The teachers give suitable opportunities for children to learn to take care of their own needs. As a result they are confident in selecting their own materials, for example, when choosing pens and paper, or putting their wet paintings carefully on the drying rack. They clear away quickly at the ends of sessions and return everything to its proper place. They sit quietly in discussions and at plenary sessions and take it in turns to answer questions or to show others what they have made. They have made satisfactory relationships and work well together in the role-play when, for instance, acting out the life cycle of a butterfly. Children understand what is right and what is wrong. They are generally co-operative and confident as a result of consistent practice in class management by teachers and support assistants and can be expected to achieve the standards expected of pupils on entry to Year 1.

Communication, language and literacy

46. The children speak coherently and generally use phrases or whole sentences in their discussions. They communicate effectively in small groups, for example, when sharing out play dough or playing in the “garden centre”. The teachers provide suitable opportunities for them to express their thoughts and feelings, to answer questions and explain their views. They listen with enjoyment to stories, such as “Dogger” and talk about toys that are precious to them and how they feel when they lose something. They are developing an appropriate basic sight vocabulary and most children recognise their own name and can write it, although some still need to copy. Many children are beginning to learn how to blend sounds together to make simple words. Some children can read a simple text with reasonable accuracy and understanding. Children learn to enjoy books as a class during literacy lessons, as well as individually with the teacher, or teaching assistant. Children take books and letter recognition worksheets home to share with parents and carers. This support from home and the daily school lessons result in the children making sound progress. They are learning to form letters correctly, joining them up to make words. Some children can write a simple sentence with support. For example, they wrote what they liked about the story of “The hungry caterpillar”. The children are on course to attain the national early learning goals by the time they move to year 1.

Mathematical development

47. The teachers provide a range of activities to enable the children to develop their mathematical skills. The children are on course to achieve the early learning goals in this area by the end of the reception year. Most of them can count confidently to ten, and many to twenty. They can count forwards to twenty and make numbers up to ten with two smaller numbers. They can sort objects according to colour and shape and match reflecting shapes, as when working on a butterfly puzzle. They are learning about symmetry and teachers provide them with suitable opportunities to make symmetrical pictures and patterns to reinforce this learning. Children know the names of the most familiar shapes, square, rectangle, triangle and circle, and can use these when printing a repeating pattern. They construct simple pictograms with the help of their teachers to illustrate their favourite fruits.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

48. Throughout the year children are provided with a suitable range of activities to extend their knowledge and understanding of the world. They are in line to attain the standards expected when they transfer to Year 1. Teachers plan lessons effectively. During a topic on growing they gave children opportunities to look at the changes that take place from a seed to a plant. When reading stories about ‘The Hungry Caterpillar’, they looked at the development of a butterfly. They planted beans and other seeds under various conditions and considered what they need to grow. Children know that plants and animals need energy to live and grow. They looked carefully at different fruits, recognising more common ones such as apples and oranges easily, although having more difficulty recognising pineapples and melons. The children are given regular good opportunities to use the computer in the new ICT suite when they develop specific ICT skills. Teachers plan effectively for these lessons; they are confident, well prepared and make good use of class assistants and volunteer support. Teachers effectively revise previous learning at the start of the lessons and, as a result, children make very good progress in their learning. They confidently open programmes and use the mouse and icon bars with skill and confidence to make pictures and patterns, including the use of the stamp facility. They print their resulting pictures without the need of assistance from adults.

Creative development

49. There are well-planned activities to enable children to make suitable progress in this area and most children will achieve the expected standard by the end of the reception year. Children recognise and copy a simple rhythmic pattern singing songs from memory, which they accompany with actions and percussion instruments, such as cymbals and bells. The children work well together with great enjoyment in singing and drama sessions. They co-operate well with role-play, taking it in turns to be the shop assistant. They select their own materials when painting and making pictures, such as painting patterns, which they turn into symmetrical pictures by folding them in half. They experiment with various paints, mixing colours to make new shades. They draw pictures of themselves and each other. They use puppets to enact stories they have been reading, working well together and offering help and suggestions to each other.

