

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ASPIN PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Knarborough, North Yorkshire

LEA area: North Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 121432

Headteacher: Mr. P. Kendall

Reporting inspector: Mr. R. Gill  
4074

Dates of inspection: 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> December 2001

Inspection number: 194140

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 – 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Grimbald Road  
Knaresborough  
North Yorkshire

Postcode: HG5 8HD

Telephone number: 01423 863920

Fax number: 01423 860849

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs. A. Stirling

Date of previous inspection: 28<sup>th</sup> April 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
4074	Mr. R. Gill	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage, art and design, and music.	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
8988	Mrs. J. Cross	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with its parents?
23204	Mrs. C. Wojtak	Team inspector	Mathematics, design and technology, and equal opportunities.	How well are the pupils taught?
21993	Mrs. D. Atkins	Team inspector	Science, geography and history.	
30823	Mrs. B. Clarke	Team inspector	English, English as an additional language and religious education.	
28011	Mr. J. Porteous	Team inspector	Information and communication technology (ICT), physical education, and special educational needs.	How good are the curricular opportunities?

The inspection contractor was:

Independent School Inspection Services (ISIS)

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Aspin Park Primary School is situated in Knaresborough, near Harrogate, in North Yorkshire. Most pupils live close to the school, but some travel to it from other parts of the town. The school is larger than an average primary school. One per cent of pupils is eligible for free schools meals, which is very well below the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below the national average. There are four pupils with a statement of special educational needs and this is below the national average. The majority of pupils with special educational needs have learning difficulties. There are a few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and a very small number that are at an early stage in their learning of English. Most pupils attend the school's reception class on a part-time basis, before joining it fully. Teaching in the reception classes is arranged temporarily to cover for the absence of a full-time member of staff who is also the co-ordinator for art and design. Most children enter the school with levels of attainment that are above average. The school has achieved the Investors in People Award.

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

The achievements made by pupils at Aspin Park are good. By the end of Year 6 pupils regularly reach standards that are well above average in English, mathematics and science. Standards for seven and eleven year olds have been consistently well above average since 1997, with only a few minor variations. This maintenance of high standards is due to the very good leadership from the headteacher, deputy headteacher, senior managers and the governing body, all of whom work together very well to ensure the school's success. The quality of teaching is good with a measure of very good and some excellent teaching. The school spends an average sum on each pupil and continues to provide very good value for money.

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

- Pupils reach standards at seven and eleven that are consistently well above average because staff work hard and are so well directed.
- There is very strong leadership that makes sure that the school's aims are implemented excellently.
- The excellent relationships throughout the school promote very high levels of personal development among pupils and ensure that attendance is well above average.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very well managed and pupils make very good progress.
- The school makes excellent use of its links with the local secondary school and parents to improve the education it provides.

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

- The effectiveness of the current systems for recording pupils' attainment, and for setting targets for future achievement.
- The management of subjects other than English, mathematics and science to provide a balanced programme of study.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

When the school was inspected in May 1997 it was described as a very good school with no key issues to tackle. Since then the school has, among other important developments, successfully implemented the National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies and vastly improved its provision for information and communication technology (ICT). One of its major achievements is to have maintained high standards in English, mathematics and science, and even improved in some areas like writing, in the face of many demands to effect change and ensure development. In order to provide enough time for pupils to succeed in English, mathematics and science, some other subjects, like religious education, art and design, and music, have received comparatively less time and pupils' achievements have slowed in these subjects. A good start has been made to assess and record pupils' attainment but there is still more work to do in this aspect. Overall, the school has made good progress since the last inspection.

## STANDARDS

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

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

**Key**

well above average    A

above average        B

average                C

below average        D

well below average    E

Over the last five years pupils' attainments in English, mathematics and science, compared to national averages and similar schools, have been consistently well above average, with the occasional exception. The English results in 2000, for example, were not so good because teaching did not prepare pupils well enough in writing. This was a temporary fault that was remedied in 2001.

A similar pattern in results exists for seven year old pupils. Results have been well above the national average for reading, writing and mathematics in every year since 1997 with the exception of 2000 in writing when pupils reached an above average level. As in the juniors, teaching was improved in 2001 to help pupils achieve higher results in writing.

Current attainment, by the pupils in Year 2 and in Year 6, matches the successes of previous years and is well above average in English, mathematics and science. This represents good achievement on a regular basis.

Targets are calculated carefully each year, for Year 6 pupils, to take account of individual strengths and weaknesses, but also to keep abreast of national improvements. The school has been successful at meeting increasingly more demanding targets and is on course to meet its challenging targets in 2002.

Beyond English, mathematics and science, pupils' attainment is at least appropriate by the end of Year 6 in all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Pupils exceed



national expectations in ICT. They go beyond those expectations by the age of seven and go well beyond them by eleven. In history and geography, pupils in Year 6 attain above what is expected for their age, and in physical education and design and technology, pupils throughout the school go beyond what is expected. Children achieve well in their reception year and by the end have maintained their position of being above expectations in communication, language and literacy, and mathematics. They are also on course to go beyond the national expectations for their age in knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development, and to meet them in creative development. They have achieved very well in personal, social and emotional development because many children were below expectations in this area of learning and are on course to reach expected levels.

Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in their learning. Pupils at an early stage of learning English as an additional language make good progress. Many of those capable of more demanding work achieve well. Those capable of higher levels in English, mathematics and science invariably reach them.

### **PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are eager to learn, concentrate hard on their work and want to succeed. They are justifiably proud of their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very well at all times. The climate for learning is conducive to fullest attention and productive work. Pupils play happily together in their free time.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent. Relationships are outstanding and personal development is very good. Older pupils look after younger ones extremely well and act very responsibly in their role as prefects.
Attendance	Excellent. Attendance is well above the national average and there is no unauthorised absence. Very few pupils are late to school.

### **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

<b>Teaching of pupils in:</b>	<b>Reception</b>	<b>Years 1 – 2</b>	<b>Years 3 – 6</b>
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching is very similar to that found at the time of the last inspection in 1997. The school has successfully maintained a consistently good level of teaching. In 1997 no lessons were judged as unsatisfactory and this was again the case.

The sound, good and very good teaching is spread throughout the school with the excellent teaching found more often in Year 6. The successful teaching is founded on a systematic form of planning for lessons that makes sure that pupils make good progress. This is particularly true in literacy and numeracy lessons, but also in other subjects. Teachers

manage classes very well. The relationships created and pupils' responses in terms of effort and concentration, for example, are keynotes to success throughout the school. Teachers are very well supported by a range of classroom assistants who work with pupils that need extra help.

Children of reception age are taught well particularly in literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. They are taught very well in personal, social and emotional development. A temporary arrangement for teaching exists at the moment to accommodate the absence of a permanent member of staff. This arrangement is working very well and the children are responding sensibly and with enthusiasm.

Teaching in English, mathematics and science is good, on balance, with some very good and occasionally excellent features. The staff have implemented the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy very well since the last inspection and these are having a strong influence on the way pupils learn and their achievements.

Teaching is often good in other subjects. It is successful throughout the school in ICT, physical education and design and technology. It is also good in history and geography for pupils aged seven to eleven. In religious education, art and design, and music, teaching is satisfactory and pupils achieve well enough.

Teachers are very successful at meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Those who can manage more challenging work are catered for well. They are being challenged, particularly in mathematics where they are grouped by attainment. Occasionally, in other lessons they are not expected to do any different work to average attaining pupils and this limits their progress.

#### **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. Pupils are provided with a curriculum that not only meets statutory requirements but also gives a wide range of additional opportunities for learning. The provision in some subjects is restricted by a lack of time for the ambitious long-term plans.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils' learning difficulties are identified quickly and they receive an individual plan that breaks learning down into small and achievable steps. This provision is very well managed by the co-ordinator.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The school has a very small minority of pupils at an early stage of learning English and good progress is being made.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The strength of this provision is that social and moral development is so well planned for, both in and out of lessons. Cultural development is good but multi-cultural education is not as well developed as the rest of the provision. Spiritual development is sound.

How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are very well cared for at all times. The assessment of their work is very good, but the use made of the results of these assessments to guide future learning for individual pupils is at an early stage. A good start has been made, but the school recognises, correctly, that there is more to accomplish in this area.
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The school works very well with parents and they have a very positive opinion of the school. Parents' involvement in their children's learning is excellent and the school has very effective links with them. Some parents believe, with justification, that the lack of a parents' consultation evening in the autumn term prevents an even better understanding of their children's progress.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The leadership shown by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other senior managers is very effective in ensuring the high academic standards and the pupils' excellent personal development. The management of time and the monitoring of subjects beyond English, mathematics and science are major areas for development.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. Governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses and work very well together to fulfil their responsibilities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The monitoring of the school's work is undertaken well. The school's development plan contains appropriate priorities and relevant action is planned to tackle them.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. There is a very positive team spirit demonstrated by all staff. The school's computers are used particularly well and have an extremely positive effect on pupils' learning. Funds for special educational needs are used effectively and the accommodation, although limited, is used very well.

The school provides a very good number of teachers and classroom support assistants all of whom are well qualified for their responsibilities. Resources for teaching and learning are generally good. The governors make sure that the school gets the best value from its funds and their strategic role in school improvement is very good. They are very well supported in this by the headteacher. Governors are not only concerned about financial implications, they are very knowledgeable about the standards that pupils achieve and how teaching is successful in maintaining these standards. They play their part well in challenging the school to maintain and improve its standards.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Children are expected to work hard and achieve their best.</li><li>• Children like school and are well behaved.</li><li>• The teaching is good.</li><li>• The school is well led and managed.</li><li>• The children are helped to become mature and responsible.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The amount of homework given.</li><li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li><li>• The way the school uses the reading scheme.</li><li>• The way the school works with parents.</li></ul>

The inspectors agree with all that the parents like about the school and with some of the concerns about the reading scheme and information about progress. Extra-curricular provision for pupils is wide ranging and the school works very closely with parents. The amount of homework given is appropriate.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Pupils' attainments at the end of Year 6, in English, mathematics and science, compared to national averages and similar schools, have been consistently well above average, since 1997, except on a couple of occasions when they dipped uncharacteristically. There is a similar pattern for seven year old pupils at the end of Year 2. These high levels of attainment are the result of much hard work on the part of the staff and pupils. The school has met or exceeded increasingly demanding targets, year on year, to stay ahead of the rising national averages. The school has learnt from the occasions when standards have slipped and immediately put measures in place to deal with the issues, for example, in pupils' writing where a greater attention to spelling and handwriting was needed in the compositions.
2. Children's attainment on entry to school is generally above what would normally be expected for their age. Children successfully maintain this advanced level of attainment and are on course to be above the expected levels, particularly in literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development, by the end of the reception year. The well above average standards at the end of Year 6, therefore, represent good achievement from this above average level on entry to Year 1.
3. Currently, pupils are achieving standards that are well above average. The school has set challenging targets in English and mathematics for eleven year olds and the pupils are on course to meet these targets. The pattern of achievement throughout the school is one where high standards at the age of seven are maintained through to Year 6. In the past, achievement went unrecorded in a systematic way and this meant that in the juniors, for example, teaching in Year 6 often had to accelerate pupils' learning rapidly in order to meet the targets. The school has identified this as a weakness and started to create a comprehensive record of pupils' attainment that can be used to decide what degree of progress individual pupils should make in any one year. In essence the tests' results and other assessment information have not been used well enough, in the past, to guide pupils' progress. The lack of such a system has meant that teaching has caused achievement to be successfully maintained but it has not identified specific areas in which pupils could make even better progress. Consequently, the school has not had, for example, results in the highest five per cent nationally.
4. Beyond English, mathematics and science, pupils' attainment is wholly typical for their age in three of the eight subjects of the National Curriculum: religious education, art and design and music. For reception aged children, attainment is typical in creative development and personal, social and emotional development. The latter represents very good achievement because children entered the school with uncharacteristically low levels in this area of learning. Pupils' attainment goes beyond expectations in design and technology, physical education and in ICT, where, in Year 6, attainment is well above expectations due to teachers' and pupils' effective use of the superb facilities provided. In history and geography, pupils' achievements improve from the infants to the juniors and attainment advances from broadly average at the age of seven to above expectations at the age of eleven, due to the increased opportunities to research and present findings in an individual way.

5. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in lessons. There is an effective system to help teachers identify pupils who may be experiencing learning, emotional or behavioural difficulties. Classroom assistants give very good support in lessons and they help to raise the standard of pupils' work when they work with individuals or groups. They are also very effective in dealing quietly and unobtrusively when pupils occasionally find it difficult to cope with the stresses of normal classroom life. The good relationship between adults and pupils contributes to the very good progress made by pupils with special educational needs. The school receives good quality professional support whenever it is needed. Individual education plans are very good. They identify the small steps each child needs to make in order to make progress.
6. Currently, a few pupils are at an early stage in learning English as an additional language and are making good progress with specialist help from adults and sixth formers from the local secondary school. Furthermore, pupils who are capable of the highest attainment make good progress. There is no significant difference between the achievements of boys and girls. All pupils make good progress in lessons. Talented pupils do well in music and physical education, but not so well in art and design because this subject receives too little time. This is the same in music lessons where achievements are not so good as in the choir or orchestra. Pupils are beginning to make rapid progress in learning to use computers. The positive effect of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy is seen across the curriculum, for example in the precise measurements needed in design and technology or the written work related to history and geography.

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

7. Pupils' response to school life is even better now in many respects than at the time of the last inspection when the overall picture was then very good. Attendance is now excellent and the manner in which pupils relate to everyone they encounter during the school day is equally outstanding. The children are a credit to the school and their families.
8. Attendance has risen at a steeper rate than nationally in recent years and is now very high by comparison. Unauthorised absence is minimal and very few pupils arrive late. These factors greatly influence the high standards achieved because pupils are able to build upon their knowledge consistently day by day.
9. Almost without exception parents believe that their children like school and this is apparent in pupils' amenable dispositions and their very positive attitudes towards learning. They put their all into every aspect of school life and are justifiably very proud of their achievements.
10. When the children first start school in the reception classes their personal and social development is not as advanced as their academic attainment. In general they quickly respond to the active encouragement from teachers and support staff to get on well with one another, share and take turns, and behave in an acceptable manner. They enjoy the activities provided for them and are very eager to learn. Sometimes over-eagerness gets the better of them. A few, for example, are still finding it difficult to hand over control of the computer keyboard when the sand timer indicates that they have had their turn. Others get so involved in their learning that they are prone to snatching from one another when the teacher is not directly supervising their group. By the time they move into the infants they have learnt to relate much more positively to one another.

11. Pupils of all ages listen very carefully to their teachers' explanations and speedily get down to work. They are mature learners, sustaining concentration very well, asking pertinent questions and wanting to succeed. In a Year 5 numeracy lesson, for example, the pupils enjoyed the challenges posed by quick-fire mental estimations and by solving mathematical problems based on real-life situations. They worked very hard throughout the lesson and the classroom was totally silent, as they became lost in concentration on the exercises. Pupils work productively whether completing tasks individually or as a team. A very good example of this occurred in a Year 2 design and technology lesson when pupils first noted down their own thoughts for creating an irresistible fresh fruit salad and then pooled these ideas very effectively in teams.
12. Pupils with special educational needs try very hard with their work at all times. They respond very well to the adults that work with them and as a result make very good progress. This positive response from pupils is also true of the few pupils who find it hard to behave well.
13. Behaviour has improved since the last inspection and is now very good throughout the school day. This agrees with the perceptions of parents. Bullying and racism are not issues that cause worry or concern. There was no such behaviour seen during the inspection. Pupils focus fully on their learning in lessons without interruptions through indiscipline. They play happily during their free time whether spent outdoors or inside. High quality play equipment helps pupils to get on well together by giving them plenty to occupy themselves constructively. There are no exclusions from the school.
14. Pupils' personal development in the infants and juniors is very good. They have a very mature understanding of the impact of their actions upon others because of the way that the school relates their right and wrongdoing back to its child-centred aims. The pupils are very sensitive to the feelings of others and are friendly, open and honest. They willingly and very sensibly take responsibility for helping in the smooth running of the school. Older pupils are very good at looking after younger ones at break and at lunchtime. Year 6 in particular make themselves extremely useful in their role as prefects and are very dependable. They willingly give up much of their leisure time to assist teachers by undertaking small chores around the school. The prefects also enjoy helping mid-day staff to supervise children who eat packed lunches in classrooms. They like playing games with the younger ones. During the inspection, for instance, a Year 6 pupil very maturely delighted an entire Year 1 class with a game of 'Simon says' when it was too wet to go outside.

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

15. The quality of teaching and pupils' learning is good. This is a very similar picture to that found at the time of the last inspection. The quality of teaching is good, on balance, in the reception classes with several lessons being taught very well. Across the school the quality ranges from sound to, on occasions, excellent. There is little difference between year groups although there was no teaching seen in Year 6 that was less than good. Examples of outstanding lessons were, more often, seen in Year 6, although often lessons in other year groups contained excellent elements. The result of this successful teaching is that pupils' learning is also good. This confirms the parents' view expressed in the pre-inspection questionnaire where 95 per cent of respondents thought that teaching is good.

16. Children of reception age are taught well. Teaching in literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development is good with some examples of very good teaching. Children are taught very well in personal, social and emotional development and they are making quick progress. The absence of a permanent member of staff has resulted in a temporary arrangement for teaching in both classes for reception aged children. This arrangement is working well and children are responding sensibly and with enthusiasm.
17. Teaching is good in English, mathematics and science. A higher proportion of very good teaching was seen in mathematics compared to the other core subjects. In Year 5 there is a stark contrast between learning in English and mathematics. Whereas it is consistently very good in mathematics, it is consistently satisfactory in English. The grouping arrangement in mathematics is one key factor in the high level of engagement of pupils who are all achieving at an appropriate pace and making such good leaps in their knowledge, skills and understanding. Although this organisation is relatively new, all pupils are responding extremely well and enjoying their learning.
18. Teaching is good throughout the school in design and technology and physical education. The teaching of ICT is good in the infant classes. The junior teachers build upon this firm foundation and teaching becomes very good. Teaching is satisfactory in music, art and design, and religious education. In geography and history it is good in the junior classes and satisfactory in the infant classes.
19. The quality of teaching in English varies from sound to excellent. At its best it is inspiring, such as in Year 6 when a teacher stimulated pupils' imagination and challenged pupils to develop their radio interview style in a very good lesson focusing on Duncan's murder, taken from Shakespeare's 'Macbeth'. Mutual respect between teacher and pupils underpinned the very good learning in this lesson. The follow-up work in most lessons emanates from class discussion. This aspect of the teaching of literacy skills is good and enables pupils to express themselves articulately in other lessons. Similarly, reading skills are well taught because all teachers insist upon high standards and the partnership between the home and the school ensures good progress. Good attention is paid to the reading and writing skills of middle and lower attaining pupils, but the highest attaining pupils are not always challenged. The system for the selection of reading material can be somewhat rigid in some year groups, which does not always engage the interest of avid readers. There is also a lack of rigour in the teaching of spelling, and the marking of pupils' work sometimes acknowledges effort rather than informing them how to do better, except in Year 6 where marking is often better than elsewhere.
20. The continued improvement in the teaching of mathematics since the previous inspection is largely due to the well-managed implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. Its structured approach has raised teachers' confidence in this subject. Teachers' subject knowledge is extremely good and the high quality of planning for different abilities is a key feature of all lessons. Lessons are varied, pacy and interesting. Teachers skilfully interweave various elements to raise pupils' confidence and readiness to tackle a challenge even if they cannot see it through to conclusion. Where misconceptions arise, teachers are quick to promote logical thinking by giving very good feedback. Teachers have identified written problems as a particular focus area and are helping pupils to develop their own strategies and the confidence to tackle word problems independently.



21. Improvement in the teaching of science, and consequently in standards of work, is the result of the teachers' good subject knowledge and more effective use of scientific vocabulary. Teaching promotes good interest in science although on occasions pupils are not encouraged to develop their own ideas. Occasionally the timing of lessons is inappropriate and the topic loses impetus because it has to be carried over to the next lesson.
22. A strong emphasis is placed on the teaching of ICT. The basic skills are taught very well. There is a real challenge for the higher attaining pupils to make use of the skills that they are taught and for the least able to consolidate them. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to practise and extract information from CD-ROMs and develop the full range of desktop publishing and data handling skills.
23. Pupils with special educational needs are taught very well in accordance with their individual education plans. The pupils are included in discussions, for example those at the beginning and end of literacy and numeracy lessons. Teachers take time to allow pupils who have difficulties in expressing themselves to make significant contributions to whole-class sessions. Classroom assistants are skilful in asking questions that allow pupils with special educational needs to gather their thoughts and then offer sensible answers. Teachers prepare work that enables pupils to succeed most of the time. The relationship between adults and pupils is mutually respectful and this allows pupils to attempt new work without being afraid to make mistakes. The special educational needs co-ordinator teaches small groups of pupils experiencing difficulties, especially those associated with reading. Pupils enjoy their time in these groups where basic skills are taught very well. The teaching of pupils for whom English is an additional language is good. The smaller groupings for teaching numeracy skills are advantageous and, together with good planning, enable these pupils to take an active part in the lesson. They learn well and make good progress. Excellent relationships between teachers and pupils also contribute to pupils' achievement.
24. Other features of good teaching include very good management of pupils through patient but firm insistence that they follow instructions and work to the school's rules and disciplinary code. This is so effective that it is unobtrusive. The best lessons get off to a brisk start and sustain interest throughout because of the varied activities. Questioning is skilful and used well to move the lesson on, often by building on the pupils' own contributions and discussing their misconceptions.
25. Teachers' methods of assessment are well implemented, but the use made of the results to record the individual progress of pupils, in English, mathematics and science, and to set targets for learning, is less well developed. This has a limiting effect on the way in which pupils talk about their own learning and understand what they need to do to improve.
26. A few parents expressed concerns about the quantity of homework. Inspectors found homework to be useful and complementary to work carried out in class. The content of the work is appropriate and there is consistency in the amount set by different teachers in the same year group.

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

27. The curriculum has a number of strengths and one important weakness but it is good overall. The school has successfully adopted the national guidelines for most

subjects and this ensures that the curriculum is broadly based. There are very good opportunities for approximately one quarter of junior pupils to receive instrumental tuition, which enable them to participate in the school orchestra when they become skilful enough. Pupils with special educational needs participate in all class and school activities. The curriculum reflects the school's aims well.

