

INSPECTION REPORT

CORBETT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bobbington, Stourbridge

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124464

Headteacher: Mrs Margaret Southall

Reporting inspector: Dr Pauline Buzzing OBE

Dates of inspection: 18-21 February 2002

Inspection number: 193760

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4-11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Six Ashes Lane Bobbington Bridgnorth Staffordshire
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Dr Terry Lester
Date of previous inspection:	28 April 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
15849	Pauline Buzzing	Registered Inspector	English (including literacy), music, equality of opportunity	The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9981	Saleem Hussein	Lay Inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
6957	John Cook	Team Inspector	Mathematics (including numeracy), geography, information and communication technology (ICT), physical education (PE), provision for pupils with special educational needs, provision for children in the Foundation Stage.	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
30457	David Evans		Science, art and design, design and technology, history,	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	12
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	14
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	17
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	18
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	21
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	22
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	26

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Corbett Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School is located in Bobbington, South Staffordshire, close to the Shropshire border. This is a small school, with 81 boys and girls currently on roll. The pupils come from a range of home environments, many of which are far from the school, and the majority of which are above average, socio-economically. About nine per cent of the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, and this is below the national average. The pupils enter school with average attainments overall, but each year group is small, some as low as eight pupils, so that the composition of each year group varies greatly. Seven pupils are currently on the school's register of special educational needs, some eight per cent, and this is below average. Their needs vary from physical disabilities through a range of behavioural and learning difficulties. Two pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need, which is above average. No pupil is from an ethnic minority family, and none speaks English as an additional language. At the time of the previous inspection, the school was grant maintained, but it is now a county primary school and a new headteacher has been appointed since that time. The school has received two National Achievement Awards for improvement in standards since the previous inspection.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Corbett Primary School provides a sound standard of education for its pupils. By the end of Year 6, they reach average standards in most subjects, with strengths in English, music and science and some weaknesses in geography and aspects of physical education. Pupils are keen to come to school and the very good relationships in the school mean that it is a harmonious environment in which pupils can learn. The school's emphasis on literacy and numeracy means that the pupils receive a good grounding in these basic skills, and the hard working staff work as a team to create a good sense of community in the school. Pupils and parents are enthusiastic about their school, which provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The school's results in the national tests taken at the end of Year 6 are above average over the past five years in all the core subjects, because of a good emphasis on basic skills and specialist teaching in science.
- In work seen, standards are well above average in science by the end of Year 6 and above average in English and music, due to some good and very good teaching in these subjects.
- The school provides good standards of care for its pupils, so that their attitudes to school are good, they behave well, and relationships in the school community are very good.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs, as a result of meeting their individual needs, so that they achieve well.
- The headteacher leads effectively, and the governing body discharges its duties well, so that the school is moving forward, despite the small numbers of staff, who have multiple roles.
- Provision for the youngest children in the Foundation Stage is good as a result of significant improvements, put in place since the previous inspection.

What could be improved

- Standards in geography are well below average at the end of Year 6 and there are weaknesses in some aspects of teaching and learning in PE for pupils in Years 3-6.
- There are very long gaps in the teaching of history and geography, inadequate time is allocated to the teaching of design and technology, and pupils do not make the progress they should in these subjects.
- The percentage of satisfactory, rather than good, teaching in some subjects is high because the pace in some lessons is not brisk enough and expectations are not always sufficiently high in some subjects.
- Higher attaining pupils are not always challenged by being given work that develops their learning fast enough in some subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

When the school was inspected in April 1997, there were issues to address in standards, teachers' knowledge and expertise in art and information and communication technology (ICT), and planning in some subjects. Provision for the under fives and procedures for assessment, and monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, were unsatisfactory. Teaching was satisfactory or better in eight out of every ten lessons, and the headteacher had inadequate time for management. Despite the school's small staff, improvement has been satisfactory, and managers have overseen as many developments as could reasonably be expected. Everyone is focused on improvement and the school's capacity to develop further is good.

By the end of Year 6, pupils now attain higher levels than in 1997. Standards are average in ICT and in art and design by the end of Years 2 and 6. Provision for the youngest children is now good. There is still no designated outdoor area for them, but the school makes good alternative arrangements and work is soon to start on a new classroom, with an outdoor area as part of that development. Assessment procedures are firmly in place and the school addresses weaknesses identified through the national tests, as it is currently doing by targeting writing. However, the results of ongoing assessments teachers make in lessons are not always used to plan challenging work for higher attaining pupils. Overall, teaching and learning have improved, resulting in higher test scores, which are increasing faster than the national trend. The school is on course to meet its targets. Part-time specialist teaching in music and science is very cost-effective. Although the curriculum is more secure now, the recent emphasis on English and mathematics has left less time for other subjects, such as geography and design and technology. The headteacher still carries a heavy load; she and all staff work extremely hard to cover all the required areas for development.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	B	A	A	A
Mathematics	C	B	D	D
Science	A	A	A*	A*

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

The school's results, taken overall in the three core subjects, are above the national average for the latest three year period. Results in science in 2001 are in the top five per cent of schools, nationally. The results represent an improvement since the previous inspection, rising faster than the national trend. Results in mathematics are more variable than in the other two subjects, although with such small numbers of pupils, each pupil's score represents several percentage points; nine in the 2001 year group. One pupil missed the average, Level 4, by one mark and because of this, the target in mathematics was not achieved, although the English target was met. The small size of year groups means that care must be taken when analysing data; it is more appropriate to track the achievement of individual pupils. This kind of analysis shows that standards are high enough for the majority of pupils and the school meets the needs of all its pupils most of the time, but higher attaining pupils could reach higher standards in some subjects. Achievement is satisfactory overall, but pupils achieve well in English and music and they achieve very well in science.

Results of the tests taken at the end of Year 2 show considerable variation from year to year, due to the small numbers of pupils involved, but overall, they are above the national average for the past three years

in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2001, results are average in writing and in the teacher assessments for science, well above average in reading and in the top five per cent for mathematics.

In work seen, the majority of children in the Foundation Stage are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development and to attain them in all other areas of learning. Standards are average at the end of Year 2 in all subjects except geography and design and technology, where no judgement could be made and in music, where standards are above average. Within English, there are strengths in reading, speaking and listening. By the end of Year 6, standards are well above average in science, above average in English and music and average in all other subjects except geography, where they are well below average, and in design and technology and physical education, where no judgement could be made. Pupils achieve satisfactorily overall, throughout the school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are very enthusiastic about their school, and they apply themselves well to the tasks they are set.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They enjoy playtimes, and lunch-times are pleasant, social occasions, where they are happy to talk to visitors.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Personal development is satisfactory and relationships are very good. All pupils know each other and they are mutually supportive.
Attendance	Satisfactory. There is no unauthorised absence at all.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Quality of teaching	Foundation Stage	Years 1 and 2	Years 3-6
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

Every class teacher was observed teaching English and mathematics. Teaching in English is good and in mathematics it is satisfactory, with some good teaching of the older pupils. Literacy is well taught across the curriculum, and the teaching of numeracy is satisfactory overall. Overall, teaching meets the needs of all pupils, so that pupils with special educational needs are well supported and achieve well, and the majority of pupils achieve satisfactorily. However, there are times, in some subjects, where higher attaining pupils are not working at the pace they should, and teachers do not always make sure they are adequately challenged. Teachers know their pupils very well and manage them well, so that the pupils make considerable effort to do well in lessons; this is a strength of their learning. As a result, their learning is satisfactory overall, with good features in aspects of ICT, science, music and English.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Unsatisfactory overall. Good in the Foundation Stage, but in Years 1-6, too little time is devoted to design and technology. History and geography are taught for half a year each and the long gaps mean that pupils cannot build on what they know. Statutory requirements are met.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by teachers and by learning support assistants.
Provision for pupils'	Satisfactory overall. There is good provision for moral development, which

personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	has a significant impact on the school's communal life. The provision for spiritual, social and cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and for tracking the pupils' achievement are good.

The school works well with parents and this partnership is one of the school's strengths.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher leads well, but the load she carries is too heavy. Most subject co-ordinators, including the co-ordinator for special educational needs (SENCO), carry out their duties well, but there is insufficient monitoring of some of the foundation subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The hard working, knowledgeable governors play an important role in shaping the school's direction. They are committed to raising standards and improving provision.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school monitors its performance well overall and takes good action to improve, leading to a rising trend in national test results. The school's development plan contains appropriate priorities and relevant action is planned to tackle them.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Staff are very well inducted into the school's routines. Teaching assistants and the ICT technician are used effectively. Funds for special educational needs are used well.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory overall. The lack of a hall that can adequately accommodate appropriate equipment for physical education has a negative impact on standards. Currently, some classrooms are small and there is no outdoor play area for the youngest children. Plans are in place to move some classes into larger rooms when an additional classroom is built. The school works hard to make sure that it invests its time and finance so that there is a good impact on standards and provision, giving the best value possible for each initiative.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like coming to school, make good progress and behave well. • The school is well led and managed, teaching is good and the school helps pupils to become mature. The amount of homework pupils are set is about right. • The school works closely with parents, is approachable, expects their children to work hard and provides parents with good levels of information about the pupils' progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents are concerned at the range of extra-curricular activities.