Physical development

50. Children make suitable progress in developing their physical skills and attain standards expected by the time they enter Year 1. The school built recently a large secure outside play area for children in the foundation stage. At present, all children in the reception year have regular opportunities to play outside with large wheeled toys, balls and hoops, as well as sand and water. The children also have a timetabled session in the hall and playground to develop movement skills. Teaching within physical education lessons is good. Teachers' planning ensures that all areas of physical development are addressed and children make good progress in these lessons as a result. They have many suitable opportunities to develop manipulative skills in the classroom through modelling, cutting and sticking and using a range of construction sets.

ENGLISH

51. Standards in English are average by the time the pupils leave the school, which reflects the findings in the last report. All pupils, including those with special educational needs achieve appropriately.
52. The Key Stage 2 test results in 2000 showed a marked decline from above average performance in the two preceding years. However, there was a larger number of pupils, almost one half, on the register of special educational needs, than is typical in the school. The school was aware that this group of pupils had performed badly four years earlier in their Key Stage 1 tests and had adjusted their predictions accordingly. The pupils' performance was well below the national average, but they exceeded the school's predictions and were in line with their prior attainment at Key Stage 1.
53. Although the percentage of pupils attaining the expected standard in Key Stage 2 was slightly above the national figure, the percentage attaining the higher standard was only just over one half of the national average. This had a significant detrimental influence on the average point score, which was in the lowest 5 per cent of schools nationally.
54. The trend in Key Stage 1 is better, although results have been unusually erratic. The 2000 results were in line with the national average in writing but below the national average in reading. The standard of writing reflects reasonable progress in Key Stage 1 considering the average standards in all baseline tests. As in Key Stage 2 the major deficiency is the low percentage of pupils attaining the higher level than found nationally.

55. The work seen in school is better than the test results would indicate and reflects sound progress related to the average level of attainment on entry. Baseline tests also confirm that there are a lower number of higher attaining pupils than would be expected nationally, although not sufficient to fully explain the low numbers attaining higher levels in tests. The need to address last year's decline in Key Stage 2 and improve English test results has been justifiably seen as a major priority for the school.
56. Standards in reading are average at the end of both key stages. Pupils of all ages enjoy reading the shared text in the literacy hour and most do so with clear and expressive voices. In Key Stage 1 pupils take books home regularly to practise their skills. Most pupils read simple texts accurately and with understanding, employing a number of strategies to tackle unfamiliar words.
57. Although the recording of reading at home is less consistent, pupils' interest and enthusiasm for books develops soundly in Key Stage 2. The more able can discuss authors such as Roald Dahl and J K Rowling and give reasons why they prefer particular books. Less confident readers have a more secure grasp of appropriate strategies to help them. Increased emphasis has been correctly given to developing the skills of inference and deduction to aid both pupils' understanding and their performance in tests
58. Standards of writing throughout the school are satisfactory. Most pupils in Year 2 can write in clearly defined sentences that usually begin with a capital letter and end with a full stop. Only a few pupils can write in a sequence of sentences that develop logically. The least satisfactory work is in Years 3 and 4, where too often writing with insufficient care and effort is accepted. Standards are better in Years 5 and 6 where expectations are generally higher. The writing in the final two years covers an appropriate range of forms including letters, newspaper reports, poetry and stories. Pupils organise their writing in a logical sequence and generally show a sound understanding of grammatical structure. Pupils in a number of classes responded enthusiastically to extracts from Macbeth'. The oldest pupils wrote interesting verses in the style of 'The Witches' Chorus' with a very good use of a wide vocabulary.
59. In both key stages, standards in speaking and listening are average. Younger pupils enjoy listening to, and talking about, stories, rhymes and poems, particularly during the introductions to the Literacy Hour. Almost all pupils in Years 1 and 2 listen attentively and are aware of the importance of taking turns and valuing the contributions of others. In Years 5 and 6, pupils are confident speakers and attentive listeners. They often make perceptive responses to open questioning.
60. The school has given additional time and emphasis to the basics of spelling, handwriting and reading. A spelling journal is particularly useful for developing pupils' skills and retention. Regular handwriting practice ensures pupils write with consistent form and size by the end of Key Stage 1. Standards deteriorate overall in Years 3 and 4 but improve in the final two years so that presentation is of an acceptable standard.
61. The teaching in lessons is usually sound, often better and only occasionally unsatisfactory. It is at its best in Years 5 and 6 where effective strategies, good relationships and flair are producing improved standards from the pupils. Over half the teaching in these final two years is very good and it is always at least sound. In a very good lesson in Year 6 the teacher probed behind an incorrect response by a

