

INSPECTION REPORT

WILNECOTE JUNIOR SCHOOL

Wilnecote, Tamworth

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124157

Headteacher: Mr K Lomas

Reporting inspector: Mr M Johnstone
21114

Dates of inspection: 17th – 20th September 2001

Inspection number: 194145

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Smithy Lane Wilnecote Tamworth Staffordshire
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs K Manuel
Date of previous inspection:	March 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21114	Malcolm Johnstone	Registered inspector	Art and design Physical education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
13526	Richard Barnard	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
17545	Brian Aldridge	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology	How well is the school led and managed?
20911	Judy Dawson	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Equal opportunities	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
18143	Bernice Magson	Team inspector	English Music Religious education Special educational needs English as an additional language	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This large community junior school for pupils aged seven to eleven is situated in the village of Wilnecote on the outskirts of Tamworth in Staffordshire. There are 339 pupils on roll (168 boys and 171 girls), a number that has fallen since the previous inspection when there were 388 on roll. Numbers are also falling in the feeder infant school. The school serves the local community where the housing is a mixture of owner occupied and rented accommodation. Over the past two years attainment on entry to the school at seven years of age has been broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. In previous years it was below average in these subjects. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals, 14 per cent, is similar to the national average. Only three pupils are from minority ethnic families but all three speak English fluently. Eighteen per cent of the pupils have special needs, which is similar to the national average; five per cent has a statement of special educational need, which is above the national average. These pupils have a variety of physical, behavioural, and learning needs. There has been a low teaching staff turnover since the previous inspection, although there have been two key staff changes recently. A new headteacher took up post in September 2000 and the deputy headteacher left in July 2001. The new deputy headteacher will take up her post in January 2002. There have been no recruitment difficulties.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is providing a sound education for its pupils. Standards in subjects other than mathematics and ICT are similar to the national average and teaching and learning are satisfactory and improving. The headteacher and governors know what needs to be done to become a good school and are building strong foundations. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good and their behaviour is very good. All pupils and adults who work in the school know they are valued. The school provides satisfactory value for money. There is a clear sense of optimism in the school and a strong desire to improve. This is a school on the move.

What the school does well

- The headteacher is a very good leader and manager who, with the support of a committed and hard working staff, is developing key areas of the school's work very well.
- The governors support the school well and have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses.
- Pupils behave very well and their attitudes to learning are good; they are happy and want to come to school.
- The pupils' welfare is of a very high standard and the moral and social development of the pupils is very good.

What could be improved

- Standards in mathematics and information and communication technology.
- The provision for pupils at the early stages of special educational need.
- The methods for checking pupils' progress and planning further work.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Overall, the school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection in March 1997 and progress has been particularly good over the past year. Standards have risen in line with the national upward trend and the overall quality of teaching is better. Leadership and management by the headteacher and governors are developing very well from what was a sound base. Standards and pupils' progress have improved in art and design, design and technology and geography, subjects about which the last report was critical. All year groups now make at least satisfactory progress, although in mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) this has not been as good as in other subjects. With the opening of the new suite at the beginning of this year ICT is beginning to improve but more needs to be done in mathematics. With the exception of aspects of the special needs policy, there is now consistent implementation of agreed policies.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	all schools			Similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	C	C	C	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	D	C	D	E	
Science	D	C	C	C	

The table indicates that in the year 2000 National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds, standards in English and science were high enough to be similar to the national average and those in similar schools. In mathematics, standards were not high enough. They were below the national average and well below those found in similar schools. Provisional results for tests for 2001 paint a similar picture.

For pupils who are now in the school, inspection evidence indicates that standards are improving, although they remain broadly average in English and science. They are still below average in mathematics and are not yet high enough. Analysis of trends over the past four years shows that standards in all three subjects are rising at a pace that is broadly in line with the national upward trend. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. In all three subjects, the percentages of pupils attaining the national average have improved markedly since the last inspection. The school did not meet its ambitious targets for 2000 and 2001. Good analysis of the performance of the various year groups in school based tests over the past year has resulted in more realistic and achievable targets being set for the next few years.