Parents are very positive about the school. The support they give their children, together with their involvement in school life, have a good impact on the pupils' learning. The inspection team agrees with this view.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children enter the school with broadly average skills and levels of development. During their reception year, the children benefit from a good range of experiences that are well planned and solidly based on the requirements of the Foundation Stage. As a result of this good provision, they exceed the national targets for their age (the Early Learning Goals) in personal, social and emotional development and meet the goals in all other areas of their learning. Some pupils exceed all the goals and the majority do better in some aspects of their learning; for example, in the musical component of their creative learning, thanks to some excellent teaching. Most of the pupils can identify high and low, and their confidence encourages them to offer to sing solos at a very early stage. This represents significant improvement since the previous inspection and the school is now laying firm foundations for the children. Their work in personal, social and emotional development ensures that they learn to work well together, to take turns and to listen politely to each other. In their café, which was created in the home corner during the week of the inspection, they created menus and enjoyed entertaining visitors. Another group talked willingly about food, listing words connected with what they eat and discussing their preferences with the adults in the room. They developed good links between the words and their spellings, listening carefully to the sound of words and spelling phonetically. Their work with words leads them smoothly into reading and writing. Their enthusiasm for books is evident and their good levels of self-esteem give them the confidence to tell stories and try writing.
2. This satisfactory achievement continues in Years 1 and 2, so that by the end of Year 2, in work seen, pupils attain average standards overall. Standards in English are average, but in reading, speaking and listening they are better than this. The pupils have a good understanding of phonics, which helps them in their reading, and they enjoy playing with words. Pupils in Year 1 enthusiastically listed stories they had read and Year 2 pupils, when asked how Granny would have felt when the wolf put her in the bin, responded, 'sad, bad and mad', laughing with enjoyment at the rhymes. They read with expression. One Year 2 pupil adopted a special 'wolf' voice to make the story more dramatic. Their listening skills are particularly well developed. This was clear in a lesson on story writing, when the pupils concentrated on a series of pictures the teacher showed them and their responses showed how carefully they had understood the task, so that they produced answers to the questions, 'who?' 'where?' and 'why?'. Standards in writing are average. Although higher attaining pupils spell accurately and rapidly and most pupils spell single syllable words correctly, no pupil uses cursive script. Average and lower attaining pupils do not always use capital letters correctly, and a minority still reverses letters when writing.
3. In mathematics, the pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2, so that they reach average standards by the end of Year 2. They recall number facts satisfactorily and most are good at explaining how they arrived at their answers; their good oral skills help them in this. For example, in one lesson, they explained to the teacher how they counted in threes. Higher attaining pupils counted in twos, threes, fours and fives, forwards and backwards. The higher attainers have a good understanding of five and six-sided shapes, they achieve well in their number, shape, space and measure work, but are less skilled in problem-solving and investigative work. In science, the pupils' achievement is satisfactory and they reach average standards. They predict what they think their results will be and explain how a test is fair. They use an imaginative collection of objects and test whether they will float or sink. Higher attaining pupils are quick to experiment to see if changing the shape of a piece of plasticine will make a difference.
4. In art and design, history, ICT and physical education, the pupils reach average standards and make satisfactory achievement. No judgement can be made on standards in design and technology or in geography, since too few lessons were able to be observed. Standards in

music are above average. The pupils sing and play well, they experiment with sounds and use tonic sol-fah and French time names effectively to help them, so that their achievement is good.

5. The well above average results of the tests for pupils in Year 2 reflect a steadily rising trend, although results in 2001 are much better in reading than in writing. The mathematics results are very high and higher attaining pupils did well in these tests. The differences between these results and the inspection judgements are because of the attainment profile of the different groups and because individuals' performances make a significant difference in such small year groups.
6. In Years 3 to 6, the pupils achieve well in English, as a result of good teaching, so that, in work seen, standards are above average by the end of Year 6. The pupils use their good vocabularies in their oral and written work and display high levels of self-esteem when they talk in front of others, in class and in school assemblies. Articulate and confident pupils listen well, showing a good understanding of the thoughts and ideas of others. They contribute well to discussions. Their standards in reading are above average and many are keen readers. They enjoy poetry and many read non-fiction texts about the universe and wild life. They explain the plots of novels and discuss characters. Although they identify good techniques in the books they read, they do not always see how they can use them in their own writing. The school has identified writing as a target for improvement.
7. Their achievement in mathematics is satisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6, but it is better than this in the top (Year 5/6) class because of the good teaching they receive. In science, achievement in Years 3 to 6 is very good. The pupils acquire a very good knowledge base and their good oral skills enable them to explain succinctly how they arrived at their conclusions and to present their results neatly and accurately. Their work in experimental and investigative science is very good, and the well above average standards they reach is the result of the very good specialist teaching they receive.
8. The pupils continue to achieve satisfactorily through Years 3 to 6, so that they reach average standards in art and design, history and ICT. No judgements can be made on achievement in design and technology or in physical education, since it was not possible to observe enough lessons in these subjects. However, the school accepts that there are weaknesses in some aspects of standards in physical education. Standards in geography are well below average. Not enough time is devoted to the subject and there are long gaps between the times when geography is taught, so that the pupils forget what they have learned and they do not build solidly on the skills and understanding they have acquired. Achievement in music is good and pupils reach standards that are above average. There have been good improvements in standards in the three core subjects, art and design, ICT and music since the previous inspection.
9. The Year 6 national test results in 2001 continue a solidly improving trend in English and science for the majority of pupils, although the trend does not rise fast enough for higher attaining pupils. Results over the past three years have been more variable in mathematics, but the overall trend is still upwards and the school has been careful to analyse results to see why the pupils' results are usually lower in mathematics than in English or science. A number of measures have been put in place to improve matters and the school has set itself challenging targets, which it is on course to meet.
10. Achievement for pupils overall is judged as satisfactory in Years 1 to 6 and this is an improvement since the previous inspection, and is leading to rising standards. The overall upward trend is a result of the more secure curriculum that the school has in place in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and of the monitoring systems that operate in these subjects. English and mathematics have benefited from the National Strategies in Literacy and Numeracy. Literacy is taught well across the curriculum, and not just in English. The teaching of numeracy is satisfactory, with good examples in some subjects, so that there is good reinforcement of the pupils' basic skills and this is helping to raise standards.

11. There is only a small number of pupils with special educational needs and they achieve well in relation to their needs and abilities and achieve well in their learning. This is because there is a clear programme for their support, some good teaching and some very good help and guidance from support staff. The pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need achieve well and their work is well matched to their needs. The school has a strong commitment to meeting the needs of each individual and this is well reflected in the achievement made by pupils with special educational needs.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils have good attitudes to school; they want to learn and they try hard. Overall, their enthusiasm for school is very good. The children in the reception class settle in well each day and clearly enjoy their work. They work well together and there are very good relationships with all adults. The levels of interest, enthusiasm and co-operation develop as the pupils get older. A good example of this was seen in a Year 3/4 mathematics lesson. The pupils were very supportive of each other during the lesson and worked well together. They also revealed their obvious interest and enjoyment in the subject itself. By age 11, pupils are equally hard working, keen and eager to learn. They tackle the tasks their teachers set with enthusiasm. In a Year 5/6 music lesson, they listened carefully to a piano piece by Liszt and concentrated through several repetitions of the tape in order to identify the patterns they were looking for.
13. Most pupils show good and consistent behaviour in lessons, and when moving around the school and in the dining hall. They listen carefully to their teachers and to each other, without interrupting. On rare occasions, a small minority of the older boys were less well behaved, being rather noisy in class. There were no exclusions last year. The school's authorised attendance is just very slightly below the national average, but all absences are accounted for and there is no unauthorised absence at all, so that, overall, attendance is broadly in line with the national average.
14. The pupils with special educational needs are given plenty of help, support and encouragement, so that they behave well, feel valued and take a full part in all school activities. There is much respect from adults and other pupils for the needs and well-being of everyone.
15. The relationships between pupils and teachers and the pupils with each other are very good throughout the school. Pupils value the support and guidance they are given. A group of Year 6 pupils were keen to say, 'When you come here every day you're welcomed' and 'the teachers are kind and understanding; if you're getting picked on you can talk to teachers and they will help you out'. Such incidents are rare and there is no evidence of oppressive behaviour, racism or sexism; boys and girls work and play well together. The pupils also speak of the small school factor and how this helps in getting to know everyone and what the school has to offer. The caring ethos helps in establishing this climate of mutual support.
16. The pupils' personal development is satisfactory. They certainly have self-confidence and are willing to accept responsibility. Whenever they are asked to help they do so courteously and willingly. The pupils respond positively to the school's provision for social and moral development. However, this is more limited in its opportunities for pupils to have a leadership role or to participate in the making of decisions.
17. The school has maintained its overall strong approach and is still the 'orderly and harmonious community' described at the previous inspection where pupils 'clearly enjoy the secure and friendly environment'.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. Teaching is satisfactory overall, and promotes sound learning. Over nine out of every ten lessons are now at least satisfactory or better, but four out of the ten are good or better and this represents a significant improvement since the time of the previous inspection. During the inspection, of the 33 lessons observed, three were very good and one was outstanding. Most of

the very good and outstanding teaching is in music. Teaching is good overall in English, science and ICT, and very good in music. It is satisfactory in mathematics and no judgement is made on teaching in art and design, design and technology, geography, history and physical education because of the small number of lessons able to be observed in each of these subjects. Two unsatisfactory lessons were observed in geography and physical education, and this is a much lower proportion than during the previous inspection.

19. Throughout the school, teachers manage their pupils well; in Years 1 and 2, they manage them very well. Because the school is small, teachers know their pupils well; they recognise their strengths and weaknesses, and are skilled in targeting questions to particular pupils. As a result, question and answer sessions are often times when the pupils make good progress. There are good routines in lessons, so that pupils put their hands up, listen carefully to each other and to the teacher, and learn effectively.
20. Teachers ask straightforward questions to lower attaining or average pupils, making sure that everyone is included and they use more complex questions that demand different skills to challenge the higher attaining pupils. This is particularly noticeable in the two younger classes, where the maturity, age and ability ranges provide a great variety of levels. However, although teachers do this very well, and often make allowances for a range of responses in the written work that they mark, they do not often use this technique of matching the challenge closely to the pupils' needs to set different tasks for groups of pupils within the class. As a result, higher attaining pupils in particular are not always challenged and some find it easy to coast through the work they are set. This means that expectations are sometimes satisfactory, rather than consistently good, except for the youngest children, where there are good expectations.
21. Where teaching is good, the pace is brisk, so that the pupils' attention is focused on their task, they volunteer responses to the teacher's questions and learn well. In a good Year 5/6 mathematics lesson, quite a high level of direct teaching supported the acquisition of skills and knowledge about dividing money. The pupils put good levels of effort into their work and the teacher encouraged them to explain their strategies and share with each other easy ways of tackling problems. It was clear that the teacher was using her knowledge of the pupils' strengths and weaknesses, gained as a result of some test papers that had just been completed and marked.
22. Where lessons are satisfactory, it is often because teachers miss opportunities to provide adequate challenge for higher attaining pupils. All pupils may be set the same task and the higher attainers sometimes complete this easily and simply wait for the others to finish. This does not make the best use of time for them, so that they do not always make as much progress in lessons as they should. In a minority of lessons, the pupils sit on the carpet at the start of lessons for considerable periods of time; on one occasion, as long as 40 minutes. In these lessons, the pattern is for all pupils to be given their tasks at the same time, after the introductory part has been completed. Naturally, with a two year age range and the full range of attainment in the class, the pupils arrive at points where they could start more independent or group work at different times and higher attainers do not always start as quickly as they could.
23. Teachers ensure that pupils of all levels of attainment and both boys and girls take a full part in the lesson. They are sensitive in ensuring that a range of pupils read out their work, or give answers. In a good design and technology lesson, a pupil with special educational needs remembered doing some work in his previous school and enjoyed demonstrating his skills to the rest of the class.
24. Teachers have a good knowledge of the pupils with special educational needs. Work is well matched to needs and based on the small steps required for the pupils to achieve well. The targets, which are recorded on individual education plans (IEPs) or Statements of Special Educational Need, inform the teachers' planning. There is plenty of encouragement for pupils and a supportive climate in which to work. Discussion and questioning in class always include the pupils with special educational needs, who respond well and make good progress in lessons. Planning is carried out in close liaison with support staff so they are well briefed and

able to use a range of teaching methods to promote learning. They contribute their own observations to the assessment and monitoring of the pupils' achievement. Teachers keep effective records of achievement.