pupil to give a further understanding of rhyme and rhythm in a passage from 'Macbeth'. Questioning is challenging in these very good lessons and the atmosphere of mutual respect and calm control enhances the opportunities for pupils' learning. A consistently good feature in all lessons is the focus on the learning objectives of the lesson and pupils' own targets for improvement.

62. On the few occasions when the teaching is less sound, expectations are too low, particularly for the higher attaining pupils and each phase of the Literacy Hour proceeds too slowly. The worst feature of the teaching is the marking of pupils' work. Suggestions for improvement are given far too rarely and insufficient use is generally made of the assessment data produced to improve standards further. The marking is also often insufficiently rigorous and unacceptable standards of presentation and content sometimes receive an unwarranted brief positive response. This is particularly so in Years 3 and 4 where the quality of marking is least satisfactory.
63. The curriculum is balanced and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The National Literacy Strategy is now soundly embedded and standards of literacy are satisfactory throughout the school. The co-ordinator is providing sound leadership. The school is now using diagnostic tests to target necessary individual improvements, which is particularly useful in Year 6, although only limited attention has been given to analysing last years Standard Assessment Test results. Support assistants are used productively to aid pupils' learning and a booster class has been used to give further teaching to pupils who should attain the expected standard in the Key Stage 2 tests.
64. There is a shared commitment to succeed. Clear strategies and consistently good teaching should produce further improvement. However, the targets set for 2002 are insufficiently ambitious and, if they were achieved, the percentage of pupils who attain the required standard would still not match what is expected nationally.

MATHEMATICS

65. The 2000 National Curriculum Tests showed the standards achieved in mathematics at Key Stage 1 had improved and were now in line with national averages but that Key Stage 2 had fallen sharply to be well below the average. Standards at Key Stage 2 have improved in the current Year 6 age group and are in line with what would be found nationally.
66. Teaching in the three mixed-ages Years 1 and 2 classes is good. Lessons are well prepared and follow the National Numeracy Strategy closely with a lively pace and a good balance of direct teaching and individual and group work. Pupils respond enthusiastically during the mental arithmetic sessions and quickly count on and back in tens and fives. While most Year 2 pupils can add and subtract single digit numbers, recognise quarters and halves and construct simple graphs there are too few working confidently with two and three digit numbers or applying their skills to solve problems. Greater emphasis should be placed on the early identification and support of pupils capable of reaching these higher standards.
67. Teaching in the three Year 3 and 4 classes is satisfactory. Planning is satisfactory and when the pace of the lesson is brisk and all children participate, pupils learn well and behaviour is good. But when the lesson objectives are not made clear to all pupils and they are not set demanding tasks the pupils are easily distracted, become restless and achieve less. Teachers' expectations of pupils in these years are too low. Unjustified praise is often given when marking and too much untidy and

careless work is accepted.

68. Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is good. Each year is set into two ability groups, which are taught as separate classes. This works very well and enables the school to support pupils with difficulties while fully extending the most able. For instance some pupils in Year 6 have been working in a small group investigating whether the amount of packaging used for chocolates provides good value. In order to solve this problem, pupils had to apply all they had learnt about the four rules of number, measure carefully and use the formulae for calculating area and volume. Meanwhile, in the other class, the teacher was supported by three assistants when teaching pie graphs, with the least able group of four still requiring practical work with real pies and cakes to grasp a concept usually readily understood by seven year olds. Most lessons start with a lively mental arithmetic session with good strategies and equipment to see that all pupils answer and understand. Knowledgeable direct teaching of the whole class, with clear objectives leads to purposeful learning which is followed by a whole class review of how well the objectives have been met. Teachers have high expectations and pupils' response can be seen in the very neat presentation of their work.
69. Good use is made of mathematics in other subjects, especially in science, geography and design technology. The subject provides very good opportunities for pupils' independent learning and social development during group investigations. Regular homework promotes good work habits. The support for pupils with special educational needs is outstanding and very good use is made of the large number of skilled and dedicated support assistants.
70. The subject co-ordinator has provided good leadership during the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. Although there has been some monitoring of teaching, more is required to find out what needs to be done to raise pupils' standards.

SCIENCE

71. Results in the Key Stage 2 National Tests in 2000 were below the national average and, for higher attaining pupils, well below the national average. When compared with similar schools standards were well below average. Until 2000 science results were average. There has been a difference in performance between the boys and girls; the girls' attainment has been better than the boys'. Standards in the work seen are currently average at the end of both key stages. Pupils with special educational needs are making sound progress in their knowledge of the subject.
72. The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory but is much stronger in Years 5 and 6 where drama, for example, was used effectively to illustrate the differences between solids, gases and liquids. There is an emphasis on scientific enquiry, particularly at Years 5 and 6, which means that pupils' investigate through practical experiments. For example, they have investigated the rate at which an ice cube melts, which drinks are good for teeth and how many lamps can be lit by 3 volts. However the higher achievers are not given the opportunity to design their own investigations: they rely too much on the teachers and lack the necessary experience in thinking of questions that would form the basis for an enquiry. Most pupils understand the idea of fair testing and have sound scientific knowledge on which to make reasonable predictions as to the outcomes of their experiments. The scientific enquiry skills of the Years 3 and 4 pupils are more variable and progress is limited by insufficient experiences in scientific enquiry methods, although a class had investigated keeping drinks warm and mixing solids with water. Information and communication technology is used for information gathering to support the science

curriculum. Work is regularly marked but variable in its quality; from time to time a commentary on how to improve the scientific investigations would help pupils' learning.

73. A broad and balanced curriculum is offered; long and medium term planning is sound but short term planning is variable and does not sufficiently specify assessment strategies. An analysis of pupils' workbooks at Key Stage 2 indicates that they have studied electricity, light, green plants and the environment as well as the separation of materials. They make sound progress over time and homework in Year 6 supports learning. Pupils enjoy science and work well with the teachers and collaboratively with each other.
74. By the end of Key Stage 1 standards in science were below the national average according to teacher assessment. An analysis of pupils' work indicates that they have investigated sounds, my body, light, electricity and living and non-living things. Teaching is sound. Pupils carry out simple enquiries such as identifying types of fruit hidden in a bag by using their senses and how materials change with cooling. Older pupils in the key stage considered the aspect of fair testing during these investigations.
75. The subject is soundly managed. There is a policy, scheme of work and a record of achievement system. The assessment system is being developed. Homework is given weekly in Year 5 and Year 6. Resources are of good quality and well organised but the way the scheme of work is organised sometimes means there is barely sufficient to meet teaching requirements. There is a good range of library books but they are limited in quantity. There has been some monitoring of the subject by the temporary co-ordinator, which can be developed further by the checking on the standards of work by the pupils. The subject gives support to the pupils' spiritual development. In one Key Stage 1 class pupils showed surprise at how their melted chocolate could quickly solidify in the freezer. There is an environmental area, which enhances pupils' curricular experience.

