

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **WEST MONKTON CE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Nr Taunton, Somerset

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123804

Headteacher: Mr S Marley

Reporting inspector: Barry Allsop  
1245

Dates of inspection: 17 – 21 September 2001

Inspection number: 193329

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
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	School Road Monkton Heathfield Taunton Somerset
Postcode:	TA2 8PA
Telephone number:	01823 412582
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Gary Francis
Date of previous inspection:	14/04/1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
1245	B Allsop	Registered inspector	Science; Information and communication technology (ICT); Geography; History; Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? How high are standards – the school's results and pupils' achievements? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
13048	P Bowen	Lay inspector		How high are standards – 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?
17343	S Morris	Team inspector	Mathematics; Art; Design and technology; Physical education; Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
27799	A Nicholson	Team inspector	English; Music; Religious education; Under-fives	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

West Monkton Church of England Primary School caters for pupils aged between four and eleven. It is of an average size and has 213 pupils on roll. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is four per cent, which is well below average but has been considerably higher in previous years. The proportion of pupils with English as an additional language is one per cent, which is broadly average. A very small proportion of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is 11.5 per cent, which is below average. The percentage of pupils with actual statements of special educational needs is broadly average. The attainment of pupils on entry to school, whilst very varied, is overall average.

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

This is an improving school where the standards are rising to previously high levels after a period of considerable staff change and a legacy of some recent poor quality teaching. New staff, some in key positions, are helping to support rapid improvements. By Year 6 pupils are currently achieving above average standards in science. Standards in English and mathematics are average, although good teaching in Years 5 and 6 is having a very positive influence on these standards and rapidly driving them up. The quality of teaching is good in the Reception classes and in Years 1 and 2. Here standards are above average. The good behaviour, positive attitudes and good relationships help the majority of pupils to make good progress. The fairly recent appointment of two senior managers has established a good senior management team, which is working well with staff. The capacity to improve the school is now good. The school offers sound value for money.

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

- Good quality teaching for pupils in the Reception classes and up to the age of seven.
- Above average standards in the Reception classes and for pupils by the age of seven.
- High quality teaching and improving standards in Years 5 and 6.
- Good behaviour, attitudes and relationships.
- Good social and moral education.
- Links with parents are good.
- The senior management team provides good leadership.

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

- The quality of teaching in Year 4 and occasionally in Year 3.
- The quality, quantity and use of assessment information about the pupils' attainment.
- The school development plan, to establish fewer and very clear priorities for development.
- Equality of access to the full curriculum for some pupils withdrawn from classes for music, ICT and special needs.

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

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

There has been satisfactory improvement in the school since the last inspection in April 1997. The greatest improvements have been in the quality of teaching and standards for the pupils aged six and seven. There has been some improvement in the quality of teaching for older pupils but unsatisfactory teaching has not yet been completely eradicated. Assessment and recording systems have developed but are still new and not sufficiently used by all teachers to plan work. Behaviour has improved throughout the school. The monitoring and evaluation of the school have developed, as have the planning systems for the curriculum. The school has worked hard to enlarge and equip the surfaced outside play spaces but the school library is still inadequate.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	D	C	C	C
Mathematics	B	D	E	E
Science	B	D	D	E

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The table shows that in recent years standards for pupils leaving the school have not been high enough and that standards, for example in mathematics, had declined. This slide has been halted and effectively reversed. Provisional results for 2001 show marked improvement to slightly above average standards in all three subjects. Standards for those aged seven in the national tests have generally been above average and provisional results for 2001 are also above average.

Trends in results up to the year 2000 have, overall, not kept in step with improvements nationally for pupils aged eleven. The school has been set targets by the local authority and has exceeded the appropriately challenging targets set for 2001.

The inspectors found standards are currently average in English and mathematics and above average in science but the pace of improvement is rapid. The oldest pupils are still hampered by a past legacy of unsatisfactory teaching. However, above average standards could be achieved in 2002 in all three subjects as a result of current good and very good teaching. Standards are in line with the expected standards for all subjects except art where they are lower. The pupils are well motivated, keen to learn, behave well, listen to advice and instructions and co-operate well. Standards in Year 4 are, however, not high enough.

Standards for pupils aged seven are above average in English, mathematics, science, art, music and gymnastics. Standards meet with the expected levels in all other subjects. The pupils achieve well.

Children in the Reception classes, the Foundation Stage, settle rapidly to school and achieve well. The vast majority achieve the goals in each area of learning that are expected for pupils in the Foundation Stage.

The pupils with special educational needs are effectively supported and make steady progress. The very few pupils with English as an additional language are given good help from within and from outside the school and make good progress.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good: the pupils are enthusiastic and co-operative and eager to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good behaviour seen in the classrooms and playground.
Personal development and relationships	Overall good. The relationships between the staff and pupils are generally very good. The pupils treat each other with great respect.
Attendance	Good. The school has good systems to monitor attendance.

The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and at times very good. Relationships are good and a major factor in staff working together to improve the school.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Satisfactory

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

The quality of teaching in the school varies from excellent to unsatisfactory. The teaching is good for all the pupils up to the age of seven. Staff are knowledgeable, enthusiastic, have high expectations, organise their rooms well and have good subject knowledge. They teach literacy and numeracy well. The teaching for pupils aged eight to eleven varies from unsatisfactory to very good. The unsatisfactory teaching was confined to five lessons, seen mainly in Year 4 but also occasionally in Year 3. This contrasted sharply with frequent good and very good teaching in Year 5 and Year 6. In these years brisk pace, good questioning and crisp management of lessons ensured good gains were made in pupils' skills and knowledge. Here English and mathematics were well taught. Greater attention needs to be given to reading throughout Key Stage 2.

Pupils with special educational needs are given overall sound support and make satisfactory progress. The few pupils with English as an additional language are well taught by staff in the school and from the local authority.

The pupils are eager to learn and most staff effectively exploit that enthusiasm. Good behaviour and co-operation between pupils support the effective learning. The limited library provision hampers both staff and pupils in developing the pupils' ability to find things out from reference books and other materials.



## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The overall curriculum is satisfactory. Some pupils miss important lesson content because they go out for music, ICT or special educational needs support.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The special educational needs co-ordinator gives good support together with the classroom assistants. Good support programmes are devised but not closely followed by all teachers.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The support from within the school and the local authority is effective.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Overall sound. The provision for social and moral development is good. Provision for spiritual and cultural development is sound. There is insufficient emphasis given to studying the life of other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes sound care of the pupils overall. Whilst ensuring effective monitoring of their behaviour, attendance and general welfare, insufficient use staff make currently of systems for monitoring academic progress.

The ICT curriculum has been developed effectively and pupils now experience the full width of the required curriculum. Pupils who go out for short periods for additional teaching in a number of subjects often return to lessons having missed important instructions and information.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is soundly led. The new deputy head and Key Stage 1 co-ordinator make a good contribution to the improvement of the school. The senior management team is improving the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their responsibilities effectively and take an active and informed part in shaping the development of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Sound. Monitoring and evaluation of the school have improved considerably but have not yet had a full impact on the quality of teaching for all teachers.
The strategic use of resources	Overall sound. The school's spending decisions relate closely to priorities but too many priorities are identified. Good use is made of staff, resources and most of the accommodation. Better use could be made of the computer suite and the library.

The senior management team is hardworking and dedicated. The governors monitor the work and finances of the school closely and are keenly aware of its current strengths and weaknesses. The governors soundly apply the principles of best value when purchasing goods and services.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school encourages hard work and achievement</li> <li>• Children enjoy going to school</li> <li>• The children make good progress</li> <li>• The good teaching</li> <li>• The school helps children to mature and become responsible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The links with parents</li> <li>• The range of out of school activities</li> <li>• The amount of homework</li> <li>• The behaviour in the school</li> <li>• The way the school is led and managed</li> </ul>

Two hundred and twelve questionnaires were sent out and 67 returned; 19 parents attended the parents' meeting.

The inspection team endorses all the positive views of the parents. The children do work hard, enjoy the school and generally make good progress as a result of good teaching. The inspection team felt that links with the vast majority of parents were good. They also felt that the homework policy and new homework diary now meet with the requirements of the parents. Behaviour overall is good and parents were referring to recent past experience where teaching was, sometimes, not as effective as it could have been. The activities outside the curriculum are at least as good as would be found in most primary school of this size.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The majority of pupils who attend the school start in the Reception class. Here, the early tests which are done with the children show they enter the school with widely differing levels of attainment that are, overall, average.

2. In the year 2000 National Curriculum tests for pupils aged eleven results were average in English, well below average in mathematics and below average in science. In comparison to similar schools the results were overall well below average. These results do not show any improvement on previous years. The results for the pupils aged seven were below average in reading but above average in writing and mathematics. In comparison to similar schools the results were well below average in reading but above in writing and mathematics.

3. The provisional results for the Year 2001 show considerable improvement compared with the previous two years at Key Stage 2. The results were slightly above the unconfirmed national average in all three subjects. At Key Stage 1 the provisional results also indicate continuing improvement, with results above the unconfirmed average scores in all three subjects. The school has a high proportion of competent new staff, some in key positions, and standards are rising rapidly for the vast majority of pupils.