25. A degree of specialist teaching is used in the school. This works particularly well in the Year 3 to 6 classes, but is sometimes less effective in the Year 1/2 class, where often a more practical approach is needed. The exception to this is music, where good understanding of how young children learn is allied to excellent practical skills and knowledge of the subject, and the specialist is skilled at taking account of maturity and challenging higher attainers, as well as including those pupils who have special educational needs.
26. Every class teacher was observed teaching English and mathematics. Teaching is good in English and satisfactory in mathematics. The impact of the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies has been positive and teachers have adopted the three part lesson effectively, for the most part. Sometimes, however, the pupils are left sitting on the carpet for too long in the early part of the lesson. This results in delays, so that the highest attaining pupils are not always allowed to go and get on with their tasks, even if they have grasped more quickly than others, what it is that the teacher wants them to learn.
27. Across the curriculum, teachers teach the pupils to use their literacy skills well. They build up good specialist vocabularies in music and science, for example, and write in a range of genres in history. Their good speaking and listening skills enable them to take part in discussions and to explore ideas, which they are then able to commit to paper, using competent writing skills. The teaching of numeracy is satisfactory. ICT is not so frequently used and teachers do not make the best use of the computers they have in their classrooms to integrate ICT into all subjects of the curriculum. This is a pity, since direct teaching of ICT is done well and represents a considerable improvement since the previous inspection.
28. The two unsatisfactory lessons were largely the result of weaknesses in the curriculum. Although there were some errors in the teacher's knowledge in geography, there was not enough time to fully develop teaching points in the last half-hour of the day with the Year 1/2 pupils, so that they did not learn effectively. The long gaps between geography modules mean that the pupils' factual recall is poor, so that they cannot build on what they know and understand. The physical education lesson observed included boys only from Years 3 to 6 in a games lesson on a wet day. The teacher tried her best to adapt the lesson to the village hall, as it was raining, but the space was too small. It was difficult to manage the class to ensure that skills were taught to the full age and ability range, so that the pupils did not make enough progress.

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

29. The quality and range of learning activities for children in the Foundation Stage are good and the statutory curriculum is in place throughout the school. This allows pupils to attain average standards overall, although there are signs that the more secure curriculum that has been put in place since the previous inspection is having an impact on standards. In English, music and science, for example, where the curriculum is allied to good and very good teaching, standards are rising and an improved curriculum in ICT and art and design has raised these standards to average since the previous inspection. However, although the curriculum in Years 1 to 6 is broadly based and relevant, it does not provide an appropriate balance, and this is unsatisfactory. The school is not taking sufficient account of Curriculum 2000 when reviewing schemes of work in order to ensure a better allocation of time for the teaching of geography, history and design and technology.
30. Pupils with special educational needs receive their full entitlement to the National Curriculum and the needs of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need are well met. If there is any withdrawal from classrooms this is well planned and support is given so that pupils participate fully in work. Pupils with physical disabilities are very well supported in physical education and outdoor activities and during playtimes.

31. There are clear policies for all subjects and some, such as history, geography, art and design and design and technology, are now being reviewed. The school has satisfactorily implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. These are providing a good framework for teaching the basic skills of literacy and a sound basis for the development of numeracy skills, where opportunities are missed in some subjects to use these skills, in geography and design and technology, for example. In all subjects, the school is tailoring its planning to follow the guidelines from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. The school meets its obligations to provide a daily act of collective worship.
32. The school's curricular planning overall is sound, so that long and medium-term planning strategies are effective. However, the arrangements for teaching history and geography are unsatisfactory. Each is taught for half a year and, at the time of the inspection, the pupils were having their first geography lesson since the previous July. Consequently, they found it difficult to remember what they had learned and to build on the knowledge and skills they had acquired last year. The curriculum for physical education presents particular problems, due to the lack of an adequate hall. The school does its best by hiring the village hall, although the accommodation here is not ideal and the co-ordinator has taken advice from the Staffordshire Local Education Authority adviser to ensure that statutory requirements are met. The school is beginning to develop the use of cross-curricular links, such as in science, history and art and design. This is at an early stage of development, and the school is aware of its potential for enhancing curricular provision and raising pupils' attainment.
33. Good provision is made for pupils' personal, social and health education and this reflects the school's good levels of care for pupils. There are designated lessons for most year groups and these are often combined well with drama activities. In one exuberant lesson, pupils wore different articles of clothing and colourful hats as part of their role play as team members. Sex education is mainly taught well in science lessons, as part of religious education, or in the personal, social and health education programme. It is taught separately by an external specialist to Year 6 pupils only. This was not scheduled during the inspection, but the plans are satisfactory and the content of the lessons is reviewed regularly by the headteacher.
34. The caring ethos of the school lays appropriate emphasis on the importance of equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in activities, with support if required. Teaching methods and planning are inclusive of all children, but, in a minority of lessons, tasks are not always matched closely to the needs of the higher attaining pupils.
35. Some parents expressed concerns about the range of extra-curricular activities available for their children, but inspection findings indicate that the plans for this year are adequate. There is a number of sporting activities available for pupils, such as football, netball, rounders and skipping. Outside organisations often run training sessions for pupils. The school arranges a sports week, a swimming gala and a sports day. A residential weekend at Chasewater is planned for this year. There is a good range of musical activities and the take-up by pupils is good.
36. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is good, and the school's work is closely integrated with the life of the village. Events such as the village fete and the school's celebrations are experiences that the school and village enjoy together, and religious services at Christmas and Easter are held in the local church. Most of the governors are local people and they are closely involved in the work of the school. Villagers visit the school to share some of their experiences with pupils; for example, in Year 5/6 history classes, where they are interviewed about life and the school in the past. The local vicar takes school assemblies and there are contacts with local police and fire stations.
37. There are satisfactory links with partner institutions, and especially with the cluster and local secondary schools. Co-ordinators meet on a regular basis to discuss curricular issues. Also, there are inter-school sporting activities such as the football tournament, which was planned for the end of the inspection week.

38. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory, and this represents an improvement since the previous inspection. The daily acts of collective worship are carefully planned to provide an interesting range of experiences for the pupils. During the inspection week a representative from Barnardo's spoke at one of the morning assemblies while the vicar led another. However, there is no overall policy to ensure that opportunities are not missed to develop spiritual understanding in other areas of the curriculum. As a result, although individual teachers do take opportunities when they arise, they are not planned for in any systematic way. Some good work is going on. Aesthetic development is catered for well in music, for example, but spiritual development is not mapped across the curriculum and this is a necessary first step to seeing where gaps might be, and how they can be filled.
39. The provision for pupils' moral development is good and has a significant impact upon life in the school. Teachers and other adults set a good example and have high expectations of manners and behaviour. Adults are kind, supportive and encouraging. Pupils are clearly encouraged to make distinctions between right and wrong. Teachers deal firmly, but sensitively, with any indications of misbehaviour. The headteacher knows the pupils well and has the full respect of the whole-school community. There is a reward system for good behaviour and academic achievement in the school and house points are proudly displayed in the corridor. 'Best work' assemblies are held every half term and parents are welcome to attend these celebrations of their children's achievements.
40. The provision for pupils' social development is satisfactory. Adults work hard at promoting good relationships, good manners and social skills, both directly and by example. Pupils have many opportunities to work together in large and small groups. They relate well to each other in lessons and in the playground. Pupils work happily together and share resources, often in quite confined spaces. When provided with opportunities, pupils take responsibility within the school itself; for example, as classroom monitors or as captain of a sports team. There are, however, too few opportunities for pupils to be involved in decision making in the daily life of the school; there is no school council to enable them to have a voice, for example.
41. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Opportunities are provided for pupils to experience activities that are not normally part of their daily lives. Through the local church the school has established links with an orphanage in Nepal. The pupils visit Lichfield Cathedral, Birmingham Symphony Hall and Birmingham science museums. They participate in nativity plays, concerts and recorder festivals, and music makes a good contribution by including music from a wide range of cultures. There are some opportunities for pupils to become aware of multicultural Britain. A Diwali open day was held in November 2001, and Year 6 pupils talk enthusiastically of their emergent understanding of other faiths. The school addresses satisfactorily the issue of how to develop further the pupils' understanding of living in a diverse society, and is trying to find ways in which this can be further developed.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42. The school provides a positive and secure learning environment. Very good relationships between staff and pupils successfully foster a caring, family ethos where pupils are valued, and there are good procedures for monitoring and supporting the pupils' personal development. These are effective in supporting the pupils' learning. The school has successfully maintained these features since the previous inspection.
43. Procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are good overall. As at the previous inspection, arrangements for child protection are sound and those for ensuring their welfare are good. The designated officer is appropriately trained and deals with issues effectively. Staff are vigilant at all times regarding any issues. They are given appropriate written information and guidance on the school's policy and procedures.
44. Parents are pleased at how well their children are cared for when they have minor accidents. The school nurses and dental services are each well used to promote pupils' welfare and provide

valuable guidance and support. For instance, the school nurse was recently fully involved in 'sports and fitness week'. This included basic first aid information for many pupils. There are satisfactory arrangements to identify and remedy potential hazards to health and safety. The headteacher and Chair of Governors carry out extensive risk assessments each year. All electrical equipment and appliances are regularly tested. Fire drills are carried out frequently and are appropriately recorded. Two staff are fully trained and qualified to administer first aid.

