

INSPECTION REPORT

BRIZE NORTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Carterton

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 193555

Headteacher: Mrs Andrea Moss

Reporting inspector: Mr Paul Bamber
15064

Dates of inspection: 17–19 September 2001

Inspection number: 193555

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 5 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Station Road
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Oxfordshire

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs J Bellenger

Date of previous inspection: April 1997

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			Geography	
			Physical education	
9115	Terence Clarke	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23056	Teresa Manzi	Team inspector	Science	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			Art and design	
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			Music	
			Foundation Stage	
			English as an additional language	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Brize Norton Primary School is situated in a rural setting where most of the housing is privately owned. Many pupils live in the village, but a significant minority are from neighbouring villages or the adjacent aircraft base. In recent years the school has grown in reputation and is now over-subscribed. At the time of the inspection 76 pupils (47 boys and 29 girls) were on roll and nine children aged under five were due to start full-time education the following week. Twelve per cent of pupils (below average) are on the special educational needs register, one of whom has a Statement of Special Educational Need. There are no pupils who use English as an additional language, or who originate from a minority ethnic background. The annual turnover of pupils is above average. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is average. Since the previous inspection the acting headteacher has been appointed on a permanent basis, a fourth class has been created and there has been considerable turnover of staff. Two newly qualified members of staff joined the school at the beginning of the term. Although there has been considerable change the school does not have major problems recruiting or retaining staff.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Brize Norton is a very effective school. There are excellent relationships within the school, pupils achieve well, have very good attitudes and behave very maturely. The quality of teaching is good and the school is well managed. Parents think very highly of the school and rightly acknowledge significant improvements since the previous inspection. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils attain above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave the school.
- The quality of teaching is particularly good in Years 3 to 6.
- Because the school fosters excellent relationships, pupils respect one another's views, behave very well and have very good attitudes to learning.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well.
- The school's partnership with parents is excellent. Parents think very highly of the school and contribute significantly to their children's learning.
- The headteacher provides strong and sensitive leadership.

What could be improved

- By the end of Year 2, brighter pupils do not attain the same high standards in writing as they do in reading and spelling.
- Lesson plans for infant pupils are not always detailed enough to ensure rigorous learning.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good improvement since the last inspection in April 1997. The most potent improvements have been in the standards achieved by pupils in Year 6, especially in writing, in the quality of teaching, and in the governors' contribution to strategic management. Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes have improved considerably. The governors have successfully addressed the key issues from the previous inspection.

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	A	D	A	B
mathematics	A	D	C	D
science	A	A	C	D

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

Because the school has very small numbers of pupils in each age group, year-on-year comparisons with national averages and similar schools need to be viewed with extreme caution. The performance of individual pupils can affect average performance much more acutely than in most schools. More important than the fluctuations evident in the above table is the rise over the last five years in the average standards achieved by pupils in Year 6 in the National Curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science. This improvement has been achieved at a faster rate than found nationally. Pupils' results in the 2001 national tests for 11-year-olds indicate continued improvement, with an increased percentage of pupils attaining at higher levels. During the inspection, standards achieved by pupils in Year 6 were above those expected for their age in English, mathematics and science, history, music and religious education. They achieved standards in line with those expected for their age in all other subjects of the National Curriculum. Evidence from the inspection indicates that the school's realistic targets for achievement in the 2002 national tests will be met.

The results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 2 show that pupils attained well above average standards in reading and mathematics, and above average standards in writing. Over time, the school has worked successfully to help more seven-year-olds, especially boys, attain average standards in writing, but still too few brighter pupils reach higher standards. Analysis of seven-year-olds' attainment over the last five years shows that they have improved at a faster rate than the national average in reading and mathematics, but at a slower rate in writing. During the inspection, seven-year-olds attained above average standards in reading, music and religious education. Standards were in line with those expected for their age in all other subjects of the National Curriculum.

Pupils aged under six make satisfactory progress in their learning, and most achieve the Early Learning Goals set for them. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well, recently exceeding expected standards for their age in national tests. Reading standards are high throughout the school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Because the school is such a friendly place, pupils enjoy school and want to learn and achieve their best.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are courteous, listen well to each other and are very aware of the impact of their behaviour upon others.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils respect the views of others, relate to each other and adults extremely well and value opportunities to influence the school's work through the School Council. Older pupils take very good care of younger children and help them with their reading.
Attendance	Very good. The rate of attendance is above that found nationally, unauthorised absence is rare and pupils are punctual.

Pupils' attitudes to school, their behaviour and the way in which they relate to each other have a very positive effect on the standards of work they attain.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good overall for Years 3 to 6 and often very good in individual lessons. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed. This quality of teaching contributes significantly to the high standards pupils achieve by the time they leave the school and to the good progress they make. All teachers and support staff work in harmony to create a warm and friendly atmosphere in which pupils can learn. In Years 3 to 6 particularly, teachers' high expectations and the challenging work they set promote positive attitudes amongst pupils and high standards. Overall, the teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. Teachers in these classes enthuse pupils with lively introductions to lessons and provide interesting activities to support their learning. However, higher skills of writing have not been taught with sufficient rigour in Year 2. Existing weaknesses in teaching are linked to inexperience and to a lack of detailed planning. Teachers promote literacy and numeracy skills well throughout the curriculum, particularly in reading and in the juniors, in writing. The teaching of information and communication technology skills is satisfactory throughout the school. Recently there has been good improvement in the teaching of information and communication technology skills. Teaching of pupils aged under six is appropriate to their needs and enables them to achieve the standards expected of them. Pupils with special educational needs receive well-directed support and achieve well. Particular strengths in pupils' learning, especially in the juniors, are their ability to work independently and to apply their existing knowledge to new learning. This is very evident in the homework tasks they complete.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. The range of after-school clubs is very good for a small school. All pupils are fully included in the curriculum. The organisation of the timetable for pupils aged under six means that they are sometimes passive for too long a period.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good overall. Early identification in the infants, very good support and well-targeted work, ensure that pupils often achieve very well. Parents are closely involved and contribute well to their children's successes.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good in all aspects. Assemblies offer many opportunities for personal reflection. Pupils have a strong moral sense and are good 'citizens', assuming responsibilities willingly. They are well aware of their own and other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are very good procedures for child protection, welfare and health and safety. The school ensures that pupils' personal and academic progress are effectively monitored and evaluated.

The school's partnership with parents is excellent and remains a strength of the school. The interest in and support given to the school by parents, and the confidence the school has in the parents, contribute significantly to the very positive ethos and sense of community.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides strong and purposeful leadership and is highly respected by parents, pupils and staff. The senior teacher ably supports the headteacher in promoting high standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Individual governors oversee the school's provision for literacy, numeracy and special educational needs. Governors are closely involved in setting school priorities and the chair of governors is particularly effective as a 'critical friend'
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory overall. The school analyses test data to identify weaknesses in pupils' attainment. This has contributed to raising standards. However, the school still has not fully identified how it can enable brighter pupils in Year 2 to attain higher standards in writing.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning and budgetary control are rigorous. Governors' prudent management has enabled the school to create a fourth class to accommodate the increasing demand from parents for places. The school's administration contributes very well to its smooth running and its relationships with parents and the community.

The school is aware of the principles of 'best value'. Governors are vigilant in seeking value for money when buying services. They consult frequently with parents and pupils, compare and contrast the school's standards with other schools and consistently challenge themselves regarding the quality of education the school provides. The school's staffing

and learning resources adequately support learning and good use is made of a specialist music teacher. Internal accommodation is cramped and places some restrictions on the amount and range of practical work that can be carried out. The school benefits from attractive, impeccably maintained grounds, a major feature of which is the school garden, which is testimony to the excellent involvement of parents. These excellent facilities contribute very well to the pupils' social and moral development as well as to aspects of their academic learning.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like the school and make good progress. • Behaviour is very good. • Teaching is good. • The school works closely with parents and keeps them well informed. • The school provides interesting activities out of school and helps pupils become mature and responsible. 	No significant issues.

From the responses to the questionnaire sent to parents and the comments and opinions of those parents who attended a meeting prior to the inspection, it is clear that they have extremely positive views of the school. A very few felt that too much homework was set for five to seven-year-olds, and that they were not as well informed about their child's progress as they would wish. Inspectors strongly concur with the positive views of the parents. They feel that, throughout the school, homework contributes well to the standards pupils achieve and that, in reading especially, younger pupils benefit from a regular amount of work to do at home. The school provides the parents with as much information about pupils' progress as is the norm.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests, pupils in Year 6 reached well above average standards in English, and average standards in mathematics and science. When compared with similar schools standards were above average in English, but below average in mathematics and science.
2. Although the results the school achieved in the 2001 National Curriculum tests have been validated, at present there are no published national averages for this year, or available comparisons with similar schools. However, all pupils in Year 6 who sat the 2001 tests in mathematics and science attained the standard expected for their age, with a high percentage in both of these subjects attaining higher than expected for their age. In English, a high percentage of pupils reached standards above those expected for their age.
3. The number of pupils taking the National Curriculum tests each year is very small. This means that year-on-year fluctuations in average standards are common, because the attainment of individual pupils influences statistics disproportionately. More significantly, over the last five years the average standards attained by 11-year-olds in English, mathematics and science have improved at a faster rate than nationally.
4. The school sets realistic and challenging targets for improvement in test results in Year 6, and works hard to ensure that individual pupils overcome their particular weaknesses in English and mathematics. Clear evidence of this was the achievement in the 2001 tests of two pupils with special educational needs, who attained the standards expected of them for their age in mathematics and science and also came within one or two marks of reaching that standard in English. The school provided extra classes to help these pupils overcome their difficulties, and their achievement was a source of pride to the pupils, parents and the school. Since the previous inspection, the school has worked successfully to raise standards in the quality of pupils' writing, especially that of boys.
5. Standards currently achieved by pupils in Year 6 are above average in English, mathematics and science, and they apply their literacy and numeracy skills well to support their learning in other subjects. For instance, pupils write imaginatively in history and persuasively in geography. They also apply their knowledge and understanding of standard units of measurement in science investigations, and use graphs and tables to organise data in geography lessons.
6. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 2, standards were well above average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. Indications from the results of the 2001 tests are that standards have been maintained. When compared with similar schools, standards in the 2000 National Curriculum tests were well above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing.