4. The inspection findings for the pupils aged eleven show that the pupils' attainments are currently average in English and mathematics and above average in science. These standards are currently still not high enough when compared to the pupils aged seven. Nevertheless, this shows significant improvement from the below average levels of recent years. Previous, recent, poor quality teaching and the considerable staff turbulence experienced by pupils aged ten and eleven has been eradicated through changes of staff. However, the effects of this still linger at this very early stage in the school year. Good quality teaching is rapidly raising standards for these pupils and has the clear potential to raise standards to an above average level by the end of the year. Standards in information and communication technology, history, geography, design and technology, music and religious education are average. However, standards in art are below those expected for pupils aged eleven and lower than at the time of the last inspection. Standards in physical education are meeting expectations and are higher in dance than last time. Standards of boys and girls are similar apart from the end of Years 1 and 2 where, overall, the girls are attaining at a higher level than the boys in English.

5. The inspection findings for the pupils aged seven show them to be above average in English, mathematics, science, music and art. The pupils are average in all other subjects and often exceed expectations in physical education.

6. By the time the children are ready to start in Year 1 the vast majority will have met most of the Early Learning Goals. The children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. The teachers successfully help them to accept the rules of the classroom. They are taught to share and co-operate in the many stimulating activities inside and outside the classroom. Standards are above average in communication. The teachers spending a lot of time encouraging children to listen and giving them the confidence to speak. The children make good gains in skills in reading and writing. Handwriting skills are also effectively developed. Teachers make good use of the

early content of the numeracy strategy and numeracy skills are well developed. All children can count and the more able pupils add numbers. They enjoy counting games and make good use of mathematical language.

7. Overall, children achieve well in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Good teaching enables them to have confidence to ask questions and select equipment from within the well-organised classrooms. Children also make good progress in their physical development. Stimulating and enthusiastic teaching encourages this good achievement. Since the last inspection, a safe and secure outside area has been developed for outdoor play but this lacks suitable balancing and climbing equipment. The children's creative development is successful and most pupils will exceed the Early Learning Goal in this area. They enjoying singing and respond confidently and positively when discussing their drawings and paintings. The rich learning environments and skills of the teachers aid them in developing ideas and selecting media and resources to work with.

8. By Year 6 standards in English are currently average but good teaching is rapidly expanding the pupils' skills and understanding. By age seven pupils' standards in English are above average. Throughout the school standards are above average in speaking and listening. The teachers encourage all to participate in discussions and insist on correct and precise vocabulary being used. Standards in reading are average in Year 6 but above average in Year 2. The pupils in Years 5 and 6 are experiencing some good teaching; nevertheless, an even greater emphasis on text level work is required to build the pupils' range of reading skills and knowledge. The limited library provision does not encourage staff or pupils to focus on reading for information. However, good work by the teachers is starting to have a positive effect and is building enthusiasm for reading. The majority of pupils are now making good progress but there is a lot of past ground still to be covered. Weak teaching in Year 4 hampers progress for a number of pupils. Writing standards are currently average in Year 6 but above average in Year 2. By the age of seven pupils can write simple stories and reports with mainly correct spelling and punctuation. By the age of eleven pupils are structuring work carefully and make good use of a wide vocabulary. The regular and effective use of assessment data in English would help to improve the standards even further and more rapidly.

9. Standards are average in mathematics by the age of eleven but above average at seven. Relatively new staff and the teaching methods and content encouraged by the National Numeracy Strategy are having a positive effect in the school. Progress is good for the pupils now at the end of Key Stage 2. Nevertheless, they have lacked a good grounding in mathematics and there is still some unsatisfactory teaching in the lower end of the key stage. By the age of seven a majority of pupils count competently, add and subtract numbers confidently and have a good knowledge of shape. They can record data in simple graphs. By the age of eleven the majority use numbers confidently and competently. They understand place value. They work effectively with fractions, understand decimals and can use data to generate graphs. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are gaining real fluency and confidence in handling calculations and explain their methods of working. Standards are rising.

10. In science, by the ages of seven and eleven standards are above average. Overall good teaching now accelerates the rate of progress at both key stages. But weaker teaching has not been fully eliminated at Key Stage 2. The pupils up to the age of seven are confident in carrying out simple investigations into ice melting and the growth of seeds. They are starting to recognise a fair test. By the age of eleven the pupils know about growing plants under different conditions and how to separate solids from liquids. They are competent and confident in designing their own experiments and in talking about forces,

light and sound. The use of the good science facilities and equipment in the adjacent secondary school helps the pupils' progress.

11. In information and communication technology (ICT) standards are meeting expectations for pupils aged seven and eleven. There is growing confidence in the teachers and this is enabling pupils to make good progress. The skills and competence of a learning support assistant who spends much of her time in the computer suite also has a positive effect. At all ages the pupils make good progress in the skills of word processing and communicating information. Whilst the use of ICT in subjects such as geography helps strengthen pupils' skills, insufficient use is made of the computer room and equipment to support work in English and mathematics.

12. Standards in art are above average in Years 1 and 2; by the age of seven pupils observe closely and draw and paint effectively. By the age of eleven the pupils have not extended their skills sufficiently. They do not use colour, shade and perspective to a level expected for their age and standards are below average.

13. Standards in history and geography are average. By the ages of seven and eleven the pupils gain the appropriate knowledge about physical features of the landscape and other environments which contrast sharply with West Monkton. They competently use maps, atlases and photographs in their work. By the age of seven they know about life in Victorian times and can sequence historical events. Historical enquiry is a strong feature in their work. By the age of eleven they can talk about the reliability of different types of evidence.

14. Standards in music are above average at Key Stage 1 where highly skilled and competent teaching is having a very positive effect. Standards at Key Stage 2 are overall average. The pupils sing with expression and enjoyment in whole-school assemblies. The school now has a number of teachers with good subject knowledge. Standards in physical education are as expected by the age of seven and are often higher. Standards for the pupils aged 11 meet with expectations, with some high attainment in dance. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The school makes good use of an adjacent, new and very well equipped Arts Centre.

15. Standards in religious education are meeting the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. By the age of seven pupils know a range of Bible stories and can talk about major festivals in the Christian calendar. By age eleven the pupils know about other major world faiths and events in the life of Jesus.

16. The pupils identified as having special educational needs make at least sound progress. They have well-produced Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and are effectively supported by classroom assistants. The IEPs are not always effectively translated into appropriate activities in every class. Pupils with English as an additional language make good gains in their acquisition of language, skills and knowledge.

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

17. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Behaviour has improved markedly since the last inspection. In other respects a similar picture emerged. The number of exclusions is low with only one pupil excluded in the last 12 months.

18. Good habits are established as soon as the children come into school; for example, in the reception class good routines were observed. In all the lessons seen, pupils' attitudes and responses were never less than satisfactory. In the classes where

expectations are high and a varied pace is maintained, the pupils' response was found to be good or very good. In these lessons pupils concentrate well and work hard.

19. The pupils move around the school sensibly. At the start of each school session they line up quickly and wait quietly. A good range of extra-curricular activities is provided for the pupils, who have the opportunity to participate in sporting competitions and make use of the very good facilities available in the secondary school which shares the site. No oppressive behaviour was observed during the inspection. During playtimes pupils show consideration for one another: for example, two girls were observed playing chess without being interrupted by a boisterous game of football only a few yards away. The pupils are well-mannered and confident in talking to adults. All pupils - boys, girls and those with special educational needs and English as an additional language - respond well to what the school offers.

20. Relationships are good. The staff know their pupils well. In most classes observed a pleasant, easy rapport was evident between staff and pupils. The personal development of the pupils is satisfactory. The school provides opportunities for them to take responsibility, for example as register monitors and in the "buddy" system in operation at playtime. The pupils have some opportunity to reflect on the feelings of others and they show consideration for one another. However, opportunities for them to make choices about how they complete their work or to evaluate their own and other pupils' work are limited.

21. Attendance is good and above the national average. The registers are marked consistently and correctly.

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

22. The quality of teaching in the school varies from excellent to unsatisfactory. During the week of the inspection 67 per cent of teaching was good or better (38 lessons) and 21 per cent was very good or better (12 lessons). The remaining lessons (14) were all satisfactory apart from another five lessons where the teaching was unsatisfactory. These unsatisfactory lessons were confined to Years 3 and 4. However, there has been improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection, particularly at Key Stage 1. The teaching for these pupils is now good and at times very good or excellent. The proportion of unsatisfactory teaching remains at Key Stage 2. The very appropriate focus on improving the quality of teaching by the senior managers continues to be the key to improvement in the school. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been effectively implemented and the subjects are well taught in almost all classes.

23. Teaching of pupils in the Foundation Stage is good. The teaching is characterised by the high level of attention paid to planning, careful preparation of resources and effective and regular assessment. In both classes, there is a calm supportive atmosphere, routines are well established and relationships between staff and children are very good. The staff show good knowledge of the Early Learning Goals and objectives for the lesson are always clear. Hard working, knowledgeable learning support assistants contribute significantly to the quality of teaching. Rooms are well organised and a variety of resources readily available.