45. Procedures to monitor and improve attendance are good, and the school has maintained good practices since the previous inspection. The small size of the school means that the pupils and their families are well known to staff. Attendance registers are well maintained and governors are provided with regular reports on any issues. The headteacher acknowledges that more could be done; for example, to discourage the proportion of holidays being taken during term time, although parents are given frequent reminders about the importance of good attendance and punctuality. Telephone calls are made on the first day of any unexplained absence, so that there is no unauthorised absence, and there is an effective partnership with the educational welfare service.
46. As at the previous inspection, procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are good, and this is reflected in the pupils' good attitudes to learning and the rising standards in the school. Incidents of bad behaviour are appropriately recorded. Any problems are carefully monitored to ensure that improvements take place. Pupils say that the school has good procedures to deal with bad behaviour and bullying, although such incidents are rare. They say that they are confident that they can tell staff when there are problems and that they are helped to make friends straight away. Good use is made of a wide variety of rewards to maintain high standards of behaviour. For instance, younger pupils are engaged in 'star wars', where ultimately they can achieve a headteacher's award for 'stars' and, further, a rosette. Similar rewards are in place for older pupils where good behaviour is also recognised.
47. Sound procedures are in place for identifying the pupils with special educational needs. Class teachers are quick to recognise if pupils need extra help, although one pupil who was receiving good support from his teacher needed to be formally recorded on the school's register of special educational needs. Good monitoring systems are in place for keeping a check on the academic achievement and personal development of pupils. IEPs are reviewed and targets set at suitable intervals. These targets are manageable for the pupils and good use is made of them in planning and teaching. The requirements of the Statements of Special Educational Need are implemented well and annual reviews are fully in line with statutory requirements.
48. Procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment and progress are good. The school tracks the achievement of individual pupils and uses optional tests well to identify underachievement. There are some weaknesses in using the results of some of the assessments to plan further work for some higher attaining pupils, so that this aspect is satisfactory, rather than good, overall. However, the procedures for monitoring and supporting the academic progress of the majority of pupils are good; it is action that is not always taken that is the relative weakness. The support and guidance pupils receive is playing an effective part in raising standards.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

49. The school has successfully maintained a good, close partnership with parents since the previous inspection.
50. Parents have positive views of the school. The inspection questionnaire resulted in a high response and there was a good attendance at the parents' meeting. It is clear that parents are highly supportive of the school and its work. At the parents' meeting, parents emphasised how pleased they were at the way the school relates to them and involves them in school life. They commented particularly on the family atmosphere and sense of community between them and the school. All parents replying to the questionnaire said that staff are approachable. The majority are pleased about leadership and management, teaching, the school's expectations for their children, their children's progress and the fact that their children like school. Parents are

also generally pleased about behaviour and how the school helps their children to become mature and responsible. Inspection findings support these views and particular points are discussed in other parts of this report.

51. The questionnaire indicates that some parents are dissatisfied with the range of extra-curricular activities on offer. However, inspectors felt that there is satisfactory provision for a school of this size. Those present at the parents meeting were content in this regard.
52. As at the previous inspection, the quality of information to parents, especially about pupils' achievement, is good. The school has addressed the significant weakness identified at the previous inspection concerning pupils' annual reports. Reports give much detail about what children know, can do and understand. Annual reports for the youngest pupils are very good and others are good. All teachers are setting clear learning targets in reports and parents are given good information about how their children compare to national averages. Each class teacher sends out written details of forthcoming work to be covered in each term and this is very useful. Notice-boards include minutes of governors' meetings. Inspectors found that the many photographs and displays of pupils' work were effective in showing parents what their children are doing. Brief newsletters are sent home regularly and these are effective in giving information about issues, events and important dates to remember.
53. The school positively welcomes parents and carers, and inspectors found that relationships are good. Links with parents and carers are highly effective, and their involvement has a good impact on the work of the school. The contribution of parents and carers to children's learning, at school and at home, is also good.
54. The school's parent teacher association has continued to thrive since the previous inspection. It gives much support to the school through organising social and fund-raising events. It is highly successful in raising funds. A very good example of the association's support is the recent purchase of ten laptop computers to support teaching and learning, and this has helped to raise standards in ICT. A number of highly dedicated parents are helping with school activities regularly. For example, they listen to readers, support lessons such as ICT and accompany swimming and school trips. The great majority of parents have signed up to the home and school agreement. Homework diaries and reading records indicate that many parents are giving good support with learning at home.
55. The school has the confidence of all communities with which it is involved and works well in partnership with parents of pupils with special educational needs. The reviews take place at the appropriate times; the teachers are always willing to discuss the pupils' achievement. Parents, overall, feel that the school works closely with them. A tribute to the school's work with pupils with special educational needs came from the parent who wrote giving news of their child who was now at another school: 'All this success and confidence I put down to Corbett school and it just proves that disabled children can do well and eventually find a place in society'.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

56. The leadership and management of the headteacher and staff with management responsibilities are satisfactory overall. The headteacher leads well and there is a clear educational direction to the school's work. The committed team of adults have carried out their responsibilities well. The school is a welcoming place and it fulfils its aims to provide a welcoming environment, in which the children learn happily. The focus on individual pupils is good, although occasionally, higher attaining pupils could reach higher standards. All members of the school community take a pride in their school and work harmoniously together. The headteacher, who is also a class teacher, leads by example, but carries too heavy a load. There is, understandably, a problem in such a small school, but areas of responsibility are not yet linked closely to the school development plan, so that the attempt to cover everything at once has resulted in an inequitable distribution of responsibilities.

57. The majority of co-ordinators make effective contributions to the running of the school and its development. There is good leadership in English and mathematics, and the co-ordinators for music and science, who are both specialists, lead very well. Physical education is also led well, despite considerable problems with accommodation, and the co-ordinator has a strong agenda for change. Arrangements for ICT are good, with the headteacher overseeing developments, supported by very good work that is carried out by the ICT technician, and the co-ordinator of the Foundation Stage leads well.
58. The SENCO has a good understanding and application of the role of the post and has worked hard to develop the school's successful approaches. She fosters the links with outside agencies and co-ordinates the meetings with parents. She meets with staff to discuss the pupils' needs and monitors achievement; she knows the pupils well. As SENCO, the headteacher agrees that it can be a time consuming task, and this adds to the load the headteacher carries. There is a policy for special educational needs, which is about to be reviewed to come in line with the new statutory arrangements. A range of resources is available to support pupils with special educational needs especially in mathematics, literacy and ICT. These are used well in lessons and enhance learning.
59. The governors are effective and ensure that all statutory requirements are met. They exercise their clearly defined roles conscientiously and provide good support to the school as critical friends. There is a strong relationship between the school and its governors, who visit regularly; consequently, they know a great deal about the school's work, and this has a good impact on their decision making and, consequently, on the rising standards in the school. They plan strategically, being particularly aware of the fluctuating numbers in each year group, which have implications for spending decisions, and they look carefully at the educational benefits from their financial decisions to ensure that these result in the best possible value. The experience the governors had of running the school at the time when it was grant maintained is very valuable.
60. The governors have a good understanding of the school's priorities and make sure that grants and funding are linked to these. They have ensured that improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory, despite the multiple roles that each member of staff has to fulfil. The resulting action has contributed well to higher standards in the national tests, improved provision in the Foundation Stage and ensured that the pupils benefit from a more secure curriculum. Only in some of the foundation subjects, mainly in geography, but with some shortcomings in design and technology and physical education, has the school not shown improvement since the previous inspection, so that standards in geography are well below where they should be.
61. The school's management information systems are efficient and effective and bureaucratic demands are not excessive. Financial planning and control are good, so that the school operates smoothly and office staff cope well with its daily running. As a result, the maximum time is spent on teaching and learning.
62. Performance management is satisfactorily in place and teachers are used to being observed, but sometimes the focus of observations is not sharp enough. Although there is now very little unsatisfactory teaching in the school, monitoring has not identified ways in which the satisfactory teaching in the school could be raised to the highest levels in order to increase the percentage of good and very good teaching in order to raise standards even further.
63. Staff who are new to the school are supported well and all adults work together effectively as a team, making the most of their individual skills and providing co-operation and support so that the school runs smoothly. Their commitment to improvement is good, as is their capacity to succeed.
64. The school's staffing and resources and accommodation are satisfactory overall. The accommodation allows the National Curriculum to be taught adequately, but some classrooms are small and there is no designated outdoor play area for the youngest children. A building programme is about to commence and this will provide the required outdoor play space, and

permit the redistribution of classrooms to address the problem of cramped classes. Problems with the accommodation for physical education are not so easily solved. The school hall is insufficiently large and awkwardly arranged, and presents problems, particularly in games lessons, when the field is too wet to be used. Inevitably, this affects standards in this aspect of physical education work along with insufficient resources to adequately teach gymnastics. New equipment has recently been ordered.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

65. In order to take the school forward and improve the provision for pupils in the school, the headteacher, governors and all staff with management responsibilities at Corbett Primary School should:

1. Raise standards throughout the school in geography, and address weaknesses in standards in aspects of physical education in Years 3 to 6 by:

- improving teachers' knowledge of the subjects;
- raising teachers' expectations of the standards pupils will reach;
- improving resources** in both subjects.

(Paragraphs 8, 28, 29, 31, 32, 60, 64, 100 and 115-118)

2. **Reconsider the balance of the curriculum by:

- increasing the time allocated to design and technology;
- creating greater continuity in the arrangements for teaching geography and history;
- monitoring and evaluating curriculum planning more closely to establish what pupils can and cannot do in these subjects.

(Paragraphs 8, 18, 28, 29, 31, 32, 60, 100, 112, 114, 115, 117, 123 and 124)

3. Increase the percentage of good teaching by:

- addressing the issue of pace in lessons, so that a greater proportion of lessons proceed at a brisk pace;
- raising teachers' expectations in aspects of mathematics and some foundation subjects.

(Paragraphs 20, 21, 22, 26, 91, 99, 100, 118 and 137)

4. Improve the provision for higher attaining pupils by:

- ensuring that planning always includes more challenging work for them;
- monitoring teaching and written work to check the success of planned opportunities;
- using assessment from lessons to plan further work;
- providing more opportunities for pupils to develop investigative and problem solving skills in their mathematics learning.

(Paragraphs 2, 9, 20, 22, 33, 34, 48, 91, 95, 96, 97, 99, 100, 106, 111, 116)

** Indicates that these issues are already in the school's development plan.

Minor issue

Continue to find ways of addressing the overload on the headteacher to give her more time to monitor teaching. (Paragraphs 56 and 58).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	33
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	3	10	17	2	0	0
Percentage	3	9	30	52	6	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 figures, since each lesson represents more than three percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	81
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	7

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	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.5
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	8	7	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	6	8
	Girls	7	6	7
	Total	15	12	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (88)	80 (75)	100 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	8	7
	Girls	7	7	7
	Total	15	15	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (88)	100 (88)	93 (88)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	5	6	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	4	5
	Girls	6	3	6
	Total	11	7	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100 (79)	64 (64)	100 (86)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	4	5
	Girls	6	3	6
	Total	11	7	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100 (92)	64 (85)	100 (92)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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	81
Any other ethnic minority group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18
Average class size	20.25

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	51.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000 - 01
	£
Total income	185,965
Total expenditure	191,460
Expenditure per pupil	2,364
Balance brought forward from previous year	15,680
Balance carried forward to next year	10,185

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

81

Number of questionnaires returned

50

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	32	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	38	10	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	42	12	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	46	10	2	2
The teaching is good.	48	40	0	0	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	34	44	14	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	26	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	42	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	36	52	8	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	46	42	0	2	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	46	2	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	42	28	18	2	4

Other issues raised by parents

A number of parents added comments to their questionnaires and the vast majority were overwhelmingly supportive of the school, praising the hard work of the staff and expressing their enthusiasm for what the school is doing for their children. All issues raised by parents were investigated by the inspection team and their findings are included in this report.