7. As in Year 6, the number of pupils in Year 2 taking the tests each year is very small and similar caution is needed when making comparisons with national averages, the standards achieved by similar schools, or year-on-year performance.
8. Average standards reached by pupils in Year 2, in reading and mathematics, have steadily improved over the last five years. In addition, more pupils now attain the standard expected for their age in writing. However, too many pupils, who attain above average standards in reading and spelling, fail to do so in writing. This is a relative weakness in the school's performance. The school has been insufficiently rigorous in identifying what it needs to do to enable more seven-year-old pupils to attain higher standards in writing. For the existing pupils in Year 2, average standards are above those expected for their age in reading, music and religious education, and in line with expectations in all other subjects of the National Curriculum. Pupils apply their literacy and numeracy skills satisfactorily in other subjects.
9. Year 6 pupils speak confidently, and articulate their thoughts well in discussions and when responding to questions. They listen well, respond promptly to instructions and have respect for the views of teachers and fellow pupils. Pupils in Year 2, speak and listen as well as is expected for their age. The standards achieved in listening, throughout the school represent a substantial improvement since the previous inspection.
10. The standards reached in reading, in both Year 6 and Year 2, are above average for pupils' age, because the school places strong emphasis upon this aspect of the pupils' learning and encourages parents to provide their children with good support at home. Year 6 pupils read fluently and talk enthusiastically and knowledgeably about books they enjoy and about different styles of writing. Higher-attaining pupils use variations in tone and accent to convey emotion and character when reading aloud, and scan books to gather information quickly. As a result of the school's well-focused support for them, older pupils with special educational needs achieve good reading standards compared with their prior attainment. Pupils, in Year 2, use and understand non-fiction well, and this promotes their learning in other subjects. They make good use of phonics and visual clues to tackle unfamiliar words.
11. Year 6 pupils write well, attaining above average standards for their age. They are encouraged to regard writing as a life-skill and to apply the skills they learn in literacy lessons to other subjects. Overall, pupils in Year 2 attain average standards in writing, often producing interesting and lively stories. Most understand how to use ideas to modernise traditional stories. However, too few attain higher standards because they do not consistently write extended sentences, use joined handwriting, punctuate accurately, or organise their work in paragraphs.
12. In mathematics, pupils in Year 6 use a good range of strategies to calculate quickly and solve problems. Higher-attaining pupils have a very good grasp of multiplication facts, but a significant minority of pupils make careless mistakes when multiplying. Year 2 pupils measure accurately using standard and non-standard units, and higher-attaining pupils have rapid and accurate recall of number relationships to 100 and beyond. Overall, Year 2 pupils use mathematical vocabulary appropriately. Lower attaining pupils show some weakness in identifying mathematical symbols.

13. Because Year 6 pupils think scientifically, prepare well for their investigations and have a good knowledge of materials, forces and life-forms, they attain above average standards. Although Year 2 pupils attain above average standards, their ability to predict the outcomes of their investigations is too limited.
14. In music, Year 2 and Year 6 pupils sing tunefully and rhythmically, follow conducted instructions and many play instruments. They attain standards above those expected for their age because they are taught well by a specialist teacher. In religious education, pupils throughout the school exceed the expected standards for their age. Year 6 pupils develop a good understanding of the Christian faith and respect for the values, ceremonies and artefacts of Judaism and other faiths. Year 2 pupils relate their own family experiences well to those occasions which are celebrated in other faiths, such as birthdays and New Year.
15. In art and design, Year 6 pupils closely follow a design brief to create work in the style of famous artists, and Year 2 pupils use pencil, paint or charcoal well for their self-portraits. In design and technology, Year 6 and Year 2 pupils think keenly about their designs and the suitability of materials for making objects, and are careful to match their finished product to the design requirements.
16. By the time they leave the school, pupils attain standards above those expected for their age in history. Strengths are in their recall of historical events, their sense of chronology and their understanding of the impact of technological advances on their own lives. Year 2 pupils attain overall average standards, but have a good knowledge of how children lived and played during the period of the Second World War. Throughout the school, pupils attain average standards for their age in geography. The oldest pupils use maps well to locate features, but a minority has limited knowledge of the location of countries and major cities around the world.
17. By the time they leave the school, pupils use word processing skills effectively to support their learning across the curriculum. They use graphics packages widely to illustrate their work. A particular strength is in their use of information and communication technology equipment such as digital cameras, overhead projectors and the Internet to support and enhance their work. Year 2 pupils use televisions, videos and DVD players appropriately to support their learning, and use word processing to reinforce their literacy skills. They use the correct terminology and are confident using a keyboard and mouse.
18. Year 6 pupils achieve high standards in swimming as a result of good provision and specialist tuition. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 2 have good ball control and throw and catch accurately. Overall, pupils in Year 2 achieve the standards expected for their age in games.
19. Children aged under six in the Foundation Stage of their learning enter the school with average standards. By the time they are six the majority achieve all the Early Learning Goals set nationally for them and are at least ready to start the National Curriculum.
20. The school emphasises, from an early age that pupils' personal and social development is paramount and, as a result, children quickly learn to value themselves and to share with others. Children join in enthusiastically when repeating text, know their way around books and many read familiar words. They

write their own name and progress to writing in a variety of styles, for instance, lists and stories. Most children count confidently to 20 and have a good understanding of comparative weight and height. Their knowledge and understanding of the world is enhanced by frequent visits to the school garden, by experimenting with a variety of materials such as sand and water, and by regular use of computers which they manipulate skilfully. Higher-attaining children catch and throw well. They paint freely and colourfully and sing nursery rhymes tunefully, which all contribute to their creative development.

21. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their individual education plans and the targets set for them. They achieve well because their support and work are well matched to their needs. This is largely because of the small group arrangements made for them, and the additional good support provided by classroom assistants, who use specialised programmes. Recently, these pupils have reached the expectations for their age as a result of focused, intensive support.
22. Overall, pupils achieve well. Whatever their ability, pupils achieve what they should because they are suitably challenged. Pupils enter the school with average standards and throughout the school they make good progress in their learning. The one exception is that higher-attaining seven-year-olds tend not to make the progress they should in writing. Progress is particularly good for pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 because they are constantly challenged by teachers to attain high standards. Pupils in this age group build steadily upon their literacy and numeracy skills so that by the time they leave the school they attain above average standards for their age. Because teachers have high expectations of their ability to work independently, pupils develop the ability to research and to apply basic skills to all areas of the curriculum. This means that they have good investigational and experimental skills by the time they leave the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

23. The quality of relationships throughout the school is excellent, and pupils' attitudes to the school, their behaviour and personal development are very good. This is a marked improvement since the previous inspection. The level of attendance is very good. These factors all contribute well to the high standards and pupils' good achievements.
24. Pupils' have very good attitudes to the school. They enjoy coming to school, are enthusiastic and quickly settle to their tasks at the start of the school day. The school is a very friendly place, and many parents sit with their children when they arrive in the morning and help them with their work until registration. Of those parents who answered the questionnaire sent out before the inspection, all said that their child or children enjoyed coming to school. The pupils are very keen to tell visitors about how proud they are of their school.
25. Overall, pupils' behaviour is very good. In the classroom, behaviour was mainly good or very good and in a few instances excellent. It was never less than satisfactory. Behaviour outside the classroom, around the school, in the playground and in the lunch-hall is always very good. Pupils are polite and courteous to each other, to members of staff and to visitors. They hold doors open for adults, and words and phrases such as 'please', 'thank you' and 'excuse me' are frequently heard. An example of pupils' politeness is seen at lunchtime, when visitors sit down

with pupils. Senior pupils ask visitors what they would like to eat for their lunch, and they then collect it and bring it to the table along with cutlery. No bullying or oppressive behaviour was seen during the inspection, and pupils say that it does not occur. In the year prior to the previous inspection there were three exclusions. Last year there were none.

26. Pupils' personal development is very good. They have a very good understanding of the impact of their actions on others, and respect other people's values and beliefs. The previous inspection reported that pupils did not always listen to what others said. This is certainly not the case now. Pupils listen well. This was observed at the School Council meeting when even the younger ones concentrated well on what was being said. The discussion held there was of good quality, and pupils showed an impressive degree of maturity and confidence and were assertive when expressing their concerns. Pupils also paid close attention and showed great interest during an assembly based on the celebration of the Jewish New Year.
27. Pupils take responsibility well and show a good degree of initiative. Older pupils look after younger ones and say that they are happy to do so. The amount of responsibility and initiative taken increases as pupils progress through the school. During playtime, after lunch, a Year 6 pupil quickly restored order when younger pupils were becoming boisterous in the playhouse.
28. Attendance is very good. In 1999/2000 it was well above the national average. The attendance rate worsened slightly last year because of circumstances beyond the school's control. The incidence of unauthorised absence is low, and pupils nearly always arrive at school in good time. The very good level of attendance and the prompt arrival of pupils at school have a positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

29. During the inspection all the lessons observed were at least satisfactory, with 43 per cent good and 32 per cent very good. This represents a considerable improvement in the quality of teaching and learning since the previous inspection, when 33 per cent of lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory.
30. There is much very good quality teaching and learning in the junior years. For this age group, the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics, including numeracy, and in religious education, is very good. It is good in English including literacy, science, art and design, design and technology and music. It was not possible to make a judgement about the quality of teaching and learning in physical education. Teachers use information and communication technology effectively to support learning throughout the school.
31. Teachers of the two classes containing Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6 ensure high quality learning by expecting all pupils to attain the highest standards of which they are capable. They plan lessons carefully, share lesson objectives with pupils and promote pupils' self-esteem very well. As a result, pupils respond very positively in lessons, striving to achieve their best, co-operating well with their teachers and each other and tackling challenging work with relish. Because teachers have high expectations, pupils of different abilities achieve well in relation to their previous attainment.