ART AND DESIGN

76. Although it was only possible to observe two lessons, secure judgements can be made from the scrutiny of work on walls and in sketchbooks, reading documentation provided about the subject and talking with pupils and teachers.
77. At the age of seven and eleven pupils from all groups, including pupils with special educational needs, attain standards below those expected for their age. This indicates a decline of standards since the previous report which judged standards to be broadly as expected at the end of each key stage.
78. The amount and range of artistic opportunities regularly given to pupils is insufficient to allow them to consolidate their learning. In addition some work is repeated, for example children in reception practice mixing paint to achieve different tones. This is repeated in Years 3 and 4, with little appreciable progress in standards attained. As a result of these inconsistencies, the pupils make unsatisfactory progress in their learning overall and their achievements are generally not appropriate for their age and ability when they leave school at the end of Key Stage 2.
79. Work taught is, however, appropriately linked to other subjects to support pupils' learning. For example, information technology is incorporated well into teaching about pointillism and pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn to make effective representations of impressionist paintings using the "spray can" facility in a drawing program. In

history lessons in Year 5, pupils make collages of Victorian clothing, learning to use a suitable range of textiles in their designs. In geography Year 1 and Year 2 pupils make a whole class, three-dimensional collage of a scene on St Lucia to illustrate life on the island.

80. Work in art makes a suitable contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development throughout the school. The teachers make good use of displays to make the classrooms, hall and central corridor bright and attractive. This, combined with the practice of older pupils on occasion being given the opportunity to choose the mounting for their own pictures for class displays, has a positive effect on pupils' self esteem. This emphasis on good presentation contributes positively to the ethos of the school and helps develop pupils' respect for the achievements of others. Teachers provide pupils with suitable opportunities to learn about the work of other artists, although the examples given are almost exclusively of Western European origin.
81. School development in the subject is planned for the forthcoming year. The co-ordinator has only recently been appointed. As yet she has had no opportunity to monitor teachers' planning or pupils' work. There are no whole school procedures in place to assess pupils' progress in their learning and the issues raised in the previous report, including the under-use of clay or similar materials and work in sketch books not being sufficiently developed, are still not resolved. The co-ordinator has given a questionnaire to all teachers as a preliminary to focus on the subject, but does not yet monitor teaching and learning to ensure greater regularity of opportunity and consistency across the whole school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

82. The previous report found standards and teaching to be unsatisfactory. Although it was only possible to see one full lesson during the inspection there is ample evidence to show that teaching has improved and standards are now in line with those seen nationally.
83. Year 6 pupils demonstrate that they have learnt how to plan projects, choose materials and use tools skilfully. When questioned they can describe their ideas and discuss what was successful and what they had to change. For example, they were at an early stage in planning a mountain vehicle linking to their work in geography. Many had chosen to make cable cars and were carefully drawing mathematical nets on paper before moving on to cardboard constructions. Some planned to have cars powered by a cog system while others intended to have a moving cable using pulleys. Previous work showed that they had designed slippers as part of a Cinderella project. The slippers, attractively displayed in the classroom, showed a wide variety of designs and variation in materials. In Year 5 pupils had grappled with the problem of changing horizontal motion to vertical when constructing mechanical Victorian toys. They were also challenged to bake bread using at least one unusual ingredient. These older children demonstrate the progress made since Year 2 where pupils face similar challenges when designing and making masks.
84. This good work results from the previous co-ordinator's efforts in providing a programme of study and suitable training to support her colleagues. This has led to good quality teaching, which is well integrated into all other areas of the curriculum, and makes important use of knowledge gained in mathematics and science.

