

INSPECTION REPORT

HOLSWORTHY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Holsworthy

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113379

Headteacher: Mr Alan Muller

Reporting inspector: Mrs Susan Smith Airey
18322

Dates of inspection: 4 – 8 February 2002

Inspection number: 193813

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior
School category: Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils: 3 – 11-years-old
Gender of pupils: Boys and girls

School address: Sanders Lane
Holsworthy
Devon

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Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of governors: Rev Michael Reynolds

Date of previous inspection: 28 April 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18322	Susan Smith Airey	Registered inspector	Science, art, Special educational needs	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
11566	Hilary Smyth	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22246	Geoff Cresswell	Team inspector	English, design and technology, music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
18605	Fred Ward	Team inspector	Foundation stage, mathematics, information and communication technology, religious education	
14511	Philip Whitehead	Team inspector	Equal opportunities, geography, history, physical education	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Holsworthy is an average sized voluntary controlled primary school serving the town and surrounding area of Holsworthy in North Devon. While pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds, most are from socially and financially advantaged families. There are 257 pupils, including 41 who attend part-time in the nursery. On entry at three years old, most pupils have levels of attainment around the national average. All pupils are white, with a few not of United Kingdom heritage. 6.8% of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is below average. 10% of pupils are on the register of special educational needs (below average) and 2.5% have statements, which is above average. No pupils have English as an additional language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school with many strengths but with some important areas still to be tackled, particularly raising achievement in aspects of English, mathematics and science in Years 4, 5 and 6. Leadership and management have successfully created a very good learning environment and team spirit and raised the quality of teaching and pupils' learning in the nursery and Years 1, 2 and 3. The school gives sound value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are very high in art and above average in mathematics and speaking and listening for seven-year-olds and above average in art for 11-year-olds.
- Children make a good start in the nursery and reception class and achieve well in Years 1, 2 and 3.
- Individual support to pupils with special educational needs is good.
- All pupils are conscientious and younger ones generally work hard and like school.
- Behaviour is generally good and pupils show compassion and concern for others.
- Nearly all the teaching in the nursery, Years 1, 2 and 3 is good and sometimes very good.
- Staff know pupils very well and relationships are very good.
- The curriculum has a strong emphasis on literacy, numeracy, art and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and is well planned and resourced.
- Leadership and management have successfully created a stimulating and attractive learning environment where pupils' work and achievements are celebrated
- Parents appreciate that the school helps their children become mature and responsible.

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology for pupils aged 11.
- All pupils' skills in writing; older pupils' skills in mathematical enquiry, scientific investigation and, in some instances, their attitudes to learning.
- The role of co-ordinators in developing teaching and pupils' learning.
- The prioritising of what needs to be done to raise standards.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was previously inspected in April 1997 and has successfully tackled most of the key issues. There is no longer a special educational needs unit at the school but support for individuals is now good. The provision and quality of teaching and children's learning in the nursery unit are good. Development planning is long term and includes provision for staff training and measuring the effectiveness of actions. Schemes of work are in place to ensure consistency in the content of the curriculum. Child protection and teachers' appraisal arrangements meet requirements. There are plans in place to deal with the few outstanding issues: extending the role of subject managers to monitor and develop teaching and pupils' learning; improving the balance of the curriculum for older pupils in English, mathematics, science and information technology.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	A	B	B	B	well above average A above average B
mathematics	B	B	D	D	average C below average D
science	B	B	E	E	well below average E

Children in the nursery and reception class make good progress and many have already reached the early learning goals and most will do so by the time they start Year 1. In 2001, results of teachers' assessment of Year 2 pupils in science were below the national average and well below for similar schools; the inspection found standards improved at around the national average. Standards for this age group are above average in mathematics and average for reading and writing, as they were in last year's national assessments. Standards in speaking and listening for pupils aged seven are above average. The inspection found improvements for pupils in Year 6 in mathematics and science, which are now average. Overall, standards are average in English for 11-year-olds although there are weaknesses in writing and speaking and listening. Standards in information and communication technology are average for Year 2 pupils and below for Year 6 pupils but are improving as more opportunities are provided. Most 11-year-olds swim 25 metres. On the limited evidence available during the inspection, standards of work seen in other subjects are around the expected level, apart from in art where they are very high in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. The school has set challenging targets to raise standards in English and mathematics considering the high number of pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 6. Pupils in the nursery unit and Years R - 3 are generally interested in their learning, work hard and achieve well. Older pupils do not always make sufficient effort and become disinterested when work is too hard or not stimulating. Generally, these pupils acquire appropriate subject knowledge and are conscientious when working on their own. However, they do not write sufficiently well and are not developing investigative and problem solving skills satisfactorily as they are not given many opportunities to explore their own lines of inquiry and communicate their findings.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Most pupils like school, are conscientious and try hard but some older pupils find work uninteresting or too hard and lose concentration.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils generally behave well in lessons and when moving around the school and playing.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships in the school community are very good. Pupils are responsible and caring and they are very aware of the effects of their actions on others.
Attendance	Attendance is below average but improving.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Over half the teaching in the school is good and sometimes very good. The rest is satisfactory with only one instance of unsatisfactory teaching. Significant strengths in the teaching are the rich variety of learning activities in the nursery and Year R, the management of pupils, the stimulating learning environment, detailed plans, which ensure that pupils are taught the right things and the way assistants and the special educational needs co-ordinator provide individual pupils with effective support. As a result, the younger pupils are eager and enthusiastic learners and most older pupils work conscientiously and are generally secure in their subject knowledge. Shortcomings in teaching are concerned with the acquisition of speaking and listening and writing skills, investigation in science and enquiry in mathematics. Limited opportunities are given for extended writing in Years 1 – 6 and pupils are not given enough opportunities to practise their discussion and enquiry skills in Years 4 – 6. Teachers have insufficiently high expectations of the older pupils, which hinders progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	There is a strong emphasis on literacy, numeracy and art with helpful schemes of work for all subjects. However, insufficient attention is given to aspects of writing, enquiry, investigation and information and communication technology skills for older pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Individual support from the co-ordinator, teachers and assistants is effective and pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This is a strength of the school, with many, rich and varied opportunities for pupils to develop socially, morally and culturally. Provision for spiritual development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Overall, the school takes good care of pupils, providing effective guidance and personal support. Staff know their pupils very well and use assessment information effectively in literacy, numeracy and personal development to help pupils improve.

The school encourages and welcomes parental support, which is forthcoming, and beneficial to pupils' learning in classrooms, on educational visits, sporting activities and at home.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The head teacher is a caring and supportive leader who has a clear educational vision for the school. He has helped create a family atmosphere and rich learning environment in which pupils and staff feel valued and appreciated. There is a commitment to improve children's education and raise standards. Subject co-ordinators are not yet playing a full part in developing teaching and pupils' learning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are aware of their role in helping shape the direction of the school and are developing a realistic view of what needs to be done to raise standards further. There is a well-developed committee structure for dealing with the running of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has identified appropriate areas for development but has not clearly prioritised what needs to be done to raise standards.
The strategic use of resources	Governors and the head teacher have firm control of finances and carefully allocate funds to appropriate areas to improve educational provision. They operate within the principles of best value.

The accommodation and learning resources, including the purpose built library, are good and well used. The adjacent nursery unit is adequate and attractively maintained inside but ageing.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Helping pupils to become mature and responsible• Expecting pupils to work hard and achieve their best• Pupils like school• Pupils make good progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The amount of homework• Range of activities outside of lessons• Information about children's progress• Liaison with parents

While inspection findings confirm that the school effectively helps pupils' personal development, some older pupils do not like school and do not work or achieve as well as they could. The amount of homework is appropriate and the range and variety of extra-curricular activities are good. Parent-teacher consultation meetings are limited but the school has plans to increase these.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

Standards are very high in art and above average in speaking and listening and mathematics for seven-year-olds and above average in art for 11-year-olds and below average in information and communication technology.

1. Inspection findings show that standards for Year 6 pupils are average overall in English, mathematics and science and below average in information and communication technology. Standards in art are above average. For seven year olds, standards are average in English, science and information and communication technology. They are above average in mathematics and very high in art. Insufficient lessons were observed in other subjects to make a secure judgement about overall standards in these areas, but on the limited evidence available, most pupils' attainment is as expected for their age.
2. On entry, pupils' attainment at three years old is average. Children achieve well in the nursery and reception class because of the consistently good teaching they receive. By the time they are five, most children are set to exceed the nationally recommended early learning goals in all areas of their curriculum. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. This improvement has been achieved by raising expectations, introducing a rich and varied curriculum and improved planning and assessment. Pupils with special educational needs receive sensitive and well-targeted support, which ensures that they make good progress.
3. Pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 generally achieve well. Teachers ensure that pupils are provided with varied and purposeful learning activities and, as a result, they enjoy their learning and apply themselves well. They are productive learners and become increasingly independent as they move up to Year 3. Pupils in Years 4 – 6 achieve satisfactorily because they are conscientious and work hard when carrying out independent activities. However, in class sessions, they are not all keen contributors because of the slower pace of lessons and they do not find the content sufficiently interesting or stimulating. Often pupils with special educational needs do not always receive the right amount of support in class sessions and higher attaining pupils are not challenged enough with the result that their progress is slowed down.
4. National test results in 2001 show that standards for seven year olds are average in English and above average in mathematics when compared to all schools. When these results are compared to similar schools, the results show reading to be below average, writing to be average and mathematics to be above average. There has been an upward trend in standards in reading since 1997 with a good percentage of pupils gaining the higher Level 3 in the most recent tests. Although standards in writing have fluctuated since 1997, recent efforts to improve provision of writing have had a positive effect. Whilst there were not as many pupils reaching the higher levels as there are in reading, the percentage of pupils attaining the minimum expected standard in writing has increased. The trend in mathematics results shows a steady rise since 1997 to above average and inspection findings confirm this picture.

Teachers' assessments in science show that lower results are due to not enough pupils achieving the expected standards, although the proportion reaching the higher standards is well above average. Teachers' assessments also differ from test results in English and mathematics. The school reports this is because some staff are not yet fully secure with new procedures. Inspection findings show that recent improved provision for science in Years 1 - 3 is beginning to have a positive effect on all pupils' standards, which are now average.

5. For pupils aged 11, 2001 test results show that standards in English are above average, standards in mathematics are below average and standards in science are well below average. When compared to similar schools, the results are the same. The general trend in English has been one of continuous improvement although in mathematics, the results have fallen since 1997. The school reports that this was due to staff changes and the way mathematics teaching was organised. Inspection findings show that there are still weaknesses in practical mathematics but that, overall, standards are now average. Attainment in science fell last year and the school again cites staff changes as the principle factor in the decline. Although improved since then, attainment is still weak in the area of investigative science because the school has only recently begun to tackle this area of the curriculum. This shows particularly in the proportion of pupils who attain higher levels in science, which is well below average. Girls' attainment has declined more steeply than boys' in mathematics and science and the school is currently tackling this setting appropriate class and pupil targets.
6. The targets set for 2002 in English and mathematics are challenging as there is a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the present Year 6 than in previous years. Targets for future years are likely to be more realistic as a thorough and rigorous system for target setting is being put into place across the school.
7. Currently, standards of speaking and listening are good for pupils aged 7 and average for those aged 11. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are confident speakers who listen carefully to each other and can speak on a wide range of subjects. This good rate of development continues in Year 3 but progress in speaking skills slows down in Years 4, 5 and 6. Pupils are confident to contribute ideas but do not sustain and develop them sufficiently. They have a good vocabulary and listen well, however, they do not get enough planned opportunities to practise and develop discussion, presentation and reasoning skills.
8. Standards of reading are average across the school. Seven-year-old pupils read simple texts accurately and pupils confidently use letter sounds to help them work out new words. They are less confident in using other skills such as working out new words by using their understanding of a sentence or passage to help them. They are enthusiastic about reading but the narrow range of books they read, which do not always provide enough challenge or experience of different styles and genres limits their progress. This improves in Years 3 – 6, where pupils meet a wider range of books. Most pupils are independent readers by the time they are 11-years-old. They read with fluency and expression but lack confidence in using the skills of inference and deduction.

9. Standards in writing are average across the school. The majority of pupils write simple sentences and can select words to add relevant detail. Recent teaching focusing on specific skills is successfully ensuring that pupils use simple punctuation confidently and spell simple words accurately. However although pupils are acquiring these skills satisfactorily, they do not have enough opportunities to apply themselves in completing longer pieces of writing. This is also the case in Years 3 – 6, where there is insufficient practice in writing longer stories or other types of text. The older pupils can, however organise their writing successfully and use skills such as choice of vocabulary or specific phrases to draw the reader in. The majority of pupils in the school write legibly and take care, except for the oldest pupils where handwriting is often careless and presentation is sloppy.
10. Standards in mathematics are above average for seven-year-olds and average for 11-year-olds. Most Year 2 pupils have a good grasp of mental arithmetic and can carry out simple written calculations. They know multiplication facts up to 5, confidently name two and three-dimensional shapes and solve simple problems involving money, weight and time. Pupils in Year 6 show a sound understanding of number and use a range of strategies when working out calculations. However, they are not confident in dealing with unfamiliar applications of mathematics in everyday situations and struggle to work out solutions to problems.
11. Standards in science are average for pupils aged seven and 11. Pupils in Year 2 gain satisfactory knowledge and understanding about science through studying topics such as their bodies, light and electricity. They enjoy carrying out simple investigations and with help use their observations to make simple comparisons and explanations. By the time they are 11, most pupils have a sound foundation in scientific knowledge of the topics studied. However, they have difficulty in forming conclusions and devising systematic lines of investigation without considerable help.
12. Standards in information and communication technology are average for pupils aged seven but are below average for pupils aged 11. Training programmes have considerably improved staff knowledge and expertise although not all are confident. Year 2 pupils are competent users of new technologies and carry out simple operations, such as word processing short sentences. They use creative programmes to express ideas in art and design and understand how new technologies effect their everyday lives. Older pupils are confident users of modern technology for communicating and researching information. They competently control and access different functions to express creative ideas or present data. However, they have little experience of simulations and modelling because staff have not completed training for these areas and do not have the resources required.
13. Pupils aged seven have very high attainment in art and design. They develop very good drawing, painting and designing skills through the rich and varied diet of activities planned for them. Standards of art for 11-year-olds are good. Pupils explore and select visual and other information well and use this successfully in their own work.
14. Inspection findings and national assessments in 2001 confirm that higher attaining pupils generally make satisfactory progress but do not gain sufficient ground in Years 3 – 6 to reach levels higher than expected for their age in writing and science. There are no gifted or talented pupils in the school.