32. In the class containing Years 3 and 4, the headteacher and a colleague share the teaching. The close liaison and collaboration in the teaching of topics and aspects within literacy and numeracy ensure that pupils learn consistently and benefit from teachers' particular expertise in these subjects. This was well-illustrated in two numeracy lessons. In one, the teacher focused on number work, making use of interesting resources to promote pupils' understanding of place value and different methods of combining numbers to 20. In the other, the teacher set tasks at different levels of difficulty, which required pupils to apply their existing knowledge of units of length and area. In both lessons, the teachers' very secure subject knowledge and well-directed questions challenged pupils' thinking and promoted mathematical learning of very good quality.
33. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 learn very well because the very experienced teacher of this class insists that they put maximum pace and effort into their work, including their homework. This teacher sets work that stretches pupils' thinking, and uses assessments of their work to plan their future learning. She has very good relationships with pupils, which means that they want to succeed and are confident when tackling new and more complex work. The very good quality of marking in this class helps pupils to understand how to improve and to eradicate mistakes. Much of the very good quality teaching noted in this class was exemplified in a literacy lesson about Shakespeare's play Macbeth. Because the teacher's subject knowledge was very secure, pupils made good progress in their learning to understand differences in the use of verbs and sentences today as opposed to in the 17th century. The good relationships promoted in the lesson meant that pupils read difficult text unselfconsciously and took pride in their achievements.
34. Both teachers in the classes containing Year R and 1 and Years 1 and 2 are very recently qualified and at the time of the inspection had been teaching for only a week. Where the quality of teaching and learning was good, teachers were well-prepared for their lessons, set work that challenged pupils of all abilities and organised pupils' learning efficiently. Relative weaknesses in teaching occurred either because lessons were not planned in enough detail to identify specific learning objectives or because the organisation of the middle part of the lesson was less secure. As a result, pupils were not always sure about the progress they had made in an individual lessons and the pace of some pupils' learning slowed when they were working without direct supervision. Strengths in the teaching of pupils in this age group are the enthusiasm with which teachers conduct lessons, and the effective introductions to lessons, which invariably capture pupils' interest and promote their speaking and listening skills. Evidence from pupils' work and National Curriculum test results indicate that there have been some weaknesses in the teaching of writing for the more able pupils, and in the teaching of experimental science, which has caused some underachievement in these areas. The quality of teaching and learning in music and religious education is good, and it is satisfactory in other subjects of the National Curriculum.
35. At the time of the inspection no children aged under five years old were attending the school. Evidence taken from teachers' plans, the work of children who were under five last term, and discussions with staff, indicate that the quality of teaching and learning in this age group has been satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning in the class which nine children aged under five years will join imminently, is good. Strengths of the teaching in this class are the wide variety of activities provided and the sense of fun generated by the teacher and classroom assistant. There is a weakness, however, in that pupils are required to sit for too long at one

time listening to their teacher or each other. This means that they sometimes lose concentration.

36. The quality of teaching and learning is good for pupils with special educational needs. Teachers work hard to organise appropriate tasks for these pupils. They give as much support to individuals as they can, asking open-ended questions, so pupils are able to join in the lessons. The system also provides opportunities for specialist, outside help to be used effectively. Small groups are well supported by knowledgeable and effective learning support assistants, who liaise well with teachers. Work is well-planned to meet specific needs. Tasks are at an appropriately challenging level, and staff set high expectations for behaviour and standards of work. For example, in the National Curriculum tests for both Years 2 and 6, last year, those pupils identified as having learning difficulties reached the standards expected for their age. Parents reported that this was due in no small way to the extra lessons and support provided by the teaching staff.

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

37. The curriculum is broad and balanced and is enriched by a very good range of extra-curricular activities. All pupils are invited to join activities such as 'the gardening club', and many do so willingly. Parents are very happy with this extra provision, which is a strength of the school. The curriculum has improved since the previous inspection. There is now much better planning for pupils' learning because there are detailed schemes of work for all subjects and lesson planning has improved. With the adoption of nationally recognised schemes, the school has clearly identified the necessary stages of learning for each year group as well as for different ability groups. This is particularly important because classes contain pupils of different ages and with a range of abilities. The detailed planning now in place ensures that, in most cases, pupils' needs are met well and they make good progress. The opportunities for attaining high standards have improved but within the writing element of English, the higher-attaining pupils in Year 2 have not been challenged sufficiently to reach the highest standards. The school is keen to improve and uses test results, inspection findings and school reviews effectively to identify how improvements can be made. An example of this is the decision to employ a music specialist. She has helped to raise standards in this subject.
38. All statutory requirements, including the provision for religious education, are met. Pupils in Year 6 are given supportive information on sex education. A drugs awareness and health education programme is taught through the personal, social and health education programme. This is enhanced by the very good, caring ethos of the school. Very good links with the community contribute well to pupils' learning. For instance, a friend of the school used heavy digging equipment to prepare the soil for the school garden, which is a feature which pupils now enjoy immensely and use to enhance many areas of the curriculum. The National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy have been implemented well. Good cross-curricular links benefit older pupils, as when English is used effectively in science to record, plan and evaluate experiments. The time allocated to all subjects is satisfactory, but in the infant classes, English and mathematics lessons are sometimes too long for the youngest pupils. The school plans to remedy this. Careful arrangements are made to ensure that pupils who have music lessons do not always miss their literacy lessons. Pupils with special educational needs have good access to the

curriculum because the ratio of adults to pupils in classes is very favourable, and relationships with the specialist advisors are good.

39. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Acts of collective worship are well-planned and offer good opportunities for quiet moments of reflection and prayer. Local visitors of different faiths regularly lead the assemblies. Good use is made of artefacts and music to stimulate thought and create a sense of wonder. Visits to places of worship, to the local war memorial, the growing of flowers and vegetables in the school garden and caring for the chickens, all develop the pupils' sense of awe and wonder.
40. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Pupils understand right from wrong and have a good understanding of themselves as individuals in society. They understand what it means to be a 'good citizen'. One pupil described the school as a 'family', and pupils look after each other very well. They realise how dangerous it can be to throw away litter haphazardly, particularly around animals in the countryside. Staff, and others in the school community, are very good role models for pupils, demonstrating consideration for others in their actions.
41. The school makes very good provision for pupils' social development. The staff know their pupils well, and excellent relationships are apparent both within lessons and around the school. Time is given for pupils to talk about their feelings and to begin to understand how their actions affect others. The playground is well-supervised and the 'School Council' notes any improvements that are needed and reports to the whole school during assembly. Pupils are proud to wear their yellow badges, which identify them as members of the school council, and are very keen to act responsibly when representing others. Some pupils with special educational needs have been voted to represent their classes. Many pupils are encouraged to take on roles of responsibility and they enjoy undertaking tasks to help others. Pupils are given the confidence to use their initiative. For example, an older pupil was confident enough to decide to bring the guinea pigs in out of the rain. The teachers have developed in the pupils a sense of trust and responsibility throughout the school.
42. Provision for pupils' cultural development is also very good. This is promoted through many subject areas. In history and geography, pupils explain similarities and differences between their own and other cultures, as well as within their own culture over time. In religious education, they study a range of customs and beliefs. They use the internet to support their own research. Art and music cover aspects from the pupils' own culture and those of others. Visitors to the school demonstrated Indian dancing and drumming from Kenya. Some pupils enjoyed these so much that they persuaded their parents to take them to see a performance of drumming in a nearby town. The pupils perform country dancing at school events. A reasonable range of books and artefacts supports cultural awareness.
43. The curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is good in the infants and very good in the juniors. This is an improvement, overall, on the judgement made at the time of the previous inspection. These pupils have full access to the curriculum, and other opportunities and arrangements for them comply with the Code of Practice. The needs of these pupils are recognised early, and their individual education plans contain manageable academic or behavioural targets. They are reviewed, updated and revised regularly, and agreed with parents.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

44. Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are very good. The monitoring of pupils' academic performance and personal development is good, as are the educational and personal support and guidance for pupils. The pupils receive their education in a safe, caring and nurturing environment.
45. The school has proper procedures for child protection, which follow the guidelines of the local authority's social services department. The headteacher is the designated adult. She ensures that staff are aware of the procedures, and keeps herself up-to-date with relevant training. As the school knows its pupils very well, the headteacher is soon aware of any problems. Relationships with social services are good, but the school rarely needs to contact them. There are very good arrangements for ensuring pupils' welfare. The school's administration officer is in charge of dealing with and recording minor and major accidents. Procedures for dealing with asthma sufferers and other pupils on medication are well known and secure. Health and safety are top priorities at the school. A named governor, with experience in the field, takes overall responsibility for this area, and carries out regular inspections. The one item brought to the attention of the headteacher during the inspection was dealt with promptly. Full risk assessment is carried out. The school is next to a Royal Air Force base, and has an appropriate 'major incident' policy in place.
46. The school has very good procedures for monitoring and improving attendance. The school records attendance electronically, although registers are still called in the traditional manner. There are strict rules for absences, which have to be notified by 9.30am, and parents are reminded annually about this by letter. They have to return a signed slip to inform the school that the letter has been received. The school has a 'first day contact' policy, and any absences not notified are followed up the same morning. Latecomers have to report to the office, but lateness is rare.
47. The school has a very effective behaviour policy, and the procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good, as well as those for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour. The school discusses the rules for good behaviour with pupils at the beginning of the school year. In the previous inspection report, the need to set clear boundaries for acceptable behaviour was part of one of the key issues for improvement. It has now been very successfully implemented, with pupils themselves helping to set the boundaries. The policy depends on a rewards system for good behaviour, which has been particularly successful in improving the behaviour of those pupils who have some behavioural difficulties. The school's very good procedures for eliminating bullying depend on the pupil saying: 'Don't do that to me. I don't like it'. If that does not work the pupil tells an adult. The School Council helps to promote good behaviour and pupils write down any problems that occur.
48. The school monitors and supports pupils' academic progress well and pupils' personal development very well. Parents liaise closely with the school to ensure that staff know in advance if any problems are likely to arise. Home/school books are used to monitor individual issues, with positive points being emphasised where possible. The procedures for assessing the attainment and progress of pupils are good, overall, and they are used satisfactorily. All teachers are involved in agreeing

the standards pupils reach in English, mathematics and science. Children are tested on entry to the reception class, to establish their attainment, and the results are used to ensure that work set matches individual needs. The school also uses optional tests for older pupils, but they are not yet used diagnostically to identify what pupils can and cannot do. There is an adequate tracking system, which helps the school to monitor small groups of pupils of differing abilities. However, this is not analysed sufficiently at present to enable the school to pinpoint why more able seven-year-olds do not attain higher standards consistently. Analysis has taken place of boys' writing, and work was devised to rectify the problem.

49. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are involved in setting their own personal and academic targets in English, mathematics and science. The system allows them to discuss with their teacher and parents what they hope to achieve. Pupils are given several opportunities to revise and reconsider their targets, and they know what they have to do to achieve them. This structure is effective in helping to raise standards by the time pupils reach the end of Year 6, when a high proportion of them gain results above the national average and the more able pupils attain levels appropriate for their ability. No comparable system is yet in place for pupils in Years 1 and 2.
50. The assessment of pupils with special educational needs is good because careful records are kept of pupils' attainment and progress and appropriate steps are taken to reach targets. Teachers know their pupils very well and are in an excellent position to support their personal development well. This effective practice contributes well to the good progress made by these pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

51. As at the time of the last inspection, the school maintains an excellent partnership with its parents. Parents regard the school very highly, and links between them and the school are excellent. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is very good.
52. The parents' views of the school are extremely positive. Parents speak very highly of the school and feel welcome. Consequently all families are represented at parents' evenings and some parents use their expertise to the benefit of the school, such as helping with the orchestra. Good links exist with the local playgroup and several pre-school visits take place. This helps new pupils settle quickly. Pupils are well prepared for the transfer to the secondary school. The teachers meet with colleagues from other schools to help them to improve their expertise and share ideas. Responses to a questionnaire sent prior to the inspection indicated how pleased parents were about the school. Only three per cent of parents did not think pupils had the right amount of homework to do. Those parents who wrote comments with the questionnaires nearly all had positive things to say. These positive views were confirmed at the parents' meeting. Parents find the staff very easy to approach and say that the school produces nice children. The whole village wholeheartedly supports the school.
53. The school provides a wide range of very good quality information for parents. Apart from the prospectus and governors' annual report, the school also sends out regular newsletters, which keep parents up to date with what is going on. School reports give a clear picture of what pupils can do and what they need to improve. They also contain targets for English, mathematics and science. Parents can see teachers before or after school and the headteacher is always available to talk to

them. Each term there is a meeting with parents to discuss their child or children's progress. Two of these meetings are formal and one is informal. At the last meeting, in the two out of the three classes involved, every parent attended. The parents come in large numbers to the curriculum 'workshops' organised by the school. Each half term there is a 'sharing' assembly and parents need to arrive early if they want to get in!

54. The impact parents have on the work of the school is very good: they make a very good contribution to the children's learning both at school and at home. There is a very active School Association. It raises, on average, £4000 – £5000 each year. The whole village supports many events, such as the summer fete, which raised over £1200 this year. Many parents come into school and sit with their children at the start of the school day, some reading with them or helping with other work. A number of parents work as volunteers in the school. For instance, they help with science and with design technology lessons. Other parents help with swimming and in promoting road safety awareness. Parents also accompany children on school visits. Parents or grandparents support a large number of after-school activities, which include gardening, the book club, netball and the science club. A grandparent teaches children how to play the guitar. Parents are also involved with school performances, and a number of them hold minibus-driving licences. Parents support their children at home through their homework and listening to them read.
55. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are well informed at every stage and are aware of their child's inclusion on the special needs register. Regular meetings are held, which are very well attended, to review targets and set new ones where necessary. Parents are very supportive of this area of the school's work.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

56. Several aspects of the leadership and management of the school were identified as weaknesses in the previous inspection. Considerable improvement has taken place in these aspects since then and the school is now well led and managed.
57. The headteacher leads the school strongly and sensitively. She has created a very positive ethos in the school and has the utmost confidence of parents who speak very highly of her and of the governors. Despite having a three-day teaching commitment, the headteacher manages everyday routines very competently. In this, the headteacher is ably assisted by her senior teacher and the very efficient administration officer, both of whom strongly promote the aims and values of the school. The strong sense of 'family,' which characterises the school, contributes greatly to pupils' very good behaviour, attitudes to their work and the excellent relationships very evident throughout. The least improvement since the previous inspection has been in extending the role of the subject co-ordinators. Because of staff changes and more pressing priorities, the school has only this term made time available for co-ordinators to monitor standards in their subjects.
58. The school development plan is now a productive working document. It contains clear priorities for improvement, and careful costings. The improvements that have taken place in development planning since the previous inspection have played a significant role in the higher standards pupils have achieved in national tests and other areas of their work.

59. The school's strategies for monitoring and evaluating its own performance and standards were also criticised in the previous inspection report. These again have improved. Particular improvement has occurred in the school's analysis of its test data, which means that it is much more aware of specific strengths and weaknesses in pupils' attainment. The school has used this information well to address weaknesses in aspects of older pupils' writing (highlighted in the previous inspection report), mental mathematics and in scientific enquiry. As a result, standards have risen in these areas. One relative weakness in the school's monitoring of standards is their inability to identify why pupils in Year 2, who attain high standards in reading and spelling, fail to attain the same high standards in writing.
60. Weaknesses in the governing body's contribution to the work of the school and their financial management have now been successfully overcome. Governors are now much better informed about school procedures and standards, exercise rigorous budgetary control and are very involved in the school's financial and strategic planning. Individual governors monitor the school's provision for special educational needs, numeracy and literacy and several are involved in the everyday work of the school, supporting individual pupils or classes. Astute financial planning and close budget monitoring have enabled the governors to create a much needed fourth class this year to accommodate the increasing number of pupils who join the school. The chair of governors plays a major role in the development of the school. She is in almost daily contact with the headteacher, staff and parents, keeps other governors well informed about school matters and is actively involved in the Annual School Review, held jointly between the school and the local education authority. Such involvement contributes significantly to the close partnership that exists between the main parties interested in the pupils' welfare and education.
61. The school's management is concerned to consult with parents, pupils and the community to ensure that their views and suggestions are aired, considered and acted upon. Questionnaires to parents and the pupils' 'School Council' provide opportunities for this, and facilities and some routines have been improved as a result. Governors seek value for money when purchasing services, and make creative use of the local community's support for the school in order to enhance the opportunities available to pupils.
62. There is a satisfactory match of teachers to the demands of the curriculum. There is a mixture of experience and inexperience among the teaching staff. The subject co-ordinators are well qualified in their areas of responsibility. The learning support assistants support teaching staff well. Governors have ensured that statutory requirements regarding the performance of teachers have been fully implemented. They have also made funds available for an experienced member of staff to mentor the two newly qualified teachers who recently joined the school. Arrangements for this and for members of staff to have time for observation and training, are already having an impact on improving their practice.
63. The school is housed in a Victorian building: the rooms are small and this somewhat restricts the range of pupils' activities. For example, during role-play activities the sound interferes with the lesson going on in the adjacent room. The school uses its accommodation well and its inadequate size does not impact adversely on pupils' achievements. In contrast, the outside accommodation is very good and enables pupils to pursue a wide range of activities. Overall, the resources for learning are satisfactory. There is a lack of large wheeled toys for pupils in the Foundation Stage, which somewhat restricts their physical development. The resources for

music are good and they contribute well to the high standards pupils attain in the subject. The range of books available to pupils and teachers to support learning and for reading for enjoyment is good. However, the library is sited in a classroom, which means that access during the school day is limited. The school makes good use of its books by creating book areas in each classroom. As a result, pupils have good access to reference materials in their own classrooms.

64. The special educational needs co-ordinator is an experienced, knowledgeable member of staff who manages the provision very well. She has effective links with the rest of the team and the school's systems and procedures are efficient. The school uses all means possible to support pupils with special educational needs and has effective partnerships with outside agencies, who speak highly of the school's positive, caring, knowledgeable attitudes. The areas between classrooms are used effectively to teach small groups.

65. **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

(1) Enable brighter pupils in Year 2 to achieve the same high standards in writing as they do in reading and spelling by:

- analysing test data to establish why they do not attain higher levels
- evaluating Year 2 pupils' writing more regularly and rigorously to identify specific weaknesses
- teaching pupils to improve their writing by using punctuation more accurately, a wider range of vocabulary, joined handwriting consistently and paragraphing more frequently
- following up more closely the instructions given in marking, so that pupils do not repeat mistakes
- considering whether to increase opportunities for guided writing in the Literacy hour (Paragraphs 8, 11, 34, 37, 48, 59, 82, 84)

(2) Ensuring that daily and weekly lesson plans, especially for literacy and numeracy, are sufficiently detailed. This would then ensure that teachers and pupils know exactly what the learning outcomes should be for different groups of pupils, in Years 1 and 2. (Paragraphs 34, 93)

In order to raise standards of attainment still further the following minor issue should be considered by the school:

- The school should review its timetabling for the youngest pupils to ensure that they are not learning passively for too long a period. (Paragraphs 35, 28, 68, 74, 83)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	28
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	42

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	9	12	7	0	0	0
Percentage	0	32	43	25	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	76
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	9

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.6
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half 2 days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2000	7	8	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	15	12	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100 (62)	80 (69)	87 (92)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	10	13	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	69 (62)	86 (69)	80 (77)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	76
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16
Average class size	19

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	82

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
	£
Total income	196529
Total expenditure	197179
Expenditure per pupil	2435
Balance brought forward from previous year	28783
Balance carried forward to next year	28133

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3.3

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 44 per cent

Number of questionnaires sent out	86
Number of questionnaires returned	38

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	37	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	66	34	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	63	37	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	59	35	3	0	3
The teaching is good.	84	16	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	86	11	3	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	95	5	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	76	21	0	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	81	19	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	92	5	0	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	78	22	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	89	11	0	0	0

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

66. At the time of the inspection there were no children in the Foundation Stage at the school. There was a pre-school visit for the pupils starting next Easter. Children are admitted to the school three times during the year, when they are soon to be five years of age. They are taught in a mixed age class of reception children and Year 1 pupils. Some children have only one term in the reception year before starting in Year 1. Judgements have been made as a result of observing the pre-school visit, examining books of children in the Foundation Stage last year and observing pupils in Year 1 who have just finished the Foundation Stage. Planning for the children entering the school later in term was also analysed. Overall, the provision for this stage of education is satisfactory. Plans relate directly to the Foundation Stage curriculum. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. As required statutorily, the curriculum covers the six areas of learning and development and as children reach the Early Learning Goals, or targets within this curriculum, they are introduced to the National Curriculum.
67. When children start school their baseline test results show that their skills, knowledge and understanding in most areas of learning match those of most four-year-old children in Oxfordshire. Children make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning and by Year 1 the majority are ready to start the National Curriculum. This is particularly so in speech, language and literacy and mathematical development. Children who have special educational needs are identified early through the use of the baseline tests and teachers' observations. Class teachers make good arrangements to meet the needs of these children in class, and they make good progress.