28. The staff have implemented well the new curriculum guidelines for the reception classes. They have grasped successfully the essential features of the guidance that make educational play a central feature of the day. Good teaching ensures that children play and learn well at the same time.
29. In English the broad outlines of the National Strategy for Literacy are used as the basis for teachers' planning, with additional time allocated for activities such as reading and handwriting, especially in junior classes. One result is that time available for subjects such as music, religious education and art and design, for example, is limited. The breadth and depth of knowledge and experience which teachers are able to give pupils in these subjects suffer as a result of the relatively little time available for them to fulfil the aspirations contained within the long-term plans. The problem is compounded by the fact that there is no clear guidance or general agreement on exactly how much time should be allocated to each subject.
30. The curriculum meets statutory requirements. The National Strategy for Numeracy and the amended strategy for literacy ensure that pupils have a secure foundation in these areas. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 are taught mathematics in groups based on pupils' attainment. In Year 6 this kind of grouping also happens on one day per week for literacy lessons. The grouping has a beneficial effect on the standard of work in these areas. There are clear and helpful policies for all subjects. At the time of the last inspection teachers' planning was described as being very good and this is still the case. There are clear links between long-term and medium-term plans and teachers use these well to plan their work on a weekly or daily basis. Teachers know pupils well and they plan lessons that largely challenge high attaining pupils and help lower attaining pupils to become more confident and proficient. Governors have approved a new version of the school's sex education programme and this is now implemented. The policy pays proper regard to the wishes of those parents who withdraw their children from these lessons. There is a good policy for personal, health and social education and the school successfully uses a national project to teach drugs awareness.
31. There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans are carefully written in small, achievable steps so that pupils and teachers can easily see the progress made by individuals. They follow the school's full curriculum. In one lesson a pupil learning English as an additional language was able to join in the literacy hour because of the good help provided by a student volunteer from the local sixth form. Pupils receive high quality additional help from the school's special educational needs co-ordinator to help them to become more confident and competent in skills associated with reading. This additional support for these pupils is effective, but there are occasions when a few pupils miss the same lesson week by week. Teachers take great care to give pupils work that they can do but also help them to improve in skills and knowledge. Classroom assistants work to a high standard and have a very good effect on pupils' learning.
32. There are many times when pupils have experiences beyond those normally found within the National Curriculum. This is especially true, for example, when the orchestra meets to practise. In most cases pupils have opportunities to make up any learning, which they may have missed, but this is not always the case. For example,

pupils who miss the introductory session of a literacy hour on the same day each week do not have the same experience as others. Provision for out of school activities is good. There are clubs for many sports and the school enters competitions for soccer, athletics, cross-country and netball. There is a school choir and the chess club is open to pupils of all ages. There are good links with the local business community and this leads to the school being involved in a good deal of fund raising for charity. Each year group makes visits to places such as museums, the local area and educational centres to give pupils valuable experiences to add to their academic work in classrooms. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 make residential visits, which have a considerable positive impact on their work because they are able to follow up these experiences back in school. There are very few visitors into school who help pupils to understand the multi-cultural nature of society. The school has excellent links with the local secondary school and with other primary schools in the area. These links contribute directly to the school's success in teaching ICT to a very high standard. The secondary school also provides very good, voluntary support for the school's few pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language.

33. Provision for cultivating pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development remains very good and a major strength of the school. The strongest element is the social aspect, which has improved since the last inspection and is now excellent. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good and for cultural is good but the promotion of their spiritual development has declined to a satisfactory level. This is because the acts of collective worship are not of such good quality now as they were four years ago.
34. Staff successfully take every possible opportunity to get the pupils to relate positively to others. They actively encourage team effort through planned co-operative and collaborative work in lessons, team point rewards, and extra-curricular sports and chess clubs that arrange inter-school fixtures. The two residential visits in Years 5 and 6 provide excellent opportunities for pupils to work and play together as a community. Staff are extremely successful at engendering care and consideration for others, for example, by actively encouraging older pupils to share responsibility for looking after younger ones. The very good example that Year 6 pupils set through their role as prefects inspires other year groups to be equally helpful and considerate to others. Staff encourage pupils of all ages to mix freely in the playground so there are no barriers to social interaction at playtime. Pupils in the juniors link up very successfully with the elderly who are their penpals and they distribute harvest produce in the locality. This help to widen their understanding of the way in which other people live. They are encouraged to raise money for charitable causes, sometimes by organising fund-raising events such as discos and stalls by themselves.
35. Key to the success of the school's provision for fostering pupils' moral development is the importance placed upon its aims. These are drawn up in consultation with pupils of all ages and, unusually, are written in their own child-like language. This successfully helps pupils to understand the qualities and goals they are striving towards. The reward system is suitably geared to celebrating those who best epitomise the school's aims through, for example, the weekly 'pat on the back' assembly and annual 'unsung hero' awards. Any unacceptable behaviour is clearly linked to the particular aim that has been breached so that staff are firm but fair in their approach to disciplining the pupils and the children themselves understand why. Those who fail to meet the school's high expectations by misbehaving are penalised, often by missing playtime. They are suitably encouraged to write about their

wrongdoing, consider how they should have behaved and write apologies where appropriate.

36. The school very effectively teaches pupils about their own cultural heritage through, for example, history, geography and religious education. It places a high emphasis on the arts through its choir, orchestra, theatre visits and visiting theatre companies, and through regular school productions. National book week and poetry week are suitably celebrated. Educational visits are paid to several local churches of different denominations and to museums. Pupils successfully study aboriginal and North American Indian art, and music from other cultures. They learn a little about world faiths such as Islam and Judaism, religious festivals and life in an India village. The school does not do enough, however, in this virtually all-white Western European community to raise pupils' awareness of the multi-ethnic nature of British society. For example, it does not draw sufficiently well on the wider community in this respect.
37. The daily assemblies that include the act of collective worship are not always made special enough to promote pupils' spiritual development effectively. Pre-recorded music is used well to set the tone for the worship and is suitably referred to so that pupils know what is playing. Opportunities were missed, during the inspection, to encourage them to reflect upon it, rather than walk in and out to it. Moreover, pupils were insufficiently encouraged to think deeply about the theme of the worship and relate it to their own lives and experiences. Children's own prayers are used effectively on occasion and their singing is often joyful. The 'pat on the back' assemblies are very worthwhile in terms of boosting pupils' self worth and valuing their qualities, but lack sufficient emphasis on the worship aspect. However, they do give teachers and pupils a very good opportunity to celebrate academic as well as social improvement over a short time.
38. Spiritual development across the curriculum is broadly typical of primary schools nationally. During the inspection the story of the birth of Jesus was very powerfully portrayed to pupils in all year groups by a visiting professional theatre company and this experience inspired some thoughtful work in literacy lessons. Religious education contributes satisfactorily as, for example, when Year 4 pupils were sensitively encouraged to reflect upon the different accounts of the same story in the gospels of Matthew and Luke.

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

39. Most aspects of the care shown by the school for its pupils remain equally as good as at the time of the last inspection but there is a key weakness. The data compiled by staff when they assess what pupils have learnt is insufficiently used to track their progress.
40. Staff continue to take the promotion of pupils' welfare, health and safety very seriously. Child protection issues receive a suitably high emphasis. The school is very proactive in ensuring that the work environment is an appropriate one. The staff are suitable qualified in first aid. Year 6 pupils learn effectively about emergency response by taking part in 'crucial crew' activities and visiting a local hospital's accident and emergency department.
41. Children in the reception classes are very well cared for. This is particularly true in relation to the low levels of personal, social and emotional development that many children exhibited on entry to the school this year. All adults involved with these

children have shown patience and sensitivity in handling situations. Consequently, children's achievements have been very good.

42. Pupils with special educational needs continue to receive very good help and guidance from teachers and their assistants to enable them to make very good progress. Staff treat the Plymouth Brethren children with sensitivity and understanding when, in keeping with their faith and parents' wishes, they do not take part in certain aspects of the curriculum.
43. The school continues to have high expectations that pupils will attend regularly and on time. Although attendance is very high and punctuality is very good the school is not complacent. Parents are strongly advised not to take holidays in term time and the education welfare officer is informed in the few cases where absence for this purpose is excessive. Pupils receive suitable awards for full attendance annually and teachers actively promote punctual arrival by setting targets for pupils where appropriate.
44. High behavioural standards are promoted very effectively through the school's aims, which are easy for the children to understand and are implemented excellently. Acceptable and unacceptable behaviour are clearly defined. This empowers the staff to be firm, fair and consistent and enables the pupils to know exactly what is expected of them. Positive attitudes and behaviour, whether of high standard or showing improvement, are suitably rewarded so that everyone strives for, and can achieve, success. Sanctions such as missed playtimes are applied appropriately when pupils misbehave and good records are kept of such incidents. The same high expectations are maintained at lunchtime as at other times of the day. The mid-day supervisors are valued by the school and are asked to be 'caring, helpful but authoritative'. They fulfil this important role well, helped by half-termly meetings with the headteacher to talk through any issues relating to the smooth running of the lunch period.
45. Procedures to monitor pupils' attainment and progress are good overall. They have some significant strengths and one important weakness. The overall judgement is similar to that of the last inspection. The examination of national test results and pupils' work by senior managers has identified a problem with pupils' writing. This analysis has subsequently been discussed with all teachers and essential changes are now in place. Individual targets for writing are set for pupils throughout school and these are discussed with pupils and with parents. Pupils have good knowledge of what they need to do to improve. Marking of pupils' books is conscientious and teachers often make helpful comments. The marking in Year 6 books is very thorough and gives pupils clear, attainable, short-term targets. The school is aware that pupils' spelling, especially in infant classes, is an area that requires further development and that the highest attaining pupils in Year 6 may not be achieving their maximum potential.
46. The school is rightly proud of the care it takes of all pupils with special educational needs. Educational, social or behavioural problems are identified quickly and steps are taken to help pupils as soon as is practicable. The recent arrival of a few pupils that are learning to speak English as an additional language has resulted in very good co-operation with the local sixth form whose foreign language students give regular voluntary help to the pupils concerned. Generally, procedures for identifying pupils with learning difficulties are very good. Individual education plans are written in small, achievable steps and this helps in raising the self-esteem of pupils as they gain some success very quickly. Records for these pupils are thorough and clearly demonstrate the progress made by small groups and by individuals. The formal procedures for informing parents of pupils' progress are efficient and effective.

47. There are some successful methods of assessment employed in the two reception classes. Children are well assessed on entry to the school and then their achievements are matched against these entry levels. Parents are well informed of these factors in their children's progress. There are very good records of children's individual progress, but no simple summary to show how well the year group has done at the end of the year.
48. Teachers' planning is very good. Long-term and medium-term plans are very clear and it is easy for teachers to know what needs to be taught on a weekly or daily basis. This is similar to the judgement made at the last inspection. Lessons in English and mathematics are planned in detail and planning ensures that all essential elements are taught. Planning for other curriculum areas is less detailed but sufficient. In some subjects, such as art and design, religious education and music for example, teachers' plans often indicate their aspirations, linked to the long-term plans, rather than what can be taught in the time available. Assessment of pupils' learning in individual lessons is not as strong as the planning. Common problems are not always identified on planning sheets and it is not clear how teachers know what has to be done in order to help individuals, groups or classes to improve. Individual teachers keep full and detailed records, but the school's use of pupils' attainment in national and non-statutory tests is in very early stages of development and is not yet used well by many teachers. This means that the senior managers and most teachers are not able to check pupils' attainment and progress easily as they pass through the school. Teachers of Year 5 mathematics groups know exactly what stage of the national testing procedure each pupil has reached. This is not the case in other classes or teaching groups.

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

49. The school continues to enjoy a very successful partnership with parents, which benefits the pupils greatly by raising standards and providing a richer curriculum. The level of involvement of parents in their children's learning at home and at school is excellent.
50. Parents' views of the school are generally very positive as shown by the many letters of appreciation that are sent to the headteacher over the course of the year and their recent communications with inspectors. They are particularly pleased with standards, teaching, and leadership and management. There are aspects, however, that some parents feel the school could do better, generally expressed to inspectors as minor reservations in otherwise very appreciative comments. Justifiable criticisms focus around the suitability of the reading scheme for the highest attainers and information they receive about their children's progress. Their misgivings about activities outside lessons and the way that the school works with parents are unreasonable.
51. The school provides a wealth of information for parents about the curriculum, everyday routines and special events. Its comprehensive guidebook, lengthy newsletters, termly outlines of pupils' current work and hugely informative top-notch website are particular strengths. Using new technology parents can log on to general information, school policies, parents' association news, recent newsletters and displays of children's work. They can even keep in touch with their children on residential visits through up-to-date diaries on the website that include photographic records of the day's events and by e-mail.