15. Overall, pupils with special educational needs make good progress. The school has made a priority of providing sufficient classroom assistants to ensure that these pupils have individual and small group support and are monitored carefully. In this they have been most effective because teachers, assistants and the special educational needs co-ordinator work effectively together through a well organised system of withdrawal groups. Pupils are given a variety of appropriately thought out activities pitched at the right level and presented in manageable learning steps. Progress of the older pupils is sometimes less than satisfactory in class sessions when work is too hard.
16. Generally, standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology are improving and the school has the capacity to raise them higher in these and other subjects, particularly if actions are taken to improve writing and investigative and enquiry skills.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

Pupils generally have a positive attitude to school, behave well and have very good relationships; some older pupils are not keen learners.

17. Nearly all the pupils have a good response to school and are interested and involved in their learning. Overall, their attitudes are good and their personal development and relationships are very good, showing a concern for each other, their school and the local community. For their age, they demonstrate a very high level of personal independence and a very mature attitude towards responsibility. Generally, behaviour is good. This indicates a decline since the previous inspection but an improvement in attitudes and personal development. Attendance is below average; this is not so good as the previous inspection but improving.
18. Pupils have good attitudes to school. Almost all pupils are enthusiastic about learning and come happily to school. Overall, they show a good level of interest and are involved in the full range of activities provided. There are some examples of very good and sometimes excellent attitudes throughout the school. In the nursery, during a lesson focusing on personal, social and emotional development, pupils arrived happily and quickly became involved in the interesting, well-prepared activities and generally sustained their interest and concentration. An excellent example of very good attitudes was seen in a Year 3 mathematics lesson focusing on four operations to work out money problems. Pupils co-operated very well, responded with much enthusiasm throughout the lesson and freely contributed their ideas as a result of the well-established working ethos and very good, enthusiastic teaching. Attitudes of pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 are more variable. In small groups, with appropriate activities, pupils are productive. This was seen in a Year 4 guided reading session with a group of seven pupils who were very keen to join in and responded well to the teacher's questions. Where pupils' attitudes are consistently good or better, it is because of well-planned, interesting lessons, with work well matched to pupils' prior attainment, consistent high expectations and generally good or better teaching.
19. However in class lessons where delivery is not inspiring, questioning or tasks are not appropriate for all levels of ability and the pace slows, pupils lose interest, become

restless and talk amongst themselves. Examples of this were observed in several lessons, including a Year 4 English lesson modelling noun - adjective where many questions were too difficult for the majority of pupils.

20. In the calm and caring atmosphere, generally free from oppressive behaviour, nearly all pupils behave well in lessons, around the school and outside. The school functions as an orderly community. With few exceptions, pupils respond well to the school's clear routines when moving around. On the playground, the majority mix happily and play well together and throughout the school generally show a caring concern to others. Staff at the local leisure centre reported that children attending swimming from this school are the best behaved and that their behaviour is exemplary.
21. Generally, when there are instances of unacceptable behaviour, these are quickly, sensitively and firmly dealt with and expectations of good behaviour are reinforced. In a Year R personal, social and emotional lesson a boy poked another in the face and he was quickly and quietly made aware of the inappropriateness of his action and apologised. Overall, the standards of behaviour are good with few examples of unkind and inappropriate behaviour and many examples of very good behaviour. Staff have very high expectations of behaviour and regularly take opportunities to reinforce these expectations. A few parents were concerned about the inappropriate behaviour of a group of older boys and to an extent the inspection supports this concern. Confidential surveys of older pupils and staff have recently been carried out by the special educational needs co-ordinator to pinpoint the problem and there are appropriate actions being taken.
22. Almost all pupils are very friendly and courteous to visitors and generally courteous to other adults and each other. Nearly all pupils are very confident and greet visitors politely. Pupils in the dining hall politely asked a visitor, "*Are you one of the inspectors?*" Even the very young children in the nursery talk confidently and clearly about their work. Generally, pupils of all ages demonstrate an awareness of the needs of others. In the reception class when changing for a physical activity in the hall, some older pupils helped younger ones struggling to get changed. Pupils generally show respect for property and handle resources with care. In a Year 3 science lesson on the characteristics of paper, they handled a variety of resources, including rulers and scissors, with care.
23. The personal development of the pupils is very good. They are eager to volunteer for, and accept responsibility. They are fully involved in the daily routines of the school community and fulfil their duties with pride. There are many opportunities for pupils of all ages to take on responsibilities. Formally, these are offered through an extensive range of duties such as librarians, collecting team points from each classroom, door monitors in the hall, operating the overhead projector, dinner money and register monitors, displaying books to support class topics, watering plants, feeding fish and looking after stick insects. There are many informal opportunities provided by teachers, such as distributing and collecting resources in lessons. Throughout the school, pupils show initiative by spontaneously helping each other, as seen in the nursery when one pupil helped another struggling to cut through thick play-dough with a plastic shape; some older pupils organise and fund-raise for charities.
24. The level of independence shown by pupils is a strength of the school. This is encouraged from the nursery onwards, where they take part in and move between practical activities, use the computer, collect, put on and return aprons, go to the toilet

and wash their hands without direct supervision. Pupils effectively moderate their own behaviour. For instance when Year 3 pupils were seated on the carpet at the start of an English lesson, they quickly settled and others reprimanded the few not paying attention. Pupils' study skills are generally being developed effectively, as seen in a small group of Year 6 pupils using an appropriate web site on mountains. Many pupils enjoy extending their learning particularly through use of the Internet. Occasionally, higher attaining pupils lack initiative unless extension activities are provided, as seen in a Year 2 lesson on making a passport. Some lower attaining pupils and those with special needs lack self-esteem. Teachers and assistants are particularly good at promoting self-worth in small group work. However in class sessions, when the teacher fails to provide for or recognise the needs of these pupils, they feel undervalued and worthless. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, a pupil said, "*I find sums impossible because I'm dumb*".

25. Through assemblies, religious education and most areas of the curriculum, pupils have opportunities to reflect on their own experiences, express their feelings and learn to respect, understand and empathise with the feelings and beliefs of others. This inclusive ethos means minority groups are welcomed into the life of the school and almost all pupils relate very well to each other. During a Year 1 history lesson about old and new toys, the very good relationships ensured that pupils were happy to answer questions even when they were not sure if they were correct, while the others listened respectfully and without interruption. Younger pupils are helped and guided by the teachers to understand the impact of their actions on others. In a Year R physical development session, the teacher reminded pupils of the dangers of pulling one another when making a large circle, making pupils aware of their own space and respecting that of the others. Generally, teachers and learning support assistants readily give praise and effective help to pupils and there is often a common feeling of encouragement between pupils, who readily give spontaneous applause for the achievements of others. Pupils willingly help and support each other's learning, collaboratively in groups or in pairs and offer to share information and resources. In a Year 1 mathematics lesson, groups of pupils worked co-operatively together on different tasks. In a Year 6 geography session, two higher attaining boys worked well together, taking turns to operate the computer and take down notes.
26. Compared with other schools for 2000/2001, the attendance rate is below the national average. This indicates a decline since the previous inspection, when attendance was broadly in line. The school reports that this was an indirect consequence of the foot and mouth epidemic, when some parents took advantage of cheap out of season offers to take pupils on holiday in term time. There has been an improvement for the autumn term when the rate was above 94%. There was one permanent exclusion in 2000/2001 and one fixed term exclusion in the autumn term. Lessons begin promptly and no time is wasted.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

Teaching in the nursery and Years 1 – 3 is good or better and pupils in these classes achieve well.

27. Teaching is consistently good in the nursery and reception classes, where almost all lessons were good. In years 1 and 2, 65% of teaching was good or better, 15% of which was very good and 35% satisfactory. The teaching in Years 3 – 6 was satisfactory overall, comprising 38% good or better and 57% satisfactory. The teaching in Years 1 – 3 is generally good and in Years 4 – 6, generally satisfactory. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection when the quality of teaching in the nursery was unsatisfactory and poor for pupils with special educational needs.
28. The good or better teaching in the nursery and reception classes is a result of effective joint planning that ensures consistency of children's experiences between the two classes. High expectations of teachers and assistants and their consistent use of praise and encouragement ensure that the children approach activities with confidence. This, coupled with effective assessment procedures, which inform planning, enables pupils to perform well at their own level because learning activities are skilfully adapted to suit their needs. Great care is taken to plan stimulating activities, which capture pupils' interest and motivate them to take part and work productively. One good example of this was the reception class's enthusiasm taking part in a Chinese dragon dance as part of their work on the Chinese New Year. Pupils develop independence because teachers have established successful routines, which reflect an appropriate balance between directed and independent tasks.
29. The overall improvement in teaching in Years 1 – 6 reflects the effective work done by the school on planning the curriculum and on improving provision for pupils with special educational needs. Planning is now thorough and detailed ensuring that lesson content reflects the programmes of study which pupils are required to cover. Teachers effectively interpret national and local schemes of work to prepare lessons, which are generally interesting in content and well resourced and organised. Appropriate links between different subjects are well exploited, which helps pupils to apply and extend their learning. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and have established routines that create an orderly working atmosphere in lessons. This is very evident when pupils are working independently as they are conscientious and apply themselves to tasks well. A good instance of this was seen in a Year 4 history lesson, when pupils settled themselves to research facts about the Blitz whilst the teacher worked with a group.
30. The literacy strategy is well established and ensures that all teachers are teaching pupils a range of literacy skills. However, although teachers conscientiously follow the guidelines for the strategy, they are not planning in enough opportunities for pupils to write at length in all year groups or to practise their speaking and listening skills in Years 4 – 6. In numeracy, teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of mathematics and they use the strategy well to plan lessons. The use of information and communication technology in teaching is satisfactory although the school does not yet have all the equipment it needs. Teachers are keen to incorporate new technologies into lessons across the curriculum and have been developing their

professional skills and knowledge through training and practice. Developments in this area are a priority for the school at the moment.

31. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs in groups is well organised. Pupils are divided into groups based on their prior attainment in English or mathematics and the learning activities are effectively matched to challenge and support these pupils. Assistants are thoroughly briefed and know how to break activities down into easier learning steps. For example, an assistant running a numeracy group for Year 3 pupils kept up a good pace and used questioning well to reinforce knowledge of number bonds to 10. The special educational needs teacher and assistants are skilled at providing the right blend of help and challenge so that pupils make gains in their learning and do not become over-dependent.
32. High attaining older pupils are encouraged to extend their thinking and mathematical skills in a withdrawn group once per week through well-planned activities and perceptive questioning. However there is a weakness in class teachers' provision for older pupils with special educational needs. Whereas teachers work well with individuals intervening at points of need, teachers do not always vary their questioning in class teaching to enable pupils with special educational needs to contribute to discussions confidently. As a result, these pupils lose interest and confidence in themselves as learners. Likewise older high attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged by teachers' questioning and often lose concentration and interest and sometimes behave inappropriately.
33. Teaching in Years 1 – 3 is characterised by high expectations and challenging activities. As a result, pupils in these classes achieve well and are active, motivated learners. Teachers use their skills well to ask specific questions which help pupils to understand and to extend their thinking. They advance pupils' learning by invoking their curiosity and provoking them into imaginative effort. So, for example in a Year 2 art lesson, pupils were encouraged to think about the purpose and design of the pots they were about to make by looking at and discussing photographs of similar articles from different parts of the world. The challenging learning environment in a Year 3 literacy lesson inspired children to create their own mnemonics to remember the spelling of the word 'friend'. Teachers know their pupils' individual strengths and weaknesses and use this information effectively when checking their progress.
34. Teaching is satisfactory overall in Years 4 –6, occasionally good and in one instance, unsatisfactory. Relationships are good in Years 4 and 5 and teachers in Years 4 and 6 manage very large classes well. There are, however, some significant shortcomings that hinder pupils' progress. Teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils' quality of thinking and productivity. Considerable use is made of worksheets that limit pupils' responses and do not contain sufficient challenge. Skills in reasoning, hypothesising, explaining and discussion are not sufficiently developed. The pace of lessons is sometimes slow and the content is not consistently stimulating. Thus many pupils are often passive during class teaching. Pupils in Year 6 are not challenged to complete enough work and take little pride in presentation because of low expectations and marking that is not sufficiently helpful. As a result, the attitudes to learning of many of the oldest pupils are unsatisfactory.
35. Currently, the school is setting class and individual targets with pupils that are communicated with parents. This is having a positive effect on pupils' progress as

they are motivated to improve and it helps to focus their attention on specific difficulties in their numeracy and literacy. Homework is set regularly although some parents thought that the oldest pupils were not getting enough. However, the inspection found that the amount of homework given is appropriate.

36. As a result of the proportion of good or better teaching in Year 1 –3 and the satisfactory teaching in Years 4 – 6, pupils who leave school aged 11 are soundly prepared for the next stage of their learning.

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

The curriculum for younger children is rich and varied and effective use is made of the local community. The provision for social, moral and cultural development is very good.