Personal, social and emotional development:

68. By the age of five children's development in this area is satisfactory. They are well behaved and polite. The children sit quietly and most, with adult support, initiate ideas and speak confidently when answering or asking questions. This is because they are listened to and their ideas are valued. Children work well as part of a group, take turns and form very good relationships with adults and their peers. They move confidently between activities as the teachers give clear instructions and often provide interesting and varied tasks. Children are sensible and follow well established routines. They are settled and try hard with their tasks particularly when an adult is present. Occasionally, when the children spend too long on one activity or are expected to work on their own on written tasks, they remain quiet and well behaved, but they do little work.

Communication, language and literacy

69. The children attain the standard expected for their age. They enjoy stories and join in with repetitive text. Some children predict what might happen next and most enjoy books, handle them correctly, remember stories and talk about them. They recognise print and know that it tells a story and also use picture clues appropriately. Many children read a few familiar words in a simple text. Children listen attentively and most have a satisfactory vocabulary and often answer

questions in sentences. The majority know some letter names and their sound. The children's handwriting is clear and generally well formed and becomes more accurate. They write in a variety of styles, such as stories and lists for a birthday party. The more able children are suitably challenged and, by the end of the reception year, a few use interesting sentences such as 'The fairy was poorly' to start their stories. Children make satisfactory progress in the early reading and writing skills. This is helped by the fact that they take a variety of books home to read with their parents. The school has excellent relationships with the parents, who in turn give very good support to their children's learning.

Mathematical development

70. Most children attain the standard expected for their age. Most count confidently to 20. Through a variety of stimulating practical experiences and games, they learn to estimate and check if there is 'more' or 'less'. Most children identify the biggest and smallest number and quickly choose a number less than 20. They also find the numbers between 15 and 20. Many use the mathematical vocabulary of 'heavier' and 'lighter'. By the end of the reception year most children add two numbers, for example, to make eight, and a few begin to subtract. The children learn a wide range of mathematical skills and are well prepared for the National Curriculum.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

71. Most children attain the standard expected for their age. They have the benefit of a very good outside play-area, which is being developed for their use. In preparation for this the children have drawn plans to identify what they would like and have made models. Many of their ideas, such as having tyres and a track, have been adopted by the school. In their study of materials they find out that not all materials are waterproof, some are 'stretchy' and some are 'see-through'. They know that in wet sand 'you can dig' and that dry sand is 'nice and squashy and you can play in it'. They also experiment to see how to stop an apple turning brown. When working on the computer, they use the keyboard and 'mouse' competently to work on games to improve their skills in areas such as English, by writing their name. On the computer, children make a bar chart to show how they get to school. As a result of the teacher using the correct terminology, they use the correct term 'delete'. However, the computer was not used often. Tape recorders are used to help children record their stories. They are amazed that the 'machine' repeats their words. They draw and label the parts of the human body appropriately and investigate the senses by tasting different food with their eyes closed.

Physical development

72. Most children attain the standard expected for their age. The children were observed during playtime and in class. They hold pencils and paint brushes correctly and walk, run and jump satisfactorily. When they find their space on the carpet they do not all crowd together and have a satisfactory sense of personal space. Higher-attaining children throw and catch a large ball accurately. There are very few wheeled vehicles, bikes and tricycles and these were not used during the inspection so it is not possible to judge the children's skills.

Creative development

73. Most children attain standards in line with those expected for their age because they are provided with a wide range of interesting activities. They paint freely and are often absorbed in this activity. They name different colours and have a clear idea of the picture that they want to paint. They draw with pencils and crayons in increasing detail. In music, children know a range of nursery rhymes and songs, follow the actions well and show an appropriate understanding of time. Children enjoy imaginative play in situations such as in a 'shop'. The role-play area is well designed and is used creatively by teachers and classroom assistant to encourage children to use a variety of skills. For example, practising their speaking and listening skills when welcoming 'customers', using technology when they use the scanner for pricing items, and mathematical skills when taking money and giving change. Generally, the children's creative efforts are valued and their work in art and design is displayed well, but occasionally their paintings are tailored by the use of templates. This results in too much work looking too similar and restricts the children's individual creativity.
74. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. This judgement is based on analysis of the children's work produced last year, but the teaching observed in the current reception and Year 1 class was consistently good. The best lessons are characterised by the teacher's enthusiasm and ability to make learning fun by providing a variety of activities planned to match the children's concentration span. Children are appropriately challenged, and the teacher gives good demonstrations and involves all children well. Time and the classroom assistant are used well to involve and help all children learn and complete tasks. Expectations for behaviour are high and children with special educational needs are supported well. The teacher has excellent relationships with the children and their parents. The school works hard to prepare children for school by providing several pre-school visits, and provides helpful advice for new parents. There are a few areas of relative weakness. These include occasions when children spend too long sitting on the carpet listening to their teacher. This does not always help to extend their active questioning skills nor actively involve them in their learning. The classroom assistant is not always used to best effect. However, children have a satisfactory start to school with the newly appointed teacher planning to revise the timetable to ensure that both she and her assistant are fully involved with the new children.

ENGLISH

75. In the National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 6 in 2000, standards were well above the national average and above the average for similar schools. A comparison of these results with those for the same pupils at the age of seven, in 1996, indicates that they made excellent progress. All pupils achieved or exceeded the expected standard and a slightly higher than usual proportion achieved the higher level. The trend over the last five years, though fluctuating as is usual with a small school population, shows a marked improvement, when compared with the steady rise nationally. Early indications from this year's National Curriculum tests are that pupils have maintained their higher than national average results. Although very early in the academic year, the inspection findings show that the pupils currently in Year 6 are attaining above the national expectation for their age, and indications are that they will maintain the school's upward trend in standards.

76. In the National Curriculum tests in 2000, pupils' results in Year 2 reached standards well above the national average in reading and above the national average in writing. All pupils achieved at least the expected Level 2 for reading and a greater than usual proportion reached the higher Level 3. However, no pupils attained a Level 3 for writing. In comparison with similar schools, results in reading were still well above average, but average in writing. Since 1997, results have fluctuated, as is frequently the case with small schools, but the overall trend indicates little improvement in writing over the period, set against a steady rise nationally. Because of the school's analysis and some intervention, boys' writing improved to the extent that they did better than the national average, but girls' writing fell short of expectations. Results of the most recent National Curriculum tests, for which national comparisons are not yet available, indicate that last year's pupils achieved lower standards in reading and writing, overall. Reading is likely to be above national average and standards of writing are likely to be typical, nationally, for the age group, but comparisons with similar schools are likely to fall short of expectations in writing. Although very early in the academic year, inspection findings reflect these results, as pupils are working at a level close to the national average. Those higher-attaining pupils, who are capable of reaching the higher levels, are not being stretched sufficiently to attain them, in writing. Caution needs to be exercised when comparing the school's year-on-year performance in national tests because of the very small numbers of pupils involved.
77. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school, because work set for them is appropriate. They also receive good support from the learning support assistants, who work well with them to raise their attainment. An excellent example of this was noted when, recently, pupils gained Level 4 against previous expectation. However, the higher-attaining seven-year-olds pupils only make satisfactory progress overall, because the work set for them is not always challenging enough.
78. Pupils' confidence in speaking and expressing their ideas develops well as they move through the school. This was not the case at the time of the previous inspection, when pupils were judged to be below expectations in listening. By the end of Year 2, standards are typical for their age. Pupils answer questions in interesting sentences and they role-play situations well, discussing feelings and ideas sensitively. When pupils reach Year 6, they are articulate and express themselves clearly and in a mature manner and attain standards well above national expectations. A very good example was observed in a lesson about understanding the world, where pupils listened carefully to their peers and expressed profound ideas about suffering and war. Teachers generally use appropriate technical language when teaching reading and writing. As a result, pupils increase their spoken vocabulary well between the Years 1 and 2, and very well between Years 3 and 6. Pupils with special educational needs join in appropriately because the questions asked of them are carefully targeted to help them succeed. The School Council is a very good forum for pupils to develop appropriate speaking and listening skills.
79. Pupils' attainment in reading is consistently above average. The school places strong emphasis on this skill, which develops well from a secure base in the pupils' homes. Reading in pairs of different age groups, is a regular, positive feature. Pupils' reading skills develop well from Year 3 to Year 6. They become independent, discerning readers and most enjoy books for pleasure as well as for information. Most read aloud with a good sense of audience. This was particularly

evident in one lesson where pupils were acting out parts from a Shakespearean play. They showed very good concentration throughout the reading of this difficult text because the teacher made it interesting and accessible to all abilities. Because they have a good command of vocabulary and fertile imaginations, they produced some blood-curdling, gruesome spells and incantations of their own, based on those of the witches in Macbeth. Pupils with special educational needs have invaluable sessions to prepare for class reading, at a later date, which helps them follow texts more closely during the main lesson. This enables them to grow in confidence. Reading records are maintained accurately throughout the school. Those for Year 6 pupils are used well to develop their higher level reading skills.