52. Almost all parents feel comfortable about approaching the staff with questions or concerns. Parents are made most welcome in school and many enter classrooms at the start and end of the school day. This gives those who are able to get to school each day plentiful opportunities to chat to the staff informally about their children.
53. More formally, the parents of children in the reception classes meet with class teachers in the autumn term to discuss the results of initial assessments and how well their child has settled into school. All parents are invited to formal consultations with teachers about progress in the spring term and to a more relaxed open evening in the summer. The open evening offers parents a good opportunity, if they wish, to discuss their child's annual written report or any concerns with present and following year's teachers.
54. The reports are suitably informative about the pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science and generally suggest aspects for improvement. Parents of those with special educational needs who get additional help with spelling and reading receive a useful extra report on their progress in these particular sessions. Over a quarter of parents, however, do not feel adequately informed about progress through these arrangements. This is particularly justifiable for those working parents who have to wait until the spring for a personal opportunity to discuss how their child is getting on and to learn about targets set for improvement.
55. Parents and the special educational needs co-ordinator work closely together for the benefit of pupils. They unfailingly attend meetings when the school's provision is reviewed each year. Occasionally parents raise concerns about their child's academic progress. When this happens the school responds immediately and effectively.
56. Staff very actively encourage parents to get involved in their children's learning at home and at school. They invite them to join working parties in shaping school policies and canvass their views from time to time on important issues such as bullying. Each class has its own nominated parent representative who acts as a go-between. The staff suitably arrange occasional meetings to explain the curriculum so that parents can better help their child to learn at home. Parents have recently been invited to see how ICT is taught in the new computer suite and to learn about the early learning goals for children in the reception classes.
57. The 'Friends of Aspin Park' are extremely hardworking and organise many very successful fund-raising and social events throughout the year. The excellent support and generosity of parents enable the school to broaden pupils' experiences greatly. For example, the parents' association has funded the recent exciting professional theatrical performances in school. The school is also very fortunate to have a large, dedicated band of parents who volunteer high calibre assistance to teachers during the day. They are suitably trained to hear children read and help with other activities such as coding library books, and do so expertly. The involvement of parents in these respects has a very good effect on pupils' learning.
58. Most parents agree that the right amount of homework is set and support their children very effectively with it. Teachers actively encourage parents to use reading and homework record books as a channel of communication about whether work has been suitably completed or for raising other issues.

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

59. Leadership in the school is very good. This is a very similar picture to that found at the time of the last inspection when the school was described as being very well run with excellent direction from the headteacher and governing body. In 1997 there were no major weaknesses for the school to tackle. This is still the case. There are, however, two main areas in which the school could improve, but these are recognised by the school and plans are already underway to deal with the issues. The headteacher is very active in providing educational direction and tireless in supporting staff and governors in their work. These efforts are recognised by colleagues and echoed by the parents who stated a view.
60. The high quality ethos of the school stems from its aims, which are written in easy language for children to understand, partly because they played a major role in writing them. The headteacher has a significant role in promoting this valuable work. Any facet of school life is judged against the aims and staff and pupils constantly refer to them to evaluate a situation. They are displayed prominently around school and form the basis of any activity undertaken. They are the foundation of pupils' social and moral development.
61. The governing body plays its part very well. Governors are very well informed about issues, as they arise, by the headteacher and are, as individuals, committed, loyal and interested in helping to improve the school. They are well led by a knowledgeable and involved chair and this has a positive effect on the way the school is managed. They all know the school's strengths and weaknesses very well.
62. The deputy headteacher and the other senior managers add an extra sense of rigour to the way that the school is managed. For example, the provision for pupils with special educational needs is managed and co-ordinated very well and is part of a strong emphasis on including pupils fully in school life. The school deploys support staff most effectively and this contributes well to the very good progress these pupils make towards the targets set for them. The way that the special educational needs co-ordinator, who is a member of the senior management team, records the progress that pupils with special educational needs have made in great detail is very informative for staff and governors. There are comprehensive arrangements for the school to implement the national requirements for performance management for teaching staff that are based on a tradition, in the school, of appraisal and objective setting that was recognised in the Investors in People Award. Moreover, the deputy headteacher is jointly responsible, with the headteacher, for a well-considered performance management scheme for support staff. Staff development is considered in a systematic fashion. Staff are given opportunities that are well linked to their needs and the value of these training events is evident in the school's work, for example, in the teaching of literacy and numeracy.
63. Leadership and management for children of reception age are good and have improved greatly since the difficulties caused by the long-term absence of one member of staff. The good quality education provided now takes fully into account the curriculum recommendations for children of this age. Provision for outside play is under-developed, but the school has a comprehensive plan in place to tackle this.
64. The school has not suffered from any major barriers to improvement in recent years, but has fought fiercely to maintain its high standards. This has been quite a struggle because to stay ahead of the national average, which has risen in successive years, the school has had to set more ambitious targets each year. They have succeeded well and are already on course to meet this year's targets. The downside to this major success is the imbalance it has caused in the curriculum for some subjects



beyond English, mathematics and science. Time to teach religious education, art and design and music, for example, has been squeezed and consequently pupils' achievements are not as good as they could be. Satisfactory standards are being reached in terms of the national expectations for these subjects, but these pupils could do better with more time or a more sharply focussed use of the time available.

65. The school is an inclusive establishment and this is recognised well by parents of children with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. In addition the few pupils who have significant problems with behaviour are catered for very well and parents praise the effort made on behalf of their children. The needs of the talented and gifted pupils are also treated seriously. The highly academic pupils are expected to progress as far as they can. For example, in 2001 a small group of pupils in Year 6 were entered for, but were not successful in, the most demanding tests for eleven year olds. Those with a gift for ICT are also very well catered for. The school has only informal methods to assess talent, but caters very well for pupils with musical and social abilities. Those with a talent for art and design can shine in painting and drawing, but have too little time in lessons to develop any other aspects of their talent.
66. The headteacher has conducted most of the monitoring of teaching. Staff have a high regard for the process and trust the judgements made. The current system includes all staff and is helpful in pointing out strengths and areas for development. Members of the local education authority regularly moderate this work. Other senior managers are currently being trained to broaden the scope of this work. The school recognises that with more staff conducting lesson observations there will need to be a shared understanding of the agreed principles within the policy for teaching and learning.
67. The school has not been complacent despite having received no key issues for development at the time of the last inspection. Its very good implementation of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy has been key to maintaining high standards. One of the significant improvements since 1997 has been the development of the computer room with funds from the local secondary school. This represents very good use of the partnership that exists between the two schools. Standards have improved at Year 6 to well above the national expectation. The school has developed a very comprehensive battery of tests and other assessment methods to find out how pupils are progressing. The analysis of the results from these tests often alerts the school to areas for improvement, for example, in writing. This has been the subject of much discussion and development since the national test results for 2000. The school is now in the process of devising a system, using computer technology, to record pupils' attainments and set challenging individual targets for improvement, in English, mathematics and science. It is believed, correctly, that this will help in the process of raising and maintaining standards. The lack of such a system at the moment, in the school's assessment strategy, is a major area for development.
68. The school's development plan contains good detail about what needs to be done. The headteacher and the governors are closely involved in the plan's production and have linked its implementation well to the school's budget. This clear understanding of what the school is good at and what it needs to do to improve is a strong feature of the school's management. They are ably supported in this by the administrative staff who are very efficient. The budget is very well managed by the governors, the headteacher and the bursar. The school always makes sure that money is spent wisely by always researching how to spend it and choosing the goods and services that represent the best value for the school.



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

**In order to improve standards in further, the governors, headteacher and staff with support from the local education authority should:**

69. Make more effective the current systems for assessing pupils' attainment and achievement by:
- recording pupils' attainments more effectively;
  - refining the target setting procedures; and
  - involving children and their parents more formally in the process.
- (Paragraphs: 3,25,48,67,94,104,109)

Ensure that time allocation for subjects other than English, mathematics and science is managed more effectively to maximise achievement in all subjects by:

- agreeing and implementing time allocations and planning for them to be fulfilled;
  - checking that long-term plans can be taught in the time allowed; and
  - regularly monitoring the quality of teaching and pupils' learning, with reference to a policy for teaching and learning, to check whether achievements are good enough.
- (Paragraphs: 6,29,48,64,65,66,112,115-117,137,140,147,149)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	82
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	15	43	21	0	0	0
Percentage	4	18	52	26	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	414
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	49

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

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	14

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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*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	26	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	25	26
	Girls	35	35	35
	Total	60	60	61
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98 (95)	98 (95)	100 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	25	26
	Girls	35	35	35
	Total	60	60	61
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98 (91)	98 (95)	100 (98)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	30	37

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	30	28	29
	Girls	34	30	37
	Total	64	58	66
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	96 (87)	87 (83)	99 (97)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	29	28	29
	Girls	35	32	38
	Total	64	60	67
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	94 (87)	88 (84)	99 (95)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	359
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27.6
Average class size	29.6

#### **Education support staff: YR– Y6**

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	178

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0
Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0
Number of pupils per FTE adult	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5.0
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

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

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

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

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000/1
	£
Total income	745262
Total expenditure	736130
Expenditure per pupil	1716
Balance brought forward from previous year	19472
Balance carried forward to next year	28604

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*



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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	414
Number of questionnaires returned	181

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	31	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	35	4	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	52	2	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	54	9	2	2
The teaching is good.	58	37	1	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	24	47	24	4	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	34	5	3	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	70	28	1	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	36	44	17	2	1
The school is well led and managed.	61	34	2	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	52	43	2	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	23	37	20	6	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**

70. When the school was last inspected in 1997, the report judged that children exceeded the expectations for their age in all areas of learning. These good levels of attainment have been maintained well. Children are already on course to go beyond the recommended levels, in most areas of learning, for children at the end of their year in the reception class. This represents a successful maintenance of standards.
71. All children start school and attend full or part-time in the September that follows their fourth birthdays. The younger children attend for half a day only until Christmas. They are taught in two classes. When they start school, the children's levels of attainment are above average for their ages on balance, but in creative development attainment is as expected for four year olds. In personal, social and emotional development, attainment, this year, was lower than expected for entrants into reception. Most children have experienced some kind of pre-school education and this has given them a good start.

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

72. Most children are reasonably confident when they start school, and they quickly settle into the daily routines. However, this year many children had difficulties in behaving appropriately, concentrating on their work and forming productive relationships with adults and other children when they started school. Many, for example, found it very hard to share toys and equipment. The very good teaching has been most sensitive to the children's needs and they have achieved very well since they started school. Teaching is most persistent in spurring children on to higher levels of behaviour. Children increasingly respond in an enthusiastic but controlled manner. The classroom support assistants have also played a strong role in helping children to learn how to learn. Some children are still noisy when asked to clear away, but can concentrate well now on their work. Some still find it difficult to share with other children, for example, at the computer keyboard, but most can manage this with ease. In addition to the very good role models children receive from adults, they are also assisted by school prefects from Year 6, who take a very active and useful part in showing children in the reception classes how to behave. Most children are now on course to meet the expected level by the end of this year.