Standards in ICT are below average and are not yet high enough. In art and design, design and technology and geography, standards have risen from below average at the last inspection. They are now above average in art and design and average in design and technology and geography. Standards are average in all other subjects.

The pupils identified as having special educational needs (SEN) and receiving additional specialist support make good progress. However, for pupils at earlier stages of identification progress is unsatisfactory. The school has been slow to review and maintain targets, or increase and decrease support as necessary.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to school. They enjoy coming to school and are friendly and happy. Attention and interest in lessons is good, pupils are keen to succeed and persevere well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is very good in lessons, around the school and in the playground; in assemblies it is excellent. Pupils know the school rules well and have a good understanding of the effect of their behaviour on others
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good. Pupils play and work very well together. Pupils' personal development is good. They undertake a good range of duties with responsibility and care. Pupils respond well when asked to use their initiative
Attendance	Attendance levels are satisfactory. However, a significant minority of the pupils misses important parts of their education when taking holidays in term time. Pupils arrive at school punctually enabling lessons to start promptly.

The very good relationship between mid day supervisors and pupils has a marked influence on pupils' behaviour. The new school council enables pupils to put forward their views and the views of their classmates.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory

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

The quality of teaching and learning are sound and meet the needs of pupils satisfactorily. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen and in about a half of the lessons seen it was good. There was no marked variation in the quality of teaching across the year groups. The teaching has improved since the last inspection, particularly over the past year. The quality of teaching is checked regularly and more effectively. Although there is still work to be done, all staff work as a team, are open to suggestions and keen to improve their effectiveness. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory overall, although the teaching of literacy is stronger and results in higher standards. Expectations of what above average pupils might achieve in mathematics are not yet high enough.

The key strengths teaching and learning across all subjects are;

- the good relationships and high expectations of behaviour that result in pupils' very good behaviour, good attitudes to learning and well managed lessons,
- the use of resources and homework to stimulate and extend learning,
- co-operative planning that links together subjects effectively and allows pupils to develop their ideas and understanding,
- support and teaching of pupils at the later stages of SEN.

General weaknesses in teaching relate to;

- the checking of pupils' progress in lessons and building the outcomes into the following lessons,
- the use of marking to show pupils how they might improve,
- a lack of sufficient pace to learning in group work.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides its pupils with a broad and relevant curriculum. Curriculum planning is good and good links are made between subjects that make learning more relevant for the pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils at the later stages of SEN who are receiving additional teaching support is good. For pupils at the early stages provision is unsatisfactory.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The very few pupils classified as having English as an additional language all speak English fluently and do not require any additional provision.
Provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and is a key factor in the development of pupils' learning.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are very good. Assessment procedures and the use of assessment to make improvements to the curriculum are both good.

The range of extra-curricular activities provided for the pupils is satisfactory. The school's partnership with parents is good and parents make an effective contribution to their children's learning at school and at home. The school does not fulfil statutory requirements in relation to the provision for pupils with SEN.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is a very good leader. He involves all staff and governors in decision making and has succeeded in making all who work in school feel and act as a team. He has been a significant force for change.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors handle their work well. They have a very good understanding of the needs and priorities of the school. They understand the need to move the school forward and have good ideas as to how this might be achieved.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There is effective analysis of the school's performance in national and school tests and of the value added by the school to pupils' achievements. There is a regular programme to check on the quality of lessons and this is beginning to improve the overall quality of teaching and learning.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning is very good and resources are used well to support educational priorities and developments. The principles of best value are understood and applied well by the headteacher and governors.

The number, qualifications and experience of teachers and support staff match the demands of the curriculum satisfactorily. The school's administrative staff provides very good support in ensuring the smooth day-to-day running of the school. The accommodation and resource levels are good. One aspect of the leadership and management of the school's work does not meet these high standards. The provision for pupils at the early stages of SEN is unsatisfactory and requires immediate attention in order to meet their needs more effectively. There has been no recent training for the governors in this aspect of school provision.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and are making good progress. • Behaviour is good and the school is helping their children become mature and responsible. • The teaching is good and children are expected to work hard. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children do not get the right amount of homework to do. • They are not well enough informed about how their children are doing. • The school does not work closely enough with parents. • There are not enough interesting activities outside lessons.