80. Younger pupils read well, confidently and with good expression. They are aware of their mistakes and have a developing set of strategies with which to cope with the increase in difficulty of reading material. Pupils with special educational needs read well in their guided sessions and are well-equipped to report back to the rest of the class, when necessary. Older pupils use expression well because their teacher sets a very good example. All pupils have opportunities to read from texts they have chosen for themselves. In Year 2, pupils read a good range of fiction and non-fiction texts, using appropriate strategies to make sense of words they do not know. They demonstrate understanding of the main points of the story and are generally accurate. Almost all are keen to express preferences in what they like to read, comment on characters and see the humour in their reading. There is good communication from home to school throughout the school and this helps with fluency and interest in reading. Pupils extend ideas and themes, for example, when writing about something being lost, after reading about a bear who got lost. They use word processing well to write their ideas, not only to retell but also to create new situations. Pupils gather and process information, understanding how a library functions and how to find a book. Pupils know how to use contents, index and glossary correctly.
81. By the end of Year 6, standards in writing are above average. Pupils write in a mature style for an increasingly wide range of purposes. Written work in other subjects, such as science and history, helps to foster skills learned in literacy lessons. A good example was in a history lesson, specifically planned by the teacher to practise information-handling skills learned in a literacy lesson. Pupils know the value of research, frequently using the internet both for homework tasks, and as preparation for a lesson. Pupils use evocative vocabulary, for example, when writing their incantations and spells. They used alliterative and rhyming phrases and included imaginative ingredients such as 'pork of pig', 'hoof of horse', 'fang of spider, drowned in cider'. Handwriting, spelling and punctuation improve well and pupils' work shows a good degree of accuracy by the end of Year 6. The work planned for pupils of all abilities is appropriately challenging, and any mistakes are dealt with and improvements considered by both teachers and pupils.
82. Overall, by the end of Year 2, pupils achieve average standards in writing. Their writing is often interesting and lively. For example, when using modern ideas, chosen for effect, such as the RSPCA responsible for 're-homing' the wolf in Little Red Riding Hood. Punctuation and spelling are generally correct, but some pupils are sometimes careless with words they already know. This, combined with inaccurately formed, untidy handwriting, indicates that pupils do not always take their work seriously because expectations have not been high enough. There is a good range of work covered and it is marked appropriately, but at times the same mistakes and omissions occur regularly with little evidence that pupils learn from

their mistakes. For example, there are repeated references to full stops and capitals, but nothing to show that pupils have responded to this by subsequently using them correctly. Whilst higher-attaining pupils often write well, they do not consistently write more extended sentences; join handwriting; use interesting vocabulary; use punctuation accurately and appropriately or use paragraphs to sort out their ideas. Because the same problems occur when pupils write for other purposes, as in science or history, this is a relative weakness in the teaching, which prevents pupils reaching higher standards.

83. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, and never less than satisfactory. One lesson observed was very good. Lessons are well-planned for older pupils, and all teachers have good methods for teaching basic skills. This enables pupils to have a good grounding in what they learn. However, analysis of the previous year's work and planning shows, for example, a past and present inattention to detail in Years 1 and 2. There is sometimes a lack of specific purpose in individual lessons, which means that pupils are not always clear about what they should learn. There is a lack of a well-structured, final rounding-up session to check pupils' understanding. These factors have contributed to some under-achievement by brighter pupils in Year 2 in writing, over the last five years. All lessons observed were carried forward at an appropriate pace, allowing time for reflection and quick-fire ideas. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well and the atmosphere in classrooms is warm and friendly. Because teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and respect for others, especially in Years 3 and 6, pupils rise to the occasion and work well, independently and without fuss. Teachers successfully communicate their own enthusiasm for the subject and this is reflected well in the standards of reading in all age groups and writing among the older pupils. Effective, lively, yet thoughtful sessions enable pupils to concentrate well and remain interested. Good examples were observed throughout the inspection, but especially when younger pupils were involved in role-play activities, or word processing their work; and when older pupils worked on language for meaning or researched information about spiders. Teachers have worked hard, since the previous inspection, to ensure they plan work for different ability groups. They now use well-chosen resources successfully to achieve this. In this way, all pupils understand the texts they read, at their own level. Questioning is also effective to speed up the pace, extend ideas and help with meaning. For instance, in a very good session about tenses, the teacher focused closely on the lesson objective, which was shared with the class; all pupils gained success in writing their report about spiders.
84. Assessment procedures are now well established and effective overall. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The school has used its analysis of national test results well to improve the quality of pupils' writing in the junior years and to ensure that more pupils in Year 2 reached the standard expected of them in writing. However, the school has insufficiently analysed the reasons why brighter pupils in Year 2 have not attained higher levels in writing. The quality of marking is good for pupils in Years 3 to 6, and this contributes well to the progress they make. Although teachers have marked Year 2 pupils' written work regularly and have indicated their mistakes and how they might improve, they have been less diligent in ensuring that pupils act upon these instructions and do not repeat errors.

85. Overall, the subject is managed satisfactorily. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and provides good support for colleagues. There are some weaknesses in analysing test data already referred to. The quality of resources adequately supports pupils' learning, with a good range of fiction and reference books available to encourage pupils' love of reading and to enhance their research skills. The paired reading scheme and membership of the School Council both offer pupils good opportunities to develop their moral and social development.

MATHEMATICS

86. In the National Curriculum tests for 2000, pupils in Year 6 attained average standards when compared with all schools and below average standards when compared with similar schools. In the 2001 tests all pupils in Year 6 attained at least the level expected for their age and a high percentage attained higher levels than this. No national or similar school comparisons are yet available for the 2001 tests. Caution in making such comparisons is needed for the reason outlined in paragraph 3 of this report.
87. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests for Year 2, pupils attained above average standards when compared with all schools and similar schools. In the 2001 tests all pupils attained at least the level expected for their age and a high proportion attained at higher levels.
88. Since 1996, the school has improved the performance of both Year 2 and Year 6 in National Curriculum tests, at a greater rate than the national average. This has been achieved through a combination of more challenging teaching and the effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy.
89. Evidence from the inspection indicates that the present Year 6 pupils are attaining above average standards. As a result of a well-balanced curriculum and challenging teaching, pupils have a good grasp of basic number facts, how to apply this knowledge to solve problems and the way in which data may be organised. Pupils use a range of strategies to add and multiply large numbers, and accurately estimate, calculate and measure length and area. Most have a good recall of multiplication facts, but a relative weakness is that a minority of pupils make initial errors when using them as a part of more complex calculations
90. Higher-attaining pupils, throughout Years 3 to 6, achieve well because the work set for them extends and challenges their thinking. A particular strength of these pupils is their speed of mental recall and their ability to find shortcuts to calculate complex problems. For instance, two Year 4 pupils applied their knowledge of shape correctly to work out a formula to calculate how much string would be needed to securely tie wrapping around a cuboid and add a bow.
91. Throughout Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching and learning is very good. Teachers plan their lessons very thoroughly and ensure that pupils are clear about what they should achieve in lessons. By setting tasks to challenge pupils of all levels of attainment, and by consistently celebrating genuine success, teachers motivate pupils to learn very effectively. In a lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4, the teacher's quick-fire use of a counting rod to test pupils' understanding of place value both motivated and consolidated their learning. Teachers' use of open-ended questions and mathematical investigations enables pupils to think creatively and to

understand that patterns in mathematics can be applied to many situations. Teachers of pupils in Years 3 to 6 use homework particularly effectively to consolidate basic number work for lower attaining pupils, and to extend higher-attaining pupils.

92. Evidence from the inspection indicates that, overall, pupils in Year 2 attain average standards for their age. Most have a secure knowledge of addition and subtraction facts to 20 and use correct mathematical language to describe position and order. In one lesson, many pupils confidently identified the fifth and ninth in a row of cubes. A strength in Year 2 pupils' attainment is their knowledge of measure. Pupils know that time is measured on digital and analogue clocks, by sand timers, sundials and stopwatches. Higher-attaining pupils measure time accurately to within five minutes.
93. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory for pupils in Years 1 and 2. Strengths in teaching include well-conducted and pacy introductions to lessons. As a result, pupils enthusiastically contribute to mental and oral starters and relate what they have done in lessons. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils, who respond by endeavouring to carry out instructions and to succeed in their work. However, at present, lesson plans are not sufficiently detailed to ensure that pupils know exactly what they should achieve in one or a series of lessons. In addition, the pace of lessons slows somewhat during those times when pupils work on their own or in groups to consolidate new learning. Teachers do not always identify quickly enough when pupils repeat mistakes, particularly where there are confusing mathematical symbols, such as addition and multiplication signs. In the infants, teachers diligently set homework that helps pupils with their learning of number facts and use of mathematical language.
94. Because pupils with special educational needs receive well targeted support, are expected and encouraged to overcome their difficulties, they strive hard to improve and many achieve the standard expected of them for their age in National Curriculum tests. The support and respect they receive from their fellow pupils play no small part in their success.
95. The curriculum is broad and balanced and the school teaches the National Numeracy Strategy effectively. Staff have attended very useful training to equip them with the skills necessary for teaching the strategy, and this has helped to improve the ability of all pupils in the school to calculate more quickly and accurately in mental mathematics sessions. Numeracy skills are used and developed in other areas of the curriculum, notably in science and design and technology. The school uses information and communication technology well to support mathematical learning in all Year groups. It has been used particularly effectively to help those pupils who experience some difficulties with basic number work to improve their attainment in these areas.
96. The subject is ably managed. Data from a range of assessments is analysed carefully to identify areas of pupils' attainment that need improving. This has contributed well to the steady improvement in standards over the past five years. Very experienced and well-qualified staff contribute greatly to the very good achievements of pupils in the junior years. The good range of resources available to teachers to support their teaching of mental mathematics and measure and shape, contributes well to the pupils' good attainment in these aspects of the subject.