GEOGRAPHY

85. By the time the pupils leave the school, standards are average. The previous inspection report judged them to be good. Most pupils are making satisfactory progress. Boys and girls attain equally. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their previous attainment.
86. By the age of eleven, the pupils know about aspects of mountain environments, including weather, landscape and tourism. They have researched information from books and CD ROM. They have compared Marlborough with a contrasting locality in Gambia.
87. The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. The teachers balance the giving of information with opportunities for the pupils to find information for themselves. Fieldwork is encouraged and the pupils have surveyed traffic flow, parking locations and shop types in Melksham town centre. The pupils have used their mathematics and information and communication technology skills to record their findings in accurate pie graphs and bar charts. The teachers make learning relevant by focussing, wherever possible, on issues of local concern. Thus, pupils in Year 5 devised questionnaires which were posted to people who might be affected or unaffected by the proposed construction of an amenity lake at Challymead. The pupils used their literacy skills soundly to write for and against these proposals. They have discussed ways in which Melksham might be improved by, for example, the building of a bypass. They have discussed the possible environmental concerns that this might cause. In a Years 3 and 4 lesson, the teacher encouraged the pupils to think of ways in which the playground environment might be improved. Good emphasis is placed on the acquisition of map skills. Year 3 and 4 pupils, for example, have located features on land and aerial photographs on a map of Bowerhill.
88. By the age of seven, the pupils know about different means of transport and how these are suited to journeys of differing lengths. In a Years 1 and 2 mathematics lesson, the pupils used their geographical skills to follow directional instructions on simple plans. The pupils know something about the West Indian island of St. Lucia. They understand the importance of bananas to the island and how bananas are transported to Britain.
89. It was not possible to observe any geography lessons in Key Stage 1, but an analysis of planning and of pupils' work indicates that the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The teachers place an appropriate emphasis on the acquisition of early mapping skills and careful observations of daily weather. Effective links are made with other subjects whenever possible. For example, the pupils have used their mathematics skills to help construct a sound class bar chart of ways in which they come to school.
90. The newly appointed co-ordinator has made a satisfactory start in managing the subject. Planning is soundly based on national guidelines, but the co-ordinator recognises the need to update the subject policy and to develop whole school procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. She has not yet had time to begin any monitoring of the subject's performance. The previous inspection report judged learning resources to be poor. They have been increased and are now broadly adequate. Effective use is made of the schools' library service for reference books. The subject makes a positive contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, Years 3 and 4 pupils have conducted a survey of rubbish discarded in school as part of a topic on environmental pollution and the need for conservation.

HISTORY

91. By the time the pupils leave the school, standards are average, which is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection report. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress.
92. By the age of eleven, the pupils know that Tudor times in England were years of great explorers and voyages of exploration. The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 is good. The previous inspection report judged teaching to be mostly unsatisfactory. In a Year 6 lesson, the teacher made effective links with geography and this helped the pupils learn how maps and map making have evolved over time. She made effective use of information and communication technology (ICT) in the development of pupils' research skills. They found out about Frobisher, Raleigh, Drake and other Tudor explorers. The teacher used two learning support assistants well, one in the ICT suite and the other with a group of pupils with special educational needs. For these, suitable selected reference books were made available. In a Year 5 lesson, the teacher used questioning skilfully, extending the pupils' learning of aspects of life in ancient Greece. She made excellent use of well-prepared resources to support the learning of the differences between myths and legends and of the rivalry between Athens and Sparta. ICT was used well to develop pupils' independent research skills. A scrutiny of work in Year 5 indicates that these pupils know about some aspects of life in Victorian Britain, including the employment of children in mines and factories. The pupils have used their literacy skills effectively in writing sound diary extracts of a child working in a Victorian mill. The importance of roleplay in developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of history was well illustrated by a stimulating Year 5 class assembly. The pupils dressed up in Victorian clothes and enacted scenes from Victorian life. The teachers make learning real by organising worthwhile visits to Roman Bath, Holbourne Museum, Radstock Mining Museum and Swindon Steam Museum.
93. By the age of seven, the pupils know about some famous people in history, such as Louis Braille, Guy Fawkes and Grace Darling, and they are beginning to understand the significance of special events, such as Remembrance Day. The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 is good. In a Years 1 and 2 lesson on the history of transport, the teacher made good use of the pupils' own experiences and her own family history to help them learn how increasing traffic in recent years has affected how and where children now play. She had prepared photographic resources well and the pupils succeeded in sequencing these correctly. The teacher encouraged the use of historical terms, such as 'modern', 'newest' and 'a long time ago' and this helped the pupils understand how cars have evolved over time. She encouraged careful observation through skilful questioning: "Why is the lady by the car wearing a hat and scarf? How do we know that this car is from a long time ago?" The teachers have created a small, but stimulating, historical museum in the corridor and this helps the pupils see how transport has evolved over the years.
94. The co-ordinators have revised the subject policy, which now meets National Curriculum requirements, which was not the case in the previous inspection report. Planning is soundly based on national guidelines, adapted to meet the school's needs. There is little monitoring of the children's performance and there are no whole school procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment and progress. Learning resources are adequate and are supplemented by loans from the schools' library service. Through the use of visits and visitors and through a study of past cultures, the subject makes a positive contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