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. Children start the Foundation Stage in the school in the reception class in the term after their fourth birthday. At the time of the inspection, the class comprised 13 children in their reception year and seven Year 1 pupils. When children start in the reception year, their level of attainment varies considerably from year to year; the small size of the year groups means that the performance of individual children has a significant effect on the overall level of attainment each year. However, taken overall, attainment on entry is average, with slightly above average skills in personal, social and emotional development. The pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, but many pupils achieve better than this and the improved provision is beginning to impact significantly on overall achievement.
67. There have been considerable improvements since the previous inspection, when attainment on entry to the National Curriculum at the start of Year 1 was lower than it should have been in some areas of learning. The curriculum is now good, properly planned and better balanced, so that the children benefit from a wide range of experiences that are relevant to them and which foster their learning. The curriculum follows the national guidance for the Foundation Stage. The teaching is much improved and is now satisfactory, with some good features. Consequently, by the end of the reception year, children attain the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. They exceed them in personal, social and emotional development and in some specific parts of the areas of learning; for instance, in responding to music and singing. This is a direct result of good and some excellent teaching. Children with special educational needs are supported well and fully included in all activities and achieve well.
68. The Foundation Stage benefits from good overall management and co-ordination. Good assessment systems are in place, and these identify the children's needs as soon as they enter the school and keep track of achievements over time. Very effective use is made of support staff, who make good contributions when working with their assigned groups. They are well briefed. The classroom is small, but every attempt is made to maximise the space and to provide the right sort of opportunities for role-play and independent learning. The school is aware of the problem with the lack of immediate access to an outdoor environment. Ideally, children should be able to move spontaneously between indoors and outdoors. This allows them to develop a wide range of skills in physical development and continues to promote confidence and independence. A timetabled session for the reception children to use the playground does help to promote this. A new classroom is to be built, however, which will have outdoor provision.

Personal, social and emotional development

69. Starting from a relatively high baseline, the children continue to thrive and develop, so that by the time they leave the reception class, they are exceeding the Early Learning Goals in this area. This is because a high priority is given to children's personal, social and emotional development by all staff and the teaching is good. The children settle in well each day and work and play together confidently. They know and follow the class routines and respond well to the adults around them. They show their independence when allowed to choose activities in the classroom. Staff are consistent with their use of praise and encouragement. This raises self-esteem and fosters good behaviour. Another feature of the children's abilities is their good attention and concentration span. In a music and movement lesson in the hall, they watched, listened and responded to instructions very enthusiastically and were confident to try out new activities.
70. Children play well together, take turns and share resources well. This was noticeable in a very well organised and well-taught outdoor session. It was one of those occasions when the reception children could use the playground all by themselves. There were balls, bicycles, cars,

containers with water and a whole range of interesting activities and materials for the children to choose from. The teacher entered into the play, at one point taking the role of the traffic 'marshall' and at other times supporting or raising questions with children about what they were doing. This helped both to further develop the learning and to foster the very positive relationships that exist between adults and children. Children with special educational needs, including physical disabilities, received very good support and encouragement from support staff. The whole session was very purposeful for the children.

Communication, language and literacy

71. There is good provision in this area of learning and satisfactory teaching, which means that most children are likely to reach the Early Learning Goals at the end of the reception year. Reading is an area the children respond to positively and they enjoy an expanding range of books that are read to them or made available in the classroom. They begin to recognise familiar words and know that information can be obtained from books and computers. Some are well into reading a range of common words and they retell favourite stories. Children learn the sounds made by each letter and staff include the written word in activities and displays and encourage children to notice letters and words.
72. Throughout the inspection, the topic theme was 'Food'. Good planning highlighted a number of ways in which language and literacy skills could be developed. It included looking at the books 'Around the World Cookbook' and 'Pass the Jam Jim'. The children used the pictures and text both to gain information and to consolidate their understanding of letters and words. Knowledge of phonics is promoted in class and group activities; for instance, through the 'letter of the week'. Children are prepared to have a go at different forms of writing such as in making menus for their café or in their own spontaneous 'stories' or free writing. They learn to hold and use pencils correctly and most could write their name or a label for a container to grow their cress seeds. The older reception pupils show that they can form letters correctly, try to write in simple sentences and spell a few familiar words.
73. In the main, adults use talk and questioning to good effect especially when the focus is on the reception children themselves. Getting them to feel confident in speaking supports the whole aspect of language for communication. Sometimes the needs of the Year 1 pupils means that the younger reception children are not fully involved in whole-class sessions and find it a little more difficult to keep up. Their listening skills are well developed, although additional planned activities would further extend their abilities to talk alongside others and initiate conversation themselves.
74. The teaching in this area of learning benefits from a good assessment and recording system that tracks the pupils' achievement and helps to identify any early problems with language and literacy. This clearly supports identification of children with special educational needs. Elements of the National Literacy Strategy are taught so that by the end of the reception year the children are getting used to the literacy hour format.

Mathematical development

75. This area is soundly taught and by the end of the reception year most children attain the Early Learning Goals, although in their knowledge of numbers, some children exceed them. The lesson seen was a typical whole-class lesson based on the National Numeracy Strategy. The starting activity was counting forwards and backwards up to 20 and then there were group tasks in consolidating number understanding or a simple combinations problem. The teacher did everything that she could to involve both the reception and Year 1 pupils through her lively and supportive teaching style. The introduction of a glove puppet that kept forgetting his numbers was absorbing and took everyone's attention. However, it was clear that for some of the younger reception children parts of the lesson were a little too advanced. In the group activities they did usefully practise their understanding of numbers from zero to five through a worksheet, exploring them with a flexible and practical approach.

76. Older and higher attaining reception aged pupils were coping with much of the lesson and they showed a good knowledge of numbers from zero to ten and in some cases to beyond this. They found the missing numbers on number lines and recorded answers accurately and quickly. Assessments show that they achieve satisfactorily in shape, space and measures; for instance, in recognising simple two and three-dimensional shapes. Some of the children pointed out these shapes when they were involved in a painting and printing activity later in the week. Other approaches or lessons were not observed during the inspection, but there is provision through role play, the sand tray, bricks, containers and other resources to support mathematical development.

Knowledge and Understanding Of The World

77. This area lays the foundation for future work in science, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology and religious education. In all aspects of this area of learning the provision is at least satisfactory sometimes good and by the end of the reception year the children are attaining the Early Learning Goals. The teaching overall is sound with some good features. In the case of the information and communication technology strand, good teaching in the school's computer suite means that the children are having a good start to their learning and their attainment is high. Children learn, for instance, about the uses of everyday technology having been on a trail around the school to find out where technology is used. They are becoming confident with the mouse and keyboard and could select from a number of images the one that they wanted to fill with colour. They were considering waterproofing the finished outcomes to use as tiles.
78. Appropriate opportunities were taken by the class teacher in the outdoor session to question and develop thinking about the wider world. Everyone stopped to look at the helicopter as it landed at the nearby airport. Again, in an indoor session the children showed their interest, enthusiasm and early organisational skills in setting up simple investigations for growing cress seeds. The discussion as to where our foods come from was well handled and the children began to understand some of the links.

Physical Development

79. Good teaching makes up for some of the constraining factors of not having a permanent outdoor provision. The children are on course to attain the Early Learning Goals in this area. A good range of equipment for the outdoor session did allow children to show control of a ball with hands and feet and very good co-operation when playing games together. They show that they can play safely with the wheeled toys and are certainly confident and enjoy themselves outside. This was all down to the good preparation and involvement in the learning by the teacher and support staff. An indoor music and movement lesson was well planned and the teacher did well to accommodate both the Year 1 and the reception age children into her lesson. She used the village hall environment to the best advantage. Her instructions were clear and her expectations of both behaviour and performance ensured that the children made good progress in their learning. They showed that they have an awareness of the space in which to move and control and co-ordination when travelling around.

Creative Development

80. By the end of the reception year the children are attaining the Early Learning Goals. However, in the aspect of music their attainment is very high because of the excellent contribution and teaching of the music co-ordinator. In aspects of creative development the children have a reasonable opportunity to explore a range of materials and media. It is mainly in the form of structured group activities; there are fewer opportunities to create or paint spontaneously. In conjunction with the theme of 'Food' the children were printing or making mosaics with fruit and vegetables. They tried hard with these tasks and took some care in the cutting, gluing and assembling of the mosaics. Teaching was sound overall. The planning, preparation and the introduction of the task were good. The interactions during the group activities kept the children

on task, but did not sufficiently focus on the skills involved and expected outcomes. The outcomes from portrait painting are of a good standard.

81. The children are taught music with the Year 1 pupils, but this makes no difference to their access or involvement in the lesson. The children make great efforts to reach the expectations that are made of them. They are so interested in their work. The children project their voices in singing incredibly well. They understand the difference between high and low pitch. They have a good repertoire of songs. The lessons make a powerful contribution to their learning.

ENGLISH

82. Standards overall in English have risen since the time of the previous inspection, when they were average at the end of Year 6. This is confirmed by the results of the Year 6 national tests in English, which are at least above average over the past three years. Although we have to take care when interpreting the results, because of the small numbers in each year group, there is a pattern of consistency in the English results, showing at least above average attainment.
83. In the work seen during the inspection, standards are average by the end of Year 2 and the pupils' achievement, including the achievement of pupils with special educational needs, is satisfactory overall. There is a discrepancy between this judgement and the well above average test results for 2001, and it mainly lies in the pupils' writing skills. None of the pupils in the small group that makes up the current Year 2 joins letters in handwriting, and none is showing above average standards in writing. This is despite the school's handwriting policy that states that 'Most pupils start to learn cursive script at the start of Year 2' and it means that higher attaining pupils are not yet reaching the higher standards of which they are capable. However, the pupils do learn to write in a range of genres. They write letters of apology from the wolf to Granny, stories, descriptions and instructions. Higher attaining pupils write well in terms of the content of their writing. One piece of extended writing described how a little boy went shopping and lost his mum and dad. The spelling was good, and speech marks were accurately used. Average attaining pupils show some confusion over punctuation marks, but they write with conviction. Their achievement has been good since September. Pencil control is much better, the spacing between words is more even, and the teacher's notes show that more of the writing has been done independently. Lower attaining pupils produce a limited quantity of writing, but clearly make great efforts to get their letter shapes right. Pupils with special educational needs write well, relative to their prior attainment, and they are well supported.
84. Standards in speaking and listening are above average overall. The pupils already talk with assurance in a range of situations, and their responses show that they listen carefully. They responded quickly when the teacher asked them to identify rhyming words and answered the teacher's questions, giving good levels of detail about how they thought the different characters in the 'Red Riding Hood' story might feel. They showed that they knew a good range of words when the teacher asked them to suggest words containing long and short 'oo' sounds. Standards in reading are also above average. The pupils are fluent readers and express their preferences clearly. They read confidently from the big book and enjoy changing their voices in the reading for dramatic effect.
85. Pupils of all levels of attainment achieve well in their reading and several factors contribute to this. Phonics and key words are taught in a well-structured way and teachers monitor and support the progress of individual pupils well. The impact of the National Literacy Strategy means that the pupils are familiar with non-fiction as well as fiction books and teachers encourage pupils to borrow and take home books, in addition to those from the reading scheme. They successfully foster pupils' initial interest and enjoyment of books and further stimulate their interest through events such as 'Book Week' and the visits of authors and poets.
86. The pupils' rate of achievement increases in Years 3 to 6, as they become able to do more independently, so that by the time they reach the end of Year 6, standards are currently above average. Pupils with special educational needs make similarly good progress. Standards in speaking and listening continue to be above average, with some features that are even better

than that. The pupils have well-developed vocabularies and enjoy using colourful words. They speak fluently, answer and ask questions well and use their good oral skills to learn. Their interesting vocabulary means that they quickly engage the attention of their listeners and they listen attentively to their teachers and each other, asking questions to develop their ideas. They did this in a lesson in which they discussed whether mobile phones should be banned from school and later in their paired work, where the issue was whether cars should be banned from town centres. Some argued fiercely against the banning of cars, pointing out that we would need triple-decker buses to transport people and showed that they could call on a good range of arguments very rapidly to express their views effectively.