Inspectors agree with the parents' positive comments. The homework set is similar to that given in many schools and the school's own questionnaire to parents indicated that the large majority of parents felt that the amount given was about right. The range of activities provided outside lessons is similar to that found in many schools. The school does value parents as partners and inspectors judge parental links to be good. There are three formal opportunities for parents to meet teachers and all teachers are available to discuss pupils' progress at any reasonable time. The quality of annual reports on pupils' progress is judged to be good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In the year 2000 National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds, standards in English and science were high enough to be in line with both the national average and the results of similar schools. In mathematics, standards were not high enough. They were below the national average and well below those found in similar schools. Not enough pupils attained the higher level 5. Provisional results for tests for 2001 paint a similar picture. Analysis of the two groups of pupils who took the 2000 and 2001 tests reveals that there were particular factors that affected the results. Whilst pupils' attainment on entry has been close to the national average over the past two years, it was below average for the pupils who took the 2000 and 2001 tests. In both years there were substantially more pupils who had special educational needs (SEN) and a tenth of the pupils had statements of special need relating to learning difficulties.
2. Analysis of trends over the past four years shows that standards in all three subjects are rising at a pace that is broadly in line with the national upward trend. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. In all three subjects, the percentages of pupils attaining the national average have improved markedly since the last inspection. The school did not meet its ambitious targets for 2000 and 2001. This revealed some weaknesses in teachers' own assessments of the progress of individual pupils. Good analysis of the performance of the various year groups in school based tests over the past year and improvements in teacher assessments have resulted in more realistic and achievable targets being set for the next few years.
3. For pupils who are now in the school, inspection evidence indicates that standards are improving, although they remain broadly average in English and science. In both subjects, the achievements of the large majority of the pupils are at least satisfactory. Standards in mathematics are still below average for the oldest pupils and are not yet high enough. Whilst standards in mathematics are now nearer to the national average in other year groups, more could still be expected of the above and below average pupils.
4. In English, pupils' achievements in speaking and listening are satisfactory and standards are average by the age of eleven. Pupils join in discussion confidently and speak clearly. Some incorrect speech is often allowed to go unchecked by teachers and this slows down progress. Throughout the school, all pupils have good listening skills and activities to develop these skills are provided across all subjects and in assemblies. In reading, most pupils are making good progress and across the key stage many have standards in line with expected levels. Good reading habits are additionally promoted in school each day through specially identified reading groups. Most pupils have a good understanding of the sounds made by letters and letter combinations and use these effectively to read unfamiliar words. By the age of eleven, most pupils in the year group have developed more advanced reading skills. The above average pupils read expressively and name favourite authors or stories they have enjoyed. Above average and average pupils have good library skills and research independently for information from non-fiction material.
5. Standards and pupils' achievements in writing, although satisfactory, have not been as strong as in other aspects of English. The school has identified this relative weakness and over the past year standards and pupils' progress are improving in all year groups. Pupils write for a wide range of audiences and in story writing above

average pupils develop a good literary style. All pupils are beginning to recognise the need to organise their ideas more systematically to produce the greatest effect. Above average pupils write good pieces of persuasive writing and recognise bias in the writing of others. Pupils develop a good knowledge of grammar and punctuation. Standards and pupils' progress in spelling and handwriting are satisfactory.