24. The teaching of pupils at Key Stage 1 is also good with some excellent teaching. The teaching at Key Stage 2 is much more variable, ranging from very good to unsatisfactory. The quantity of unsatisfactory teaching in Year 4, together with the

occasional weak lesson in Year 3, is a weakness in the school and contrasts sharply with the high quality offered in other year groups.

25. The good teaching for pupils aged six to seven is characterised by teachers having a good understanding of the needs of these pupils. They plan relevant, stimulating activities that are well matched to the needs of the pupils. The good relationships, high expectations and the teachers' good subject knowledge effectively push forward the pupils' skills and knowledge. The teachers make good use of their subject knowledge to pose questions and challenge pupils to think for themselves. However, on occasions work could be better matched to the needs of the most able pupils.

26. The use of learning support assistants is good. They are well briefed about pupils, work very closely with them and constantly aid them to make the next steps in their learning. Good support is given to pupils with special educational needs and for those with English as an additional language. This gives them confidence to join in with lessons.

27. The teaching for pupils at Key Stage 2 is variable in quality. The good and very good teaching seen in the final two years of the school exhibits good classroom management where a brisk pace, crisp questioning and regular time targets are set. The teachers have good subject knowledge, question skilfully, use a range of techniques and groupings and keep the pupils working hard. This contrasts with the weaker lessons in the key stage, where low expectations, slow pace, inadequate pupil management and supervision cause pupils to make insufficient gains in skills and knowledge. Inadequate subject knowledge in such subjects as science adversely affects the teachers' expectations.

28. Most teachers plan well for pupils who need additional support. They work well with teaching assistants to ensure that pupils with language or literacy difficulties receive appropriate help. However, at times, the resources or tasks do not provide the appropriate challenge and do not closely match the pupils' Individual Education Plans. Pupils with English as an additional language are effectively supported and they make good progress in lessons.

29. In almost all lessons the relationship between teachers and pupils and the management of pupils' behaviour is good. Teachers give clear explanations, which help the pupils to settle to their work knowing what it is they have to do. Paired and group work is used effectively to encourage pupils to share ideas and equipment and to come to joint solutions to problems. The limited stock and space available in the school library means that there is little opportunity for pupils to undertake independent research. In a few lessons lack of direction and appropriate challenge encourage some pupils to lose concentration and engage in off-task chatter.

30. The newly initiated homework diary is rapidly encouraging an improvement in the use of homework to support learning in school. An adequate amount of homework is set in English and mathematics in almost all classes but this is not consistent.

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

31. At the time of the last inspection there were weaknesses in the balance, breadth and relevance of the curriculum.

32. The school now provides a broad and relevant curriculum in which all subjects of the National Curriculum are represented including religious education. The curriculum meets the statutory requirements but it is still not well balanced. This is due in part to inconsistencies between class timetables after the very recent re-structuring of the school day. The time allocated to some subjects has not yet been closely monitored and evaluated. There are differences between classes in the time allocated to physical education, science, circle time and reading.

33. The school has effectively implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. There is a consistency of approach to teaching the basic skills and the majority of teachers have at least sound understanding of the subjects. The strategies have been effectively used in Key Stage 1 to raise standards. However, in Key Stage 2 the use of the strategies has had varied success.

34. When teachers fully understand the techniques and plan work carefully linked to the strategies, the progress of the pupils is good. However, progress is limited in one year group due to a lack of effectiveness in the implementation of the strategies. However, the school is working effectively to bring greater consistency of approach.

35. The school has used the current guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority to ensure that schemes of work for the subjects are in place. The school makes sound provision for health and sex education. All pupils take part in swimming during Key Stage 2.

36. The curriculum is successfully enriched by a range of activities which take place outside the classroom. The school has developed very good links with the adjacent secondary school and the pupils in Year 6 benefit greatly from use of the science facilities. The neighbouring Tacchi Morris Arts Centre provides excellent opportunities for creative art projects in a purpose built environment. The provision for extra-curricular activities is good. After school clubs include football, netball and art. There is a good variety of opportunities for learning a musical instrument both within and outside the school day.

37. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is sound. The Code of Practice for special education is fully implemented. The SEN co-ordinator is well qualified and produces good Individual Education Plans, which clearly identify each pupil's learning needs. The plans are regularly reviewed and updated in consultation with class teachers and support assistants. Parents are informed about their child's progress and are offered advice about helping at home. Pupils are set appropriate tasks in small groups when they are withdrawn from class for extra help. However, at times, class teachers take insufficient account of the advice contained in the plans when setting work in classrooms. The re-integration of pupils after withdrawal lessons is not always well planned and they are unable to fully access the lesson in progress.

38. The provision for equality of access and opportunity is unsatisfactory. This is due to the fact that a significant number of pupils are withdrawn from class lessons for a wide variety of activities. These activities include recorder groups, music lessons, additional literacy skills, ICT and special needs groups. Some pupils therefore miss aspects of some subjects in the curriculum. This has a negative impact on progress in a lesson, particularly when the time is missed from key aspects of learning.

39. The community makes a sound contribution to pupils' learning. The pupils take part in various local sporting and cultural activities; for example, the Year 1 pupils entered their



paintings into the local flower show competition. Parents and friends make a valuable contribution to the development of the school grounds.

40. The school makes sound provision for the pupils' spiritual development through daily acts of collective worship and religious education. The local vicar regularly takes assembly. The pupils are asked to reflect upon many of the wonders of nature. For example, they grow seeds and watch them develop and change. One class grew a pumpkin and marvelled at how a small seed can develop into such a large object. The pupils reflect upon values and beliefs of others as these are covered in the religious education curriculum. Spiritual experiences are not fully developed through links with art, drama, music, history and geography. Moral development is, however, good with teachers seizing every opportunity to discuss the moral issues which arrive from daily actions within the school and the wider community.

41. The school makes good provision for the pupils' social development. The pupils show respect for one another and behave very well. In lessons pupils are able to take turns, share and work together co-operatively. Year 6 pupils regularly partner younger children in reading. In the playground older pupils act as mediators to solve the few disputes that arise and show care for those younger than themselves. The teachers consistently apply the school policy, which rewards and encourages good behaviour. Year 6 pupils undertake a residential visit, during which team activities take priority. Pupils of all ages take responsibility for various jobs around the school, for example, organising lunch boxes.

42. The provision for pupils' cultural development is sound. Pupils have studied some other cultures but in a limited way. They have received letters from a friend now living in Africa. Some aboriginal artwork was produced and there have been some visitors who have contributed to their knowledge of other cultures. However, pupils lack sufficient understanding and experience of other ethnic groups and the school does not make sufficient provision for developing their awareness of a multicultural society. There are very few resources in any subject area for this purpose and few multicultural toys in reception.

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

43. Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare, personal support and guidance are satisfactory. Staff know the pupils well and are responsive to any concerns about them. Relationships within the school are good. This was also reported by the last inspection team. However, systems for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress, whilst developing rapidly, are not yet satisfactory.

44. The school has given good consideration to the security of the site. Regular safety checks are carried out and suitable arrangements are in place for first aid. The inspection team noted that the Reception outdoor play area is secured after the start of each session but is frequently left open by those who use it as a thoroughfare. The school has a designated teacher for child protection, who has undertaken training and is familiar with the procedures. Not all staff have had training to make them more aware of the signs to note but the staff handbook contains notes on what to do if they are concerned. Good relationships exist with other agencies that come into the school. There are good systems in place to encourage attendance and follow up any absence.

45. The school is successful in promoting good behaviour. The policy has been revised since the last inspection and behaviour has improved since then. The pupils know what is expected of them and understand the golden rules. Each week there is an assembly to

celebrate the pupils' achievements. The parents at the parents' meeting reported that class teachers were responsive to any concerns expressed with regard to bullying.

46. The effectiveness of the school's assessment and monitoring of pupils' academic performance is not satisfactory. The previous inspection report stated that there were formal methods to monitor progress. The current inspection team found that the systems were not consistently applied. Good use is made of the information relating to the whole group test scores and attainment, but there is no coherent strategy in place to use records to help monitor and support individual pupils. Some targets are set but this is not yet embedded across the school.

47. The monitoring of the personal and academic progress of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. The pupils have clearly defined targets and receive good support when withdrawn by the special educational needs co-ordinator. However, not all teachers make good use of the IEPs to link the programme appropriately with class activities. The pupils with English as an additional language are supported well both from within the school and from the local education authority. The school as yet has done very little to identify and support gifted and talented pupils.

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

48. The picture painted by a significant minority of parents at the parents' meeting and by the questionnaire did not accord with the findings of the inspection team in the school. Parents expressed concerns about behaviour, progress, homework, information to parents and the range of extra-curricular activities. These concerns reflect the recent past but the situation has changed. The team found behaviour to be good, with children considerate of their surrounding and of others. The school has a homework policy and a new and effectively used homework diary but there has in the past been some inconsistency in the use of homework across the school. The information provided for parents was generally good but reports could give more information about how well children were progressing rather than in what they have done. The extra-curricular activities were found to be good for a school of this size. They were wide ranging and enjoyed by a large number of pupils.