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

73. Work in this aspect of the children's learning pervades each lesson every day. It is very common for children to be learning well when working in pairs at a computer, working in a group with a classroom support assistant, or talking to each other while playing in the three bears' cottage. They have good attitudes to their work that are developed by the positive relationships that exist in the classes. Many children are on course to exceed the goals, set nationally, in this area of learning. As a result of the good teaching they have received, children have achieved well to maintain this above average position.
74. The teaching methods that are used are most effective and demonstrate the importance the school places on speaking and listening as a means of communication in their own right and for eventual proficiency in reading and writing. Most children are able to speak out in front of the whole class. For example, one

higher attaining child said with complete confidence, "I think that sad and said nearly rhyme" when discussing words that began with the same letter. Others just love the sound that words make and take great delight in speaking out loud the words from the school scheme for learning letter sounds. Children, for example, chanted, "Jiggle like a jelly" with squeals of pleasure. They also became very fired up by the toy animals that are used to promote letter sounds and word recognition. They talked fluently to these toys. They get plenty of good opportunities to talk about their likes and dislikes. For example, when porridge was being made they could choose some toppings and describe their feelings about the different tastes.

75. The good teaching of reading and writing is based firmly on those methods advocated in the National Literacy Strategy. Teaching is well versed in such methods and children are making quick progress. Children's reading of single words and their ability to say the sounds that go to make up words is fostered well by the use of books with appealing pictures and a scheme to focus their attention on particular sounds within words. All children, including those who find learning difficult, have made rapid progress in learning letter sounds by word association and a variety of hand signals. All children understand that writing conveys its author's intention. The higher attaining children, in particular, can already write legible sentences like, "This leaf was up a tree" when trying to explain the events in autumn. Even the lowest attainers write strings of letters that represent their story or list of items. Children's enthusiasm for writing and reading is widespread. They pay very close attention to what adults are saying and enjoy the process of getting things down on paper.

### **Mathematical development**

76. Children are learning well in this aspect of their development: their attainment is on course to go beyond expectations by the end of their reception year. Children's achievement is good in their efforts to maintain this above average level of attainment. The teaching is good and sometimes very good. It is making a strong impact on children's learning, particularly since teachers make learning fun; class lessons are linked well to children's stories like 'Goldilocks and The Three Bears', for example. Counting is a daily feature and almost all the children can count to ten and then back again with ease, particularly when it is linked to songs like 'Ten in a bed'. Children with special educational needs get caught up in these class activities and learn well by being carried along with the flow. Children are very keen to find out how many letter sounds they can say in one minute or how many physical activities they can complete in the outside play area in the same time. The way that children's learning is developed throughout the many well-planned activities is a strong feature of the provision in this area of learning. The teacher and the classroom support assistants use every opportunity to promote the use of mathematical language in a wide variety of contexts. Words of measurement are well used, for example, when porridge is being made. When children are making a robotic toy move backwards and forward they are learning well about counting and direction. Teaching also uses computers to assist in the development of mathematical ideas. Children enjoy using a piece of software linked to Goldilocks to reinforce counting skills. One higher attainer, for example, was happily counting up to 23 and beyond.

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

77. The children enjoy learning about the world around them. They learn well in this area of their development as a result of good teaching. Most children are on course to exceed the expected level in their learning by the end of their reception year. This good achievement, in maintaining above average levels, results from teaching that concentrates well on first hand experiences that give plenty of opportunity for good discussion. Some higher attaining children already have a good idea about how things change as a result of heating and cooling. They can grasp why you need to add hot milk to porridge and what happens when you freeze water. One higher attaining child said about a balloon filled with water and then frozen, "It felt like a giant frozen egg." Children learn well about their own past and about growth in general in well-planned lessons about babies and how they develop. They were particularly interested when a mother brought her new baby into school for children to meet and talk about. Their learning is enhanced by the fact that most have already, before they came to school, acquired a reservoir of knowledge to help them interpret information that they receive. For example, children enjoyed meeting the local police and crossing patrol person and matching new information about these jobs with what they already knew. Children have a good knowledge about computers because they are given a lot of time to practise. All children use the mouse effectively. Children's skills in making models have been well developed. They made, for example, houses for the three little pigs out of the appropriate building materials. They had great fun making the houses but the value was also in the discussion and role-play that accompanied the construction.

## **Physical development**

78. The children are likely to exceed the goals set for the end of their year in reception. They have the chance to exercise fully in the school hall when playing parachute games, for example, but they lack the use of climbing apparatus outside, which would help them to attain even higher standards. The lack of an adventurous area outside is limiting achievement not only in physical development but also in developing an imaginative response to their tasks in finding out about the environment. The school has already identified this as a priority and funds have been allocated to tackle this issue. Teaching is good on balance, despite the limited curriculum, because teachers work hard to provide experiences for children to develop physical skills. Teaching is able to provide plenty of opportunities for the children to develop good control over pencils, crayons, paintbrushes and other tools. Children, for example, have good control when writing, drawing and making papier-mâché models.
79. Children are able to use bikes and scooters outside to develop their muscles and sense of balance, but it is the school's hall that provides the best opportunities at the moment for children to develop on a large scale. Groups of children play games in the hall with a classroom support assistant to develop team skills and physical attributes. They also thoroughly enjoy the parachute games that cause much excitement.

## **Creative development**

80. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is sound and the children are on course to achieve the targets set for their attainment by the end of the reception year. This represents satisfactory achievement. Children can use a range of equipment to paint, draw and make collages, for example. A lot of creative work is currently based on the stories that are being read in class. Children paint bold pictures of the three bears

and make models of the bowls so that they can role-play the porridge tasting episode. The quality of children's imaginative play is satisfactory and children's achievements are sound, but there is still room for improvement. Their development in this area of learning is often limited slightly by the inability to share and work together as a group. This can limit the learning of children who need to develop greater skills in communicating with others. Music is taught as an activity for the whole class and children also have very many opportunities to sing, in mathematics, for example. Reception children also join the rest of the infants in singing practices in the hall. The quality of this singing is superb and, on these occasions, they perform well above expectations for their age.

81. Children are taught by two teachers who normally work part-time, but are working full-time while a colleague is absent from school. Despite any difficulties this may have caused, the quality of teaching is good on balance for all children, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. These arrangements ensure that the children get off to a good start in the school and achieve successfully in this earliest stage of their education. The provision has many strengths. The school provides a broad and interesting curriculum and staff regularly assess children's efforts well so that they know how to plan the next stages of the work. The staff keep many good individual records for children, but do not, as yet, have a simple summary, for the whole year group, of how well children have achieved in their reception year. The strength of the teaching is the way in which children are organised and motivated in activities that are full of fun. Work is very well planned around well-known stories that make learning relevant and engaging for children. Parents are fully involved in their child's introduction to the school. The school provides useful information for parents to keep them up to date with their children's attainments and achievements.

## **ENGLISH**

82. Standards achieved by Year 6 pupils in the 2001 national tests were well above the national average. Almost all pupils achieved the level expected for their age and just over half achieved at a higher level. The general picture over the last four years is for English results to be well above the national average for pupils aged eleven. There was a dip in standards in the 2000 national tests. The school has effectively addressed this issue. The results of this inspection shows that attainment is currently well above the national average by the time pupils are eleven.
83. Standards achieved by seven year olds in reading and writing over the last three years have been well above average. These standards have been as well maintained as those in the juniors. Standards in reading and writing are above those of similar schools.
84. Pupils enter Year 1 with standards above those expected nationally. They make good progress in Years 1 and 2, and continue to do so throughout the junior classes, achieving well. Pupils in Year 6 make very good progress. This is due to the consistently very good teaching and pupils' hard work. Additional arrangements enable Year 6 pupils to be placed in smaller groups, where teaching is more closely tailored to their needs. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress overall. This is because the targets in their individual learning plans are closely related to their needs. Good planning ensures that targets are reinforced effectively in lessons, and that pupils are well supported by classroom assistants. This includes pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language, who make good progress in lessons.

85. Standards in reading for the current Years 2 and 6 are well above average. Reading has a high profile in the school, extra time being given for pupils to read silently each day, in a group or individually to their teacher. The school 'Book Week' gives additional valuable opportunities for pupils to hear quality literature, adding enjoyment and fun to their learning. Most seven year olds read accurately with developing fluency, and with very good expression. They have a good understanding of letter sounds, using this effectively to decode new words. Their knowledge and skills in using non-fiction texts are good; most use the index and contents page to locate information, and have good skills of comprehension. They have a good understanding of alphabetical order and use dictionaries appropriately. They name the author and illustrator. High attaining pupils explain their book preferences and talk about the story's characters and plot at length and in detail. Children who experience difficulty in their reading show interest in their books. They confidently tackle new words by using picture clues, and by spelling out unfamiliar words.
86. By the age of eleven, most pupils are fluent and expressive readers. Pupils talk confidently about books they have read, expressing preferences of author or type of text. They complete well-written reviews in which they assess books, sometimes giving very detailed and perceptive opinions about characters and settings, and making comparisons with previous books. However, some older pupils find a number of the reading scheme books uninteresting. In Years 1, 2 and 3, pupils are well supported in their reading because there is good communication between parents and teachers via the home and school reading records. This good practice continues in the juniors as parents sign the homework book.
87. Pupils' standards of speaking and listening are very good overall. Pupils listen attentively to what others say. They follow instructions well. For example, in a Year 1 dance lesson, using a recorded broadcast, pupils successfully followed a number of quite complicated directions because they listened carefully. Pupils' ability to listen for extended periods of time increases as they move through the school, enabling them to make sensible, reasoned responses to teachers' questions. For example, pupils in Year 6 understood the complex language portrayed by characters in 'The animated tales of Shakespeare', speaking knowledgeably about the villains, heroes and complicated plot. The skills of speaking and listening are practised well throughout the curriculum. In a Year 4 music lesson, the teacher encouraged pupils to give their opinion as each group used musical instruments to illustrate waves breaking on the beach. They responded well, saying why they liked a particular effect. In a religious education lesson, Year 2 pupils demonstrated well their ability to listen and comprehend, writing their own detailed versions of the Nativity.
88. Standards in writing are very good throughout the school. The school has concentrated specifically on raising pupils' quality of writing through the provision of carefully constructed individual pupil targets, and emphasis on the development of interesting and structured writing in many forms. From the earliest age, pupils are taught to punctuate their work, and to find different words to begin and join sentences. Starting with simple sentences and stories at the beginning of Year 1, many seven year olds produce well-organised short stories that show good development of ideas, characters and plot. They begin to punctuate their writing, and to use text in differing ways to add interest, for example "Roooooar" to depict a lion's ferocious cry, or "BLESS U" to add impact to a sneeze! By the age of seven, the average and high attainers, particularly, produce writing that has an imaginative feel to it, is legible and has a fluid, joined hand-writing style.