SCIENCE

97. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests for Year 6, pupils attained average standards when compared with all schools and below average standards when compared with similar schools. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests, the results (which have not yet been verified), suggest that there has been a significant improvement in the percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels in both Year 6 and Year 2. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils in Year 6, and those in Years 3, 4 and 5, presently attain standards above those expected for their age. This is an improvement on the standards reported at the time of the previous inspection.
98. The standards attained by Year 2 pupils, in the 2000 teacher assessments, were well above the national average. Although all pupils attained the average standard, no pupils attained above average standards. This was partly the result of the underdevelopment of the experimental aspect of science for the younger pupils, and the fact that their literacy skills were insufficiently used to record their work in science. Inspection evidence shows that pupils in the present Year 2 attain the expected standards for their age.
99. Analysis of pupils' work in the reception class and Years 1 and 2, suggests that these pupils are not being well prepared for the experimental aspect of science. Although they are asked to record their experiments, they are not asked to predict the outcome. Pupils give the results, but do not suggest why they occurred. By Year 6, pupils are challenged to think and question their hypotheses, and they achieve well in consequence. As a result of the very good teaching they receive, pupils in Year 6 are very attentive, thoughtful and give sensible suggestions as to why things happen.
100. During their time at the school pupils make satisfactory progress, but this is due to the fact that progress is accelerated for pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, where the teachers demand high standards and have a very good subject knowledge. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school. Whilst the youngest pupils progress satisfactorily, they are insufficiently challenged and their literacy skills are not used sufficiently to organise their work.
101. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. It is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3,4, 5 and 6. In a very good lesson observed in Year 6, the teacher had very good relationships with pupils and managed their behaviour very well. High expectations of standards in behaviour and in work are understood by all pupils. Differing expectations of work were shown in the planning and the teacher had high expectations of the higher-attaining pupils who were constantly challenged to think and plan for themselves. Teachers help pupils to make good use of information and communication technology to record scientific data in graphical and tabular form. In most lessons pupils show enthusiasm for the subject and behaviour is very good.
102. The leadership and management of this subject are good. Although the co-ordinator works very hard and has good subject knowledge, she has received insufficient time to improve standards. This is to be remedied shortly. The co-ordinator, however, is aware that the teachers need training to help them with the experimental aspects of science. The timetable is not flexible enough to enable teachers to plan short, skills-based lessons and practical sessions.

ART AND DESIGN

103. Pupils in Year 6 and in Year 2 attain standards in line with expectations for their age. The school has adopted the nationally approved scheme of work to help teachers to plan their lessons to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make at least satisfactory progress in this subject.
104. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 plan their work to a tight design brief. This was evident in a lesson based on the work of Paul Klee, where pupils used and experimented with several different media. Pupils were encouraged to be creative and to try out different materials and techniques. They worked well together. They ably described how they would make improvements, and which parts of their work they liked best. Younger pupils are encouraged to experiment with a range of media, including charcoal, paint and pastels, to draw a portrait of themselves. All pupils observed, including those with special educational needs, were very pleased with the results. The attitudes and behaviour of all pupils are very good.
105. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning, and the curriculum offered, are satisfactory. Teachers display pupils' work well to show that it is valued, show them different techniques and introduce them to the works of famous artists. For instance, one of Matisse's pictures of a snail was used to stimulate the youngest pupils, who made interesting collages of a 'snail hunt.' Teachers encourage pupils to use graphics and paint programs, on the computer, to increase their knowledge of colour and information and communication technology skills. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory, as is the use of resources to support learning.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

106. In Year 6 and in Year 2, pupils attain standards in line with expectations for their ages. This judgement is based upon observation of lessons, analysis of work, books and displays. It represents a good improvement on standards at the time of the previous inspection. The school has adopted the nationally approved scheme of work to help teachers plan their work and meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make at least satisfactory progress.
107. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory throughout the school. Very good links are made with other subjects, for example, with history. A very good lesson was observed in Year 4, in which pupils designed, made and evaluated Egyptian-style money-boxes representing the god 'Seth'. The teacher encouraged the class to be adventurous in their designs and use of materials, and to use their own initiative. The teacher gave constant praise and support throughout the very well-organised lesson. As a result, pupils worked creatively and with obvious pride in their work. Throughout the school, teachers encourage pupils to evaluate the success of their work. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 give good suggestions as to how to they might improve their designs for wind-up toys. Younger pupils study other countries, learning about art and design from Australia. They design and make their own didgeridoos. Good use is made by staff and pupils of information and communication technology to support learning in the subject. For instance, in a

Year 5 and 6 lesson, pupils manipulated digital photographs to enhance the design of a book cover.

108. The quality of the leadership and management of the subject is satisfactory. There is now a suitable scheme of work to help teachers plan, but much of the improvement in standards is due to the teachers' commitment to teach the children well. There are adequate resources to support teaching. The procedures used to assess pupils' attainment, and the progress pupils make are also satisfactory. The subject makes a very good contribution to the pupils' personal, social and cultural development. There are good links with other subjects, especially science, and pupils have many opportunities to plan and evaluate their work.

GEOGRAPHY

109. By the time they leave the school pupils attain standards in line with those expected for their age. This is a similar judgement to that made at the time of the previous inspection. Year 6 pupils are keenly aware of local environmental issues and understand that employment and material gain often bring with them an environmental cost. Higher-attaining pupils read detailed maps using co-ordinates. Most pupils identify suitable journey routes for various purposes, such as speed, and for different modes of transport.
110. Pupils in Year 2 are familiar with maps of the United Kingdom and of the world. They identify countries of the United Kingdom and their capital cities. Pupils develop their map skills and their knowledge of differences in land-forms and use them when they study a fictional remote island. From the reception class, pupils develop an awareness of the differences in landscape, climate and people in different areas of the world. This is in part achieved through postcards sent by pupils, staff members and friends of the school from holiday destinations.
111. The quality of teaching and learning is good in the junior years and satisfactory in the infants. Pupils achieve in line with their prior attainment. A strength in pupils' learning is their ability to apply previous knowledge to new situations. This was observed in a lesson for Years 5 and 6 in which the teacher required pupils to pair artefacts according to their country of origin. Pupils were very motivated and many, including higher-attaining pupils, applied their previous knowledge of the world to arrive at the correct identification. However, in the same lesson it was clear that a small minority of pupils confused continents with countries.
112. Teachers use the local environment well to promote pupils' geographical skills and knowledge. The school is located next to a large Royal Air Force base and, as a result a significant minority of pupils are familiar with living in different parts of the world. They share their knowledge of these places with their fellow pupils to enhance their understanding of distance and time differences. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 use the air force base as part of their 'noise census', in which they identify sources of noise pollution and the times of the day when this is most intense.
113. The curriculum is suitably broad and balanced, and geography is taught in conjunction with history. This helps pupils make links, for instance, between modern and ancient Greece. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 contrast an area with their own, when they participate in a residential visit to South Wales. During this experience they gain good insight into geological forms, the characteristics of seashores and of coastal features. Visiting dance groups and speakers promote

pupils' understanding and respect for the customs and values of Asian and African cultures. Pupils' work on the environment contributes well to their moral development, and their understanding of soil types is enhanced when they work in the school's carefully tended garden.

114. The subject is satisfactorily managed and resourced. Teachers have a secure teaching programme and adequate resources to teach a range of topics. Computer software is frequently used by pupils to support their learning or to carry out personal research for extended studies, such as comparing modern and Ancient Greek cultures.

HISTORY

115. Pupils' attainment in Year 6 is above national expectations and in Year 2 is in line with national expectations. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection, when the teaching was found to be insufficiently demanding and pupils' standards were too low.
116. Work in history is lively and interesting in Years 1 and 2. Pupils concentrate their historical enquiry on how children lived and played, in the Second World War. Their work is well planned so that they understand the problems associated with war, discover the reasons people acted as they did, and how events altered their lives. A good example was observed in pupils' sensitive writing about evacuees; 'they had to have labels on them and they did not know when they would see their families again.' Through careful study, pupils write about other events and comment on the sadness felt when a plane crashed and people were killed. They pose good, historical questions such as 'what did they eat if food was rationed?' then go on to find out. Some have help from grandparents who may have lived through the times they study. Pupils develop an appropriate understanding of chronology and make their own timelines from 1940 to 1944, recording significant events of their own choice.
117. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of the periods of history they have covered, and many of them write sensitively about why people did certain things and how war affects lives. They draw their own timelines and make interesting, accurate entries about notable events between 1930 and 1970, which they have researched. They compare differences between past and present days, for example, between television programmes then and now, making good use of dates and historical vocabulary. In a lesson for eight and nine-year-olds about Ancient Egypt, pupils used appropriate historical vocabulary because the teacher used the correct terminology. Pupils had many opportunities to follow up their initial video evidence, using books, a printed but muddled story, pictures and practical work, and they carefully gathered information in preparation for a dramatic interpretation the following week. The teacher's skilful planning ensured that they noted nuances and facts to sort through at a later date. Older pupils make a study of Ancient Greece, locating it on the map and finding facts about past events and the present setting, from the internet and CD-ROM. The teacher carefully guided the initial discussion, and pupils designed questions they did not know the answer to, but wanted to find out, such as 'why did they have so many temples?' or 'how did they become so educated?' Through the range and breadth of their questions pupils demonstrated appropriate historical enquiry and an understanding that people, events and places shape history. They soon realised that not all sources would tell them what they wanted to know, and not all sources would be accurate.