49. The school has good links with the parents. Newsletters are sent home about three times each term. In addition, at the beginning of the autumn term, each class teacher invites parents to a meeting after school to inform them about the curriculum to be followed and the routines and homework to be expected. This is followed up by a newsletter outlining the curriculum to be followed each term, with information about homework to be set. Two parents' evenings are held, one in the autumn and one in the spring term, when children's work is available for parents. Parents at the parents' meeting said that class teachers were approachable and willing to discuss any concerns that parents had. The school has a notice board by the main door which displays information about the school and local activities. Parents are given every opportunity to join in with and find out about the life and work of the school.

50. A number of parents help in the school on a regular basis; for example they listen to children read and help staff by making practical materials. Other parents are happy to assist on trips and visits. There is an active parent-teacher association, which has good liaison with the school staff. They are involved in fund-raising and in consultation on what the school needs and how its service might be improved.

51. The annual reports are lengthy and give a good descriptive picture of the work covered but do not give a clear idea of the progress and achievement of individual children.

The parents felt that the reports had improved over the last two years, but that practice is not consistent across the school.

52. Parents are eager to support the work of their children. The last inspection report found that there was an effective partnership with parents. Since then the school has experienced some difficulties, particularly with staffing problems. The school now has a largely enthusiastic and positive staff, who are endeavouring to improve the partnership in a number of ways, for example through information to parents in the Reception class to help them assist their children with reading and in Key Stage 2 where homework is being formalised with the help of a homework diary. Overall, parents have a positive impact on the work of their children and efforts are being made to overcome the legacy of problems since the last inspection.

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

53. The overall leadership and management by the headteacher is sound. He has steered the school through a period of considerable turbulence in which half the staff have changed and the school has had, and continues to have, staff on long-term absence. His energies have been deflected from the longer term strategic development of the school into managing on a short-term daily basis. As a result the school has been slow to develop some key aspects of management systems, for example, the assessment of pupils' progress. The relatively new deputy headteacher and the Key Stage 1 co-ordinator have brought skill, enthusiasm and impetus to the improvement of the school. This has produced good leadership from the senior management team. The morale and teamwork of the staff are improving rapidly and the stated aims and objectives of the school are now, once more, beginning to be well met. The leadership offered by several new staff for English, mathematics, Key Stage 2, Key Stage 1 and the Foundation Stage is good. This brings clear educational direction, which is gradually raising standards to previous higher levels. However, the school lacks an identified co-ordinator to oversee the assessment procedures in the school.

54. The headteacher and key staff are keenly aware of the standards of the pupils and test results are carefully analysed, weaknesses are highlighted and teaching programmes put into place in an attempt to raise standards. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have, generally been successfully implemented and monitored. This has had a positive influence on the quality of teaching and on standards in these subjects. The good examples set by senior staff help to spread good practice. Effective monitoring of planning is undertaken by all co-ordinators and teaching has been soundly monitored by the headteacher. However, despite monitoring by the head, senior staff and external consultants, a small element of unsatisfactory teaching has not been sufficiently improved. Time allocations to subjects also require further close scrutiny.

55. The governors effectively fulfil their responsibilities. The committee structure works successfully and the governing body has a sound grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The monitoring of the school is achieved through governors visiting the school and having reports about the progress in subjects. The SEN governor regularly visits the school and liaises closely with the co-ordinator. There is close and effective involvement of the governors in the creation of the school development plan and financial planning and control.

56. The school development plan, whilst comprehensive and detailed, identifies too many priorities and spending is spread too thinly across the initiatives. The subject co-ordinators produce useful action plans to develop their subjects and these plans take full notice of the overall school developments but in an attempt to be fair to all money allocated

is often insufficient. The strong commitment to continue to improve National Curriculum test results is a unifying theme in much of the development activity. There is a need to set fewer priorities and target sufficient sums of money to those few key developments to really make a difference.

57. The staff and governors try to ensure the principles of obtaining best value from purchases and contracts are effectively applied. The aims and objectives of the school are well met through the curriculum, extra-curricular activities and in the good ethos of the school. The good support for pupils with special educational needs reflects the inclusive nature of the school. The IEPs are good, with clear and manageable targets for the pupils to attain. The pupils with English as an additional language are effectively supported by teachers, learning support assistants and the visiting teacher from the LEA. They make good progress.

58. The staff of the school generally work hard in an attempt to improve standards. Teachers are deployed well, although, due to so many recent changes in staffing in the school, the allocation of subject and other responsibilities is very new and not yet fully influencing practice. There are a number of inconsistencies in timetables and time allocations to subjects, which require attention. There is good liaison between the learning support assistants and the teachers to provide for the needs of the pupils. The number of support staff and teachers is broadly average. The school is adequately staffed.

59. The quality and quantity of the accommodation are barely satisfactory and are inadequate for the library provision in the school. Nearly two thirds of the classes are taught in temporary classrooms, all of Key Stage 2. Most staff make their rooms attractive with stimulating displays, for example a range of Victorian artefacts, photographs and pictures. The storage and use of such things as scientific and mathematics equipment are difficult. The small computer suite is useful but with only five computers makes organisation of a class ICT lesson difficult unless a learning support assistant is available. The school library is housed in a small shared practical area and the stock and general organisation of the books are inadequate. These arrangements inhibit the pupils' development of library skills and opportunities for independent research. The outside areas are well used by the school for physical education and science. The school has worked hard to improve the playground space, which was criticised in the last report. The school now has two very good play areas equipped with good quality climbing and general play equipment. These help the older pupils with balancing and climbing skills.

60. The overall quality and range of resources to support the teaching and pupils' learning across the curriculum are sound. Resources for most subjects are at least sound with good provision for science. The number of computers to support ICT, whilst new, is still insufficient. There are good resources for pupils with special educational needs and for the youngest pupils apart from suitable large outdoor play equipment for the reception class.

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

### **(1) Continue to improve the quality of teaching in the lower part of Key Stage 2, by:**

- providing further training and advice in raising pace, expectations and general classroom management;
- regularly monitoring the quality of teaching and providing feedback to the teacher.

(See paragraphs 8, 22, 24, 27, 33, 76, 91, 94, 103.)

### **(2) Ensure the new assessment policy is fully implemented and used, by:**

- identifying an assessment co-ordinator;
- regularly assessing pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science;
- monitoring the quality, quantity and use of assessment information.

(See paragraphs 42, 45, 95, 104.)

### **(3) Improve the quality and impact of the school development plan, by:**

- reducing the number of development points;
- focussing on a few key priorities;
- allocating sufficient finance, time and resources on those priorities;
- regularly monitoring the effects of the developments.

(See paragraph 55.)

### **(4) Provide equality of access to all of the curriculum for all pupils, by:**

- ensuring pupils withdrawn from lessons are not missing key elements of teaching and learning in the subjects.

(See paragraphs 37, 96.)

### **The school may want to consider as additional issues:**

1. Improve standards in art at Key Stage 2 by providing staff training (see paragraphs 12, 108, 109).
2. Improve the equipment to support ICT, games and outside play in the Foundation Stage (see paragraphs 11, 58, 59, 72, 132, 144).
3. Improve the siting and stock of the school library (see paragraphs 82, 119).
4. Consider the allocation of time to science and PE (see paragraphs 32, 53, 57, 106, 142).
5. Ensure consistency of use of IEPs in a few classrooms (see paragraphs 36, 46).



## 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	29

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	11	26	14	5	0	0
Percentage	2	19	46	25	8	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		213
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		9

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		33

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	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.5
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	20	7	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	21	24	24
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	78 (87)	89 (93)	89 (93)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	24	25	27
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	89 (87)	93 (90)	100 (93)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year. Because of the low numbers of girls taking the tests at the end of Year 2 the results for boys and girls separately have been omitted.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	17	15	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	10	8	12
	Girls	12	8	12
	Total	22	16	24
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	69 (73)	50 (55)	75 (73)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	12	9	12
	Girls	13	8	9
	Total	25	17	21
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	81 (73)	55 (64)	68 (76)
	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	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	1
Indian	
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	1
White	184
Any other minority ethnic group	

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	1	
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.*

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y7**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.7
Average class size	27.6

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y7**

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	160.5

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	443,727
Total expenditure	435,358
Expenditure per pupil	2,006
Balance brought forward from previous year	17,459
Balance carried forward to next year	25,828

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	221
Number of questionnaires returned	67

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	33	14	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	36	47	8	8	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	24	48	15	8	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26	41	18	12	3
The teaching is good.	45	38	9	5	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	38	20	9	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	53	23	14	11	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	45	42	6	2	5
The school works closely with parents.	26	38	27	9	0
The school is well led and managed.	26	42	14	15	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	36	45	14	3	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	18	45	20	14	3

## **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**

61. The Foundation Stage staff have worked with colleagues in Key Stage 1 to plan a successful rolling programme of activities which successfully address the Early Learning Goals and the early stages of the National Curriculum. (The Early Learning Goals set out what children should learn before they enter Year 1.) This means that pupils are taught their basic skills regularly, and also have good opportunities to work with their friends on activities which develop physical, creative and social skills well.