89. This good progress continues through the junior classes. Pupils' composition of poetry develops quality and flair. For example, in a poem about wintry weather, a high attaining Year 3 pupil used descriptive phrases such as "whistling wind" and "snowy night". By the age of eleven, pupils' have developed a good insight into how to structure different types of writing. They write play scripts, diaries, instructions and reports. Their writing is lively, mature and very individual, is written with the reader in mind, and sometimes has a humorous touch. Pupils' writing shows good knowledge and application of grammar, and complex sentence structures. Standards of handwriting are very good. One area of weakness is the lack of accuracy in pupils' spelling. Pupils are not sufficiently challenged to correctly spell those words previously learnt in spelling tests. They do not systematically correct their work. Most literacy hours are used well to develop pupils' content and style of writing, but are not consistently used to teach word-level work. Too few pupils use dictionaries to spell words correctly. Teachers provide extra time outside the literacy hour for pupils to practise spelling lists. This they do conscientiously, but there is a lack of rigour in ensuring that these words are spelt correctly in future written work.
90. There are good opportunities for pupils to apply the skills taught in literacy to other curriculum areas. For example, in a Year 2 history lesson, pupils researched non-fiction books before writing about the life of Florence Nightingale. In art, Year 1 pupils used the poem 'Monsters' as a starting point for imaginative painting. Year 6 pupils wrote letters in the character and style of a World War 2 evacuee. Year 4 pupils made carefully labelled diagrams of electrical circuits, giving written explanations for the purpose of each component. Pupils use computers appropriately for word processing purposes. For example, they add coloured text and differing fonts to give impact and interest to their writing.
91. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 ranges from good to very good. The real strength of the work is the teaching of basic skills. Because the work builds carefully on earlier lessons, pupils learn in a structured way. They become confident learners, eager to try new work. Teachers provide work which is relevant and familiar, but which extends pupils' thinking. For example, in a very good Year 2 lesson, pupils made labelled diagrams and written instructions for 'How to wash your hands'. They were delighted when, at the end of the lesson, another carried out one pupil's instructions. This gave real purpose to their learning. Teachers ensure that work is planned to meet the differing abilities of pupils. This includes a good rate of challenge for high attaining pupils, and achievable goals for those experiencing difficulty, enabling pupils to complete their work confidently, and to persevere. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 helps pupils to achieve very good standards of writing, especially when writing and punctuating stories.
92. The quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 varies from satisfactory to excellent, being good overall. In all classes, basic skills are well taught. Teachers help pupils achieve very good writing, and have high expectations of standards of presentation and handwriting in all aspects of the work; from work in exercise books, to pupils' book reviews and spelling lists. In the very good and excellent lessons, there was a rigorous pace and variety of activity which ensured that pupils participated well and produced quality work. Teachers had an infectious enthusiasm that was transferred to pupils, who in turn were excited about their learning. Clear explanations ensured that pupils knew what to do, so that lessons proceeded in a very orderly, productive manner. In some lessons, teachers did not focus on specific groups to extend or support learning, thus limiting the amount of progress pupils made. High attaining pupils were not always sufficiently challenged.

93. A strength of the teaching is the way in which all teachers work as a cohesive team, maintaining systems, and planning to the school's aims and objectives. Teachers control classes very well and there are very good relationships between adults and children. This ensures a very positive ethos for learning, with orderly lessons and hard working pupils. All teachers provide literacy targets for individual pupils, and this is having a significant affect on the standards that pupils attain. The majority of pupils know what they need to do to improve their work. In some instances, these written targets are difficult for the younger pupils to understand, so value is lost. In many classes, the targets are not to hand when pupils are writing, in other subjects, resulting in missed opportunities to reinforce pupils' learning.
94. Literacy has a high profile in the school and is very well led and managed. The subject co-ordinator has worked very hard to provide policies and guidelines that enable teachers to present a consistent approach to the subject. This has helped to keep standards at a high level over a number of years. There is a suitable development plan, which identifies the need to improve pupils' spelling. Resources to support the English curriculum are good. Planned opportunities for library times enable pupils to develop library skills practically. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good, so that individual teachers know their pupils' abilities well and provide work at the appropriate level. There are insufficiently developed procedures to track the attainment and progress of cohorts, groups and individual pupils over time. Current assessments are used well for teachers' planning, but are not yet used as a management tool to inform target-setting decisions. The school is aware of this and has plans to improve its procedures. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Since 1997 standards of reading and writing have risen. The very good standards achieved at age seven are well maintained by the age of eleven.

## **MATHEMATICS**

95. Standards of work are well above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Taking into account pupils' attainment on entry, which is above average, most pupils, including those with English as an additional language, achieve well because the good teaching that is firmly based on the National Numeracy Strategy raises attainment to a higher level. The high standards achieved by the age of seven are well maintained for the majority of pupils by the age of eleven and increased for the highest attaining pupils. They are given suitably challenging work and they make very good progress. The structured approach to the teaching of mathematics is enlivened by the use of creative methods, high expectations and high-quality resources. These are significant factors in the steady improvement in pupils' performance, particularly since 1999. Year on year the school consistently surpasses the challenging targets it sets itself. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress due to the appropriate work given to them and the high-quality support provided by the strongly-knit team approach.
96. The 2001 national test results show that the proportion of pupils reaching and exceeding standards expected for Year 6 pupils was well above the national average and that of most other similar schools across the country. Test results for 2001 are even higher than the previous year.
97. Similarly, in 2001, pupils' results in national tests at the end of Year 2 were well above average when compared to all schools and above the average achieved by pupils in schools of a similar background. The National Curriculum assessments showed that every pupil achieved or exceeded the expected level. Approximately one third of



pupils achieved the higher level. This is better than most schools and is a result of the good quality teaching throughout the school.

98. In the infant classes, teaching focuses on strengthening pupils' understanding and application of operational skills in number work, simultaneously with extending knowledge in data handling, shape and measure. Some of the lowest attaining pupils still have poor concepts of number bonds to 20 at this stage. The grouping of pupils by ability enables the highest attainers to move on more quickly whilst providing extra support where it is most urgently needed for others. By Year 2, most pupils are working at a high level for their age in all aspects of mathematics. Lower attaining pupils work more routinely, and at a simpler level. They find difficulty in recalling what they have learned; progress is slower because teachers repeatedly have to go over earlier work before extending topics. Nevertheless, all pupils achieve well from their starting point.
99. In the junior groups, pupils' strong numerical skills are clearly evident. Pupils of all abilities are confident when applying number to other situations. For example, a significant number of them know multiplication tables well enough to work confidently with fractions and percentages. This also assists their ability to solve problems; translation of word problems to their equivalence in number is better than average. Other aspects of mathematics are higher than average, for instance, data handling and measurement.
100. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good throughout the school. Learning support assistants are effectively deployed. They work closely with class teachers in planning for the needs of individual pupils and groups. This enables these pupils, and others of lower ability, to exceed the levels that might have been expected based on their prior attainment. The good provision for lower attaining pupils is accelerating their progress and has contributed to the overall improvement in performance at the end of Year 6 in recent years.
101. Pupils have very good attitudes to their work and, for the most part, behave extremely well in lessons. This goes hand in hand with the teachers' ability to engage pupils' interest, the use of a range of creative strategies and the selection of excellent resources. The majority of pupils say they enjoy mathematics, particularly the mental arithmetic sessions. The good quality of teaching and learning has been maintained since 1997. It is currently good overall and half of teaching is very good. The best lessons encouraged pupils to think for themselves and to learn from their own mistakes when teachers explained misconceptions. Activities were varied and sustained interest whilst skilful questioning enabled teachers to extend learning by building on pupils' answers, whether or not correct.
102. In the best lessons, teachers have very high expectations and question pupils skilfully to check their understanding and progress. They set challenging tasks which engage pupils' interest and motivate them to work hard, independently. When lessons are satisfactory rather than good, teachers provide opportunities for pupils to investigate but do not allow them enough independence in deciding on their own methods or resources. Introductions to lessons are clear and pupils know what is expected of them and settle to work quickly. A good pace is maintained so that pupils waste no time and produce an appropriate amount of work. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is very good and good for those who speak English as an additional language, because work is well matched to their needs. Homework is satisfactorily used to deepen pupils' understanding. The quality of the marking of

pupils' work is not consistent, with some teachers marking in some detail and providing good feedback whilst others confine themselves to ticks.

103. Teachers seek to develop communication and literacy skills of pupils, through discussion sessions that give them the opportunity to improve their ability to listen to others and express themselves clearly. Writing and numeracy skills are developed whilst measuring and recording the results of experiments, but pupils have insufficient opportunities to use ICT in this work. Pupils' numerical skills have improved through the focus on mental mathematics at the beginning of lessons. Pupils' computational skills are very good. The school rightly discourages the use of calculators when operations are simple enough to be calculated mentally. Mathematical skills are used well to complement work in other subjects, such as science, geography and history. In science, for example, pupils plot line graphs and extract information from them.
104. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. This has helped to maintain high standards consistently over a number of years. Well-identified areas for improvement have contributed to the high standards. Time is given to supporting and advising colleagues. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is reviewed and managed well. Planning is checked to ensure that skills and knowledge are taught progressively. Pupils' work is regularly assessed against the national scheme of work and progress is recorded on individual records. Good practice is developing in the gathering and evaluation of information from national and other tests, but the means to make the best use of this information is not yet fully developed. There is still more to be achieved through the strategic use of the monitoring and assessment systems. The school has made good improvement in its provision since the last inspection.

## SCIENCE

105. Pupils' standards of attainment in science are well above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Teachers' assessments in 2000 showed pupils to be attaining well above average standards at the end of Year 2. National tests for eleven year olds also showed that pupils' attainment was well above the national average. These high standards, identified in the previous inspection report, have continued to be well maintained as shown by the latest figures for 2001. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.
106. By the time pupils are eleven, pupils achieve high standards as a result of the good, and sometimes excellent teaching that they receive. Pupils in Year 6 can apply intellectual effort to their work, sustain concentration and think for themselves. These attributes have been gradually built up, over the years, by teaching that has accentuated the need for pupils to behave like scientists: asking apt questions and thinking things through for themselves. This good progress began in Year 3 and Year 4. These younger pupils are encouraged to predict, measure, test fairly and record findings, often in the form of graphs, tally charts, tables and bar charts, so making effective links with mathematics. They develop scientific vocabulary well, as, for example, when sorting rocks into those which are permeable and non-permeable. In their work on circuits and conductors, pupils use bar graphs effectively to record their investigations. All pupils, throughout the juniors, are encouraged to predict, carry out a fair test, record results, draw conclusions and evaluate their findings. Work is logically and carefully presented.
107. By the age of seven, pupils are developing good scientific habits. They can predict, carry out a fair test, discuss and evaluate their findings. They are encouraged to

develop their scientific vocabulary. They know that human and animal babies need a supply of food, water, air and light to survive. They understand the need for a balanced diet of healthy foods and can sort different foods into groups. They can identify different sources of light. Pupils engage in an appropriate range of work and have a good knowledge and understanding of each aspect of science. The high standards achieved are helped by the emphasis placed by teachers on investigations, particularly when the work is posed as a challenge or problem. By the end of the infants, pupils can compare the way in which bulbs work in electrical circuits. More able pupils can link cause and effect in simple explanations, for example the effect of a push or pull, or the fact that a bulb will not light because of a break in the electrical circuit.