37. The school promotes a broad and relevant curriculum overall. In particular, there are rich and varied learning opportunities in the nursery and reception classes and good provision for pupils with special educational needs throughout the school. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are effective in ensuring that these pupils make good gains in their learning. The nursery provision and the provision for pupils with special educational needs were key issues in the previous inspection. The turning of these aspects into strengths of the school represents a significant improvement since 1997.
38. In terms of subjects, the quality and range of the curriculum is a strength in art and physical education throughout the school and in mathematics, religious education and information technology in Years 1 and 2. Alongside these strengths, there are also curriculum subjects where the content is not sufficiently balanced between different aspects. There are insufficient opportunities throughout the school for pupils to do extended writing and in Years 4 – 6, to take part in scientific enquiry or use and apply the mathematics learnt. In Years 3 -6, there is an imbalance in information and communication technology because too little data handling or control take place. Despite these shortcomings, the overall picture is an improvement on the previous inspection, when the imbalance and lack of breadth of the curriculum in Years 3 - 6 was a key issue to be tackled by the school. The improvement in subject provision has been driven by the introduction of detailed long, medium and short-term plans that cover the range of the curriculum.
39. Strategies for teaching literacy skills have proven effective in ensuring that the majority of pupils are taught a balanced diet of relevant skills. The same is true of the strategies for teaching numeracy. The weakness in both cases is in the application of these skills. In literacy, it is the application of skills in order to write extended pieces of work and in mathematics, the use and application of skills learnt in problem solving and investigations.
40. A significant feature of the way the curriculum is planned is the way different subjects are linked in the same lesson. For example, trick photography using a digital camera was used as a stimulus for instructional writing. There is also a good range of extra-

curricular activities that is expanding. Recorder, orchestra, gardening, netball and football activities are all provided outside of normal school time.

41. The school takes good care to ensure that every pupil has equal access to the curriculum. Good access is evident in English, mathematics, information technology and physical education. The provision for art empowers pupils from all backgrounds. The curriculum meets both national and local requirements and provides appropriately for sex education, anti- drugs and health education. These aspects are integrated into subject areas already taught, for example, pupils in Year 2 learnt about the dangers of medicine in a science lesson.
42. The statutory curriculum is fully in place except for the control aspect of information and communication technology. In fact, the statutory curriculum is reinforced through what is covered in physical education throughout the school and in mathematics and information communication technology in Years 1 and 2. Furthermore, the art curriculum enriches the statutory curriculum significantly as is seen by the high quality of pupils' work.
43. The contribution made by the community to pupils' learning is good and effectively extends and supports the curriculum. Pupils benefit from regular visits to the local town in support of a range of topics and these visits provide opportunities for many cross curricular links. The local chemist supplied resources for a Year 2 science lesson. There are close links with the local church. Members of the school and local community celebrate the major Christian festivals together and the vicar is a regular and frequent visitor. The church is well used by pupils in support of their religious education studies. Year 3 pupils made a recent visit examining Christian symbols. The local environment is well used to enrich pupils' learning. All pupils have the opportunity to visit the local library and museum. The old school building was used as a source of inspiration for clay plaques on display in the school. The school draws on expertise within the area. A local artist visited the school to work with Year 5 pupils and twelve Year 6 pupils had the opportunity to take part in a taster sailing and windsurfing activity. The swimming pool at a local leisure centre is used effectively to support pupils' physical development. The adjacent park provides a regular venue for sporting activities. The school is very involved in local traditional events such, as the weeklong fair held in the town. The Internet is becoming a valuable tool for researching topic work.
44. Links with the wider community also provide enriching experiences for pupils. These strong links and the continuous and consistent personal development guidance pupils receive are helping them to see their place in the community. Their personal development is promoted through themes in assembly, which are reinforced consistently within the classroom and around the school, through the religious education programme and planned discussion. Throughout the school, pupils are being helped to recognise and become aware of the importance of caring for the environment. Younger pupils express interest and concern for the local environment. Year 2 pupils thought that litter makes a place look untidy and older pupils agreed but said they would not pick it up as they had been warned of health risks. Year 6 pupils do not like mindless graffiti but think that street art could brighten up a dull or rundown area. Younger pupils understand the reason for rules in school and all pupils are involved in the formation of class rules. However, they are not aware that there are rules for adults. Older pupils have better but limited knowledge and a vague

understanding of voting. They know the age at which one can vote and that Tony Blair is the Prime Minister but they have no knowledge or understanding of local government. They are developing an understanding of rights and responsibilities within the community and know the difference between fact and fiction. They have a basic understanding about good and bad drugs.

45. The school has good links with its partner institutions. It has established close links with the local playgroup. Each term, a member of the nursery staff visits the playgroup and playgroup staff, children and their parents are invited to an open afternoon at the school. This makes for an effective induction to the nursery. There are good links with other primary schools through the academic council and sporting activities. There are also close links with the community college; students spend time at the school in support of their vocational studies. Arrangements for preparing pupils to transfer to the main secondary feeder school are well established. There are introductory visits for Year 6 pupils and at least two visits by the head of Year 7; the transfer arrangements for pupils with special needs are particularly good.
46. The school very successfully cultivates the personal development of pupils. The provision for moral, social and cultural development is very good and the provision for spiritual development is good. This shows an improvement in the provision of all these aspects since the previous inspection.
47. The promotion of spiritual development is good. It is effectively promoted through the caring, Christian ethos that pervades the school, reinforced by contact with the local church. Provision for spiritual development is not specifically included in subject planning. However, there are many opportunities within the curriculum, particularly in religious education, the daily act of worship, and discussion times to promote knowledge and insight into values and beliefs and to allow for quiet moments of reflection. Pupils wonder at growing and life processes and physical phenomenon in science. Nursery pupils were intrigued and amazed by the colours of bubbles and the way they burst. In English, stories and poetry offer pupils a chance to read about, explore and express their own thoughts and feelings. The Year 3 teacher reported that on a recent visit to the church, pupils thought the light shining on the gold cross looked like God's light shining on the world. In recorded work following this visit, a lower attaining pupil wrote, "*What Jesus did on the cross - it made me feel sad*". The use of spiritual music and a thought-provoking theme in an infant assembly helped pupils explore feelings of sadness. Pupils are encouraged to respond sensitively and reflect on what they have heard or experienced. Such activities are appropriate to the pupils' age and maturity and staff sensitively guide and encourage this reflection. The uniqueness of individuals and the promotion of their self-esteem is given a very high priority by most adults. The constant and consistent use of praise and other rewards by staff is considered a vital part of boosting pupils' self esteem. The excellent and very many well-presented displays of pupils' work and the general use of discussion in many lessons reflect the value teachers have for their ideas and achievements.
48. Pupils' moral development is very well promoted and is fundamental to the school's aims and practices. The recognition of right and wrong is given a very high priority and the application of Christian principles effectively supports moral development. The curriculum aims and objectives, published in the prospectus, reinforce the importance of respect for oneself and others and an appreciation of other races, religions and cultures. Opportunities are regularly, consistently and sensitively taken

by staff to foster such values as caring and respect for each other, courtesy and fairness. Staff regularly guide pupils to understand the impact of their attitudes and behaviour on others. The school actively involves all pupils in the forming of class rules. Rules governing sporting activities give all pupils an understanding of fair play. Personal, social and health education is woven into many areas of the curriculum and assemblies. Themes, such as taking responsibility for one's actions and looking after the environment, provide very good opportunities for all pupils to develop and express moral values and extend their social and personal understanding. All classes take part in a paper-recycling scheme. Pupils are taught to respect themselves, each other and helped to become aware of issues such as pollution. The expression of moral values can be seen in the wide range of charities that pupils and the school generously support.

49. There are very good arrangements for promoting pupils' social development. There are very many opportunities provided for all pupils to take on responsibility and develop an understanding of living in a community. The headteacher and all other adults provide very good role models, treating pupils, visitors and each other with respect. Throughout the curriculum, all pupils have many opportunities to learn how to relate to each other by working in pairs and in small and large groups. In a Year 1 religious education lesson, pupils took turns to share glue sticks and scissors, showing an appreciation of fairness when sharing resources.
50. The school provides a wide-variety of other activities that effectively promote social development. A varied, enriching and expanding programme of extra curricular activities, such as the mini orchestra, recorder and gardening club and sporting activities, including football, netball, sailing and swimming, encourages teamwork, competition and fair play. Lunch times and shared reading between older and very young-pupils help foster mixed age relationships. Shared Christian celebrations in the local church, school productions, assemblies, very good links with the local community and visits help pupils develop social skills when working with large numbers of people. The school encourages all pupils to take responsibility by giving them a very wide variety of duties within class and around the school. Pupils have the opportunity to voice opinions through discussions in lessons, although not sufficiently in Years 4 – 6.
51. The promotion of pupils' cultural development is very good. The school actively supports and teaches pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions through curricular provision and a range of extra curricular activities. Positive contributions to pupils' cultural development come from aspects of English, art, geography, history, information and communication technology, music, physical education and assemblies. There are also appropriate opportunities to compare aspects of other religions.
52. Art plays a very significant role in raising pupils' awareness. Excellent displays of pupils' work in a range of styles and different mediums provide an enriching and stimulating learning environment. Pupils have the chance to study the works of a very wide range of artists and other cultures and they are developing an understanding of the contributions of individuals and different peoples to current society. For example, Year 5 are studying Judaism, the Ancient Greeks and a village in India. The school held an arts week supported by visits from a local expert and Year 6 are examining ancient Egypt, the Aztecs, Hinduism and faith through art. An assistant shares a

regular library session with younger pupils where she introduces them to a range of authors and illustrators through storytelling.

53. Pupils' learning is enriched by many appropriate visits in support of topics. Younger pupils make very regular use of the immediate vicinity, visiting the library, museum, the church and the local town centre in support of numeracy, literacy, science and history. Older pupils have the opportunity to visit a Tudor house and to experience a range of outdoor activities, such as climbing and caving. Visitors have added to the programme provided by the school. These have included theatre groups, peripatetic music teaching and the southwest forest education officer.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

Overall, the school takes good care of pupils and staff know pupils very well, using assessment information effectively in some subjects but not all.

54. Overall, the school takes good care of pupils. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when it was only satisfactory. The school strives to ensure the health, safety, care and protection of all pupils, doing what it reasonably can to protect them from harm.
55. Very good relationships have been developed between staff and pupils and the needs of pupils are put first. This has created a supportive, caring community. The headteacher's and class teachers' knowledge of pupils is very good. They are aware of their pupils' various needs and respond to them in a positive and supportive way. Prompt informal support is consistently given to any pupils showing distress during daily routines and lessons. Consequently, pupils feel they are well cared for and have confidence in adults in the school community for advice and support. The school takes good care of all pupils, particularly those with special educational needs. Staff work closely with parents and carers, and other agencies when appropriate, to support these children, ensuring they are fully included in the life of the school.
56. Good child protection measures are in place, staff discussions take place regularly and all staff are aware of their responsibilities. The head teacher reports that child protection forms part of the induction procedures for new teachers. The school places appropriate importance on personal and social and health education. This is covered through other subjects of the curriculum, mainly in science and religious education.
57. The school has a very good working relationship with the education welfare officer and, if appropriate, home visits are arranged. The school nurse is a regular visitor and helps support personal and health aspects of the curriculum. The school also has links with other support agencies and close links with the local health centre. Generally, the day-to-day work of the school, in terms of supervision and awareness of hazards within and beyond school, shows a good level of responsibility for the health and safety of pupils. Security cameras and special locks have been installed and pupils using school transport are well supervised. Some parents were concerned about overcrowding on the infant playground, leading to arguments and accidents. It was not possible to verify this as during the inspection, pupils had very limited opportunities to play outside due to appalling weather. Incident books do not

indicate an excessive number of accidents. However, mid day meal supervisors report that there are no specific areas designated for the playing of more vigorous activities, such as football. During the inspection, the playground for the older pupils was dominated by boisterous games of football, leaving little room for any other type of physical activity. Supervisors carry out their playground duties diligently but report that they have received no formal behaviour management training.

58. Regular health and safety inspections of the buildings and grounds are carried out. Staff stress safe working practices to children in order to avoid hazards, and they emphasise the need to be careful when handling resources. In a Year R lesson, appropriate health and safety warnings were given to pupils handling knives and instructions given about hand washing. Volunteers helping in the school and supervisors have not received appropriate health and safety information.
59. There are very good, consistently applied formal and informal procedures to monitor and support attendance. The registers are accurately kept and monitored daily by the administrator. The education welfare officer visits every two weeks and home visits are made when appropriate. If a pupil does not arrive at school and no message is received, the administrators always telephone the parents to establish the safe whereabouts of the pupil. The school takes a very firm line on authorising absence. There was one permanent exclusion during the previous school year and one fixed term exclusion in the autumn term 2001; correct procedures were followed.
60. There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. Generally, all teachers have very high expectations, which are consistently and sensitively enforced so pupils clearly know what is expected of them. There is a climate of good behaviour in this orderly community with clear routines and class rules agreed between pupils and teachers. Class teachers regularly and consistently give praise and thanks to pupils for their good and often very good, attitudes and behaviour. Each class has a team point system that is consistently used to encourage positive behaviour, personal development and good work. Pupils have individual targets and, when these are achieved, they take their work to the head teacher who awards them certificates. Procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are satisfactory. When incidents of bullying or aggressive behaviour are seen they are dealt with immediately, using a quiet, sensitive but firm approach. There are good formal and informal procedures to follow up any incident. Pupils and parents are encouraged to share concerns with staff, which they report they can with ease.
61. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are very good. The school believes that personal development is as important as academic progress and therefore both are celebrated. Pupils' achievements for effort, attitude and behaviour are acknowledged. Those, who experience difficulty with a specific area of personal development, are encouraged to improve and rewarded when they are successful. Teachers and assistants support these pupils very well and help them set their own targets. The inclusive ethos in the school ensures that all pupils are valued as individuals and for the part they play in the life of the school.
62. The school has sound procedures for tracking pupils' academic progress. Systems for assessing national curriculum levels are particularly thorough. Portfolios of work, records of achievement, assessment on entry to the school and yearly tests provide a wealth of information about pupils' performance in English and mathematics. These

results are efficiently collated. There is less evidence of assessment in physical education, art and music. Systems for on-going assessment are well developed for some aspects, such as reading, but almost no systems exist in design and technology or personal and social education. Consequently, teachers have an accurate view of where pupils are in English and mathematics but are less confident in other subjects. Procedures for tracking the progress of pupils with special educational needs are well developed in English and make a good contribution to the good progress made by these pupils.