95. The standard of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is average when compared with schools nationally. Since the opening of the new computer suite pupils receive weekly lessons in information technology and the skills are improving in most aspects of the subject. This is an improvement on the last inspection, which was critical of standards of attainment, teaching and resources.
96. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are confident enough to use software packages independently. For example they can use a graphics package to draw pictures of a cocoa tree in St. Lucia. They can also use a CD-ROM to access information for topic work, to make a pictogram and block graph on food, or to use a simple word program.
97. In Key Stage 2, older pupils demonstrate sound knowledge of how computers and computer devices work. The work in word processing and graphics is sound. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 can use simulations, control technology, access the Internet, send and receive e-mails. Not enough work is developed in control technology. Links are strong in this subject with the local secondary school where video conferencing was observed involving a design and technology project. Information and Communication Technology supports other subjects in the curriculum. For example, a Years 3 and 4 class were constructing a questionnaire, then tabulating the information and producing different graphs for a rubbish survey.
98. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory throughout the school. Planning for work in the computer suite is sound and pupils show interest and enthusiasm. Pupils concentrate well and provide support to each other as they work co-operatively.
99. Teachers' knowledge is variable. Future in service training for the teaching staff has been planned to improve their knowledge and skills in information technology. Planning is sound; the record system is good and some older pupils have a log of their work but this is not consistently kept throughout the older age groups. More evidence of this nature would effectively support assessment. The subject co-ordinator has a sound grasp of the subject; resources are good and sufficient time is given to the subject.

MUSIC

100. Standards attained at the end of Key stage 2 are satisfactory. The previous inspection report criticised the amount of time given to the subject and this is now satisfactory. In addition the previous inspection report was critical of standards at Key Stage 2. An improvement has taken place in this key stage since the last inspection.
101. The musical experience given to the pupils is now more varied. Singing is satisfactory at Key Stage 2 but lacks enthusiasm. A class of Year 6 pupils has given an assembly performing a song in two-part harmony. A Year 5 class was observed discussing the notation on a musical score and how knowledge of the musical score could improve performance in singing in terms of rhythm and expression. Pupils in a Year 6 class were listening to, and appraising music from a different historical period in western culture; subsequently they used this experience to learn a dance from the period.

102. Pupils at Key Stage 1 are given the opportunity to sing to a variety of musical instruments. They sing with clear strong voices and have a good tonal quality. The standard of singing is better than that at Key Stage 2. They also experience music making with unpitched percussion instruments.
103. All pupils have the opportunity to experience music of different composers from different cultures and historical periods when entering and leaving the hall for Collective Worship.
104. Teaching is sound in both key stages. Lessons are well planned and the use of the new scheme of work shows evidence of progression across the key stages in developing musical skills in a systematic way. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and is beginning to have an impact on standards, she does not have enough opportunities to work alongside colleagues to help them develop technique. Continued support is necessary to further raise standards. Resources, although not plentiful, are of good quality and adequate to meet curricular requirements.
105. The pupils enjoy music making. They support each other and relationships are good. They have the opportunity to have weekly lessons in woodwind and piano. The school has also a choir where membership is open to the whole school community.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