108. Teaching is good throughout the school. It ranges from good to excellent, resulting in the continued good achievement of pupils. A lesson of particularly high quality on reversible and irreversible changes was observed in Year 6. Explanations were extremely clear so that pupils could consolidate their understanding. They responded to the teacher's questioning with well-thought and well-articulated answers. Because of the excellent use of ICT for demonstration purposes, difficult concepts became clear to pupils and they applied intellectual, concentrated and sustained effort throughout the lesson. Pupils throughout the school engage not only in observation and recording skills, but also in planning, predicting and fair testing. Effective questioning of pupils encourages them to contribute answers. When given the chance to contribute to discussion or engage in practical work, pupils do so with enthusiasm, throughout the school, showing very good attitudes and behaviour. Teachers have good subject knowledge; they plan their lessons well and have high expectations of their pupils. Pupils, in turn, listen attentively and are eager to get down to their investigations. Where routines and procedures are well defined and consistently applied, pupils work very well. Pupils with special educational and other individual needs are effectively supported in class. More able pupils are suitably challenged in most classes through the provision of extension work.
109. The co-ordinator manages the subject very well, supporting colleagues effectively, working hard to encourage a practical, investigative approach to science. Resources are well managed and appropriately matched to the work planned. Assessment data is used effectively to gain an understanding of pupils' progress and to set suitably challenging targets, but this is not yet fully co-ordinated throughout the school in the respect of checking the progress of individuals and setting them targets. The subject is monitored well. Science teaching is enhanced by fieldwork in the school grounds and local area and by planned educational visits. These events are very well managed by the co-ordinator.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

110. The current satisfactory standards in art and design are not as good as they were at the time of the last inspection. They were good in 1997, but that was before time for art and design began to be squeezed to allow extra time for English, mathematics and science. At the time of the last inspection, teaching was very good. This caused good learning in the infant classes and very good learning for pupils aged seven to eleven. Now teaching is satisfactory and it is matched by satisfactory learning throughout the school.
111. In some cases the standard of work and pupils' achievements are still as high as they were before. This is particularly true in painting and drawing. In Year 6, for example, pupils are learning how to use pastels effectively to produce cubist style portraits and

landscapes in the fashion of Picasso. The results are very emotive and powerful. Pupils' grasp of the genre is made more secure, in one class, by the use of information downloaded from the Internet. In Year 2 pupils have produced some mixed media monsters that are very imaginative and frightening. High achievement in painting is shown by the work produced in Year 5. Pupils were asked to create a Lowry-type industrial landscape. They did so with very controlled brush strokes and a mature use of colour that was built up layer by layer. These pieces of work were produced in classes where teachers had maximised the amount of time available and concentrated on teaching techniques that often made reference to the work of well-known artists.

112. There is not enough time available now for the breadth and depth of work that was found at the time of the last inspection. In 1997 inspectors noted that portfolios of pupils' work showed a range of media and art techniques being used. The current portfolios show mainly painting and drawing with only a few examples of printing, textiles and three-dimensional work. Some pupils have produced clay pieces, completed collages with material and tried mono printing, but these aspects of work are not common. The new long-term plan for art and design states that these areas of work will be addressed, but since no time for this work is stipulated teachers may well find it as difficult to fit it all in as they have done in the past.
113. The best teaching results in learning that is exciting in its imagination and execution. For example, pupils throughout the school have had an opportunity to draw a bicycle and thereby practise the skills of sketching and perspective. Some results from talented pupils, in particular, show great depth of vision and sensitivity with pencils. Furthermore, in the infants some pupils have made natural sculptures out of flowers and pieces of wood, in the style of Andy Goldsworthy. These have been photographed for future enjoyment. However, these isolated examples do not form part of a coherent curriculum that gives appropriate weighting to all areas of art and design. Pupils really enjoy this kind of work and attitudes in general are very good. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are excellent where teaching is informed about the work of an artist and pupils are taught techniques and skills that give a quick and powerful dimension to their work. This is particularly true in Years 5 and 6.
114. The use of computers for art is a positive development and one which was not present at the time of the last inspection. Pupils in both the infants and the juniors can now use software to produce colourful pictures using shapes and colours. Furthermore, older pupils get a good chance to broaden their education on residential trips when in Years 5 and 6 they visit art galleries while away in Robin Hood's Bay or Beverley Park.
115. Subject management is in limbo at the moment because the current co-ordinator is absent. Consequently, lessons are not being monitored to judge the effect of the new planning arrangements, work is not being collected for assessment purposes and standards are not being checked. The practical issues related to the amount of work planned and the time that is needed to fulfil these plans are not being considered at the moment.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

116. Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and show good improvement since 1997, when the school was last inspected. The co-ordinator has worked with the staff team to ensure that pupils have more scope for creativity in the designing stage. This is clearly evident in the high quality of design plans, which

results in good achievement for the infant pupils. All junior pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, achieve well although development is, to some extent, hindered by the amount of time given to individual lessons. This tends to slow progress, particularly in the evaluation of work, which could be better.

117. The high standards are a direct result of good teaching in most aspects of the subject. Pupils design and make simple products, selecting appropriate resources and using a sound range of tools and means of fastening materials together. In Year 1, pupils take great pride in the quality and finish of their moving 'Jack and the Beanstalk' characters. Although this is an appropriate activity for learning about joints and moving parts, the use of the card character templates, coloured in by pupils, limits individual artistic creativity by imposing an adult image on the pupil. Useful experimentation with the technological aspect was expanded in earlier lessons when pupils experimented with joints but the testing, evaluating and improving aspect are not consolidated throughout the project. This limits the depth of evaluations, which rely heavily on the final presentation of the product and insufficiently on the assembly and joining of the figure. The time allocated to evaluation is in general rather short and pupils are not always given appropriate ideas of changes that they might attempt.
118. The Year 2 'Fruit Salad Challenge' was both great fun and helpful in developing a good range of literacy skills. Pupils challenge, present arguments, persuade, appease and defend their point of view when discussing their team plan. The teachers prepare the pupils well for the planning session by engaging their interest and sparking off lots of ideas through an initial discussion, set in a classroom environment enriched by quality displays and vocabulary relating to 'Health and Growth'. Pupils respond to the challenge set by the teachers of being judged on all the stages of the challenge. This gave due importance to the planning stage. This activity is a very good example of the teacher using a range of strategies to facilitate learning.
119. The link to other subjects is also emphasised in the choice of topics for the junior pupils. For example, Year 6 pupils make a Victorian toy called a zoetrope. Year 3 pupils test a range of sandwiches before designing their own whilst studying healthy eating in science. Pupils in Year 6 have opportunities to use computers in the design process but this practice is not established through the school.
120. Making skills are good and pupils make products to a good standard. For example, Year 4 pupils made a quiz board, which lit up, using knowledge from their science lessons. Year 5 baked bread and changed one of the ingredients such as honey or poppy seeds. Year 6 built a chassis, with axles and wheels and propelled it by means of a motor. They cut materials to size with reasonable accuracy and fixed them appropriately, adding a switch and taking time and effort over the finishing touches. They discussed their products and wrote a simple evaluation.
121. Subject leadership and management are sound. The co-ordinator has been instrumental in developing a new curriculum with the staff team over the last year. This matches government guidelines and allows more scope for individual creativity, retaining those elements that have proved to be successful in terms of skill development, standards and engaging pupils' interest. Pupils report that they enjoy the lessons. They are making good gains in knowledge and understanding of the designing and making processes. Pupils' achievement is being checked at the end of each unit of study but the information gained is not being used to promote higher standards.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

122. At the time of the last inspection, standards at seven and eleven were judged to be above national expectations. Currently, attainment by the end of Year 2 is in line with national expectations, with above average attainment for some more able pupils. In Year 6 standards are above average.
123. By the age of eleven in Year 6, pupils know a great deal about their local area and can compare it very well with locations further away. They have, for example, produced quality work related to their residential visit to Bewerley Park in North Yorkshire. They understand, in depth, about rocks and minerals and write well about how they were formed and what changes they go through. This understanding is often well linked to art and design. They have, for example, produced some closely observed and colourful pastel drawings of caves and rock structures. They are very familiar with geographical representation and most pupils can use local, regional and world maps of various scales. Throughout the juniors, pupils are developing their knowledge of a wider geographical context; this includes observations of the environment, and the collection and recording of evidence from which conclusions are drawn. In all lessons, pupils are encouraged to make use of the skills taught in the literacy hour, to produce pieces of extended writing for example. Pupils with special educational and other needs are effectively supported in lessons, enabling them to make good progress. More able pupils are suitably challenged through extension activities and appropriate resources.
124. By the age of seven, pupils are aware of the physical and human features of their environment. They are aware of the more attractive features of their local area. They have undertaken some investigative work on traffic and parking in the area close to the school. Most pupils are able to identify some differences between their own locality and a contrasting place. In Year 2 pupils know where hot and cold countries are around the world. They can identify the countries of the United Kingdom and are able to use maps to indicate where they or their relatives live or have been on holiday.
125. Teaching is sound in Year 1 and Year 2 and good in the juniors. Teachers use their subject knowledge well to plan activities that engage the interest of pupils. They use a good balance of direct explanation and open-ended questions. The quality of teaching is better in the juniors, particularly in Year 6, because teachers have high expectations of their pupils and present geography in an interesting way using stimulating resources. They also have established routines, which enable pupils to work independently and to concentrate well. As a result there are positive attitudes to the learning of geography. The subject is enhanced by the use of day and residential visits.
126. The co-ordinator manages resources effectively and supports colleagues well. Assessment of pupils' learning is less well developed. The subject now needs to be more closely monitored to identify gaps in provision and learning and to ensure appropriate balance in the development of knowledge and geographical skills.

## **HISTORY**

127. At the time of the last inspection, standards were described as above national expectations in both Year 2 and Year 6. Standards in Year 2 are now broadly in line with national expectations. In Year 6 attainment is above average.

128. By the age of eleven pupils are extending their factual knowledge and understanding of periods of history well and can use this effectively to describe and sequence events. By the end of Year 6 many pupils are handling historical sources with increasing confidence to select information, to give reasons for, and consider results of, main events and changes. In Year 5, pupils are able to evaluate a range of sources to find out about rich and poor people in Tudor times. An educational visit provided enjoyable and memorable opportunities for pupils to experience a 'Tudor Day', dressing in Tudor style clothes, eating food and acting in role. This was followed up in the classroom by a display of photographs and extensive thoughtful writing in a variety of styles. In Year 6 the work on a study of Britain since 1930, is wide ranging in content. Pupils make very good use of a wide range of sources and their writing is carefully structured and beautifully presented. In all classes, pupils with special educational needs are supported, enabling them to make good progress. More able pupils are challenged well.
129. By the age of seven, pupils are developing a good understanding of the difference between past and present, for example, by comparing their favourite toys with those from the past. They can compare seaside holidays past and present. They can find information from simple sources to identify different ways in which the past is represented, handling sources to ask and answer questions. A good example of this was in Year 2 when pupils found out about aspects of the life of Florence Nightingale. More able pupils were able to produce independent writing about aspects of the Crimean War. In discussion, pupils could remember learning about the Great Fire of London, and about Samuel Pepys.
130. The quality of teaching and learning in the infants is satisfactory and is consistently good for pupils aged seven to eleven. Pupils, particularly in the juniors, successfully develop historical skills. Subject knowledge is good and teachers use resources very well to try to bring the subject alive for pupils. This has a positive impact on learning, as pupils are very responsive, showing a good level of interest in the subject. Teachers are very good at engaging pupils and extending their knowledge with the result that children put a lot of concentrated effort into their work. Effective links are made with literacy through appropriate use of vocabulary. Pupils are given good opportunities to develop their skills in speaking, listening and reading, and to engage in discussion and role-play. They record their findings in a variety of ways including well-organised, extended structured writing. It is this extended writing in Year 6, for example, that demonstrates how good the teaching is in this part of the school. Visits to places of historical interest and visitors to the school are well used to support learning.
131. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of her management role. She supports colleagues and manages resources for the subject effectively. Systematic and consistent assessment in history, which would indicate effectively how pupils are to progress, is not yet sufficiently in place throughout the school.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

132. Seven year olds achieve beyond what is expected for their age while eleven year olds achieve well beyond those expectations. The picture for seven year olds is very similar to the last inspection but there has been an improvement in standards for eleven year olds. The principal reasons for the improvement are the very good teaching, the very good use made of the new computer room and the excellent links with the local secondary school. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress overall.