63. Assessment outcomes in English and mathematics are analysed in depth. Specific targets for each class arise from this analysis. Although these targets are not linked to the development plan for English or mathematics, they have a significant influence on practice, for example, spelling logs were introduced as one measure to tackle underachievement in spelling. The cycle of assessment and subsequent planning is well established in the nursery and reception classes. The same sophistication is not in evidence in other subjects and sometimes lessons are not built securely on a prior knowledge of the pupils' attainment. In particular, this is true of music, information technology and design and technology. It is also true for many of the oldest pupils.
64. There are good procedures for tracking individual pupils or groups of pupils in English or mathematics. The system of individual target setting is effective for the majority of pupils. Targeted support for groups of pupils with special educational needs is a strength of provision in the school. This includes springboard groups for mathematics, early learning support for Year 1 pupils in literacy, additional literacy support for Year 3 pupils also in literacy and in-class support for Year 4 pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

Parents are appreciative of the school and feel well informed and involved.

65. The school has good links with parents. The school endeavours to work closely with all parents, informal contact is encouraged and views sought and valued. Parents have positive views of the school. There is good formal and very good informal contact with parents, particularly those with younger children. Overall, the quality of information provided by the school, particularly about pupil progress, is satisfactory. The contribution of parents to their children's learning at school and at home is good. This broadly reflects the findings of the previous inspection. Nearly all parents are supportive of the school and satisfied with what the school provides and achieves. With few exceptions, parents find the school approachable and welcoming and willing to listen to their concerns.
66. Parents appreciate the regular newsletters, which include up to date information from the 'friends of the school', and other letters when appropriate. The school prospectus is well presented and provides useful information for parents. However, it does not meet statutory requirements, as there are some minor omissions. The governors' annual report to parents is informative and meets requirements. Appropriate curriculum meetings have been held and these were well supported. During discussions, some parents indicated that they would appreciate termly letters outlining the topics to be studied to enable them to support their children's learning.

67. The school and home work well in partnership, sharing information about pupils, their learning and how they feel. This partnership starts with good induction procedures. Effective provision is also made for pupils who start other than Year R through 'buddy' support to introduce them to the life of the school. This partnership continues through a good range of formal sharing of information and parents value the 'open door' policy operated by the school. Nearly all parents find the school approachable and know that concerns will be dealt with promptly.
68. Several parents indicated their concern about the limited number of opportunities to meet with staff to discuss their children's progress. The inspection supports this view as, currently, the school provides only one formal opportunity a year for parents to meet with teachers. This was the system when the new head teacher was appointed but from autumn 2002, there will be another formal parent/teacher evening. There has been an improvement in the quality of end of year reports. Now they indicate clearly pupils' strengths and weaknesses and show what pupils need to improve; parents are offered the opportunity to make a follow up appointment.
69. The school has a good range of productive and consistent links with parents that help pupils learn. Parents' involvement in the life of the school is actively sought and welcomed. Some parents contribute directly by helping in classrooms or accompanying school trips. Parent helpers report that they receive appropriate guidance from teachers so that they can effectively support pupils with their learning and that they have good informal communication with staff. Parents support their children's learning at home, with reading in the early years and with increasingly difficult homework, as pupils get older. Home/school link books are well used by many parents listening to their children read and these form a useful communication between school and home.
70. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to be involved from the earliest stage and report they value the advice and support given. They appreciate the quick response of the school when a specific concern arises and appreciate the additional support given, especially to Year 6 pupils.
71. The 'friends association' makes a good contribution to the life of the school and pupils learning. Members of the committee are committed to improving the quality of the learning environment and to provide funds to improve the range of learning resources. They see their role as mainly fund raising and to provide a range of social activities for pupils and adults.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

Leadership and management are generally good and there is a commitment to raise standards further.

72. Overall, the leadership and management of the headteacher, teachers with management responsibility and governors are good.
73. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school's educational direction and supports this with detailed analyses of pupils' attainment and plans for improvement. Since his appointment in 1999, he has worked extremely hard and successfully to establish a good learning environment for the pupils and to create a team ethos amongst all staff. He has a collaborative leadership style that has ensured that governors, staff, pupils and parents contribute to discussions about important decisions, such as consultations about the new building and the range of the curriculum. One successful strategy has been a reorganisation of the management structure within the school to create teams of teachers who now can focus on areas of the curriculum and on year groups in order to raise standards. He has also tackled a number of shortcomings identified in the previous inspection. In particular, he has improved the quality of education provided by the nursery and provision for pupils with special educational needs.
74. A key achievement has been to raise the overall quality of teaching in the school. This has been accomplished through a thorough revision of curriculum planning and the adoption of schemes of work for every subject so that there is consistency in what is being taught across the school. He has linked this well to effective procedures for performance management that ensure staff have now embarked on a coherent plan of professional development and have a structure for the process of self-evaluation. As part of the head teacher's strategy to build a cohesive team in the school, classroom assistants are included in this process and they receive training and are consulted about their role. All staff are given good support for their professional development and as a result there is a clear commitment to improving professional expertise and thus raise standards further.
75. One clear priority has been to raise the quality of curriculum leadership by teachers with management responsibility. Although subject leaders are now more actively involved in leading their subjects and the majority have improved provision, they do not yet systematically monitor teaching and pupils' learning. As a result, they do not have a clear picture of standards in all subjects. A system of tracking and analysing data in literacy and numeracy devised by the headteacher informs a very well organised target-setting process with clearly defined targets for each class. Through this system, class teachers are left in no doubt about the areas that need improvement in literacy and numeracy. In addition, the school employs a large number of classroom assistants to provide targeted support for literacy and numeracy. However, these focused actions are not clearly linked to the school's development plan. Furthermore, targets on the development plan have not been clearly prioritised and many actions lack rigour. Systems set in place to evaluate the work of the school are thus not yet sufficiently consistent. As a result, some important issues with regard to the quality of teaching and pupils' learning in Years 4, 5 and 6, have not been tackled effectively.
76. Governors now have a well-established and effective committee system, which receives reports from curriculum leaders as well as the headteacher. Individual governors have specific curriculum responsibilities and report regularly to the relevant committees. The governing body has established a system of monitoring visits linked to targets on the development plan and reports findings to staff. This, alongside

annual reviews of test results, has resulted in the governors having a clearer picture of the work of the school and has also facilitated a closer and more supportive relationship between governors and staff.

77. Targets identified in the development plan are now clearly costed and the school has a five-year development plan, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. Spending priorities have been carefully targeted following the move to the new building. Finances are well managed and best value principles are adhered to in the management of finances and purchase of resources as, for example, the purchase of information and communication technology hardware and networking arrangements. The finance committee is properly constituted and regularly monitors the school's spending.
78. Funds for special educational needs have been well used to provide a good level of individual support for pupils. As a result of this careful planning and the deployment of learning support assistants, these pupils make good progress. Plans to evaluate important improvements in the school, such as the library provision and the employment of more classroom assistants, have been drawn up in order to evaluate their effectiveness. In the recent audit in June 2001, only minor recommendations were made and these have already been carried out.
79. The school makes efficient use of the new technologies both in teaching and in administration. Staff are being trained and resources improved through the purchase of modern systems. This has not yet had time to have an effect on raising standards in information and communication technology of 11-year-olds. The library cataloguing system is now up and running with the result that all pupils now have regular access to books. The electronic pupil tracking systems are being developed further. National grants are being used effectively to improve information and communication technology provision in the classroom. The use of new technologies has also considerably reduced bureaucracy.
80. Effective use is made of resources and staff within the school. There is a strong partnership between the assistants, teaching staff and the special educational needs co-ordinator. Consequently, there is a shared understanding of what has to be done to provide for pupils with special educational needs and these pupils are well supported. The way staff have used display in the new school is very effective. The glorious colour and texture in the art displays and the carefully arranged interactive displays for subjects such as science, history and religious education, make for a very stimulating and visually pleasing environment, which positively enhances pupils' learning. The provision of resources is generally good; however there is still a lack of control and data handling equipment for information and communication technology and the range of reading books for younger pupils is too narrow. The school makes good use of its new accommodation and is in the process of developing the grounds so that there will be better play and sports facilities for pupils. The caretaker and his staff take good care of the school, which is clean and tidy and free from graffiti. The administrative staff is very good and allows the headteacher to carry out his professional duties more effectively.
81. Considering the average levels of attainment on entry at three-years-old, the generally good achievement of pupils from the nursery to Year 3 and the efficient use of finances, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The governors, headteacher and staff with management responsibilities should:

raise standards in information technology by:

(1 12 30 38 42 79 80 165 168 174)

- providing a curriculum which meets requirements, with appropriate resources to support pupils' learning;
- developing teachers' knowledge and expertise, particularly in Years 3 – 6 in the areas of control, simulation and modelling.

improve all pupils' skills in writing and in mathematical enquiry and scientific investigation in Years 4 - 6 by:

(5 9 10 11 14 30 34 38 39 75 95 96 98 101 115 129 133 35)

- providing more opportunities for extended writing in all subjects;
- giving older pupils more opportunities to discuss, try out and test their own ideas when tackling experiments or investigations in mathematics and science.

Improve older pupils' attitudes to learning by:

(3 15 19 24 32 34 99 114 116 118 121 134 135 196)

- enabling and supporting pupils of all abilities to take part in class sessions;
- making learning more interesting and stimulating.

extend the role of managers by:

(75 101 126 150 156 161 174 188 198)

- supporting them in effectively monitoring and developing teaching and pupils' learning in their subjects.

improve the quality and effectiveness of the school's development plan by:

(63 75)

- establishing clear links between the prioritising of what needs to be done and assessment information used to determine targets for classes and pupils.

The school may wish to consider these further areas in the action plan:

Speaking and listening in Y4 - 6 (7 50 104 105)

Water safety and personal survival skills in swimming lessons (185)

Assessment procedures in subjects other than English and mathematics (62 63 136 150 156 174 181 198)

The school prospectus (66)

Playground organisation and supervision (57 58)

Range of reading books for younger pupils (80 92)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	58
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	42

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	6	30	20	1	0	0
%	0	11	53	35	2	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents 1.77 percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	21	216
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	16

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	33

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	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	6.0	School data	0.4
National comparative data	5.6	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	15	12	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results	Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	14
	Girls	10	12
	Total	22	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (83)	96 (85)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)

Teachers' Assessments	English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11
	Girls	9	8
	Total	20	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (78)	70 (85)
	National	85 (84)	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	22	18	40

National Curriculum Test/Task Results	English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	16
	Girls	16	12
	Total	32	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (69)	70 (81)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)

Teachers' Assessments	English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	16
	Girls	14	11
	Total	30	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (78)	86 (88)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)

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	203
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.6
Average class size	32.2

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	200.8

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	50
Number of pupils per FTE adult	7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
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	£
Total income	491,808
Total expenditure	483,885
Expenditure per pupil	1,983
Balance brought forward from previous year	6,076
Balance carried forward to next year	13,999

Recruitment of teachers

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

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)	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	176
Number of questionnaires returned	58

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	34	5	0	3
My child is making good progress in school.	41	50	3	2	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	31	55	5	3	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	21	45	21	9	5
The teaching is good.	52	33	5	0	10
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	29	45	24	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	48	40	7	5	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	41	3	2	2
The school works closely with parents.	29	45	21	3	2
The school is well led and managed.	55	31	3	2	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	50	2	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	33	22	7	12

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

82. There are 65 children in the Foundation Stage. 40 of the three and youngest four year-olds attend the separate nursery unit part-time for mornings or afternoons. They make a good start to school through an effective induction programme that fully involves parents. The majority have average attainment on entry. The older four-year-olds and pupils aged five are accommodated in the reception class, situated in the main school building. During their first years in school, all children achieve well because of the consistently good teaching they receive. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Currently, most children exceed the nationally recommended early learning goals in the reception class and the rest are well on the way to doing so. They are confident, caring, and supportive of each other, respectful and very enthusiastic learners.

Personal, social and emotional development

83. Children's personal, social and emotional development is promoted effectively through a rich range of opportunities provided by the teachers and support staff. Staff know their children very well and successfully help them acquire a high level of self-esteem, confidence and independence. Children's efforts are praised and rewarded constantly and their work attractively displayed. They have a good understanding of right and wrong because expectations are clear; they are consistently and sensitively reminded when they make mistakes. When a three year-old boy would not let a girl have a cuddle of a baby doll, he was gently encouraged to do so by the assistant and did this willingly. Children have very good relationships with each other and the adults in the classes, who provide very positive role models. Throughout the day, all children show initiative and a level of independence when taking part in directed and chosen activities. They confidently put away outdoor coats and prepare for registration within well-established and clear routines. They co-operate happily in large and small groups enjoying a wide range of interesting activities. In a reception physical education lesson, five year-olds assisted the newly arrived four-year-olds changing and then looked at books together when dressed. They are aware of the cultures and beliefs of others through regular activities, such as celebrating the Chinese New Year through performing a dragon dance. Currently, children in the nursery are at an appropriate stage in their personal, social and emotional development and most of the pupils in the reception class have reached or exceeded the early learning goals in this area.