62. Pupils enter the school with broadly average attainment. Their skills in language, literacy and personal development are, however, above average. This is shown by the teachers' assessments which are carried out in the first weeks of school. This assessment also shows that there is a wide range in the attainment of pupils coming into the Reception classes. By the time they leave these classes, almost all the pupils will have achieved the Early Learning Goals, and about half of them will have gone beyond this expected level. This good learning is the result of good teaching, careful assessment, and especially the atmosphere in the classes. The teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic and plan carefully to match the tasks to the needs of the children. Pupils also feel safe, and are happy. They have lots of self-confidence, and this helps them to try out new things and attempt to answer hard questions without being afraid of being wrong.

63. Support staff and parent helpers make a very good contribution to this work. The support given to pupils who have special educational needs is especially good. This means that these pupils can join in with everything that goes on in the school, and can learn well.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

64. By the time they leave the Reception classes, most pupils will have achieved the Early Learning Goals for this area. Pupils are taught how to sit quietly as part of a group, and to put up their hand to answer. They are shown where equipment and toys are kept, and are taught the rules for working and playing together. For example, they learn how to wait their turn to speak during any class discussions. Because of this good teaching, they understand what is expected of them in school. They can learn skills which are being directly taught by their teacher, for example counting skills. They can also practise their skills in a play situation, for example counting the cars in the garage. Teachers make sure pupils know what behaviour is expected, and they are tactfully reminded when necessary. This helps pupils to understand what is right and wrong, and why. Pupils are very tolerant and supportive of each other. This is supported by the way they are set very good examples by the adults in the classrooms.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

65. Most pupils enter the Reception classes with above average attainment in reading, writing, and speaking and listening. Good teaching continues to develop these skills, so that all pupils make progress in these areas. Most pupils will reach the Early Learning Goals by the end of the year, and about half will be working beyond this level.

66. Pupils in both classes are very good at discussing and organising without adult help. For example, whilst playing outside, they decide how their 'fire brigade' will tackle the supermarket fire, and what to do with the light which has fallen off the 'fire engine'. This is because teachers make the most of opportunities to extend and refine pupils' language. The quality of teaching is good.

67. At this early stage in the year, most pupils are showing interest and enjoyment in books. They listen carefully when they are being read to, and many will choose to look at a book on their own. Several children can recognise the sounds letters represent, and a few can read some common words.

68. Pupils are provided with a range of opportunities to develop the skills needed for writing. They work with dough, colour, cut, and draw. They have opportunities to write as part of their play, for example, writing a shopping list in the home play corner. Work seen in Year 1 indicates that most pupils leave the Foundation Stage able to form letters correctly and write some common words confidently. This represents sound achievement.

### **Mathematical development**

69. Numeracy lessons are well planned and organised so that all pupils can achieve well. The teaching is brisk and skilful. Most pupils will achieve the Early Learning Goals for this area of learning, and about half will be working beyond this level. Many pupils can already count to ten, and recognise the numbers. Good play opportunities are provided for pupils to develop counting skills, for example counting and matching numbers as they put toy cars into the garage. They are encouraged to develop mathematical language such as 'more', 'less', 'bigger', 'smaller'. They are helped to recognise pattern, for example when building a wall with the big bricks.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

70. Pupils attain well in this area. This is because they have the confidence to investigate, observe, and try out new ideas. There is much good work by teachers in developing language skills, so pupils are helped to ask questions and share their ideas with one another and with adults. Pupils are able to select what they need for a task because the classrooms are well organised and because classroom routines have been well taught. This means that they can get on without having to wait for an adult. They can build with construction kits, and can explain what their model can do. Pupils make good use of opportunities to design and make, using scissors and glue effectively. Through play opportunities, they explore and investigate, for example, working out how the lift works in the toy garage. During their play, pupils talk about events which have happened to them. For example, a child playing in the water tray commented "I saw a boat like this on my holiday". A collection of leaves and autumn pictures prompted a child to compare the pictures with trees in the park, demonstrating a good sense of place. In the sand, pupils can use tools effectively to build, dig, flatten and write numbers. They plan what they are doing, and work together.

71. Pupils have a good awareness of themselves and their own lives. They can talk about occasions which are special for them. Because of the strong support provided by parents, pupils will often bring in special items from home to add to these discussions, for example, a baptism candle. They develop appropriate skills in using the computer in naming the equipment and using the mouse and keyboard.

### **Physical development**

72. Most pupils have good co-ordination, and are on track to achieve the Early Learning Goals for physical development. Pupils in both classes are already developing a good awareness of space around them. They can find a space to sit in on the carpet, and can line up without pushing each other. When playing outside, they can follow a marked pathway, and avoid colliding with each other. In physical education lessons, they can respond to simple instructions and move at different speeds around the room. They are able to manipulate materials such as construction sets, playdough and puzzle pieces, and many are becoming skilled in managing their clothing, for example, when changing for physical education.

73. The last inspection report identified limited opportunities for these pupils to play outdoors because of the lack of a secure area. A good fenced area has now been provided, with a safety surface. However, lack of large climbing equipment means that the pupils still lack sufficient opportunities to travel around, under and through suitable balancing and climbing equipment. There is also a lack of bikes, scooters and other large wheeled toys. This inhibits aspects of their physical development.

### **Creative development**

74. Most pupils are likely to meet the Early Learning Goals for creative development. This is because they have good language skills, which enable pupils to express likes and dislikes, and to discuss experiences. The rich learning environment and effective teaching encourages pupils to try out their ideas, for example, when making a collage of 'Elmer'. They respond well to comments and questions about their work, and most can explain what they are doing. They enjoy singing, and some are developing good skills in controlling their voice. For example, the oldest group responded well when pictures were used to indicate loud, soft, humming and silence when singing.

### **ENGLISH**

75. National test results for the last three years show that at age seven, standards in reading were below the national average for all schools, and below those expected of similar schools, whereas the results for writing were above those achieved nationally and above those for similar schools. However, results in reading for pupils aged seven have improved this year, and now exceed the provisional national figure, especially for the proportion of boys achieving Level 3. New staff, good leadership and a consistent desire to improve the school have supported this rise in standards.

76. For pupils aged eleven, results have been broadly in line with those achieved by all schools, and similar to those expected for a school such as this. Provisional 2001 data indicate that results for last year's Year 6 will exceed national figures. When compared with other schools, the trend in results in English has overall been similar to that of all schools.

77. The findings from the inspection confirm high levels of attainment for pupils at the age of seven. The quality of teaching for pupils aged between five and seven is good and, at times, very good. Most pupils are likely to achieve above average standards in English at the end of Year 2. This represents at least sound achievement from the end of the Foundation Stage. Between seven and eleven, most pupils make satisfactory progress, and the vast majority are in line to reach, and a significant number to exceed, expected levels. This is because of good teaching in Years 5 and 6. Here again, new, capable and enthusiastic teaching is having a visible effect upon raising standards. However, progress

for pupils in Year 4 is, at times, unsatisfactory. Here the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory, expectations are too low and pupils do not work at an appropriate level.

78. Pupils who have special educational needs are well supported and achieve well. Classroom assistants offer good support and show good care and attention to the pupils' needs. The very few pupils with English as an additional language make good progress, helped by support within the classes and also by effective additional help from the visiting teacher from the local authority.

79. By the time pupils leave the school, most are likely to achieve above national standards in speaking and listening. Language skills on entry to the school are generally above average, hence this represents satisfactory progress. Teaching is frequently good and pupils are encouraged to use precise vocabulary when replying to questions. Pupils throughout the school listen attentively to their teachers.

80. In reading, most of the pupils are likely to reach the expected level by the time they leave the school. About half will exceed this level. This represents a recent improvement. The changes in staff in Years 5 and 6 have resulted in higher quality teaching. The good teaching for pupils aged six and seven also supports improving standards. The most able pupils in Year 2 read with confidence. They are able to recount the main parts of the story, and can suggest what might happen next. In Year 6, a high proportion of pupils read a range of texts fluently and accurately, and can select essential facts. However, a number are unable to say which authors they enjoy reading or talk about different types of stories. Pupils in Year 4 found it hard to explain the difference between fiction and factual books and the less able pupils lack a good range of strategies to tackle challenging texts.

81. During the inspection, there were insufficient examples of text level work seen where the focus was on reading. Some of the 'silent reading' sessions were found to be of limited value to less fluent readers.

82. Pupils with special needs are generally well supported, but some lesson plans take insufficient account of the targets in their Individual Education Plan.

83. Opportunities for research are limited, especially for the older pupils, because the library is located in a different building. The library space is cramped and books are not easily accessible. The library has far fewer books than is recommended for the number of pupils in the school, and the range is limited.