6. In mathematics, the achievements of the above average and below average pupils, whilst satisfactory overall, are inconsistent across classes. For example, below average pupils who are now in Year 4 made good progress throughout Year 3 because their teacher set realistically challenging work that was relevant to their needs. However, the above average pupils in this and other year groups often repeat work unnecessarily at the same level and this restricts their progress. In some lessons, below average pupils only achieve the objectives for the lesson with adult support. They are not taught the steps they need to enable them to work independently.
7. In science, pupils in all year groups are provided with good practical learning experiences. This helps them make consistently sound progress as they move through the school. They develop a good understanding of the principles of scientific enquiry and develop a sound knowledge of life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes.
8. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are below average and are not yet high enough. Pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are below the levels that are set out in the National Curriculum and their achievements have been unsatisfactory. This situation is improving and progress over the past year has been good. The opening of the new computer suite and input from the new headteacher and co-ordinator have raised the profile of the subject and enthused the teachers.
9. In art and design, design and technology and geography, standards have risen from being below average at the last inspection. In art and design, pupils' work on this inspection is better than normally seen for pupils' age and all pupils achieve well. In design and technology and geography standards are similar to those expected for pupils' age and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the local agreed syllabus and pupils make sound progress. Standards are similar to those expected for pupils' age in physical education and history and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. In music much of the work is similar to that expected for the pupils' age. Pupils' achievements in singing are good.
10. In all subjects, the progress of the above average pupils is satisfactory overall, although more could be expected of them, particularly in mathematics. The pupils identified as having SEN and receiving additional specialist support make good progress. An individual educational plan is set up for each of them following consideration of a number of school based and national tests. To help these pupils towards best achievement, teaching provision is considered in literacy and numeracy for each pupil, and for some pupils assistance is also included in several other areas of the curriculum. As a result teachers and classroom assistants provide targeted intervention and good sensitive support. They work well together to help the pupils consistently improve their standards in any problem areas. Regular reviews take place so that progress can be sustained. However, for pupils at earlier stages of identification progress is unsatisfactory. Although the pupils arrive in the school with action already identified by the feeder infant school, the school has been slow to review and maintain these targets, or increase and decrease support as necessary. An analysis of annual assessments shows that targets for some pupils are no longer

accurate. A review of procedures is necessary so that the achievements of these pupils can be improved.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils' good attitudes to school, personal development and very good behaviour have a positive impact on their learning. The good attitudes reported at the last inspection have been maintained and the good personal development and very good behaviour have improved since the last inspection. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are friendly and happy. The pupils who have recently moved from the partner infant school have settled very quickly into their new school. Attention and interest in lessons are good and pupils persevere well. They particularly enjoy practical tasks. In a Year 4 mathematics lesson, for example, pupils' enthusiasm in exploring methods of adding up two and three digit numbers supported their learning well. There is some loss of attention by a very small minority of pupils, usually boys, when activities fail to stimulate them. This occurs in only a small number of lessons.
12. Pupils' behaviour is very good in lessons, around the school and in the playground; in assemblies it is excellent. Pupils know the school rules well and have a good understanding of the effect of their behaviour on others. The level of temporary and permanent exclusions over the last three years is well below the national average. Bullying, racist or sexist behaviour was not observed during the inspection and pupils and parents raised no concerns.
13. Relationships are very good and have improved markedly since the last inspection when they were satisfactory. Pupils play and work very well together. In a Year 3 physical education lesson, for example, boys and girls dance sensibly with each other without any silliness. The very good relationships between adults and pupils in the playground have a very positive influence on standards of behaviour and pupils' personal development.
14. Pupils' personal development is good. They undertake a wide range of duties with responsibility and care. Pupils feel that the school council enables them to put forward their views; for example, they have discussed rules for using the school field at lunch times. Pupils respond well when asked to use their initiative. In Year 6, for example, they completed a questionnaire responsibly to assess their own and their teacher's performance in relation to recent work in science.
15. Attendance levels are satisfactory and similar to what they were at the time of the last inspection, being about the national average for junior schools. However, a significant minority of the pupils miss important parts of their education by taking holidays in term time. Unauthorised absences are below the national average. Almost all pupils arrive at school punctually enabling lessons to start promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching and learning are sound and meet the needs of pupils satisfactorily. In the 61 lessons observed across all year groups just over a half were at least good and a tenth were very good. All other lessons observed were satisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. There was no marked variation in the quality of teaching across the year groups. The teaching has improved since the last inspection when there were fewer very good lessons observed and about a tenth of lessons were less than satisfactory. This represents good improvement since there have been very few staff changes and improvements have resulted from teachers evaluating and working to improve their teaching. This has been particularly pronounced since the headteacher took up post a year ago. His monitoring of teaching and learning and drive to lift the quality of teaching to the next level is

beginning to have a clear effect. Although there is still work to be done, all staff are working as a team, are open to suggestions and keen to improve their effectiveness.