Communication, language and literacy

84. A good start is made in communications, language and literacy. Children respond well to the strong emphasis on speaking and listening and readily engage in conversation with staff and visitors about their views or things relating to themselves. A high attaining three-year girl confidently instructed an adult how to change a nappy on a baby doll. Children respond well to appropriately constructed questions that staff effectively adapt to take account of the stage and rate of learning of individuals, particularly those identified as having special educational needs. All children enjoy

books, handle them carefully and know that print carries meaning. In the nursery, groups of three and four-year-olds enthusiastically joined in following the story of a family of bears, which the teacher expressively read aloud. She effectively engaged them in exploring the feelings of the characters by encouraging them to act out the plot with toy bears and appropriate props. Children have an enthusiasm for reading and experience an increasingly wide range of books as they move into the reception class. Parents reading with them at home further develop their enjoyment. Older pupils also recognise the difference between fiction and non-fiction texts. These children are developing a sound knowledge of phonics, using this as a major strategy when they meet new words. In a class session looking at a poem in large print, most pupils could pick out, correctly identify and sound the similar letter forms “i” and “j”. Children with these letters in their name confidently and legibly wrote them on the white board when invited by the teacher. In both classes, words and sentences produced by staff and pupils are widely displayed and referred to. Children in the nursery are encouraged to engage in early writing as part of role-play, as they did in a baby clinic activity. In the reception class, most children have well formed handwriting and readily attempt to record simple, familiar words. Children approach language activities with confidence because of the high expectations of the teachers and staff and the sensitive support they are given. The interesting and varied activities provided regularly in both classes stimulate all aspects of language, where children’s written, spoken and reading achievements are valued and celebrated. As a result, children in the nursery are at an appropriate stage in the development of communications, language and literacy and most of the pupils in the reception class have reached or exceeded the early learning goals in this area.

Mathematical development

85. Mathematical development features in a wide range of daily activities undertaken by children in the nursery unit and reception class. Teachers and staff take every opportunity to reinforce their understanding of number. In the nursery, the assistant compared the number of fingers on a clay monster with the children’s hand and an average attaining four-year-old boy correctly calculated the difference as two. The nursery teacher checked individual’s progress in handling numbers effectively by telling a story about a dog and his bones. Two children compared and discussed the quantities and differences in the number of bones in two bowls. Older pupils in the reception class regularly work out the number present when told how many pupils are absent. This enables them to consolidate their understanding of number and counting beyond 20 in a realistic way. Children work on repeated patterns in a variety of ways. In the nursery, boys playing with a toy train were repeating sequences of coloured carriages. They used appropriate vocabulary to describe the position of colours. In the reception class, pupils were experimenting with printing simple geometric shapes in repeating patterns. They also know the correct names for square, circles and rectangle, as new words are introduced, explained and reinforced by staff. Time, order and sequencing are also regular features, with children being asked and reminded about happenings and events. In the reception class, the teacher worked successfully with a group to construct a large clock linked to important happenings in each child’s day. All children are given a wide range of challenges to match their age and ability. Those children with special educational needs receive sensitive support, as did a girl who required considerable encouragement to take part in a number counting game. Children in the nursery are at an appropriate stage in their

mathematical development and most of the pupils in the reception class have reached or exceeded the early learning goals in this area.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

86. In both the nursery and reception class, there is a wide variety of rich, first hand experiences provided to develop children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Appropriate topics are planned over the year to take advantage of the seasons, festivals, local events and other subjects of interest to children. There is a nursery garden visited throughout the year to notice and record changes. Children are developing a good understanding of investigation of the natural and made world through simple science activities, such as cutting up and examining fruit through a magnifying glass and finding out what materials are attracted to a magnet. Cooking is frequently undertaken and children have made and tasted foods from other cultures. In the reception class, they smelt, cut up and prepared food for a Chinese stir-fry and then ate the meal. The children learned a great deal from the experience and had to make a number of choices about preferences when selecting herbs and spices. One average attaining boy said about a spring onion: *"It smells like a shower."* They are developing a good understanding of the use of new technologies in their lives and in support of their learning. In the nursery unit, children role-play with mobile telephones and electric cookers and take turns to use the computer to engage in appropriate programs to develop early reading and numeracy skills. In the reception class, pupils confidently operate the computer to choose and select options, such as two boys did when using the mouse and an art program to produce line and colour patterns. As a result, children in the nursery are at an appropriate stage in their understanding and knowledge of the world and most of the pupils in the reception class have reached or exceeded the early learning goals in this area.

Physical development

87. The school has good indoor and outdoor facilities and good resources to support the promotion of children's physical development. The nursery has a partially covered secure play area adjacent to the unit and the reception class has easy access to the playground and large school hall. These are used effectively to give children the opportunity to develop confidence in the way they move and handle equipment. During the inspection, the weather was not suitable for outdoor activities but photographs showed children using buckets and spades in the sand pit, driving carefully on tricycles along a marked out road, kicking balls and taking part in races. The reception class, enthusiastically and with good control followed simple commands when taking part in a Chinese dragon dance in the hall. Children in both classes have many opportunities to take part in creative activities where they carefully handle paint and small tools and equipment, such as brushes and scissors. In the nursery, a high attaining boy used coloured chalk and a board to draw details of a digger, clearly showing the wheels and scoop. In the reception class, two average attaining girls cut out the net of a box carefully, put glue precisely on small flaps and folded the card to make a three-dimensional shape. In these ways, children are developing good manipulative skills, which enable them to carry out precise movements and actions. They make both a physical and mental effort to listen carefully and respond correctly and to think before they act. Consequently, children in the nursery are at an appropriate stage in their physical development and most of the

pupils in the reception class have reached or exceeded the early learning goals in this area.

Creative development

88. Creative development opportunities are often provided within topic themes as was happening in the reception to celebrate the Chinese New Year. A variety of stimulating activities are well planned to match the age and maturity of the children in both classes. They carry out creative tasks sensibly, handling potentially messy materials with care. In the nursery unit, the three-year-olds moulded clay when making monsters and ensured no odd pieces fell on the floor. They concentrated well and tried to do their best, responding well to the suggestions of the support assistant. In the reception class, pupils made and decorated Chinese fans and enjoyed explaining how they were made and for what purpose. A low attaining four-year-old said: *"It makes wind when you wave it and it cools you down."* The classes are rich with colourful displays indicating that pupils' creative efforts are shared, valued and appreciated. Children also enjoy listening, making and responding to music. In the reception class, a small group of three and four-year-olds worked happily together making up their own song while playing pitched and un-tuned percussion instruments. In the reception class, half the class took turns to watch each other perform a dragon dance to the beat of a bass drum. Children in the nursery are at an appropriate stage in their creative development and most of the pupils in the reception class have reached or exceeded the early learning goals in this area.

TEACHING

89. The teaching in the nursery unit and reception class is consistently good. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection when the teaching overall was considered unsatisfactory. Staff work effectively together to plan a rich, varied and interesting programme that sustains children's interests and concentration. Expectations are high and this ensures children work very hard and are productive. Teachers and support assistants know their children very well and form very good relationships. Children's progress is monitored systematically and detailed records kept on individual pupils and used to ensure learning activities are adapted where appropriate. This is particularly helpful for the few pupils with special educational needs who benefit from this support. The co-ordinator has a clear idea of what needs to be done and is currently developing an assessment system to reflect more accurately recent changes to the Foundation Stage curriculum. While the nursery unit is still separated from the new school building, it is on the same site and liaison is far easier than at the time of the previous inspection. There is now effective communication and liaison on many levels, including teachers and children visiting each other, joint planning and sharing resources. The Foundation Stage is well placed to continue to improve and raise standards further.

ENGLISH

90. Standards in reading and writing for seven and 11-year-olds are average. The speaking and listening skills of seven year olds are above average, whilst those of 11-year-olds are average. These standards are not as high as those of the seven and 11-year-olds in the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. This is a significant improvement since 1997 when the progress made by these pupils was judged to be unsatisfactory. Overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory with some good teaching seen in Year 3 and Year 4.
91. Pupils make steady gains in developing reading skills through Years 1 and 2. This is the result of sound teaching, which is well planned and organised and matched to the ability of each pupil. The systems for keeping track of each pupil's progress are thorough and involve parents as well as pupils in recording progress in a helpful home-school reading record. This record has a valuable focus on the effect of parental involvement in the pupils' learning with opportunities for parents to record the way in which their children tackle difficult words. Teaching has a good emphasis on the phonic skills and these are regularly used by pupils to decipher words. The teaching of other strategies for understanding difficult words, such as using the sense of the passage to predict what a word means, has not been so effective. Consequently, a number of pupils are stuck if they are unable to work out how to read a word by sounding it out. Displays are used to good effect to reinforce the phonic work covered. Class books written by the pupils on a wide variety of topics encourage pupils to appreciate the way books can be used to convey information in an attractive format, for example, a class book on the story of vegetable soup. The introduction of a well-equipped and well-organised library, very effectively run by a learning support assistant, has had a positive impact on pupils' learning. Pupils' research skills are developing well and teachers use the facilities of the library at every opportunity.
92. By seven-years-old, standards in reading are average, as shown by the way the majority can read simple texts accurately with understanding and express relevant opinions about what they have read. The majority also know how to use the contents in an information book. Pupils enjoy reading and their enthusiasm and good behaviour when involved in reading sessions enhance the learning experience. However, progress is limited because pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. Although teachers structure the content of guided reading sessions meticulously, a narrow range of books is used for group reading. Pupils are not experiencing a sufficient range of genres, styles and authors in their reading diet. The same is true for the books available for reading at home. The leadership team in the school has recognised this and the introduction of the library has begun to tackle the issue. As well as the restricted range, some pupils have to wait a week before being able to change a home-school reading book. Consequently, progress is limited for some more able pupils. Support for pupils with special educational needs is good and is enabling these pupils to make good progress. Teachers work well with skilled learning assistants who have clear learning objectives and are effective in giving pupils access to appropriate learning activities.
93. Pupils continue to make sound gains in reading as they move through Years 3 - 6. The library has had more of an immediate effect on broadening the range of pupils' reading experience because more pupils choose home reading books directly from

the library. The teachers are also using a wider range of reading material in class and group reading sessions. For example, a Year 4 group of pupils made good gains in analysing the language of a 'Jack in the Box' poem looking at word definitions and linking this to a greater understanding of similes. The same group of pupils are also reading together 'The Iron Man' by Ted Hughes. The use of the library has also enabled the pupils to make good gains in the skills of finding information for themselves. Pupils are developing a sound understanding of non-literary texts, mainly through well-organised teaching, which focuses on specific qualities in the text. For example, pupils in Year 6 were able to identify words used to persuade the reader in an article arguing against the use of animals in circuses. Whilst pupils are becoming competent readers, the oldest pupils are not being given enough opportunity or encouragement to stretch their thinking beyond the literal and employ inference or deduction. This is the result of teaching in which the pupils are passive and not sufficiently challenged to think.

94. By 11-years-old, the standard of pupils' reading is average. Most pupils are independent readers who read fluently with appropriate expression and sufficient pace to communicate the words. They use non-fiction books confidently to find information. Most are able to justify views with examples from books read, such as giving reasons why Harry Potter is intelligent. Pupils are less confident at identifying significant themes or ideas in books. Whilst being able to describe in detail what is happening in a book, they have not thought about the importance of particular events or characters, such as why characters act in the way they do.
95. In writing, the picture of the achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is similar to that in reading, namely good gains in important areas driven by sound teaching with notable strengths, but also an important area, which is limiting progress. Pupils are developing well in an appreciation of the meaning of words and the way the good choice of a word can be used powerfully to convey meaning. This is the direct result of teaching that consistently draws pupils' attention to the effect of words. In particular, good questioning skills are used when talking to the class and displays are used very effectively to stimulate and extend pupils' language. Handwriting skills have been the focus of recent school development. The literacy leadership team has been effective in driving an initiative that has given the pupils skills and practice that enable them to make good progress in developing a clear, joined style of handwriting. After the success of the handwriting, the leadership has now included writing, spelling and extra support for Year 1 pupils amongst its targets for improvement. This is the result of detailed analysis of test data and consequently addresses vital areas for the subject's development. Although success criteria are not specific, the action from these initiatives is beginning to improve pupils' quality of learning. Pupils in Year 1 have started using a valuable spelling log that is enabling them to build up a bank of words for reference and practice. The support provided for Year 1 pupils is well targeted and skilfully taught to enable the pupils involved to make good gains in learning.
96. The leadership team have also been responsible for the successful implementation of the literacy strategy in the school. This has been taught consistently and is effective in ensuring that appropriate writing skills are taught to the pupils. Progress in writing is hindered because teaching does not ensure that these skills are transferred into the pupils' everyday writing. This is because the pupils do not spend enough time developing the new writing skill with increasing challenge until the teacher is sure that

the skill has been assimilated. A further hindrance is the fact that pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to practice new skills in extended pieces of writing. Recent teacher training has highlighted these aspects of learning and the leadership has plans to translate this into classroom practice.