84. By the end of their time in the school, most of the pupils will reach the expected standard in writing. Approximately half will exceed this level. This represents satisfactory achievement for these pupils. Throughout the school, standards in writing are generally improving. By Year 2, the most able pupils can choose exciting words for their writing. They spell common words correctly, and can attempt unknown words by using letter sounds. Pupils are beginning to use full stops and capital letters. The majority of pupils in Year 2 are writing simple words or phrases, with some common words correctly spelt. There is a strong focus on writing this year, a need identified through classroom monitoring by the management team, and there are plans to implement a scheme to support writing. By Year 6, the most able pupils can write in different styles for different purposes, for example poems, radio scripts and newsletters. These pupils can organise their writing into paragraphs, and make imaginative use of language, for example, when writing about their first days at school: "We were like tadpoles and the older ones were the frogs". They can use the skills learned in English in other subjects, for example, writing a very sensitive email of condolence to the USA. They write effective reflective pieces about fieldtrips in

geography. Most pupils are using clear, joined handwriting by the end of Year 6. However, this needs to be introduced sooner in Key Stage 1, to enable pupils to attain a higher level of writing.

85. The quality of teaching is consistently good, and at times very good, for pupils aged six and seven. Teaching for pupils aged eight to eleven is overall satisfactory, with some unsatisfactory teaching in the middle of Key Stage 2. The teachers generally have a good understanding of the subject, and plan carefully, so pupils of all abilities can make good progress. Teachers expect the best from all pupils, and use very skilled questioning to help understanding. They share the purpose of the lesson with the pupils, and make links with what the pupils already know. They prepare resources well, and ensure that there is variety within the lesson to keep pupils interested. Support staff and volunteer helpers make a good contribution in these lessons. Where the teaching is unsatisfactory pupils are unclear about what is expected of them; sometimes the work is not well matched to what the pupils can do. The poor management of the class results in too little being done when pupils are working without adult support.

86. Relationships between pupils and teachers are good. In almost all lessons pupils concentrate and work hard. They settle well, and co-operate well with one another. Where lessons are less well planned and organised, there is low level disruption, fidgeting and talking.

87. Individual lessons are consistently and mostly carefully planned. However, there is a lack of effective assessment procedures to support the match of work to the needs of groups of pupils. However, the school has recently agreed a new marking policy, which has yet to have an effect.

88. The new leadership team for English is good, and has played a significant role in recent improvements in achievement. The lead teacher in this group has a clear view about what needs to be done to continue this improvement, and is actively involved in planning training for staff. These training needs have been identified following classroom observations by the team. The co-ordinator has overseen significant recent changes in the teaching of English, for example the introduction of a new core reading scheme, and the 'Progression In Phonics' scheme from the National Literacy Strategy. She recognises the need to develop better monitoring of standards so that pupils who are under-achieving can be identified and supported. She also plans to develop a whole-school portfolio of writing to help staff to know what is expected.

## **MATHEMATICS**

89. Standards are above average at the age of seven and higher than at the time of the last inspection. By the age of seven pupils have consistently attained standards above the national average and higher than those in schools deemed to be similar. Inspection evidence from looking at pupils' work and from lesson observations confirms that pupils make good progress throughout Key Stage 1 in all aspects of the subject. Most pupils are able to use a range of different strategies to calculate numbers mentally. By the end of Year 2 pupils can explain various different ways of finding the difference between two digit numbers of less than a hundred. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as they receive good support from teachers and classroom assistants. A few of the more able pupils could work more consistently at a higher level using larger numbers and solving more challenging problems.

90. Standards are average at the age of eleven and lower than at the time of the last inspection.

91. Standards attained by eleven year olds in the 2001 national tests were average and similar to those attained nationally. In 2001 75 per cent of pupils attained standards which were average or above. This represents a significant 25 per cent rise in standards from the previous year when standards were well below average in comparison to schools nationally and very low in comparison to schools deemed similar. The evidence from the inspection confirms that the rise in standards is being sustained. Examination of pupils' work shows that standards in the middle of Key Stage 2 were too low for much of last year due to poor teaching and low expectations. However, due to the current good teaching in Years 5 and 6 pupils are now making good progress and are rapidly regaining lost ground. The pupils in Year 6 will reach their targets at the end of the year, which will represent at least average standards and a further rise overall. Pupils in Year 6 are developing the ability to solve problems using a variety of methods both mental and written. They can work with fractions, decimals and all four number operations. They can successfully explain how they arrived at answers.

92. Standards attained by pupils in Year 4 are still not high enough. In particular, the more able pupils are not reaching standards of which they are capable due to a lack of challenge in the work set.

93. Pupils with special educational needs overall make sound progress. Those with statements have well written and clearly defined education plans, which are often pursued rigorously especially by the capable classroom learning support assistants. The few pupils with English as an additional language are making good progress.

94. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is good overall. Teachers are using the National Numeracy Strategy very effectively and have a good knowledge of the subject. They use practical resources very well to demonstrate to the whole class and take care to ensure that all pupils participate. All the teachers have a good relationship with their pupils, who respond by working hard and behaving very well. Classroom assistants make a good contribution to the pupils' learning and are well informed by the teachers about their role. In one very good lesson both Year 1 pupils and Reception pupils in the class were set challenging practical tasks, which ensured they made good progress and enjoyed their learning. By the end of the lesson Year 1 pupils could identify one more and one less than a given number between 10 and 20. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 ranges from good to unsatisfactory. In Years 5 and 6 teachers have high expectations and work at a brisk pace. They ensure a good level of concentration by explaining calculation strategies clearly and demonstrating methods to the whole class using practical mathematics apparatus. They are able to identify gaps in pupils' understanding and address them effectively, so that all pupils succeed. In Years 3, 5 and 6 teachers make effective use of the National Numeracy Strategy as a basis for planning appropriate work. In these classes, teachers are using mathematical vocabulary to good effect ensuring pupils are able to explain their thinking out loud. In one good Year 5 lesson the pupils were using doubling and halving as a means of calculating two digit multiplication sums mentally. The classroom assistant provided good support for pupils with special educational needs, so that progress was made by everyone.

95. The quality of teaching in Year 4 is unsatisfactory. The work set in this class is too easy or too difficult resulting in restless behaviour and a lack of understanding about what is required. Explanations lack clarity and pupils become uninterested, so that by the end of the lesson few have completed sufficient work of an acceptable standard.



96. The co-ordinator has managed improvements to date very well. A comprehensive action plan has successfully ensured the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. All teachers have received advice and support through constructive feedback on lessons. There have been some recent important improvements in the standards and teaching of mathematics. Nevertheless, there remains much to be done. The senior staff have effectively analysed the results of tests at the end of each year and have a good understanding of standards across the school. However, this information is put to limited use in the classrooms. The assessment of individual progress throughout each year is unsatisfactory. Although regular assessment activities are available, they are not used effectively. Too little information is kept about individual pupils so that teachers are not adequately informed about what should be planned next to ensure continued progression. Pupils receive little information and feedback on their work. This is particularly evident in Key Stage 2 where, although books are marked regularly, there are few comments to inform pupils about their progress.

97. Sometimes a few pupils miss lessons due to specialist music lessons elsewhere. This causes some inequality in the time pupils each spend engaged in the subject.

98. The resources available for the subject are adequate. Although there has been funding available for improvements, so far the current action plan is not costed in sufficient detail to enable the co-ordinator to plan spending effectively.

## **SCIENCE**

99. Results of the 2000 national tests and Teacher Assessments, when compared to all schools and also similar schools, were above average for pupils aged seven and below average for those aged eleven. However, the provisional results for 2001 seem to show above average results for pupils aged seven and also for those aged eleven. Evidence of work seen during the inspection confirms that standards are now above average. There is evidence of generally good progress as most pupils make good gains in their scientific skills and knowledge. The high proportion of good teaching in the subject is having a positive effect on standards. The previous poor results in science for the older pupils, as shown by scrutiny of past work in pupils' books, are due to a legacy of weak teaching in previous years for those pupils. Recent changes of staff in the final two years of the school have introduced higher expectations, stimulating lessons and good classroom management. The standards are rising rapidly and are now similar to those recorded in the previous inspection report. The school has a past history of good quality teaching in science.

100. The pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 make good gains in their understanding of the development of frogs, the growth of seeds under different conditions and the parts of plants. They eagerly take part in active science lessons, observing and recording changes. They capably make predictions about the speed at which ice will melt under different conditions, record what they find and try to give an explanation. In one good lesson, pupils used bikes, scooters and space hoppers to find what sort of forces were needed to make them move and what was needed to increase speed. The Year 2 pupils are given an appropriate challenge by attempting to establish a fair test when making vehicles move. By the age of seven pupils name the ingredients of a healthy diet and investigate for information about plants using a CD-ROM. They enjoy science lessons and work together well as they devise tests and record their work. The teachers plan and resource the lessons effectively, establish good relationships and encourage pupils to ask questions. Good use was made of a digital camera as pupils cycled and scooted around the playground. The photographs were then used in a later lesson as good recall and as a

focus for discussion on forces. All of this supports good development in early scientific skills and understanding. The pupils with English as an additional language make good progress, working effectively with the classroom assistant and other children. The designated learning support assistants work conscientiously with the pupils and support sound progress.