17. For literacy and numeracy, pupils in all year groups are taught in sets based on ability. The basic skills of reading and writing are taught well in most lessons. Good emphasis is placed on the use of letter sounds and this helps pupils read unfamiliar words successfully. Teachers are placing greater emphasis on the development of pupils' writing and this is having a good effect on their ability to structure their writing correctly and to write in a range of different styles and for different purposes. Good links are made to provide opportunities to use these skills in other subjects of the curriculum, for example pupils write good accounts of their work in science, history and geography and produce very good written evaluations of their work in art. This helps them increase their understanding and develop their ideas well. Literacy lessons are also used effectively to support and extend understanding in other subjects, for example, in a series of lessons in Year 5 pupils studied Dickens's *Nicholas Nickleby*. This gave them a valuable historical insight and understanding of life at that time. Listening skills are developed well in all subjects but teachers do not pick up pupils' errors in speech sufficiently and this slows down their progress in this aspect.
18. The teaching of numeracy skills is satisfactory. In all numeracy lessons teachers explain the work clearly so that pupils know what they have to do. They encourage pupils to use the correct mathematical vocabulary. In the more effective lessons, teachers set a good pace that keeps motivation high and results in consistently good progress. Whilst the aims of each lesson are shared with the class in all lessons, pupils do not have targets in response to their individual needs to help them improve. This means that good progress for all ability groups cannot be guaranteed. For example, above average pupils often repeat work unnecessarily at the same level and below average pupils only achieve the objectives for the lesson with adult support. They are not taught the steps they need to enable them to work independently. In general, teachers' expectations of what above average pupils might achieve are not high enough. This means that their progress is only satisfactory rather than good. Numeracy skills are taught well in other subjects, for example they lend effective support to work in history, geography and science.
19. All the teachers have a secure understanding of the requirements of the national literacy and numeracy strategies. All plan their literacy and numeracy lessons to include whole class, group and individual work. In most respects this works well and motivates and interests the pupils. However, in both subjects the final session, when the class is brought together to review and evaluate their learning, is sometimes rushed and loses its effectiveness.
20. In the lessons seen, teaching and learning in art, music and ICT are good. In art, pupils are taught the correct techniques well and provided with opportunities to work with a good range of materials. This fires their interest and results in good quality work. The use of specialist teaching in music impacts well on pupils learning and enthusiasm for the subject. In ICT the use of a specialist technician in the new computer suite and teaching by the headteacher are ensuring that pupils learn at a good pace. In this subject, scrutiny of pupils' past work and the limited opportunities for pupils to use computers across the curriculum indicates that this has been a weak area prior to this year. Computers are still not used sufficiently to support work in other subjects. Teaching and learning in science, geography, history, physical education, religious education and personal and social education are satisfactory. In science there is good emphasis on scientific enquiry and this helps pupils develop their ideas and encourages an excitement in discovery. Across all subjects, where

the teaching is judged to be satisfactory, there is a lack of sufficient pace, particularly in the group activities and pupils do not make as much progress as they might.