97. By the age of seven, the standard of writing is average. The majority of pupils can express themselves in writing using apt and often interesting vocabulary. They are beginning to write effectively for different purposes, such as describing their notable features for a passport. Sentence structure tends to be simple, repetitive and using limited conjunctions. More able pupils are able to vary sentence structure with guidance. Written work is usually punctuated by capital letters and full stops. The spelling of most pupils' work is appropriate for their age. The sound teaching of phonics is reflected in the way most spelling mistakes are justifiable in terms of the sounding out of the letters used. The standard of handwriting is now becoming a strength, predominantly clear, legible and joined.
98. Sound gains in writing skills are made by pupils as they progress through Years 3 - 6. The strengths and weaknesses of pupils' performance are very similar to those occurring in Years 1 and 2. Pupils continue to be taught important writing skills as the result of well-ordered and resourced lessons, which cover a good balance of different skills from writing persuasive arguments to editing letters. Again, this initial teaching is not used to the best effect because skills are not followed through into pupils' everyday writing and pupils are not given enough opportunities to refine and hone skills in extended pieces of writing. The good use of words evident with the younger pupils is built on effectively, for example, in the teaching of 'calligrams' in Year 3. Consequently, pupils develop writing that shows an appreciation of genre and style. A Year 5 pupil described 'Catherine wheels howling' when trying to write words that were onomatopoeias and Year 6 pupils wrote lively, realistic dialogue between a father and child.
99. Spelling logs have been introduced to good effect in Years 3 and 5 with the intention to extend this strategy to Years 4 and 6 following this year's trial period. The good foundation in handwriting skills established in Years 1 and 2 is built on effectively in Year 3 but tails off dramatically for the oldest pupils. This is due to low teacher expectations, marking that is sometimes incomplete and offers scant guidance for further improvement and poor motivation from many pupils to take a pride in their work. This is in marked contrast to the generally good attitude throughout the rest of the school. With this exception, the positive attitude to writing shown by the majority of pupils enhances their rate of learning.
100. The lively, well-planned sessions supporting pupils with special educational needs in Year 4 are very effective in ensuring that these pupils have access to the full curriculum and make good progress. The sessions are effective because they are characterised by positive relationships, skilful teaching by the learning support assistant and clear learning objectives. A well-organised target-setting system for individual pupils also gives the pupils ownership of the learning process and enables them to make measurable gains in reaching specific targets.
101. Standards in writing for pupils at 11-years-old are average. Most pupils can produce ordered, lively accounts with interesting sentence construction and a timing that engages the reader. This was evidenced by some vivid writing describing an event

in the past where the pupil did something wrong. Basic punctuation is sound, for example, the correct use of speech marks characterises the writing. Spelling is also sound, it is generally accurate and pupils have good skills in finding the correct spelling of words for themselves. Handwriting in general is often careless and lacks a flowing individual style. Work is poorly presented, with many pupils scribbling mistakes out and making little effort to show their writing in the best light. The quantity is low, with very few examples of quality extended writing. Although management of the subject is a strength overall, with many effective initiatives based on accurate data and perceptive analysis and a high level of commitment from the literacy team, the monitoring of standards in Year 6 is a shortcoming. No effective action has been taken to tackle weaknesses in pupils' performance. No direct monitoring of teaching in English takes place throughout the school; a situation, which means that managers do not have a clear view of the effect of teaching on the learning taking place.

102. Pupils make good progress through Years 1 and 2 in the development of speaking and listening skills. This is primarily due to good teaching that encourages pupils to think, question, work out responses, develop vocabulary, listen to others and respond appropriately. High expectations are laid on pupils to contribute during class sessions and great value is placed on pupils' responses. Opportunities are regularly taken to extend the vocabulary of pupils. Activities set for pupils often stimulate the development of speaking and listening skills, such as the task set for Year 1 pupils to work together in sorting books into fiction and non-fiction categories. The good behaviour of pupils in lessons allows productive conversations to develop in class sessions, enhanced by good relationships between teachers and pupils.
103. Consequently, the standard of the speaking and listening for seven year olds is above average. The vast majority speak confidently on a wide range of subjects that interest them, such as favourite television programmes or the effect of medicines. They listen carefully to each other and often build on or respond to what the previous speaker has said, for example, one pupil followed on from another pupil's explanation of how to make a mirror tile by adding further detail.
104. The good gains in the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills continue through Year 3. The positive features of teaching exemplified in Years 1 and 2 also characterise the teaching of this year group. However, progress slows through Years 4 - 6. The teaching of Years 4 and 5 is still dominated by good relationships and a positive ethos that encourages pupils to contribute. This good situation is not capitalised on. Although pupils cooperate well together, they are not sufficiently challenged to provide reasons for their opinions and actions. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their own ideas. There is good attention to the development of vocabulary, such as in a Year 5 literacy lesson when the terms alliteration and onomatopoeic were reinforced. However, there are only limited opportunities for pupils to apply and adapt the vocabulary learnt, for example, there are few opportunities for pupils to participate in a range of drama activities.
105. As a result, by the time they reach 11-years-old, many pupils are often passive during class sessions without the expectation of contributing significantly to the learning process. Pupils do not regularly question the ideas of others. While pupils talk and listen confidently, they have not practised these skills over a broad range of contexts and many have not developed the skills to frame their points of view. The

concentration and good behaviour of pupils are a strength. Overall, standards in speaking and listening for 11-year-olds are average.

106. A strength of the provision in literacy is the way literacy skills are used to good effect across the breadth of the curriculum. For example, the significance of the exclamation mark was realised when used in a Year 1 class in posters about the dangers of medicine. Year 6 pupils had to scan information books to research a geography topic on mountains.
107. There have been a number of significant improvements in the provision for English recently, such as the new library, the implementation of the literacy strategy and the support provided for pupils with special educational needs. Information and communications technology is used effectively to support teaching and pupils' learning. For example, Year 3 pupils word-processed a description of a giant. Many teachers use the overhead projectors as a means of sharing texts and drawing pupils' attention to words and sentence structures. The strength of the current literacy leadership team, both in expertise and commitment, means that the school is well placed to deliver further improvements.

MATHEMATICS

108. Standards in mathematics are above average for pupils aged seven and average for 11-year-olds. This is a decline since the previous inspection when standards for the oldest pupils in the school were well above average. These lower standards in the current Year 6 are as a result of there being a wide spread of abilities and a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs than in any other year group.
109. Inspection findings reflect national assessment results for seven and 11-year-olds during the period 1997 to 2001. The rise in standards for the younger pupils has followed the national trend and never fallen below average. In contrast, standards for older pupils have declined steadily to below average last year, with girls showing the greatest fall. The school reports that changes to the way teaching groups were organised and the deployment of temporary staff for Year 6 resulted in the low standards in 2001.
110. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. In seven out of 10 mathematics lessons observed, the teaching was good or better with four being very good. Two lessons were satisfactory and one was unsatisfactory. The teaching in Years 1 to 3 is consistently good and of the older pupils generally sound.
111. Most teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of mathematics because of effective training in the National Numeracy Strategy. As a result, lessons are generally planned well to build on pupils' prior learning and have an appropriate balance of activities involving the class, groups and individuals.
112. Younger pupils achieve well because their teachers have high expectations of what they can do, provide them with an interesting and varied range of learning activities linked to first hand experiences, make good use of the plenary to consolidate and challenge pupils' learning and make very good use of assistants and resources to provide very appropriate support. In a Year 2 lesson on the properties of two-dimensional shapes, pupils eagerly engaged in discussions about the similarities

and differences as the teacher first introduced a pentagon and then a hexagon. Their understanding was further helped by the effective use of a large visual aid on which to record systematically the number of sides and vertices. Low attaining pupils and those with special educational needs covered similar ground by joining in a game, naming shapes with an assistant. They were fully involved, enjoyed the challenge and made good progress.

113. Most of the current Year 2 pupils use mental recall to add and subtract to 20. They understand and use two-digit place values when carrying out simple calculations. Many understand and identify multiples of numbers from one to five and can predict the next number in a sequence. Nearly all know the names of basic regular two and three-dimensional shapes and can also sort them according to properties. They collect data and present and interpret pictograms. In describing their mathematical thinking, they use appropriate vocabulary. They have a firm foundation of measure from the variety of practical problem solving activities they undertake confidently exploring time, money, weight, length and capacity.
114. Older pupils generally achieve satisfactorily, gaining more from individual and group work than they do in class sessions. Too often, teachers concentrate on an individual or several pupils during the introduction or conclusion of lessons and those not involved disengage and sometimes behave inappropriately. At the start of a Year 5 lesson, pupils were finding efficient ways of subtracting numbers mentally, having been given different problems depending on their ability. The teacher spent too much time checking the understanding of each group by going over examples on the board, without providing others with more work. Consequently, they wasted time playing with things on their desks or looking around the room.
115. Pupils in Year 6, have a range of strategies to call on when carrying out mathematical calculations mentally. They explain their methods using appropriate mathematical vocabulary. They use written methods efficiently and accurately but do not always present their work satisfactorily. They understand the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages. They know the properties of irregular and regular geometric shapes and draw these in different rotations. However here again, unsatisfactory presentation by some pupils leads to inaccuracies. They collect and organise data using appropriate graphical presentations. However, they are not sufficiently confident when dealing with unfamiliar applications of mathematics in everyday situations, as they do not have sufficiently developed reasoning skills to work out solutions for themselves.
116. Generally, teachers' use mental and oral sessions at the start of lessons effectively to review and re-enforce previous work. These sessions are most helpful when teachers ask questions of named individuals, matching the level of difficulty appropriately. In Year 1 session on weighing, the pupils were challenged to think carefully before giving their predictions about the relative weights of objects they had handled. This avoided pupils making inappropriate guesses. However in some lessons for older pupils, appropriate questions are often asked of the class but only the high attaining pupils answer. In a Year 6 lesson exploring symbols in simple formulae, the low attaining pupils were not fully engaged, as questions were too difficult.
117. Class sessions introducing or developing new ideas work most effectively when presented interestingly using a variety of approaches with the active involvement of

pupils of differing ability. In a Year 3 lesson on calculating amounts of money and giving change, the teacher posed realistic problems based on a sweet shop. Her quick fire questions pitched at the right level for individuals, accompanied by praise and encouragement, ensured pupils joined in enthusiastically and concentrated on working out solutions quickly and accurately.

118. Pupils generally settle quickly to independent work and conscientiously complete tasks. In nearly all classes, teachers and assistants work well together effectively providing help and guidance to ensure pupils are able to make progress. In a Year 6 lesson reflecting two-dimensional regular and irregular shapes, pupils with special educational needs benefited from the sensitive and helpful support from the assistant. She broke the learning task down into manageable steps and then guided individuals carefully through the process of drawing and counting squares to construct a simple reflection. However on some occasions, independent tasks do not provide sufficient mathematical challenge. In a Year 4 lesson on three-dimensional shapes, a great deal of time was spent constructing a die rather than exploring the properties of a cube.
119. Plenary sessions are most effective when used to check pupils' understanding of their new learning and teaching points made from common mistakes. In the Year 1 lesson on weighing, many pupils were mistaken in their estimation of the weight of a large fir cone because of its size. The teacher initiated a discussion to show that careful observation of the structure of objects is necessary when making predictions. High attaining pupils correctly put forward the proposition that a house brick with holes would be lighter than a solid one.
120. In Years 3 to 6, both low and high attaining pupils are given effective additional teaching in withdrawn groups. These are organised at the same time as class mathematics lessons and cover similar ground but at a more appropriate level. In a session for Year 5 and 6 pupils helping them count in 10s with money, problems were broken down and presented in different ways with the teacher constantly encouraging and helping individuals. As a result, despite their ongoing difficulties in retaining number facts, they enjoyed the session, worked hard and completed tasks. In a Year 6 session for the more able, the head teacher provided effective challenges that enabled pupils successfully to visualise and draw the reflection of irregular shapes and record their co-ordinates.
121. Overall, pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the individual support they receive from teachers and assistants. However, some of the oldest low attaining pupils are developing a poor attitude to learning in class sessions. They try to avoid answering questions or participating in demonstrations for fear of showing their lack of understanding. In both a Year 5 and 6 mathematics lessons, girls in particular, were reluctant to join in when asked by the teacher. A Year 6 pupil said, *"I no good at maths so I don't say anything."*
122. Staff know pupils well and regularly assess them using national standardised tests. These are analysed to identify general strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning and appropriate support is given to individuals to tackle their particular problems. Recorded work is regularly marked but teachers of older pupils do not always provide sufficiently helpful comments about what they need to do to improve.

123. Homework is used appropriately to reinforce learning, particularly to help younger pupils retain and use number facts of addition and multiplication. When parents help their children at home, learning is more effective.
124. Information and communication technology is increasingly being used to support teaching and pupils' learning in mathematics. Year 3 pupils eagerly took part in a computer-generated challenge to see who could tender exact amounts of money in buying toys. Many teachers make effective use of overhead projectors to make teaching points clearer, as did the Year 5 teacher in demonstrating the rotation through 360° of an isosceles triangle. Older pupils are confident users of calculators.
125. Pupils use their mathematical skills to support their learning in other subjects. In Year history, pupils used intersecting sets to show toys they played with when young and currently and those that were still favourites. In Year 2, pupils made links between prefixes for geometric shapes, such as "tri" as in "triangle" and "tricycle" and "oct" as is in "octagon" and "octopus" to improve their understanding of language construction. In Year 5 geography, pupils used a pie chart to show the country of origin of common food imports.
126. Mathematics is now co-ordinated by a team of three teachers. This group has only met once and has not yet had time to discuss how to tackle common weaknesses identified in the analysis of pupils' assessment information in Years 4 to 6. The head teacher carried out monitoring of teaching and pupils' learning and his findings were used to draw up appropriate development plans. These have resulted in the additional support for low and high attainers, more relevant practical work for Years 1 to 3 and more displays celebrating mathematics around the school. The team have not yet been trained or supported to monitor and develop teaching and pupils' learning effectively.
127. There is a good supply of resources in classrooms and stored centrally that are effectively used by staff. The library has a small section on mathematics but pupils report that they do not often use these books to support their learning through individual study.
128. Overall, the school has made good progress in mathematics in Years 1 to 3 and there is a commitment from staff to improve teaching and raise standards further in Years 4 to 6.

SCIENCE

129. Standards in science are average for pupils aged seven and 11. This shows a decline in standards in Years 1 and 2 since the previous inspection. However, current standards in Year 2 have improved since the 2001 test results, which showed that attainment was well below average. National assessment tests show a fall in standards for 11-year-olds in 2001 whereas in the previous three years, standards had been above average. The school reports that changes in staff were the reason for this. Although overall, pupils' knowledge and understanding of science is satisfactory in Years 1 - 6, the development of pupils' skills in scientific enquiry is below average. The oldest more able pupils underachieve in this key stage whereas

in Year 2, higher attaining pupils make appropriate progress. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory with some good teaching seen in Years 1 - 3.