101. The breadth of curriculum coverage and the encouragement pupils to undertake simple scientific experiments ensure that pupils now develop good skills and understanding by the time they are eleven. By eleven pupils can predict, observe and record the outcomes of experiments with plants grown under different conditions. They understand the way in which light is reflected and construct electrical circuits to make a light operate. They record work neatly and accurately as they answer the question, "Do liquids evaporate?" In Year 6 they talk with confidence about aspects of science. Their scientific vocabulary overall is good and pupils generally use appropriate terms to express their understanding.

102. Teaching of science is consistently good for pupils aged six and seven, with some very good teaching. Here the planning is detailed, lessons are well structured, and interesting resources gathered. The experiences successfully build upon pupils' earlier learning. The enthusiasm of the teachers sweeps the pupils along in the lessons so that all become fully involved. They want to know more about a fair test or to understand what is a pushing force, pulling force or what is meant by twisting and stretching a material. The work ethos is good and pupils try to present work well.

103. For the pupils aged between eight and eleven the quality of teaching varies from very good to unsatisfactory. Teaching for pupils in the final two years is good and often very good. Here, the teachers' good subject knowledge, effective classroom management and efficient preparation of resources ensure pupils' interests are captivated. A brisk pace is established through rapid questioning and setting of time targets to keep the pupils on their toes, fully involved, and working as scientists. In one very good lesson the pupils actively investigated the capability of different materials to muffle sound. They made predictions, recorded results and discussed their findings. Good use is made by Year 6 pupils of the science laboratory facilities at the adjacent secondary school and the spacious well equipped room helps the pupils to make good progress.

104. This good teaching contrasts sharply with lessons in Years 4 and occasionally in Year 3. Here, at times, a lack of clear learning objectives, poor subject knowledge, slow pace, ineffective classroom management and low expectations hinder the pupils' learning. Nevertheless, the pupils enjoy the science investigations and co-operate well but their pace of learning is too slow and they make insufficient gains in skills and knowledge.

105. Assessment of pupils' progress is a priority in the school and under rapid development. Currently very little assessment takes place in science. There are no ongoing records for pupils' progress and targets are not set for individual pupils on a regular basis. Assessment is not undertaken at the end of a unit of work such as sound, electricity or materials.

106. The pupils enjoy science, listen well to instructions and work carefully with equipment. Most try to present work tidily but a significant minority in Years 3 and 4 take too little care with drawing, charts and reports.

107. The co-ordination of the subject rests with three senior staff, the Key Stage co-ordinators and the headteacher. This has given good leadership to the subject. However,

since the timetable for this academic year has come into existence there is a lack of consistency in time allocation to the subject. The resources for science are good in quality but the storage and use of practical equipment are problems as most classes work in limited temporary accommodation and this inhibits the use of a wide range of resources and equipment.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

108. Standards in art throughout Key Stage 1 are above average and have improved since the last inspection. By the age of seven pupils can use colour effectively, use a variety of materials to create patterns and produce careful accurate drawings. The pupils in Year 1 have deservedly won prizes in a local competition for their painting. In Year 2 pupils have used watercolour very effectively to produce delicate paintings of fruit and flowers. Pupils have begun to extend their understanding and knowledge of art by studying the work of famous artists. Year 1 pupils have painted vibrant sunflowers in the style of Van Gogh and have examined the work of Kandinsky.

109. Standards are below average by the age of eleven and below the standards seen at the time of the last inspection. The good painting and drawing seen in earlier years has not been effectively developed. Pupils lack the technical skills to enable them to use colour, shade and perspective effectively in their drawings. Some satisfactory sculptures were produced linked to a study of Andy Goldsworthy but the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the work of artists is limited. Although pupils have engaged in a variety of different art activities and used a range of different materials, progress in the subject has been unsatisfactory during Key Stage 2.

110. Although it was only possible to observe two art lessons during the inspection, time was spent examining pupils' work both on display and in portfolios. The quality of teaching observed in Years 5 and 6 was sound. The teachers both provided an interesting range of Victorian artefacts, which the pupils enjoyed drawing. In Year 5 the teacher used the language of art well to encourage the pupils to use shade, line and texture effectively but their ability to do so was limited. In Year 6 the pupils were given the opportunity to arrange a group of artefacts to express an aspect of Victorian life such as 'home' or 'childhood'. In this they showed great flair and worked co-operatively very well. However, a lack of drawing skill meant the initial drawings lacked detail and perspective. The teachers had good relationships with the pupils, who concentrated on the tasks set and tried to achieve good results.

111. The art co-ordinator has held the responsibility for only a few months and has made a good start to the role. She has a good understanding of the art curriculum and is well qualified to support other teachers. She is aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and has identified appropriate plans for further development. Although there is a satisfactory art policy statement, there is no procedure for assessment. Resources have recently been updated and are adequate.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

112. It was only possible to observe two lessons during the inspection and both were in Key Stage 1. Judgements are therefore also based on examination of pupils' work completed during the last year and teachers' planning.

113. Standards at seven and eleven are similar to those expected nationally and similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection. Pupils work with an appropriate range

of materials and are developing their designing and making skills through a well-planned programme of activities.

114. Pupils in Key Stage 1 classes are examining different types of vehicles and how they move. In Year 1 pupils discussed pushing and pulling as a means of propulsion. They learned the names of parts of a car. The pupils in Year 2 successfully made two different types of axles with wheels. They will put this knowledge to use later in the term when they design their own vehicles. It is likely that the work planned will enable them to attain at least average standards.

115. In Year 6 pupils designed, made and evaluated money holders and autograph books. They also designed masks for their creative arts production. A variety of skills were used to successfully complete these projects including, sewing, cutting and measuring. Year 6 pupils are able to record each stage of the manufacturing process and review their plans after testing results.

116. In the lessons observed the quality of teaching was at least sound. The series of lessons planned for Key Stage 1 pupils ensures that pupils develop the skills that will be necessary for them to make a good design for their vehicle. Teachers used good questioning techniques to check pupils' knowledge and understanding. The task set for Year 2 pupils ensured that they worked with a partner and shared their ideas.

117. There have been improvements since the last inspection in the management of the subject. There is now a suitable scheme of work, which builds up knowledge and understanding to ensure broad coverage of all aspects of the subject. National Curriculum requirements are now being met and resources are now improved and adequate.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

118. The standards achieved throughout the school are in line with those expected for pupils of their age. The pupils develop sound skills in map reading and map making, observing and recording and comparing different environments. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection for pupils aged seven to eleven and have improved for pupils aged six and seven.

119. By the age of seven the pupils successfully discuss life on an island off the coast of Scotland. They can describe differences in environments and state which they prefer. They draw simple maps of islands and understand the use of symbols. They capably follow the travels of Zak the bear as he jets around the world. They gain a sound understanding of the characteristics of different locations such as Barbados, Spain and America. The teachers plan lessons which capture the pupils' interest. By the age of eleven, pupils successfully develop an understanding of the water cycle and the development of a river valley. The pupils gain a good understanding of fieldwork skills undertaking a survey of land use and shopping and shoppers in Taunton. They make good use of ICT to produce graphs of the age of shoppers, their mode of transport and the goods they purchase. This data is then used to produce pie charts and bar and line graphs to illustrate the information. They successfully use maps, atlases and globes to find the characteristics of different locations. Mapping skills are soundly developed and aerial photographs are studied. The pupils gain a satisfactory understanding of life in a contrasting part of the world in Kenya.

120. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Lessons are well prepared and appropriate resources gathered. Good links are established between geography, mathematics and information and communication technology. Statistics are gathered from

surveys of the age and home location of shoppers and these are then entered into a data base and graphs produced. The teachers have sound subject knowledge and this enables them to set work effectively matched to pupils' needs. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to undertake their own research into aspects of geography. The school library is limited in the books available and accommodated in a very small space in a corridor.

121. The pupils enjoy geography and they make steady gains in skills and knowledge as they progress through the school. The teachers make good use of geography to stimulate a range of writing and some particularly good work was completed on a review of the quality of a field trip and how it could have been improved. Pupils with special educational needs are very effectively supported in a number of classes and tasks well matched to their needs. The very few pupils with English as an additional language are given sound individual support by classroom assistants, which enables them to gain an appropriate understanding of geography and build language skills. All pupils co-operate well as they share ideas and resources.

122. The co-ordinator has very recently taken on the responsibility. The long-term plan and policy for teaching geography are successfully influencing the curriculum. The co-ordinator monitors planning across the school and has started to build a collection of the pupils' work to illustrate progress in mapping skills.

## **HISTORY**

123. By the ages of both seven and eleven, standards are as expected for the age of the pupils. All pupils including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language gain sound knowledge and understanding in the subject. This is an improvement since the last inspection, where standards for pupils aged six and seven were below those expected.