21. Planning in all subjects has improved and is now good overall. Teachers work to a whole school overview and plan lessons together in year teams under the guidance of a year leader. The good schemes of work in many subjects lend effective support to the process. One weakness in this area of work is in teachers' assessments of pupils' progress. Teachers assess pupils' understanding well through good questioning, for example, in a Year 3 science lesson, the teacher asks *'how can you find out which material is the most flexible?* In a Year 4 literacy lesson, the teacher asks *'how do you think the story might end?* However, the use of assessment as a way to develop pupils' learning is generally unsatisfactory. The day-to-day outcomes of pupils' learning are not built effectively into following lessons. The school is beginning to work on this aspect by setting personal targets for the pupils based on an assessment of their individual needs but this is at an early stage of development and its impact on learning is not yet clear. Pupils' work is marked regularly but there are few comments that help pupils to see how it can be improved. This limits its effectiveness as a tool to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. Homework supports learning well, particularly in English and mathematics.
22. There are key strengths that have a good effect on learning across all subjects. There are good relationships and high expectations of behaviour. This results in a good working atmosphere, a willingness to learn and good co-operation, for example in all activities, pupils help each other and share resources well. Resources are used well to stimulate and extend learning, for example, in art and design pupils draw inspiration from famous works of art and artefacts and in literacy and numeracy white boards, overhead projectors and number cards and games are used well.
23. The quality of teaching for pupils with SEN is satisfactory overall. For the pupils on the register of special educational needs, who are identified with the greatest needs, the teaching is good. They are taught both in the classroom and in specially planned withdrawal groups when their needs can be more carefully targeted. Lessons for these pupils are well planned, and teachers and other adults have high expectations of best achievement throughout. A portfolio of activities and records of completed work are reviewed regularly by all teachers, classroom assistants and specialist helpers, so that the individual education plans of all these pupils are sufficient to sustain progress and maintain pupil interest. For other pupils at earlier stages of identification school targeted support is insufficient, disjointed, and relies on the professional skill of each teacher. Although throughout the school literacy and numeracy are taught in ability groups, so that pupils can be provided with more appropriate work, in some year groups the teachers are unaware that pupils are placed on the register of SEN. There are no formal arrangements for teachers to share any pupil difficulties so that solutions to problems can be identified and overcome. As a result of these shortcomings the needs of these pupils are not met effectively enough.

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

24. The school provides its pupils with a broad and relevant curriculum. All National Curriculum subjects and the requirements of the agreed syllabus for religious education are fully implemented. The weaknesses in the curriculum, identified during the last inspection, have been addressed. The curriculum for design and technology now complies with the National Curriculum requirements and the omissions in the provision for geography and art have been successfully rectified. Curriculum planning is good. The school has adapted the government guidance for the subjects

of the curriculum to include the community and locality, making the lessons relevant to the pupils. The school also has a newly developed scheme of work for personal, social and health education. This provides a good base from which to plan lessons in this subject.

25. The national initiatives for literacy and numeracy are firmly established. Pupils work in ability groups for both subjects and the school provides a sound education in the basic skills. These literacy and numeracy skills are effectively applied across the curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 6 use a persuasive style to design travel brochures to encourage visitors to Chambakolli in India. In a mathematics lesson, pupils used data derived from a local census to develop data handling skills. Overall, however, ICT is not used sufficiently to support and develop work across the curriculum. The school is at an early stage in the development of procedures for the identification and support of any gifted and talented pupils. None have yet been identified.
26. All the pupils with SEN receive the National Curriculum alongside all other peer group members. A register of pupils lists their special educational needs following annual assessments. For many pupils with more specific needs, good individual education plans are written, including contributions from teachers, classroom assistants, outside agencies and parents. At present these individual plans do not include any contributions by pupils, although informally in many lessons they are asked to evaluate their progress towards identified targets. For these pupils individual education plans are reviewed formally several times during each school year. Although pupils may arrive in school from feeder schools with the early identification of SEN having already taken place, and some individual plans provided, the school has not established any procedures to up-date these assessments, so that a relevant curriculum can be provided. Although all pupils have equal access to all the school activities, because some pupils do not have their SEN needs addressed, the school does not fulfil the requirements for the equal rights of all pupils to receive appropriate support.
27. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils have the opportunity to participate in football and athletics, the choir and orchestra, chess and the Power House and Eco clubs. These relate to spiritual and environmental issues. These clubs are open to all pupils. They have additional opportunities at lunchtime to finish work or take part in other activities. The range of topics covered by these activities has improved since the last inspection when they were limited to sports.
28. The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and is a key factor in the development of pupils' learning. This is a marked improvement since the last inspection when it was judged to be satisfactory. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is now very good and a strength of the school.
29. The school is a very caring community where pupils are taught to respect each other and the adults who care for them. The new headteacher has been very effective in promoting the self-esteem of the whole school community. Pupils are encouraged to take a pride in their work. Celebration assemblies enable all to share in achievements, both academic and personal. A 'good work' board greets visitors to the school. Teachers value pupils' contributions. They provide opportunities for pupils to imagine people and places beyond their experience. A video of Blackpool, for example, caused Year 3 pupils to gasp with delight as they saw the illuminations while another class silently contemplated the vision of open moorland, fresh air and birdsong described by their teacher. In a science lesson, the teacher ensured that her pupils experienced the wonders of nature as they dissected a flower. Candles lit