87. Standards in reading also remain above average, with higher attaining pupils reaching well above average standards. This is partly because the pupils are so enthusiastic about books, and the school has worked hard to foster this positive attitude. Pupils in Year 6 are adept at identifying crucial features of the text and using evidence to back up their opinions. One pupil, discussing 'Lord of the Rings' with an inspector, pointed to key parts of the story and offered opinions on the text, commenting on the impact of the writing. Most pupils have good skills for checking words they do not know, they talk animatedly about books they have read and enjoyed and the majority read widely outside school. The school's library is small and currently shares a small space with a bank of computers, making access difficult at times. Plans are in place to remedy this. Pupils use dictionaries with confidence and their growing independence leads them to choose a broad range of fiction and non-fiction books to help them to expand their reading tastes. Most pupils use a contents page appropriately and higher attaining pupils use non-fiction books for research purposes, some describing how they use several sources to help them.
88. Standards in writing are broadly average. Both boys and girls have a good sense of audience and draw the reader into their stories with interesting openings and varied sentence structure. An average attaining pupil adopted a chatty style in his 'Nursery Disaster' story, an autobiographical piece that began 'I came to Nursery once, and I accidentally knocked over a boy slightly older than me. That's how it all started...'. They write well when they are providing instructions; for example, on how to play football. Higher attaining pupils show particularly good development in their skills in producing second drafts, so that they incorporate new ideas into their writing, rather than simply correcting errors.
89. The pupils' good achievement in their English work was well illustrated by an interesting display in one of the corridors, highlighting how to write instructions. It included work from the very youngest children and examples from each year group in the school, right up to some quite complex writing by Year 6 pupils. The examples ranged from how to play pass the parcel to how to play football, and the display was attractively illustrated by the pupils' diagrams and pictures. The progression of written skills through the age range was clear and the display gave status to each year group's work. Achievement is particularly good in reading, where the school works in close partnership with parents to develop good reading habits in the pupils, and this is clear from the effective way in which parents and teachers communicate through the home/school reading diaries.
90. The quality of teaching is good overall and this is the major reason why achievement is good, standards are above average by the time the pupils leave the school and test results have improved. In the 11 lessons observed during the inspection, teaching was satisfactory in eight lessons, good in two and very good in one. However, scrutiny of the pupils' work shows that the teaching is usually better than this, resulting in above average standards. The pupils' written work is conscientiously marked and there is some particularly informative marking in Year 2, where the teacher records the substance of oral feedback to the pupils, so that this can be used later when reviewing work, or when discussing it with parents. Teachers set an interesting range of tasks that help the pupils to develop their skills and achieve well. Analyses of the text of the final scene of 'Romeo and Juliet' were handled well and were carried out independently of the teacher, after the Year 5/6 class had done some preparation together. Teachers help pupils to use good structure in their stories, with interesting characters and settings; the stories the Year 5/6 pupils wrote on 'The Treasure Hunt' are good examples, with plots that move forward and keep the reader interested. Teachers have thorough knowledge of the National Literacy Strategy

and this has also helped to raise standards, especially when it is coupled with their own imagination and resourcefulness.

91. In the good lessons, teachers work at a brisk pace and use quick fire questions to reinforce learning at different points in the lesson, not just at the beginning and the end. Where the teaching was satisfactory, rather than good, during the inspection, it was often because the pace was slower than it needed to be. Staff were extremely nervous, anxious to act strictly according to letter of the National Literacy Strategy, and they were not always quick to see that some pupils, particularly the higher attainers, were ready to move on and accept more challenging tasks. In the scrutiny of work, the higher attainers had been challenged and had responded well. Teachers give good support to the pupils who have special educational needs and structure their lessons with due attention to the literacy needs of these pupils.
92. Literacy is well taught by all the teachers in the school. In music and science, for example, although these subjects are not taught by class teachers, the pupils develop a good range of specialist vocabulary and use their good vocabularies as they describe what they have done, or what they have heard. All teachers encourage the pupils to be confident in their speaking. Teachers use ICT to help the pupils to produce final drafts of their work for display in the classroom and around the school, but there is little evidence of computers being used to edit work, or of pupils using language programs, and computers were not used in any of the English lessons observed.
93. The English co-ordinator leads well and has a good development plan for the subject, which includes an action plan for writing – one of the school's priorities this year. There is a good range of assessment data and this is used to plan further work. The English policy shows clear strategies for supporting the pupils with special educational needs. These pupils are supported well, but there is no mention in the policy of higher attaining pupils. However, in their teaching, all teachers take care that they involve all pupils in the activities that take place and they make sure that no groups dominate the learning, or that anyone is left out.

MATHEMATICS

94. By the end of Years 2 and 6, the pupils attain average standards in numeracy and other areas of mathematics, such as algebra, shape, space and measures and data handling. The Year 6 standards are higher than the 2001 test results would indicate, and the Year 2 standards are lower. However, to make meaningful comparisons is difficult given the low numbers of pupils in each year group. What can be said is that Year 6 teachers took note that scores were lower than the national averages last year, had good information about the current year group and took steps to make sure results were as high as they should be. Challenging targets were set and the pupils appear to be working well towards them.
95. With only eight Year 2 pupils and several with special educational needs, this year group is very different to those in previous years. This group, nevertheless, is achieving satisfactorily. Across the school, pupils with special educational needs achieve well, due to the extra support they are given and the way in which the work is planned for them. Not enough, though, is expected of the higher attaining pupils, particularly in the investigative and problem-solving aspects of mathematics.
96. By the end of Year 2, most pupils are working confidently with numbers up to 100 and use doubling and partitioning strategies in their calculations. They count forwards and backwards in twos, threes, fours and fives. There is plenty of evidence of their knowledge and understanding of simple two and three-dimensional shapes and examples of using standard forms of measurement in activities associated with weight and length. The higher attaining pupils, however, are not being stretched. The work that they have done is sometimes too easy for them. For instance, they appear to have a developing understanding of the place order of numbers up to 1000, yet they are still working, predominantly, with numbers up to 100.

97. By the end of Year 6, pupils show reasonable speed in working out money problems in their heads, such as the change from £20, if £15.89 has been spent. There is a good amount of work in their books that shows good achievement through the year; for instance, in calculating strategies for longer multiplication and division problems. They confidently approach the measurement of angles with protractors and then use these skills very well in the context of measuring during experimentation and in constructing and they accurately construct a range of two-dimensional shapes. In science lessons, they use and apply their mathematical knowledge to interpret graphs and diagrams. There is a reasonable challenge for higher attaining pupils in most areas of mathematics, except in the investigative and problem-solving branch. Here, there is little evidence of work that encourages reasoning and drawing conclusions and where the pupils are free to think and record using their own symbols, words and diagrams.
98. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. The teaching of the oldest pupils is good, supported by very tight checking that the pupils are doing as well as they should. This was exemplified in a lesson in which the pupils were developing their ability to recognise and measure angles. The teacher knew that the pupils were still not using the protractor accurately enough. She carefully explained the procedures, using the technical vocabulary of angles and geometry to good effect. She set a variety of tasks to consolidate skills and understanding with extension activities. The pupils measured accurately and confidently, using the language of angles correctly. Some went off to the computer suite to use a program that explored the theme from yet another perspective. Back in class, one of the boys was delighted when he found out that, by following instructions, he could accurately draw a regular pentagon with sides of four centimetres and interior angles of 108 degrees. The structure of the lesson and good quality teaching all helped to foster a high degree of participation and a keen interest in the mathematics.
99. Teaching elsewhere is at least satisfactory, and with consistent strengths in the daily planning of lessons and management of pupils. This means that the classrooms are well organised with interesting tasks set for their learning so that the pupils develop good attitudes to their learning. This was observed in a Year 3/4 lesson, as the pupils attempted to work out the missing numbers from a 'magic square' (where the rows, columns and diagonals have the same total). The pupils had reasonable success with this, but there was not enough emphasis on helping them to check and organise their work and explain their thinking. In the Years 1/2 class the teaching in particular benefited the special educational needs pupils and those in Year 1, as it was well pitched to their levels, but, for some of the older higher attaining pupils, it was too easy. They finished quickly and were capable of much more challenge. The pace in this lesson was a little slow to begin with.
100. Teachers base their planning and teaching on the National Numeracy Strategy. They teach the three-part lesson that includes a mental starter, main activity and a plenary session, which draws the lesson together. They are confident in this style of teaching, express themselves clearly and use, in the main, good questioning strategies to draw out and probe the pupils' thinking. They use resources well, such as number lines, grids and counting apparatus. Teachers use their observations of pupils, marking and regular assessments of the pupils' abilities through half-termly tests to plan for the next steps in learning. Some good opportunities are made in other curriculum areas for pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills; for instance, in science and ICT. Not enough emphasis is given in subjects like design and technology and geography, and not enough is expected of the higher attaining pupils, so that they are not always provided with challenging activities. The teaching of investigative and problem solving mathematics is underdeveloped and teaching does not always proceed at a sufficiently brisk pace.
101. The subject benefits from good co-ordination and management. The subject leader has a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses and has also identified the teaching of mathematical investigations as an area for development. There is a detailed action plan, and built into this is time for the co-ordinator to monitor standards. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection and standards have remained about the

same. There have been considerable improvements in the development of policy, teaching schemes and the use of ICT in the subject.