124. Up to the age of seven pupils learn about the lives of famous people. They study toys from the past and they learn to use appropriate vocabulary to show the passing of time, such as 'past' and 'present', 'old' and 'new'. The pupils know that things change and develop over time. They competently identify the differences seen in, for example, transport and household goods between now and earlier this century. They are able to sequence events and make good use of family photographs to illustrate the passing of time. They make steady gains in historical skills and knowledge.

125. By the age of eleven pupils attain a sound understanding of different periods, events and important people in the history of the United Kingdom and the ancient world. They enjoy the history lessons, which are enlivened by a number of well-planned visits. For example, the pupils go to a museum to study Roman artefacts, or to look at old toys and compare them with the modern equivalents. The pupils develop a secure understanding of life in Anglo Saxon times and use an art program on the computer to produce a poster about the Viking invasions.

126. The teaching is overall satisfactory with some good and very good teaching for pupils aged eight to eleven. The teachers have secure subject knowledge and use this knowledge to plan lessons which are well matched to the long and medium-term plans for the subject. They have a good understanding of the importance of the value of primary source materials in capturing the pupils' interest. For example, in one very good lesson pupils looked at a wide variety of pictures of life in Victorian times and were asked to identify primary and secondary sources of information. The good subject knowledge of the

teacher enabled her to ask probing questions which successfully extended the pupils' thinking and understanding. Good use was made of ICT and a skilled learning support assistant to enable pupils to use the Internet to research information about Queen Victoria. Management of pupils is generally effective and the pupils respond positively, concentrate and show interest and enthusiasm. Homework is used well and pupils undertook valuable research at home about Victorian life over the summer holidays.

127. The co-ordinator has a background training in history and is monitoring planning and ensures good use is made of the loans of artefacts service from the local museum service. A number of classrooms had stimulating displays of artefacts, books and pictures from the Victorian era to capture and extend the pupils' interest in history.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

128. The standards in ICT have improved since the last inspection when pupils were judged as not meeting expectations by the age of seven. Standards are now meeting expectations for pupils aged seven and for those aged eleven. The installation of a new, but small, ICT suite, staff training and the use of a skilled learning support assistant have all assisted in raising standards.

129. The appointment of a new co-ordinator, who is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and the adoption of the nationally recommended scheme of work have also supported improved teaching and learning. Information and communication technology is a rapidly developing area of the curriculum.

130. In Years 1 and 2 the pupils learn about the layout of the keyboard and the function of important keys. They use the mouse with skill and confidence and quickly gain access to programs and click and point. They can use the spacebar, shift, return and delete keys. They confidently use the mouse to point and click to pick up objects as they move them around the screen.

131. At Key Stage 2 the pupils extend their word processing skills and capably lay out letters. Overall they make sound progress. The Year 6 class had written and sent an e-mail to New York expressing their sympathy and views about the recent terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre. The Year 6 pupils confidently use the Internet to support their work in history. They make good use of a simple data processing program to interpret data gathered during geography fieldtrips.

132. The teaching is sound overall, improving rapidly and having significant impact on pupils' attainment. The vast majority of members of staff have responded positively to the new computer suite and training opportunities. All lessons are planned well. Teachers give clear, confident whole-class explanations about how to use a program or enter data. They are capably supported by a knowledgeable classroom support assistant who manages the room and resources well. This helps to ensure pupils' access to computers and this aids pupils' progress. Most teachers make effective use of ICT to support work across some aspects of the curriculum. The literacy and numeracy hours are, however, not yet sufficiently supported by work in ICT by pupils word processing their writing and researching for information about literature. The new suite is underused in the mornings.

133. The newly appointed co-ordinator has been instrumental in introducing a very useful pupil log book. This provides up-to-date assessment information for the teacher to enable the planning of appropriate activities for the pupils. She has adopted the nationally produced guidelines for the subject and monitors the teachers' planning to ensure coverage

of the curriculum. The number of computers in the school is increasing with the ratio of one computer to 15 pupils. However, even greater progress could be made with pupils having more regular access to a computer.

## **MUSIC**

134. The attainment of pupils aged eleven is in line to meet the expected standards. The standards for pupils aged seven is above expectations. The teachers' effective planning ensures pupils will experience the whole range of elements in the music curriculum, although this is the result of a very recently introduced scheme. Discussions with pupils indicate that in the past they have had limited opportunities to compose and improve their own work, and to listen to a range of recorded music, including music from other cultures. The skills and competence of the staff have been considerably enhanced by the skills of new teachers. The subject is in a strong position to continue to improve.

135. Pupils age seven recognise high, medium and low sounds (pitch) and enjoy identifying characters portrayed musically, for example, Peter and the Wolf. Older pupils can sing rounds, and try out their own accompaniments to the singing of "Street Cries". All pupils sing with obvious enjoyment in assemblies, and apply what they have been taught to improve their singing – for example, how to make the words of a song clearer.

136. The teaching is good, and sometimes excellent. Many teachers have good technical knowledge, and lessons are carefully planned to provide a variety of activities. In both Year 1 and Year 2 lessons the teachers have personal skill and enthusiasm for the subject. They motivate and engage the pupils. They give pupils the confidence to participate and improve their singing and understanding of pitch. The pupils make good progress in lessons. Many pupils have the opportunity to learn an instrument at school, and good use is made of these skills in assemblies and performances.

137. The new subject leader for music has clear priorities for the further improvement of provision for this subject, and, once implemented, these should ensure that composition is given sufficient emphasis to ensure full coverage of the Programme of Study.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

138. As only three lessons were observed during the inspection it is not possible to make an overall judgement about standards in all aspects of physical education. At the time of the last inspection standards in dance were found to be poor. Video evidence of the excellent work undertaken by pupils in Key Stage 2 suggests that standards are now above average. Pupils have benefited from the links with the neighbouring Tacchi Morris Arts Centre. Dance workshops and productions have enabled them to reach a very good standard of creative expression through dance. Their work for the "Millenium Millepede" production was well thought out and visually effective.

139. The standard of gymnastics in the Year 1 lesson observed was above average. Pupils used space well and most could undertake a carefully controlled forward roll by the end of the lesson.

140. In the two games lessons observed pupils' batting and fielding skills were average. In Year 5 most pupils can catch and accurately throw a tennis ball. In Year 6 they can return a tennis ball to a partner using both forehand and backhand strokes. In all the lessons observed the pupils worked with enthusiasm and behaved very well. They worked together sensibly, sharing equipment and taking turns.

141. The quality of teaching was good in two out of the three lessons observed and sound in the third. In all lessons there was a good balance of different activities, which built up skills and ensured progress. The teachers encouraged pupils to warm up appropriately and explained the techniques to be practised. Pupils were offered the chance to experiment, practise and refine their skills. In a well-taught games lesson the teacher carefully assessed each pupil's tennis stroke and offered advice for improvement.

142. The school provides sufficient opportunities for swimming and outdoor education. A variety of extra-curricular activities enhance provision.

143. Although all aspects of the physical education curriculum are planned during the year, there are inconsistencies between classes in the time allocated to the subject. For example, in Year 6, pupils have two hours per week timetabled, but in Year 3 only one hour. In addition, the Key Stage 2 programme allocates too little time for gymnastics. The timetable arrangements and the programme for physical education have been recently introduced and currently do not adequately provide all pupils with sufficient time or an appropriate balance of activities.

144. A new co-ordinator has made a sound start to developing the role. He has an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and has plans to address the weaknesses. As yet, the plans have not been set within timescales or costed.

145. There is sufficient large apparatus for gymnastics but the resources for teaching outdoor games are in poor condition and are insufficient in quantity. For example, pupils are unable to have the same equipment as their peers due to the variety of different sizes and the condition of racquets and bats. Teachers are restricted in their ability to offer a range of activities by the lack of suitable equipment.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

146. Few lessons were observed during the inspection. However, by talking to pupils and by looking at their work, it can be seen that by age seven and by age eleven, pupils' attainment will meet the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils in Year 6 know about and understand about major world religions, especially Judaism. They can talk about the symbols associated with this religion, but are not always able to explain why these symbols are important to the Jewish people. Pupils are able to consider moral issues from a viewpoint other than their own; for example the use of the planet's dwindling resources. A small minority lack the sensitivity to accept an alternative point of view.

147. By Year 2, pupils aged seven know many of the important stories from the life of Jesus. They know about the major celebrations in the Christian calendar. They are able to talk with confidence about the feelings of the people involved in the Bible stories they read.

148. Although only two lessons were seen, judgement can be made about the quality of teaching from the planning, discussions with pupils and scrutiny of past work. The teaching at both key stages is sound. The curriculum is adequately covered and lessons effectively planned. Relationships in lessons are good and this encourages pupils to discuss feelings and thoughts.

149. The co-ordinator has plans in place to further develop the experiences offered, such as the celebration of Purim in Key Stage 2. As yet there are limited examples of assessment in this subject, and marking often comments on literacy skills rather than helping to develop religious education skills. More regular assessment is needed to ensure



progression so that pupils build on previous knowledge and skills, especially as the whole school focuses on a single topic at any one time.