in assemblies focus everyone's thoughts during prayers and set aside the act of worship. There is a weekly visit from a local Christian leaders or leaders of charities such as the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. Pupils learn about other faiths and are taught to respect the beliefs of others. This is a school concerned with the environment and ecological issues and pupils are encouraged to care for their world.

30. All pupils know what is acceptable behaviour and know the difference between right and wrong. The example set by all adults in school, who respect and help each other, provides a very good role model for the pupils. Pupils are respected and encouraged to co-operate with each other. In several lessons observed during the inspection pupils helped each other without being prompted. Boys and girls work amicably alongside each other because the teachers expect them to. Award systems include moral and social achievements as well as academic. The school prospectus clearly states what the expectations for behaviour are and what will not be tolerated, and all the pupils know what is expected of them. Pupils have opportunities to socialise in different environments in Years 4 and 6 as residential trips are provided. Pupils take responsibility for their own learning through regular homework. Until now, pupils have had little input in the way the school is run but a school council has just been established and is beginning to help pupils understand the principles of citizenship. The curriculum includes sex education and drugs awareness through the science and personal, social and health education, which are part of the weekly timetable. The school participates in the 'Health For Life' initiative. Energy conservation has a high priority and pupils are studying the impact of a solar panel on energy consumption.
31. Much of the curriculum is planned through topics or themes. These have been carefully planned to include social and cultural issues related to each topic. When studying India, for example, pupils experience the art and music of the country and learn about Hindu gods and stories. These links extend into literacy as Year 6 study the "Just So" stories. Art and design has a high profile in school and pupils study the work of a variety of artists and sculptors. The music for the week is discussed in assemblies. Teachers make the most of the opportunities offered when studying different countries or periods in history. This helps to promote pupils' understanding of cultural similarities and differences as they have a limited experience of people from other cultures. However, visitors from other cultures are rare and there are no spiritual leaders from non-Christian faiths participating in acts of worship. The Millennium Garden Project, when pupils designed a beautiful garden for the school, was a great success and made a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness.
32. The school has effective links with the community. Computer experts who support Esso judged pupils' web page designs. There are good links with a local supermarket and many visits within the locality to support the curriculum. Links with both the infant and secondary schools are effective. The headteachers of both the infant and junior school share the same principles and ideals and work closely together. Transfer procedures are good. The headteachers visit each other's school for assembly. Pupils in Year 3 study the plans of their old and new schools in their geography lessons. Some aspects of school life are shared, for example, a drama week and fund-raising. There are plans to extend these links further with joint curriculum planning and systems to track pupils' progress through both schools. Links with the local high school are also good. As well as appropriate transfer procedures, pupils in Year 6 participate in a link project led by teachers from Year 7. The work is finished in the pupils' new school and provides good continuity of learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are very good. This does much to support the pupils' learning and personal development. It enables them to feel secure and valued. The quality of care has been sustained and in some areas improved since the last inspection. The classrooms are clean, tidy and secure. Health and safety procedures are very effective and the school regularly identifies and deals successfully with potential hazards. Fire precautions and first aid arrangements are very good. A particularly fine example of the caring attitude is the level of training, including first aid, provided for all lunchtime staff. This enables them to make a very positive contribution to developing pupils' self esteem and cements very good relationships.
34. The school promotes very good standards of behaviour through a good behaviour policy which all staff work successfully to implement. The very good use of rewards and development of self-esteem has a very positive effect on pupils' attitudes to school. The Fun Lunch Bunch is a very effective and an excellent example of how the school has developed initiatives in this field. Procedures for monitoring and discouraging bullying, racist or sexist behaviour are very successful. Any potential issues are dealt with promptly and effectively. The very low level of exclusions demonstrates the school's positive attitude towards the inclusion of all pupils.
35. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good and enable trends to be identified quickly. Parents are reminded regularly about absence procedures and the importance of not taking holidays in term time. Child protection procedures and awareness are very good. Staff are well briefed on all issues and local guidelines are followed closely.
36. At the time of the last inspection the school's procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress were judged to be at least satisfactory. They are now good. Every year the school uses the optional standardised tests for English and mathematics to identify strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum and to set targets for year groups. Analysis of the results of the English tests, for example, identified a weakness in handwriting and this has become a school priority for improvement. The results are shared with the parents so that they can be kept informed of pupils' progress. For speaking and listening [an aspect of English not included in the tests] teachers keep records of the standards achieved. The results of these assessments are used to place pupils into ability groups for literacy and numeracy.
37. In addition to the tests, there is a useful half-termly assessment for mathematics based on a unit of the numeracy strategy. The school measures pupils' achievements in science at the end of each unit. These results are used successfully to identify any weaknesses so that the curriculum may be adjusted to address them. Portfolios of work are kept for English, mathematics and science as well as art and design and design and technology. Teachers measure pupils' achievements at the end of the units for music and make informal judgements about pupils' progress in history, geography and physical education. A judgement about pupils' attainment in all subjects is made at the end of each academic year. The school identifies trends, for example, any differences in the performance of boys and girls in order to respond to any needs to adjust the curriculum. Groups of pupils are identified for extra support in literacy or numeracy in order to boost overall school achievement.
38. While assessment procedures and the use of assessment to inform the curriculum are both good, the school does not make effective use of the information to track individual pupil's progress. Teachers do not pick up any changes in the rate of an