133. By the time pupils are in Year 6 they can use the digital photographs taken on their recent residential visit and combine them with text to produce a high quality, animated slide presentation. They can share their knowledge and expertise to add sound and different effects to make their presentations unique and exciting. Achievement is broadly spread across the juniors. Pupils in Year 5, for example, can design the interior for a Christmas card, using the shape facility of a word processing program. They group shapes together and use shading and the special effects available in the program to produce a good end product. Younger pupils, in Years 3 and 4, experiment with putting a border on a page and then using facilities such as copy and paste, searching the clip art database, and importing clip art into their work and then changing the orientation of the page between landscape and portrait. Throughout the school, pupils use word processing to display their written work to great effect. Pupils are not afraid to experiment and they become excited when something they have attempted succeeds. An occasional problem with the school's sophisticated hardware teaches pupils some of the limitations of modern technology. It is greatly to their credit that they do not become disheartened or restless when computers let them or their teachers down.
134. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are also very much at home in the computer suite. They are very interested in what they are doing and have very good attitudes to their work. They co-operate well and take turns when necessary without fuss. This was the case in Year 1, for example, when pupils searched a word bank to record the story of Humpty Dumpty and they used the mouse and the delete key in a very matter-of-fact way. They asked questions sensibly and showed great pleasure with their finished product. Pupils in Year 2 can use art programs to great effect. They routinely open programs and they use computer conventions such as changing colours and line width with great confidence. In one lesson they drew houses and faces successfully by overlapping shapes and they understood some of the limitations of working with computers. Correct mathematical language, such as parallelogram, square, triangle and circle, was used correctly in this lesson.
135. Teaching in computer lessons is never less than good and occasionally it is very good. Teaching and learning are good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in the juniors. Teaching gets progressively better as pupils move through the school. This is because teachers become more confident in the use of equipment like the digital camera, and the Internet is used more frequently in lessons across the curriculum. Teachers plan their lessons well and use pupils' previous knowledge to add new skills and methods at a very fast pace. All teachers seen are confident when working in the computer suite and have sufficient expertise to adapt lessons when hardware fails to function properly. They use the demonstration hardware well when instructing the whole class and they support pupils effectively when they work in groups or on their own. Teachers challenge pupils to produce stimulating work and they are adept at using the pupils' pleasure with their own success to encourage them to experiment further. In all the lessons seen, pupils with special educational needs are helped by their teachers and their friends. Those pupils with good knowledge and expertise are consistently challenged to try to see if they can find something new or different.
136. The excellent links with the local secondary school enable the school to gain access to expertise, knowledge and finance which is used well to benefit pupils. The enthusiasm of the very knowledgeable co-ordinator is infectious and he has clear ideas of what needs to be done to improve the school's work even further. Teachers have taken advantage of the training opportunities available to them so that pupils have very good experiences.



## MUSIC

137. At the time of the last inspection the standards in music were well above what was expected for pupils at seven and eleven years old. Very good teaching throughout the school that resulted in highly successful learning caused this. Music was developed very well outside lessons with many pupils singing in the choir and playing instruments in the school orchestra. The situation is different now in lessons. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are now in line with national expectations and teaching satisfactorily results in sound learning. The pupils' musical experiences beyond lessons are still as rich in terms of the choir and orchestra. There are still many occasions when pupils can perform in front of an audience. These occasions are strong features of the school calendar. The reason for the change in lessons since 1997 relates to the way in which English, mathematics and science have been prioritised on the timetable. Music is still a regular feature on the school's timetable, but its frequency has diminished and the length of lessons has been clipped. This means that in Year 2, for example, music is now only taught for about half the school year in lessons of about three-quarters of an hour. This is not long enough to make sure that the long-term plans are fulfilled.
138. Current attainment in lessons is not uniformly average. Standards in singing are still much higher than is expected, largely due to the very good tuition all pupils receive in singing practices and some experience in choir rehearsals. Pupils are also good at listening to music and talking about their feelings with regard to the sounds and moods created. For example, in a Year 4 lesson in which pupils were learning about Gamelan music from Indonesia they were able to talk about the differences between it and western music. In this lesson pupils with special educational needs were supported well and achieved as well as the others. This kind of support and achievement is typical of lessons throughout the school. Furthermore, in a Year 2 lesson about lullabies one pupil prefaced a comment by saying, "I had a picture in my head...", and another enthusiastically likened the sounds to the lull before a tornado. In these respects all pupils get a chance to excel, but higher attainers and those with talent are particularly successful. The weakness in current practice, caused primarily, by the lack of time, is in the lack of opportunities for pupils to both play instruments and talk about how well they do, and what needs to be improved. Pupils do try out ideas on instruments, but it is mostly a rushed experience with too little time to choose their own instruments and compose at length.
139. Teachers now are generally non-specialist and lack confidence in teaching music to their age group of pupils. This is another cause of the differences between now and 1997. This changes the very good learning, identified in 1997, to satisfactory now. The music co-ordinator tried to tackle this lack of confidence by implementing the national guidance for teachers but found that it was too complicated for most staff and has wisely introduced a published scheme of work to help teachers plan lessons. This scheme is working well, but has only been in place since September 2001. Teaching is good in classes where teachers are confident and have a little more specialist knowledge. In one lesson in Year 3, for example, pupils used instruments to explore appropriate sounds to accompany a poem by Spike Milligan, 'The Ning Nang Nong'. This lesson was fast, full of fun and generated a high level of discussion about what was successful and what could be improved. In other, satisfactory, lessons the slower pace left too little time for playing and discussion.
140. The co-ordinator, who is new to the post since 1997, has achieved well in the circumstances. The special events in terms of concerts and shows are as good as

ever and teachers who lack confidence have been well supported by a new scheme of work. Pupils' get many chances to listen to a broad range of music in assemblies and collective worship because the co-ordinator has introduced a comprehensive plan to link music to the themes being discussed. However, the lack of monitoring in lessons has caused the problems related to time to be overlooked. This kind of monitoring is planned for the future as the school realises that it needs to be accomplished. There are enough resources, but still too few multi-cultural instruments to provide a really broad cultural education for all classes. Computers are not yet used to create music, but the co-ordinator acknowledges this and knows that it is a feature for future development.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

141. Standards in physical education are above those found nationally at the ages of seven and eleven. This is a similar picture to that seen at the time of the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well. Year 3 pupils have regular swimming lessons and standards are similar to those found in most schools. There is, however, no provision for the very occasional pupil who does not meet the national standard by the end of that year.
142. Teaching and learning are both good. All lessons begin with an appropriate warm up and pupils know the effect that exercise has on their body. Infant teachers use pre-recorded tapes for dance lessons. In some cases the use of the tape slows lessons down because teachers stop the tape to recap on what has been said and to go over it again. In a Year 2 lesson the teacher stopped the tape occasionally but extended what had been asked rather than merely recapitulating what had gone on previously. The pace of this lesson was much greater and the lesson flowed. The teacher stimulated pupils' imaginations and gave them clues on how to interpret the music. Pupils enjoy dance and want to improve their skills. Opportunities are missed in some infant lessons to highlight the good work being done by individuals or pairs of pupils. Younger junior pupils work hard to improve their skill and movement in gymnastic lessons. They practise rolls, hops, bounces and slides and then build up a sequence of movements on the floor or, occasionally, using the floor and low apparatus such as a bench. Teachers question pupils as they work and encourage them to make movements smoother and pupils respond positively to teacher suggestions and comments. Older juniors practise similar movements but they work in pairs to produce good, smooth synchronised sequences. Older pupils work at different heights and combine their movements to move from floor level to high bench level and then back to the floor. They achieve different three-point balances and move smoothly between them. Pupils make good progress in lessons as they try out different ways of moving and practise hard to control their bodies. Teachers ask pupils to assess their friends' efforts. In every case pupils make positive comments about the work demonstrated by others and speak about what they would like to copy to help their own work to improve. The pupils' good or very good behaviour is a significant factor in the good progress they make in lessons. They respond well to teachers' suggestions and co-operate sensibly with their friends when necessary.
143. The range of activities seen during the inspection was very limited but teachers' planning indicates that the whole range required to meet national requirements is taught. It is clear from talking to pupils that this is the case. The school is proud of the range and quality of sporting activities it offers to pupils. There are sufficient resources to cover curriculum requirements and the school is fortunate to have two halls and extensive grounds where physical education lessons take place. The school has adopted the national guidelines for physical education. The co-ordinator,

rightly, wants to devise an outline which would help non-specialists to know which activities should be introduced at which stage to help pupils to improve.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

144. Pupils' attainment is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at ages seven and eleven. Pupils work at levels of attainment appropriate for their age. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress overall.
145. Year 1 pupils have developed an awareness of the importance of relationships by comparing a range of familiar life circumstances such as family, school, clubs and church. They know that people sometimes wear special clothes such as the Jewish skullcap, or vicar's vestments. Year 2 pupils know that Christmas symbolises the birth of Jesus. They are familiar with the signs and symbols of the Nativity, such as the star and angel. By Year 6 pupils know about the life of Jesus and how this forms the basis of the main Christian festivals such as Christmas, Lent and Easter. They have visited a local church and recognise the principal artefacts found there. They have written prayers on various themes, some of which are used in school assemblies.
146. Standards at the last inspection were in line with the requirements of the agreed syllabus, and progress was generally good. The findings of this inspection show some weaknesses in the religious education curriculum, which limit the amount of progress that pupils make. The rate of progress differs between classes and year groups because there is no specific time allowance given to the subject. This results in inconsistencies in pupils' entitlement. For example, scrutiny of timetables showed one Year 5 class having a 45-minute discrete religious education lesson, whilst the partner class allocated one hour to be used for religious education or music, reducing the time by half. Sometimes, religious education is replaced with lessons on personal, social and health education. This reduces the time available to the subject. In Year 6, the subject is taught as part of the literacy hour, using a religious education focus as a vehicle for written work. This cross-referencing of work between religious education and English allows study in depth. Progress, overall, is satisfactory in lessons, but is sometimes limited by this cross-curricular approach. For example, in a Year 4 lesson about the Three Kings, the second half of the lesson was used to construct a collage card, resulting in an art and design focus for 50 per cent of the time.
147. Overall, pupils have too few opportunities to write about their work in religious education. This gives insufficient time to reflect on or consolidate their learning. Insufficient writing in pupils' books also limits the use of writing as a source of reference for future revision. However, pupils listen attentively in lessons and make sound connections between their current and previous learning. For example, Year 6 pupils are currently studying Judaism. They recognise the similarities and differences between church and synagogue. They make good comparisons of the Torah and the Bible. For example, pupils know that the Jewish faith has its roots in the Old Testament, and the significance of the New Testament to Christians. By the age of eleven, pupils make sound progress in their knowledge and understanding of the principal people, symbols and traditions of the Christian and Jewish faiths, but have limited knowledge of Islam. Whilst pupils can say that different religions have differing diets, customs and practices, their understanding of the ways in which a faith affects a believer's life is limited.

148. The quality of teaching is satisfactory throughout the school. Teachers ensure that pupils know the objectives of the lesson so that they understand the work. They provide relevant activities that capture pupils' interest. For example, a lesson about the Three Kings was introduced by playing a Christmas carol. In another lesson, pupils were eager to learn more when shown a range of attractive storybooks. The weaknesses in teaching relate to insufficient time for pupils to complete written work, and activities which are too directed and limit pupils' use of initiative. The management of pupils' behaviour and the relationships between adults and pupils are very good. This results in pupils listening attentively, concentrating and persevering with their work.
149. The co-ordinator has good knowledge of the subject and is enthusiastic. A suitable long-term plan, interpreting the agreed syllabus, gives good support to teachers and enables the subject to be taught in a consistent way, but the inconsistencies in time allocation often result in patchy coverage of the long-term plan. Monitoring of teaching and learning is limited to working alongside an individual teacher rather than monitoring consistency of provision across the school. This means that the relative weaknesses in the subject have not been identified. There are no formal procedures to assess pupils' progress.