118. Because of recent changes in staffing there is no co-ordinator for history. Nevertheless a scheme and appropriate resources are in place to support teaching, and standards are rising, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Here, with only two classes, a careful analysis can be made of what skills are taught and how well pupils develop. The quality of teaching and learning is good for pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 and sometimes very good, and this is having a positive impact on the pupils' standards and progress. Resources are well chosen and planned to support learning. Teachers are sensitive to the human aspects of history and involve pupils well in appreciating the impact of events on people and in developing a sense of empathy.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

119. In Years 2 and 6 standards are in line with national expectations. No judgement was made in the previous inspection report, but evident improvement has taken place, especially with the advent of new equipment and heightened staff confidence. Whilst very few actual lessons took place during the inspection, computers were used appropriately and on a regularly basis to support the teaching of history, English and mathematics.
120. By the end of Year 6, pupils have good opportunities to use the computer, write in a variety of styles and have had chances to re-draft work previously saved. They work on turning through angles to make mathematical patterns and shapes, as well as using tables, graphs and pie charts to display recorded data. Pupils use graphics packages to design book covers and their work in science has been greatly enhanced by the use of information and communication technology skills. Pupils write accounts and experiments, for example, on an investigation of parachutes, and, by judicious use of font, colour and sizing of text, they add visual interest to the piece. They use the internet and CD-ROM resources well to research information for a history project and a group was observed downloading digital photographs, alongside a parent helper, selecting, enlarging, saving or discarding those not needed. In all of these activities, pupils of all abilities work very well, collaboratively, supporting each other and improving work and layout through discussion and careful planning.
121. By the end of Year 2, pupils recognise that televisions, videos and DVD players may be controlled by remote signals, and most have noted the 'red flashing light' when a button is pressed. The youngest pupils were intrigued when their speaking into the tape recorder was played back to them. Pupils write, choose pictures from a given selection, change font size, colour and type and then print their work, for the group, with multiple copies, if needed. They understand that information is going from one device to another. They use computers appropriately to support their learning in other subjects. A good example was noted in English, when pupils wrote poems, descriptions and reports and in history when they wrote sensitive accounts about wartime evacuees. Some pupils have produced work that is set out in two columns, written into the page as a 'writing frame'. Pupils of all abilities practise and get the feel for the layout of a newspaper report this way and produce good work. Teachers use effective methods to support and facilitate the use of the keyboard for younger pupils. A good example was observed where a plan of the keyboard was utilised to identify the keys for the pupil's name and those functions that are important for punctuation. All pupils used the correct technical terminology, and those using real keyboards demonstrated a growing ability to use new lines, spacing and appropriate punctuation, including commas. Such good practice promotes and supports pupils' literacy skills.

Pupils also have the opportunity to compile bar charts, for example, a graph to show how people come to school.

122. Teachers are gaining in confidence through nationally funded training, and the quality of teaching and learning is now satisfactory throughout the school. Since the acquisition of new good quality equipment teachers' expertise and experience have grown and the new co-ordinator is very keen to make further improvements. The school is well aware that it must work hard to keep up with current developments, but the co-ordinator is very positive and enthusiastic and has lots of plans for improvement. Her vision and plans ensure that pupils will be taught information and communication technology skills both separately and in support of other subjects. In a short time in the past, the co-ordinator has introduced good, clear sheets to help pupils and teachers through various different processes. Assessment is linked to this so that careful records can be kept of the acquisition of skills and understanding. This is already having an impact on staff as they gain confidence with the system. The pupils like it, and say they are learning quickly. Teachers use effective strategies to incorporate the use of computers into their teaching, for instance, as an additional aid to mathematics in Years 5 and 6. A laptop computer is set up and is in constant use by pupils practising their work. Pupils are well disciplined throughout the school and they respect equipment and each other's work. They are trusted to get on and be independent throughout the school.
123. The school is well aware of its obligations to pupils about safety and security when using the internet. The parents are happy to sign a document which sets out, succinctly, the sensible measures the school will take to safeguard their children.

MUSIC

124. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6, the standard of their work in music is above the expectation for their age. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were 'consistent with national expectations.' In Year 2, pupils' musical skills are as also above average. The school's decision to employ a very good specialist to teach music throughout the school has contributed significantly to the high standards pupils attain and the good progress they make.
125. In class, pupils sing in tune and rhythmically. They sing loudly and softly and their articulation is very good. These same skills are used well in school assemblies when singing is tuneful. Pupils in Years 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 play in the orchestra and work very well together. Their understanding of musical notation helps them interpret music and to know when to sing in harmony. Their repertoire is varied and includes good expression when they use either speaking or singing voice. This was shown on a video of the last school concert, performed to parents and to many members of the local community.
126. All pupils work well in groups to compose and perform music, using untuned percussion and voice. In Year 2, pupils follow the conductor's directions accurately and in groups compose their own work to represent a weather scene. Pupils listen closely to their own performances and identify what they could improve. A good feature of this lesson for infant pupils, is the teacher's encouragement of the use of the correct vocabulary of 'tempo,' 'rhythm' and 'dynamics'. Pupils sing, tunefully and with the appropriate rhythm, having memorised the words, a song for autumn, in preparation for the school's Harvest Festival. The pupils obviously enjoy their music lessons.

127. Throughout the school, pupils benefit from the teaching of a music specialist. This teacher uses her expertise to motivate and instruct the pupils. As a result, pupils develop a very good understanding of composers, and interpret and perform a piece of music using a score that is given to them. They work well together and count beats, know when sounds should be loud or quiet and whether notes should go up or down a scale. Most are confident in their performance.
128. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teaching of the orchestra is excellent. This helps pupils improve their performance. The teacher shares her enthusiasm and enjoyment of the subject and praises and encourages pupils. Pupils with special educational needs have their talents in music recognised and are included in all activities.
129. Many pupils have instrumental tuition, which includes clarinet, violin and guitar. Specialist teachers take these lessons, which are available to all pupils and are timed so that pupils do not consistently miss the same class lessons. The curriculum is broad and balanced and is enriched for all pupils in that they rehearse and perform musicals. Pupils use a range of information and communication technology skills to support their learning in this subject. For instance, they use tape recorders, digital systems and video recorders to aid them in their appreciation of different styles of music. The subject is well managed and co-ordinated which contributes significantly to the high standards pupils achieve and the richness of their curriculum.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

130. It was only possible to observe a very limited number of physical education lessons during the inspection because of timetabling arrangements. Therefore, it is only possible to make a secure judgement about pupils' standards in Year 2 in games, and of the quality of teaching and learning for the pupils in the infants. School records and certificates indicate that by the time pupils leave the school all in Year 6 swim 25 metres safely and unaided.
131. Evidence from the lessons observed indicates that the ball skills of pupils in Years 1 and 2 are in line with those expected for their age, with higher-attaining pupils exceeding this expectation. This is a similar judgement to that made at the time of the previous inspection. Most pupils control a ball closely, when dribbling with their feet, and direct a ball accurately over distances of three metres or more. Higher-attaining pupils are very confident in throwing and catching a large ball and all pupils follow the rules of simple relay games conscientiously and only need to be told them once.
132. Teachers conduct lessons enthusiastically, pay good attention to safety procedures and to the need to enable pupils to warm up and cool down at the start and end of lessons. Thus from an early age, pupils understand the need to work in their own space and to exercise particular muscles before exercise. In a satisfactory lesson for six and seven-year-olds, teachers taught in partnership using their particular skills for the benefit of the pupils. Strengths in teaching included a fast pace of activity and good subject knowledge, which kept the pupils interested and motivated to improve their skills. A relative weakness was in the lack of opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own performance, which meant that some had little idea about how to improve their techniques of throwing and catching.

133. All aspects of the statutory curriculum are taught, and the school has access to a relatively spacious hall for indoor lessons. In addition to the school's own football and hockey grassed pitch, the school uses the adjacent large recreation ground for matches against other schools and for outdoor lessons. The resources available to support most aspects of the subject are at least adequate.
134. The subject is well managed. The experienced co-ordinator has developed the subject well, providing a helpful subject policy and attending relevant training to enhance her knowledge and skills. She enthusiastically co-ordinates a range of school clubs in football, netball, hockey and rugby, either running them herself or organising other staff members, parents or friends of the school, to supervise the sessions.
135. Pupils benefit from after-school clubs and competitive fixtures, both of which enhance their physical skills and help develop their social skills. It is noteworthy that the vast majority of pupils have a keen sense of fair-play and maintain a sense of proportion whether they win or lose a game. Pupils experience adventurous activity when they participate in their residential visit, for example, orienteering through rough terrain.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

136. Standards for all pupils are above the expectations for their age of the locally Agreed Syllabus. This is a marked improvement upon the findings of the previous inspection, when standards were judged to be 'below the national average' in Year 2 and only slightly above 'national expectations' in Year 6. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection, because of timetabling restraints, but all other evidence indicates careful thought from teachers and pupils in all classes.
137. By the end of Year 6, pupils have had many opportunities to consider life, the world and its religions. A good range of resources, including information and communication technology, is well used to support learning, and pupils have made good studies of various festivals, for example, the harvest festival. They carry out research to find out about plants and foods and celebration days in the past, such as 'Lammas', meaning 'loaf mass' – an offering from the gathering of the wheat crop. The gardening club members have grown vegetables, such as pumpkins and marrows in readiness for the school's own harvest festival. Pupils are expected to think for themselves and form their own opinions about life and religion. Their written work demonstrates a good understanding of Christian ideas as well as more secular ideas. For example, they research why Easter Day changes, even though Christmas Day does not. Pupils discover that this circumstance is connected to the movements of the moon. Teachers use visits well to stimulate interest and understanding, and pupils have written some very good accounts of their visit to a synagogue. Their writing is full of respect for another faith and comparisons are well drawn between holy books, festivals and relics, from both the Jewish and the Christian faiths. Their work is thoughtful and well presented. In the lesson observed the quality of teaching and learning was very good. The teacher of the Year 5 and Year 6 class carefully led the discussion about the world and who made it, and subsequently invited the pupils to consider what made it bad or good. Their answers were often profound and thought provoking, and the quality of their discussion was excellent. There were good opportunities to refer to the recent terrible happenings in the United States of America, and for pupils to try to come to terms with terrorism and hatred.

138. By the end of Year 2, pupils have covered a good amount of work and have contrasted Christianity and Judaism sensitively and carefully, at an appropriate level. They have considered Bible stories from the Old and New Testaments as well as various symbols, for example the use of candles for birthdays, Christmas and in churches. They have found out that other religions use candles in a similar way. Pupils write sensitively about love for family members and for friends. They have strong opinions, for example 'I am proud of having lots of friends I care for people because they will like me more'. Wonderful illustrations add to the meaning of well-written texts and stories, such as the burning bush and the pillar of cloud, or Samson with his famous long hair. A very good piece of work illustrated and compared a Christian and a Jewish wedding, demonstrating a real understanding of different and similar religious traditions and beliefs.
139. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Work is planned well to match the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Effective planning, questioning, and high expectations from teachers ensure that provision is of a good quality and helps pupils to consider, sensitively and thoughtfully their own lives in relation to those of others. Collective worship contributes well to the pupils' spiritual education. Visitors bring other sensitive thoughts and ideas to supplement those promoted by the school.