130. Younger pupils achieve satisfactorily because teachers plan and resource interesting and stimulating activities which capture pupils' interest and motivate them to learn. Good teaching challenges these pupils so that they develop a sound foundation to their scientific thinking. They make sound progress through Year 1, developing their knowledge and understanding in a range of topics such as their bodies, the need for a healthy balanced diet and recording the changes observed as a hyacinth grows. Their enthusiasm and interests in the topics they study enhance this knowledge. This progress continues in Year 2 where children work in a focused way on developing skills of observation investigation as well as their understanding of science.
131. Pupils aged seven can use simple equipment to make observations, such as investigating light sources and finding out whether certain materials are transparent, translucent or opaque. They understand that bones give structure to the body, that the heart pumps blood and that the lungs take in the air we breathe.
132. A good feature of lessons of younger pupils is the way that many teachers seek to capture the class's interest through well-chosen resources for demonstrations. They take care to model the skills of scientific enquiry with the result that even the youngest pupils are beginning to ask questions and think about how they might find answers to them. The effective liaison between teachers and assistants ensures that pupils are beginning to acquire these skills. Thus, for example, in a Year 1 lesson, pupils made thoughtful and pertinent observations about the way the mixture for making pizza dough changed from being "all lumpy" to "squidgy" High attaining pupils are effectively challenged through the skilled questioning of both teachers and assistants and the opportunities pupils are given to reflect on what they are learning. Behaviour in lessons is good and pupils handle equipment and resources with care and attention to safety.
133. Older pupils generally achieve satisfactorily and work conscientiously on practical tasks when working in groups. They continue to increase their knowledge of science but progress for the oldest pupils is slower. Good planning ensures that pupils are acquiring knowledge and understanding appropriate to their stage of development. Lessons are well resourced and organised and teachers manage pupils well. Pupils in Year 3 develop their knowledge of personal health by collecting facts about different types of teeth and how to look after them. Year 4 and Year 5 pupils further their knowledge of health issues through studying healthy food and look at topics such as animal habitats. However, much of their work is recorded on worksheets so pupils' progress is hindered by not having enough opportunities to write their own accounts, explanations and observations.
134. Pupils in Year 6 can construct an electrical circuit and explain how switches work or what happens when extra power is added. They know facts about their bodies such as the function of veins, arteries and muscles but are not wholly confident about other organs such as the liver and kidneys. They show satisfactory understanding of the topics they have studied, but the amount of science work they complete is limited and this is hindering their progress. Presentation of work in their books is sloppy because of low teacher expectations.

135. Although pupils are given practical investigative activities throughout Years 3 – 6, their development of enquiry skills is limited by teachers' over-direction of these experiments in Years 4, 5 and 6. Whilst pupils are given guidance for planning investigations, they seldom have the opportunity to devise their own from scratch and the oldest pupils demonstrate limited ability in presenting findings and drawing conclusions. Teachers miss opportunities to develop pupils' powers of reasoning and explaining in discussions and the pace of the lessons is sometimes slow. As a result, some pupils lose concentration and are not motivated to achieve. Too often, teachers do not vary their questioning of pupils so that the most able are challenged and the least able are supported and can make contributions.
136. The subject co-ordinator has been effective in obtaining and organising resources that are being used in lessons. He has concentrated on ensuring that all teachers are now using the scheme of work but has not had the opportunity to analyse science test results or to monitor teaching and learning. Teachers are exploring the use of new technologies in science but this is at an early stage. There are sufficient resources stored centrally and an adequate range of science books in the library. The school is aware of the need to improve provision for investigative science. However, science is not yet assessed as systematically and rigorously as in English and mathematics and the school does not have a clear picture of pupils' individual strengths and weaknesses.
137. Once assessment procedures have been refined, monitoring and development of teaching and pupils' learning are established and the teaching of investigative science is more secure, the school will be in a good position to raise standards in science further.

ART AND DESIGN

138. Only three lessons could be observed during the inspection. Judgements about attainment are based on these, on discussions with teachers and pupils, and examination of pupils' work. A significant amount of art is displayed around the school, particularly in Reception, Years 1 and 2 and the central areas. The work seen indicates that there has been an improvement in standards of attainment in art since the previous inspection. Standards for seven-year-olds have risen and are now very high. Standards for 11-year-olds have been maintained and are good.
139. Years 1 and 2 classrooms and displays are a riot of colour and textures, which demonstrate clearly that pupils are getting a very rich diet of art and design. This stimulates pupils' creativity and imagination so that they learn to use colour, form texture, pattern and different materials to a very high standard. Although progress slows down in Years 3 - 6, pupils build on their very good grounding in the subject; they apply their skills and imagination in a variety of ways and learn new methods and approaches.
140. Pupils in Year 1 use a range of visual sources to draw and soon begin to practise control of line and form. Their charcoal portraits show they are already keen observers of detail and can represent what they see. By the time they are seven, their drawing skills have developed further so that they use a paintbrush confidently to 'draw' skeletons. They employ different shades of colour to represent feelings of

heat and cold and have developed ideas for their own paintings through studying the work of artists such as Jackson Pollock. When learning a new skill, for example, how to make a coil pot from clay, they apply themselves well to the task, following instructions carefully and concentrating on practising and refining what they have learnt. They are not afraid to start again if, for instance, the pot does not look quite right. This is because they have been taught to evaluate their work during composition and have developed confidence in adapting and revising.

141. Pupils refine and improve their drawing skills as they move through Years 3 - 6. By the time they are 11, they make good use of shading to add depth to observational drawings and can apply this to their work in drawings showing perspective, in order to show background and foreground in their work. Pupils in Year 4 have studied the work of Clarice Cliff and have produced their own designs for plates, adapting and using her style to inspire their own work. Year 5 held an artwork week in the autumn term when they explored a range of styles and techniques producing pottery, life drawing, masks and pointillist paintings.
142. In lessons, pupils work conscientiously and delight in the finished pieces of work. They concentrate on refining their skills and discuss the finer points of technique knowledgeably. Two boys overheard in the Year 3 class were thinking how to get the exact shade of green they required and discussed whether paint-mixing or pastel smudging would achieve the best results.
143. The school has a good range of art resources including materials, prints of paintings and books. Information and communication technology is used well to support pupils' learning. Pupils are used to using various art programs, as seen in the Year 1 computer generated wintry pictures.
144. Teachers successfully motivate pupils to achieve well in art through the range of approaches they experience and by exploring a great variety of starting points for practical work. In Years 3 - 6, pupils have looked at the work of Dufy, Lowry and Done as well as the streets of their own town to inspire their paintings of urban scenes. Stories about monsters, work on the Romans and studies of the human body are as much a starting point for art as the work of famous artists. These, coupled with careful attention to each stage of development of particular skills such as drawing, painting and clay work, ensures that pupils leave the school with artistic skills, which show enviable control of line, form and colour in a number of media.
145. It is the meticulous detail and wealth of ideas contained in the scheme of work written by the coordinator that enables every teacher to deliver this rich curriculum. She monitors progress informally and has defined areas for development, such as the use of sketchbooks, very clearly. Her skill and dedication to the subject are a source of inspiration to the school. The wealth of display and confidence of teachers indicates that the subject will go from strength to strength.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

146. During the inspection, it was only possible to observe one design and technology lesson and one group working with a learning support assistant. Judgements have also been made based upon discussions with pupils and teachers, examination of

pupils' work and by looking at curriculum plans. This evidence indicates that the pupils' attainment at age seven is around what is expected for their age. No secure judgement was possible for the attainment of 11-year-olds because no lessons or work were seen for these pupils. This overall picture is the same as in the previous inspection. However, there is a significant improvement in provision for the subject since the teachers now have a scheme of work to guide them, as well as national guidance documents, which help them plan systematically and ensure that the curriculum is sufficiently broad and balanced.

147. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make sound gains in design and technology. They are provided with a good range of stimulating projects, such as making Jack Frost masks linked to performance in dance. Well-organised and well-resourced teaching was observed in a Year 2 lesson in which the pupils were making a dragon with moving parts. This resulted in good development of pupils' skills. The teacher gave focused attention to individual pupils during the making process. As a result, they were able to improve joining techniques and say what was working well. Pupils' positive attitudes and pride in their work contributed to a successful lesson in which the dragons produced were beautifully made and decorated. Similar strengths were in evidence in a cooking session involving a small group of pupils led by an experienced learning support assistant.
148. By seven years old, the standards attained in design and technology by the majority of pupils are appropriate for their age. Most can join and combine materials in a variety of ways, as shown by an investigation on how to join the front and back of material for Joseph's multicoloured coat. The pupils are eager and able to explain their designs and can make simple evaluations of finished products, such as an explanation as to why the pupils liked the cakes that they had made.
149. Whilst no teaching was observed in Years 3 - 6, evidence from discussions with pupils and scrutiny of their work indicates that pupils are developing appropriate designing and making skills. Year 3 pupils completed a worthwhile project in which they researched, designed and made healthy sandwich snacks for a Christmas tea party as well as designing and decorating paper plates and tablecloths. The project was clearly enjoyed by the pupils who made good progress in understanding the way the designs for sandwiches have to meet different needs. Year 4 pupils showed a good application of acquired knowledge of electrical circuits in the design and making of a torch. They showed good skills in producing clearly labelled designs, although the cutting and finishing was not of a high quality in some cases. A Year 5 project on making bread was thoroughly researched and evaluated by the pupils who were able to clearly identify ways of improving the bread after the batch was made.
150. Although only in post for a short time, the co-ordinator has been effective in ensuring that curriculum guidance is in place. Thorough assessment systems for tracking pupils' progress or informing planning have yet to be put in place, neither are there as yet any systems for the co-ordinator to monitor teaching or pupils' learning. The work covered shows that good use has been made of appropriate resources. There is adequate provision of books in the library to support pupils' learning.

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

151. During the inspection, two geography and three history lessons were observed. Judgements have been made on these observations, examining pupils' work, talking to pupils, discussions with the co-ordinator, looking at teachers' planning and from displays around the school. This evidence indicates that pupils' attainment at seven and 11 is generally around that expected for their age in both geography and history. This is the same as the previous inspection.
152. The curriculum provision for both history and geography has improved since the previous inspection with the recent introduction of detailed schemes of work following national guidelines. This is now satisfactory in both subjects across the school.
153. In geography, pupils in Year 2 are progressively building their knowledge about the school locality and a contrasting area in the British Isles and the island of Struay. Pupils are able to identify different uses of land and transport. Year 2 pupils explained the importance of ferries and boats to transport on the island as opposed to that of buses and cars in and around Holsworthy.
154. By Year 6, pupils develop a satisfactory range of geographical skills including knowledge and understanding of environments at several scales in various parts of the world. Their knowledge of physical and human processes is enhanced by independent research using secondary sources such as the Internet, books and CD-ROMS. In the Year 6 lesson observed, pupils were researching particular mountains, including the Rockies, and preparing for a class presentation. Well-planned research sheets guided the pupils in this activity resulting in most achieving satisfactorily.
155. In Years 1 - 6, the curriculum is enriched by a range of field trips both within the locality and beyond. For example, Year 2 pupils visit the beach at Widemouth Bay and Year 5 study Dartmoor. An extra curricula club attended by around sixteen pupils meets weekly to help improve the local environment. This is helping pupils to understand how the environment can be sustained and improved as they weed flowerbeds and plant trees and shrubs around the town park. This group is also forging good community links. Displays around the school are used effectively to support learning, as in the Year 3 classroom showing town and country comparisons based on a video resource pack.
156. The co-ordinator is beginning to develop the geography curriculum by ensuring suitable resources are available to support study units. She has successfully introduced the scheme of work and made effective use of the immediate locality by involving pupils in planning the new school grounds. Opportunities for professional development and monitoring and assessment remain limited, as development of teaching and pupils' learning in geography has not been a development priority for the school.
157. In history, pupils aged seven are developing a sense of chronology. They understand that history is about the past, are aware of the principles of "then and now" and use appropriate vocabulary in their descriptions of events and happenings. They are beginning to place events on simple time lines, sequence events and search for evidence of the past. In Year 2, pupils can explain why the Great Fire of London started, how it spread and what is known about it today. They understand that a diary, such as that kept by Samuel Pepys, can provide important information about the past.

They also learned how difficult it can be to write with a quill pen at first hand. Pupils know that looking at a range of sources can discover information about the past. Year 1 pupils studied artefacts related to lighting, Victorian toys and they compared old with new teddy bears. Year 2 pupils examined books, photographs and video programmes to learn about Florence Nightingale. They also searched the Internet for information about the Great Fire.