106. Standards are above average in physical education by the time the pupils leave the school. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. This is an improvement on the last inspection report when standards were average.
107. All pupils can swim 25 metres in Year 6, benefiting from regular lessons in Year 3 followed by further lessons in Year 4 with a particular emphasis on water safety. During the inspection the school football team took part in the final of the West Wiltshire Cup and the pupils taking part showed a high level of skill and understanding of teamwork. The oldest pupils can learn very quickly complicated movements in a sequence to perform dances. Pupils in Year 5 can hold effective shapes in gymnastics in both low and high positions and link them together with other movements. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are able to perform a Morris dance involving complex hand and body movements.
108. The teaching is good overall and dance teaching is very good in Key Stage 2. In Year 6 the teacher enhanced the learning for pupils by her clear guidance and encouraging, positive manner. Combined with necessary firmness, this motivated all the pupils to be committed and concentrate earnestly for an extended period of time. The organisation and planning of lessons is consistently sound and relationships are good.
109. The school offers a very wide range of sporting activities including football, netball, cricket, tennis and gymnastics. The girls have also reached the final of the West Wiltshire Netball Cup and the school has been successful in cricket. Some of these opportunities are not only offered to older pupils but also to pupils in Years 1 and 2.
110. The curriculum meets statutory obligations and offers equal opportunities. There is a clear policy and the scheme of work is being developed based on the Qualification and Curriculum Authority recommendations. The school has sound internal and external provision and good resources.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

111. By the time the pupils leave the school, standards are satisfactory, which is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection report. Most pupils are making satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their previous attainment.
112. By the age of eleven, the pupils understand why people go on special journeys and why Jerusalem is important for people of three major world religions. They know about some aspects of the life of Jesus, including the Easter story and the Stations of the Cross. They know that books such as the Bible, the Qur'an and the Torah, are special to people. The pupils have researched information about people who have made a great impact in the world, including Gandhi and Mother Theresa.
113. The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. The previous inspection report found some teaching to be unsatisfactory. In a sound Year 6 lesson on the building of Solomon's temple, the teacher used questioning skilfully in order to make the pupils understand the significance of today's Wailing Wall to Jews world wide ; "Why does the Bible say that they make no noise whilst building the temple? " She gave the pupils a chance to reflect on ideas: "How do you think Jews feel when they visit the Wall?" She encouraged them to write special messages of their own for display on a 'prayer wall'. Year 5 pupils know about some aspects of Islam, such as the central role of the mosque and the importance of festivals such as Eid. In a good Year 5 lesson, the teacher used questioning well to make the pupils think carefully about feelings, conscience and judgements: "Do you think God expects us to be kind? Why? " She skilfully related the idea of decision making to the story of the Good Samaritan. The pupils reflected on issues of friendship and building solid foundations for their lives. The teacher related this effectively to the story of the Wise and Foolish Men.
114. By the age of seven, the pupils know some Bible stories, such as the story of Hannah, and some of Jesus' parables, such as the Good Samaritan and the Lost Sheep. They are familiar with the main events of the Easter story. They have talked about people who are special to them and about belonging to a community. The pupils know a little about aspects of Judaism, such as the role of the synagogue.
115. The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. In a Years 1 and 2 lesson, the teacher read expressively the story of Samuel as a boy and this stimulated the pupils' interest. Good questioning made the pupils think : "Why did Eli tell Samuel to say to God that he was listening ?" She matched tasks well to differing abilities. Lower attaining pupils cut out and sequenced pictures of the story, whilst others drew their own pictures and wrote out parts of the story.
116. The subject is well managed by the headteacher, who has drawn up a sound action plan in order to address the criticisms made in the previous inspection report. Good progress has been made since then. Planning is now soundly based on the locally agreed syllabus and the subject is now well resourced. The headteacher monitors the subject's performance effectively. He recognises the need to develop whole school procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. In encouraging the pupils to value the opinions and beliefs of others, the subject makes a good contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.