SCIENCE

102. The results of the national teacher assessments for 2001 show that by the end of Year 2, standards in science are close to the national average with 93 per cent of pupils reaching average standards. However, the percentage of pupils attaining Level 3 or above was below the national average. In work seen, pupils' standards, by the end of Year 2, are average. Many pupils by the end of Year 2 demonstrate a developing understanding of how to keep healthy. They plan a daily diet and know which foods are unhealthy to eat. They have a good knowledge of drugs and medicines and they know which ones are safe to use. Their knowledge of the special uses of materials is sound.
103. The results of the tests for 2001 show that, by the end of Year 6, standards are very high in comparison with the national average. In work seen, pupils attain standards that are well above average by the end of Year 6. The pupils cover a range of interesting work, which is based fully upon discovering by practical investigation. They gain a very clear understanding of what they are taught, and they are sufficiently confident to discuss their work with visitors. By the end of Year 6, pupils carry out a broad range of investigative work covering all of the Programmes of Study in depth. Year 5 and 6 pupils show advanced skills of scientific enquiry. Pupils study the various parts of the body and know about the effects of drugs on health. They have studied the earth and the sun, and they know about ultra-violet rays. They choose apparatus carefully while investigating the way in which different parachute designs work and they plan the activity to compare different factors, such as the size of the canopy and its effects on the rate at which the parachute falls. They record their findings systematically and ask pertinent questions.
104. Pupils achieve very well in science overall. Their achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. The majority of younger pupils have an understanding of the life cycles of humans and animals. Year 1 pupils tested a variety of materials and objects to discover which ones would float and sink. They responded with appropriate questions such as, 'What if we do this? What will happen?' and their good speaking and listening skills helped them to learn effectively. Year 3 pupils are slowly developing an understanding of fair testing in their experiments on thermal insulation. They observed the use of data-logging equipment, carried out their own investigations and recorded the results appropriately. In discussions with inspectors, pupils confirmed that they learn much of their science through a wide range of experiments and one pupil said that he was particularly pleased to have moved to the school because of the exciting work in science.
105. The co-ordinator is a science specialist, and she makes a significant contribution to the teaching of the subject so that the quality of teaching is good overall. It is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and work in the books shows that it is good overall, and often very good in Years 3 to 6. Work is well planned and a wide array of resources is carefully prepared for use in lessons. The teacher has very good subject knowledge and the explanations provided to the pupils are detailed and thorough. Pupils are clearly encouraged to cover a wide range of work over the year and this stimulates their enthusiasm for the subject so that they learn well and put plenty of effort into their work. There was evidence in lessons and in pupils' work of the use of some ICT in science, but this is at an early stage of development.
106. The subject is very well managed and the co-ordinator maintains a clear view of the work across the school. Planning has been substantially upgraded since the previous inspection. Appropriate assessment procedures have been introduced, but they are not consistently used to identify and target the learning needs of pupils of different abilities. This has a particular impact on higher attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 and is confirmed by the below average percentage of pupils reaching the higher levels in the tests. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection in standards at the end of Year 6 and the curriculum and resources, which have been consistently improved, so that they are now good.

ART AND DESIGN

107. Very little teaching of art and design was observed during the inspection, but there was sufficient work on display to indicate that standards are average by the end of Years 2 and 6 and that achievement is satisfactory throughout the school. This shows that standards have improved since the previous inspection. The improvement is partly due to the good scheme of work, which has been enhanced by national guidance. No judgements can be made on the quality of teaching.
108. Painting and the use of colour are strengths. Colour mixing is particularly well taught and, from the outset, pupils are required to learn how to mix colours for themselves. The best of their work is lively and attractive and proudly displayed around the school. In the hall there are paintings of faces in the style of Picasso, which reflect the best efforts of individual pupils from the reception class to Year 6.
109. By the end of Year 6, pupils have produced a range of projects on famous artists through the ages, such as Leonardo da Vinci, Van Gogh, William Morris and Salvador Dali. There are many good examples of cross-curricular work; for example, cartoons and book cover designs as part of their work in literacy, and no-smoking posters to reinforce learning in aspects of the work in science. The pupils' graphic World War Two paintings on the Blitz are particularly striking, as are the Greek face-masks.
110. The quality of the artwork observed is often good, but the range and volume of work in some areas are often less than one would expect. There is little evidence of ICT being used to support artwork across the curriculum. The subject makes a sound contribution to cultural development, but it does not adequately reflect the multicultural aspects of modern society. Although there are colourful wall displays of batik and henna designs in the school corridors, the exploration of diversity and other cultures is limited.
111. The co-ordinator is committed to raising standards. She understands clearly the priorities of the subject and has identified the need to review the scheme of work. Assessment procedures in the subject follow national guidelines, but these are not used rigorously or consistently to raise standards even further. Resources in this area are generally satisfactory.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

112. Only one lesson was observed in design and technology during the inspection, and there are too few examples of previous products to make a secure judgement about attainment, achievement, teaching or how well skills, such as those of ICT, are developed in this subject. No judgements were made on standards or teaching at the time of the previous inspection, and no comparisons can be made.
113. In the one lesson observed, pupils in Years 5 and 6 designed a prototype for a new bridge. They investigated different types of bridges and beams and applied enquiry and investigative skills well. Experimentation was a key feature of this lesson and pupils clearly enjoyed the challenges of design and construction. Scrutiny of pupils' work indicated that Year 5 and 6 pupils had also been involved in a crashed vehicle project earlier in the school year. In this project pupils had the opportunity to extend their design skills as they compared different products and parts for their vehicles. Other pupils in Years 3 and 4 have produced money containers, hand puppets and photo frames. Outside the main building there is a bench in the school garden that pupils designed and with which they won a prize in the 'Millennium Best Kept Village' competition.
114. Overall, however, there are too few opportunities provided to enable pupils to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills in design and technology. The co-ordinator acknowledges these deficiencies and the need to review planning in order to ensure a more equitable distribution of curricular time for the subject.

GEOGRAPHY

115. No judgements were made at the previous inspection because there was a lack of evidence on which to base decisions. In Years 1 and 2, this time, there was very little evidence and only one lesson was seen in Years 3 to 6. Nevertheless, it is clear that there are major weaknesses in the teaching and learning across the school. This is because only a small amount of teaching time is given to geography in Years 1 and 2, and too long a gap exists between the teaching of geography-led work, which makes it difficult for the pupils to remember what they have learnt. As a consequence, it is hard for them to build on their skills and understanding. In addition to this, little use is made of the national guidance material to check on the standards of pupils' work and there have been few attempts to make links with literacy and numeracy teaching. ICT is little used to support learning in geography.
116. The impact of all this is that standards are well below average by the end of Year 6 and achievement is poor. The older pupils had not undertaken any sustained work in geography for at least six months. They were about to begin their first lessons of the year at the time of the inspection. Their recall of previous learning about rivers is very shaky. They remember working in project groups and searching the Internet for information, and the higher attaining pupils describe some of the features of rivers such as 'source' and 'mouth'. From their more recent history work, they talk of flooding in the Indus valley and its effects from a perspective of the past, not really the present. They cannot describe any fieldwork undertaken or, in the case of rivers, the processes that might be involved in the formation of some of the features. There are large gaps in their skills, knowledge and understanding. They cannot remember undertaking studies of small localities where they have been encouraged to ask the sorts of distinct questions geographers ask such as, 'Where is this place?', 'What is this place like?', 'How did it get like this?' and 'How is it changing?'. They have only a very superficial understanding of the issues around environmental change and sustainable development.
117. The co-ordinator for geography (who teaches the subject in all classes) taught a very productive session to Year 3/4 pupils introducing a new unit of work about 'Weather around the world'. She has very good management skills. Her questioning style and use of the world map helped to draw out the pupils' knowledge of countries and their use of keys in map reading. A lesson with Year 1/2 pupils was less successful. Here, geography is taught for half an hour at the end of two afternoons during the week and for just half of the school year. This is just not enough time to teach the current curriculum requirements. The lessons themselves do not give enough time to fully develop teaching points. This was the case in a lesson using the storybook 'Katie Morag and the Two Grandmothers' to begin a teaching unit studying life on an island. There were missed opportunities in the geography teaching and some errors in the geographical content, so that the teaching was unsatisfactory. Again this was the first lesson that the younger pupils had done in geography this year, and there was not enough evidence on which to base a judgement on standards.
118. The overall co-ordination of the subject has many weaknesses. The co-ordinator acknowledges that she would benefit from more training in the subject. She is aware of the issues that are behind the current teaching approaches. The national guidance material is used in planning for the subject, but monitoring of this and the outcomes of teaching and learning, are poorly developed. Observations and a recording system are used to make judgements on achievement at the end of units of work, but no use is made of the guidance material on expectations in geography to inform these judgements. The links with literacy and numeracy teaching have not been fully explored. There is no action plan in place or any time-scale set for improvement in the subject.

HISTORY

119. During the inspection, no history lessons were taught so no judgements can be made on the quality of teaching overall. Evidence has been drawn from discussions with the pupils, scrutiny of their work and an interview with the co-ordinator for the subject. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils attain average standards in history. A broad and relevant curriculum has been developed

and the scrutiny of pupils' work indicates a sound coverage of work in recent months, so that achievement is satisfactory.