158. By the age of 11, pupils have studied a range of historical periods including Romans, Vikings, Tudors, Aztecs and the Britain since 1930. They understand that through researching primary and secondary sources such as artefacts, reference books and photographs they can discover further information about periods of history. They know the difference between fact and interpretation and are beginning to link cause and effect. Year 5 pupils completed some very effective first hand research, interviewing long-standing members of the community. This included a retired teacher who had worked at the school between the 1920s and 1960s. This kind of work gives pupils a real insight into local life in the recent past and helps them to understand the effect of both social and technological change. Year 6 pupils know about and are able to discuss the Aztecs in detail, explaining religious rites, such as human sacrifice and dress and eating habits. Year 6 pupils enjoyed this topic and felt that they had learned much through the range of opportunities presented via the internet, CD-ROMS, books and their teacher's explanations. Worksheets, provided to support their learning, were not stimulating and did not motivate the pupils. The amount of written records of their learning is small.
159. Across the school, teachers make effective use of visits within the locality; for example, Year 3 pupils visited Cotehele House as part of their Tudor study.
160. Good use is made of displays around the school and these are often linked to other curriculum areas. A superb range of artefacts has been collected in the Year 4 class to form their own museum of Britain at the time of the Blitz. Effective use is made of current events in the lives of the children through displays, collections of photographs and digital images to illustrate changes to the school community over the last few years, for example as a result of major building work and transfer to the new school.
161. The co-ordinator is experienced and provides good leadership and support. Informal monitoring of history takes place but systematic monitoring and development of teaching and pupils' learning has not been a school priority.
162. The library is well stocked with an appropriate range of books for pupils of all ages and used frequently by individuals and small groups following up geographical and historical topics. The increasing use of the Internet and the identification of favourite websites is beginning to have a positive impact on learning in history and geography. Co-ordinators for both subjects plan to increase the range of information technology to support learning, improving the CD-ROM and video materials currently available.
163. The implementation of the new scheme of work and the use of national guidelines indicates that standards in history and geography have the potential to improve.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

164. No lessons of information and communication technology were seen during the inspection. Judgements have been made based upon observations of pairs and individuals working in and outside classrooms, discussions with pupils, interviews with teachers and examination of curriculum plans and recorded work.
165. Standards in information and communication technology for pupils aged seven are as expected but for 11-year-olds are below average. This is the same as in the previous inspection. However, there has been considerable improvement in staff's knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and resources.
166. The school has realistic development plans for the subject that include the continuing upgrading of hardware, extending software and completing teachers' and assistants' training. However, not all staff are equally confident so the range and use of information and communication technology to support teaching and pupils' learning across year groups and subjects are still variable.
167. Year 2 pupils are confident users of new technologies. They know how to control a computer mouse to load and retrieve programs and carry out simple operations. They are familiar with the layout of keyboards and can word process short sentences, carrying out basic functions, such as back spacing and deleting. They can use creative programs to draw, design and colour their own ideas and print their finished products. They enjoy working in pairs or independently when following programs to reinforce their learning, particularly in literacy and numeracy. They are able to operate technological devices found in the home, such as television remote controls, mobile phones, microwaves and digital alarm clocks.
168. Older pupils use a range of appropriate information and communication technology resources to help them in their learning and living. They are fully aware and confident users of modern technology in everyday life, such as calculators, mobile telephones and text messaging, digital cameras, remote control devices in the home and the Internet in communicating and researching information. Their word processing skills are appropriate for their age and they write, correct, edit and publish text and illustrations to a good standard. They are beginning to use emails and recognise the convenience and efficiency of communicating in this way. They use computer assisted design programs to express their creative ideas and competently control and access the different functions to produce complex and imaginative displays. They are beginning to organise and present data using simple spread sheets and graphical displays but need considerable adult support in setting up these operations. They have had very limited experience of simulations and modelling using information and communication technology.
169. Teachers are helped considerably in their introduction of new operations and functions by support from classroom assistants. Pupils are given individual help and guidance in mastering new skills and quickly become independent. The assistant helped Year 6 pupils, researching a geographical study of mountain terrain, to narrow down their investigation when using the search engine. She also guided them to develop their studies by reference to atlases in the library. As a result, pupils were highly motivated, worked very hard and gathered relevant and detailed information on their chosen mountain, in this case Mount Elbert, Denver.

170. In most classes, new technologies are used effectively to promote pupils' creativity, especially in art - a strength of the school. In Year 3, the class were producing a sketch of a character from their reading in literacy. Individuals took turns in using an appropriate computer program to experiment with smudging and blurring colours for the best effect when creating an image of "Big Foot". In Year 5, similar work on producing artistic work in the style of Matisse and Kandinsky was undertaken and attractively displayed.
171. Pupils with special educational needs make good use of information and communication technology. Assistants help pupils consolidate their learning through the effective use of appropriate literacy and numeracy programs and they make good progress.
172. All pupils enjoy using new technologies and they work well individually and in pairs. Two Year 1 boys had an earnest discussion, while working side by side on two computers, about how to make different sized and coloured two-dimensional shapes for the cover of their mathematic topic booklets. Generally, pupils have very positive attitudes to the subject and are keen to take every opportunity to explore possibilities. For instance, during break times small groups cluster around computers in the library, under supervision, to complete projects.
173. Some staff are becoming very confident in their knowledge and understanding of new technologies and help others when they can. They are also trying out more technologies to support their teaching. In Year 1, the teacher regularly uses a large display screen to support her teaching of literacy and leaves the screen saver on, programming it to show the phonics' focus for the week. In Year 5, the teacher uses the over-head projector effectively to illustrate and simplify complex mathematical operations.
174. The co-ordinator is leading staff training sessions and has been successful in acquiring and installing modern equipment. He has not yet had the time to be able to monitor teaching and pupils' learning to identify and tackle shortcomings. While a new programme of study has been introduced that follows national guidance, not all teachers of older pupils yet have the expertise and resources to promote aspects of control and modelling. As a consequence, the curriculum provided for older pupils does not meet requirements. Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory but new systems are to be introduced in the summer term following the next stage of teachers' training.
175. The library has an electronic system for recording book loans and researching and supporting pupils' class and individual study. All classes use this effectively for timetabled visits when a librarian is present.
176. The school has the potential to raise standards higher for seven and 11-year-olds as the effect of training and the use of new technologies become more widespread.

MUSIC

177. Over the period of the inspection, two music lessons were seen and singing was observed in a singing practice and an assembly. Judgements have also been made based upon a discussion with the music co-ordinator and by looking at curriculum plans. This evidence indicates that the standard of singing is average for seven and 11-year-olds. There is insufficient evidence for judgements to be made on other aspects of the music curriculum. In the previous inspection, judgements about singing were the same for seven-year-olds but higher for 11-year-olds.
178. Seven-year-old pupils sing with great gusto and enjoyment. The majority sing in tune with a good sense of rhythm. Pupils aged 11 do not always sing with as much enthusiasm, but they do pay appropriate attention to dynamics and tempo.
179. Pupils observed in Years 3 and 4 are making sound progress in the development of important skills. This is the result of skilful teaching by the music co-ordinator who uses his thorough subject knowledge to good effect. The strengths of this teaching are positive encouragement, good use of musical instruments, good class management, persistent teaching of technique and consistent teaching of technical language, for example, ostinato. Consequently, pupils respond with enthusiasm and enjoyment in a well-controlled environment where performance dominates. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils whispered lyrics while a pupil played softly, all pupils showing a good degree of control in their performances. There is a good balance between performance, composing and listening in the lessons observed. Progress in appraising is hindered because there are not sufficient opportunities for pupils to comment constructively on each other's performance and incorporate suggestions into subsequent efforts.
180. The facilities for music teaching are very good, but at the moment the music room is being used for special needs teaching. There is a good selection of new instruments that help raise standards and increases pupils' motivation.
181. The school is continuing to develop valuable out-of-school music activities with a small orchestra now added to the well-established recorder groups. These clubs raise the profile of music throughout the school and result in good gains in performance technique by those attending. The few pupils who receive instrumental tuition from visiting specialists learn important skills that are incorporated into the musical life of the school. The recorder groups play regularly in assembly. The tracking of pupils' progress throughout the school does not take place in music. Consequently, the teacher is unsure of how good the pupils are when he is starting the lesson. Some more able pupils are therefore not being sufficiently challenged by the work set.
182. The co-ordinator has completed some high-quality monitoring of teaching in Years 1 and 2. This resulted in very helpful guidance on how to improve teaching, as well as the clear identification of good practice. The co-ordinator has also been effective in introducing new curriculum guidance for teachers. If this guidance is fully implemented, there is the potential for standards to improve.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

183. Only one lesson of dance, one of orienteering and one of swimming were seen during the inspection. Judgments have been made on these observations, talking to pupils, examining the portfolio of work and discussions with teachers and looking at their plans. This evidence is insufficient to make secure judgments about overall standards in physical education. Most pupils leave school aged 11 being able to swim 25 metres.
184. There has been improvement in provision since the previous inspection as now the curriculum follows national guidance and includes a wide range of enrichment activities. This range is impressive, especially for the older pupils in the school, who are excited by current developments in physical education. Swimming lessons have been extended to include Years 1 to 5 this year. Outdoor and adventurous activities for Year 5 and 6 include climbing and caving at Haven Banks Outdoor Centre and canoeing and raft building at the Shoreline Centre. The adjoining town park is used extensively for sports, orienteering and cricket. Pupils have the opportunity to participate in after school clubs that include soccer, netball, short tennis, indoor games and athletics. Opportunities to evaluate pupils' own performance are now included as part of the planning for every lesson.
185. In the swimming lesson observed, Year 5 pupils were confident in the water with most swimming across the pool unaided and practicing good style in the main strokes. The pool instructors led the pupils through a range of exercises improving technique during the lesson. The pool instructors report, and the school confirms, that aspects of water safety and personal survival skills are not taught currently.
186. Pupils take part in lessons with enthusiasm and enjoyment. They are well behaved, persevere and co-operate well with each other. In the Year 2 dance lesson, pupils worked on a circus theme being the strong person and tightrope walkers. Good planning, clear explanation, enthusiasm and appropriately challenging activities were set by the teacher. This enabled pupils to develop their skills building easily on previous experience, which they did with gusto.
187. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in activities, benefiting from good support from classroom assistants. They are able to make good progress as the learning is broken down into manageable stages.
188. The school has a balanced programme of activities covering athletics, dance, games, swimming and outdoor activities that meet the requirements of the national curriculum. The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator. Professional development in physical education is planned for staff, linking to the appointment of a sports' development co-ordinator as part of a national initiative. As yet, the systematic monitoring and development of teaching and pupils' learning has not been a school priority.
189. Equipment and apparatus for physical education are good. The school hall, hard playing areas and the adjoining town park also extend the provision well.
190. The school development plans for physical education, the enthusiasm of staff and pupils and the range of learning opportunities on offer to pupils indicate that the school has the potential to raise standards.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

191. During the inspection, only four lessons of religious education could be seen. Judgements have been made based on these observations, discussions with pupils and teachers and examination of curriculum plans and recorded work.
192. Standards in religious education for seven-year-olds and 11-year-olds are as expected in the locally agreed syllabus. This is the same as the previous inspection but, overall, there has been an improvement in provision. A new locally agreed scheme of work has been introduced and the school reports that this has helped non-specialist teachers considerably in their lesson planning, a weakness five years ago.
193. Pupils in Year 2 enjoy retelling stories from the Old and New Testament. They have a good understanding of the messages behind these accounts and can explain, for instance, that God was displeased with people when he sent the floods and instructed Noah to build the ark and save his family and the animals. They understand that it is important to keep promises, just as God did to Noah. They know the names and reasons for some of the principle Christian festivals and most can say at what time of the year they occur. They know the importance of symbols to different religions in important ceremonies, such as light in Diwali, Hanukah and Advent.
194. Pupils in Year 6 know some of the similarities and differences between world religions. They have studied Hinduism and Judaism as well as Christianity. They know that people who follow a religion have special customs and practices that influence their everyday lives. They can compare their experiences with a Hindu family in Britain. They have considered what different people have said about God and can give their own explanation. They know the importance of caring and forgiveness and can relate these to their own experiences.
195. When teachers choose interesting ways of presenting new ideas, support their teaching with well-chosen resources and make links to personal experiences, pupils are interested and involved in their learning. In a Year 1 lesson on Zacchaeus and friendship, the teacher effectively used the sad experience of a boy's loneliness during the lunch break to introduce the Bible story. He said, "*Nobody plays with me. I was all on my own.*" Her telling of the Bible story was expressive and she used a well-illustrated large book to show different scenes in the account. Throughout, she asked questions to clarify pupils' understanding and helped them to understand the historical background. An average attaining boy correctly concluded that Jesus and his followers could not have travelled by modern transport. He said, "*He must have rode a donkey or walked.*" To further reinforce their understanding of friendship and loneliness, the class acted out the story with different pupils taking the main characters, showing these feelings most dramatically.
196. While older pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of religious education, they generally do not find lessons interesting. They are not stimulated to want to explore and discuss ideas when read accounts by teachers, followed by question and answer sessions and the completion of worksheets. In a Year 5 lesson on the ceremony of Bar Mitzvah, the teacher read an information sheet on the ceremony and asked questions to check their recall and understanding. Pupils were well behaved and initially attentive but towards the end of the passage, many lost interest and gazed around the room.

197. Information and communication technology is being used increasingly to support pupils' learning in religious education. In Year 2, pupils proudly described how they had created designs for Joseph's coat of many colours before using the printed templates to make them. Year 1 created designs for stained glass windows, after visiting the parish church, and produced a wonderful display on an end window in the corridor outside their classroom.
198. The co-ordinator has a secure knowledge and understanding of religious education, is enthusiastic and has worked hard to ensure colleagues understand the new syllabus and have the resources to support their teaching. Currently, assessment procedures are based on the previous syllabus and the co-ordinator is waiting for guidance to introduce new systems. She has been successful in giving religious education a higher profile in the school, particularly by improving the range and quality of displays in and out of classrooms. She has not yet had time or training to monitor and develop teaching and pupils' learning in order to make lessons more interesting in Years 4 - 6.
199. Resources are generally good although it is difficult for pupils to have first hand experience of other religions because the nearest centres they could visit are a considerable distance away. The library includes sufficient books on Christianity and other religions that are used effectively by pupils when following individual projects. The local vicar is a frequent visitor to the school and regularly takes assemblies. Classes visit the parish church for services and study sessions. A number of parents regularly give considerable support by putting together colourful displays to celebrate pupils' work and stimulate their thinking.
200. The enthusiasm of the co-ordinator, her realistic development plans and the positive attitudes of younger pupils indicate that standards in religious education will rise in Year 2 and, with support and commitment from staff, will improve in Year 6.