120. By the end of Year 2, pupils show a sound understanding of life in the past. They have studied famous people, such as King William the Conqueror, Queen Victoria and Florence Nightingale. In discussions, they know about the Gunpowder Plot, the Great Fire of London and Samuel Pepys' diary. Their knowledge of the locality and of their own school's historical foundation is, however, limited.
121. Pupils in Year 6 have completed a long and quite detailed project on Britain in the 1930s. They know about people's clothes in the period, rationing and evacuees. One particularly interesting feature of pupils' work is their knowledge of women's contribution to the war effort. This indicates that the teacher's subject knowledge in this area is good. Pupils also write moving letters to their parents describing their new lives as evacuees in different parts of the country. This shows that appropriate links are being established with other areas of the curriculum, as they use and develop their skills in literacy. The school has also invited people who served in the war to talk to pupils about their experiences. Pupils clearly enjoyed using their good speaking and listening skills to talk to these individuals and they write appreciative letters to them, which show that their knowledge and understanding of the period had been reinforced as a result of these community links.
122. Scrutiny of the work shows that the pupils achieve satisfactorily in history. Pupils in Year 4 have completed a satisfactory project on the Tudors, and they have undertaken studies of a yeoman's life and of children in Tudor times. They have used some primary source material, such as the will of Robert Jannys, Mayor of Norwich in the 16th century, who bequeathed money for the poor.
123. Literacy skills are well developed in history. Pupils are given sufficient opportunities to read about people and events in the past. They write in different styles; for example, when they study the diary of Samuel Pepys and write applications pleading for financial support from Robert Jannys's legacy. There is also a limited contribution to numeracy as pupils refine their chronological skills and develop a sense of time. The contribution of ICT is unsatisfactory in history. Opportunities to develop research skills, using modern technology, are taken occasionally, but these are not well developed. Although worksheets are of a good quality, these sometimes stifle pupils' investigative and research skills.
124. There is sound management of the subject, but because the subject is taught in half-year blocks, there are long periods in some classes when history has not been taught and this is affecting the school's efforts to raise standards further. Standards have remained the same as at the time of the previous inspection at the end of Year 2, but they are less good than the above average standards reported at the end of Year 6. The policy has been revised and planning is now carried out in sufficient detail to ensure that the Programmes of Study are covered in enough depth. Resources were inadequate, but these have now been improved and are satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

125. Standards are much better now than last time the school was inspected. At that time, standards were low across the school, the teaching was unsatisfactory and planning and assessment were weak. This is no longer the case. Standards are average at the end of both Years 2 and 6 and a well-planned ICT curriculum has been introduced. The school is not satisfied with these standards and rightly, in the inspection team's view, believes that they could be higher. One reason for this is that provision for the current Year 6 was unsatisfactory at the time of the previous inspection and it is now much better than that. An extremely competent ICT technician has been delegated much of the responsibility for development, under the co-ordinating umbrella of the headteacher. The technician's contribution is very good. All teachers have completed some training and are now undergoing the national training in this subject area, so that their subject knowledge has improved. More resources have been bought including the

setting up of a small computer suite, which is used well, and a set of laptop computers is available for class use. Very detailed planning and assessment procedures underpin the school's teaching.

126. By the end of Year 2, pupils are confident in handling the computer and know how to store and retrieve pictures and writing. They use the mouse confidently to click on icons and move them purposefully around the screen. They have success with simple word processing and, with help, use a computer program to produce a page for a booklet. This includes the use of procedures to reduce the size of an image to fit the page alongside the text to describe it. They talk about the use of ICT they experience in school, and also that which they know about from home and in the wider world. Their learning progresses satisfactorily through Years 3 to 6. Pupils in Year 4 know that a floor and screen turtle are controlled, using the same language, and program them accordingly. They produce, organise and present a range of ideas using ICT, including using a spreadsheet to plan a shopping outing. By the end of Year 6, pupils work confidently and independently with the computer, and also the laptops. They use the digital camera and combine this with a 'PowerPoint' program to make simple presentations. They use the Internet to search for information for history and geography projects, download the relevant items and use them in the presentations of their own work.
127. The ICT technician has been in post for two years and supports all classes. She teaches small groups of pupils in the small ICT suite (which is also the library area). Pupils are withdrawn from classrooms to further develop aspects of their class work through ICT. These are well-planned sessions drawing on the strengths of the class teachers and the technician. Everyone is clear about what the pupils are learning and how their achievements are to be recorded. The quality of teaching is good. The key strengths are the technician's obvious subject knowledge, good teaching skills and her calm, patient, supportive approach. This benefits the special educational needs pupils in particular, who achieve very well in their learning. She has high expectations and uses the language of ICT well. For instance, when Year 1/2 pupils were using a 'Clip Art' program to make pages for a book she took great care when explaining the steps required and gently probed with questions, 'You can use the scroll bar to...', 'Now, where's your cursor?', 'Double click on the cursor, move it down...' and 'What do you think will happen?'. The pupils in this case had great success in resizing the picture images to fit the pages for their 'Green Cross Code' booklet and spontaneously shared their achievements with each other. During the inspection the computers were not switched on in some classrooms as often as might be expected and there were some missed opportunities in literacy lessons. ICT is used to support mathematics and science to good effect. The computer in the reception classroom had been stolen in a recent burglary so these pupils rely on the group sessions in the suite.
128. The subject is well co-ordinated and benefits from the very good leadership of both the headteacher, who takes overall responsibility, and the ICT technician. They have introduced planning and assessment systems that closely follow the national guidance. The tracking of the pupils' learning is very rigorous and supports their achievement. The subject has a comprehensive policy including a recent addition that sets out Internet access. The ICT development plan has now reached the stage where there are plans for a larger computer suite to be available when the extra classroom is built.

MUSIC

129. Standards in music are above average overall at the end of Years 2 and 6. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection report and reflects the very good provision in music that has been put in place. The quality of teaching is very good overall. All the teaching of class music observed during the inspection was very good or excellent and the cumulative effect of this high quality, specialist teaching is producing standards in some lessons that are well above average. These are commendable standards and all pupils are included in the learning that takes place.
130. By the end of Year 2, the pupils use tonic sol fah names and hand signals confidently. This means that their sense of pitch is well developed. They sing well, projecting their voices,

willingly singing solos and contributing very effectively to their music lessons, which they thoroughly enjoy. There was a real sense of fun as they passed round the 'bone' belonging to Washington, their toy dog and each child who was left holding the bone when the song stopped, sang 'I've got the bone' on a three-note phrase accurately in rhythm and pitch. Throughout Years 1 and 2, achievement is consistently good and their listening skills develop well. As a result, the majority counted correctly the number of times the lion 'roared' in 'Lions' from 'Carnival of the Animals' and showed good rhythmic skills as they kept the pulse.

131. By the end of Year 6, the pupils have listening skills that are well above average and their good concentration skills ensure that they focus on the tasks they are set. They listened to a recording of Liszt's 'Le Rossignol', identifying the patterns of notes in the introduction and the order in which the pianist plays them. They are quick to notice contrasts between 'high' and 'low', 'loud' and 'soft', and the various degrees in between. They use technical terms such as 'crescendo' and refer confidently to changes in pitch and rhythm, and their good speaking and listening skills enable them to describe accurately what they hear. Whilst composing their own bird song pieces, several of them hummed the notes they wanted to write down and their own enthusiasm for music helped them to persist until they got the composition as they wanted it.
132. The music in the school is taught by a specialist, who has not only excellent practical skills in singing and playing the piano, recorder and guitar, but also a very good understanding of the needs of pupils in the different age groups. This expertise is used very well in lessons that are conducted at a good pace, with an interesting variety of activities, so that there is never a moment for the pupils to be bored or for their attention to wander. Her knowledge of the subject is very good, so that she can add interesting detail to flesh out the information of pieces the pupils listen to. The teacher is so much in control of the material that her attention is constantly on the pupils. She watches and listens carefully and is quick to identify anyone who is struggling and to devise ways of helping them. Lessons are very well planned, so that they contain listening, appraising and composing and the pupils learn through listening and looking, but also through movement as the younger pupils move to music, or beat the pulse, and older pupils draw shapes of tunes in the air to reinforce what they hear.
133. Although the co-ordinator teaches in the school only on one day a week, she leads very well. She has ensured that there is very good provision for the subject and the range and quality of resources are good. ICT is used to help the pupils to develop their composition skills and the recording of pupils' improvisations is a regular feature of the teaching, so that they hear what they have played, and improve. Music from a wide range of cultures supports the pupils' cultural development well. On the school's 'Diwali Day' in the autumn term of 2001, the pupils played Indian instruments and photographs of the day show their enjoyment of the experience. The pupils have good opportunities to learn to play instruments; in addition to the brass lessons, there are recorder groups and a choir and the quality of teaching in all these is good.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

134. Standards are average by the end of Year 2 and this is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. No overall judgement could be arrived at for Years 3 to 6 as very little of their work was seen during the inspection. The school accepts, however, that there are weaknesses in some aspects of the teaching arrangements and standards for these pupils.
135. A balanced and full PE programme is planned for the pupils, which includes dance, gymnastics, swimming and games. In addition, there are school teams that take part in tournaments and after school football and skipping/gymnastic clubs. There is a large field, which, when available, is used extensively to support PE activities. However, there are difficulties posed by the village hall, which has to be used for indoor lessons. It was never really designed to accommodate indoor school PE so teachers have to adapt their lessons to the more confined space and awkward room arrangement. In some circumstances, such as the movement and dance lesson observed, they are doing enormously well. In others (an indoor games lesson) it is much more problematic. In addition, in order to teach gymnastics adequately there is a shortage of

equipment to support the teaching and learning. This has now been ordered and lightweight benches, poles, ladders and other equipment should make a difference.

136. Two lessons were observed, both taught by the subject co-ordinator, but no overall judgement is made on the teaching, as the number of lessons is small. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic about her teaching and is well qualified in PE. She acknowledges that she is still learning in Years 3 to 6 as she is primarily trained for the younger age groups. The dance and movement lesson with Years 1/2 was a good example of her planning and teaching in the context of the hall and her very positive approach to the subject. The pupils responded well to the overall theme based on a Chinese legend. The Year 2 pupils show that they can explore simple actions with a degree of control and composition through their response to the music and instruction. They use the space well as they change direction and speed in warm-up activities and have reasonable lightness and agility. Pupils with special educational needs received good support from their assistants. Teaching did take some account of opportunities for pupils to watch and learn from each other's performances.
137. Because the school field was waterlogged, a decision was taken for the football skills part of the games lesson with Years 3 to 6 to take place in the hall. This just did not work. Firstly, the age and ability range is very wide and not an ideal arrangement for PE lessons. Also it was all the boys together; the girls were playing a version of netball in the playground. Pupils choose which game they are going to play, rather than being exposed to aspects of each. This again is not an ideal arrangement. The teacher tried her best, in the circumstances, to adapt to the conditions, beginning with a warm-up and then organising small group activities to practise ball skills. The space, however, was too small, some of the boys became quite noisy and boisterous and class management proved difficult. Few teaching points were made; for instance, the point and purpose of the warm-up activity were not made clear and no expectations were expressed as to the skills to be developed. There was no comparing or commenting on skills and techniques. Consequently, little progress was made in the lesson. Overall, these groups of pupils in Year 6 show that they have some co-ordination and control, but are mainly working at the lower levels of the National Curriculum. Assessment evidence by the teacher concurs with this across some other aspects of work, such as in gymnastics. With the problems of accommodation and lack of resources, including ICT, which is not used at present, it is hard for pupils to achieve the higher levels in gymnastics where they are required to demonstrate precision, control and fluency in performance on floor and apparatus.
138. Management of the subject is good, however. The PE co-ordinator has a strong agenda for change and improvement. She has consulted with the Staffordshire Local Education Authority adviser about the teaching practicalities and equipment needs for the hall, and help and support are being given. Further in-service training is planned for all teachers. Planning is based on several very useful teaching schemes and a good assessment system has now been put in place. All pupils get the chance to go swimming and they achieve well in learning how to swim and in more advanced skills. Last year a 'Sports Week' of cricket, dance, rugby, circus skills, hockey and healthy eating was organised and reported as a 'fun packed week' in the local paper.