individual's progress. They do not use their assessments to identify, for example, below average pupils who need extra support. This means that the progress of these pupils is not as rapid as it might be. The school has failed to set out clearly the differing responsibilities of the class teachers and the SEN co-ordinator, so that all are clear about their role in the provision for this group of pupils.

39. Teachers are beginning to set appropriate individual targets for literacy and personal and social development in Years 5 and 6, although this is not yet firmly established. Pupils do not know how much is expected of them or what they need to do to make good progress, especially in mathematics. The good curriculum assessment procedures now need to be applied to individual pupils so that they may become more involved in their own learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

40. The school's partnership with parents is good and parents make an effective contribution to their children's learning at school and at home. Standards in this area have been maintained well since the previous inspection. The school welcomes parents as partners in learning and a positive relationship exists.
41. The school provides very good information through regular newsletters and an attractive and informative prospectus. Teachers and parents use reading and homework diaries very well to monitor the progress of the pupils. Annual reports are good and give parents good information on progress and set good individual targets for pupils. They are supported by regular and well-attended parents' open and consultation sessions.
42. Arrangements for the involvement of parents in the work of the school to improve the provision for pupils with SEN are satisfactory. There is a good partnership between the parents and the school for those pupils with statements of special needs, and also for the other pupils for whom outside specialist help is provided. The SEN co-ordinator invites these parents into school regularly to attend meetings, and wherever possible includes them in the identification of the targets for improvement, which are set up for their children. However, for pupils at the earlier stages of identification of their SEN, no formal arrangements exist to include parents in any meetings. Although parents have the opportunity to meet with teachers at the termly parents' meetings, they are not currently informed by the school of the need to place their children on the special needs register following school assessments. Meetings are not arranged to discuss provision as recommended in the Code of Practice for all pupils with SEN. The school is aware of this omission and is setting up procedures.
43. Only four parents attended the pre-inspection meeting but about one quarter replied to the pre-inspection questionnaire. The large majority of those indicate that their children like coming to school and that they were making good progress. They believe that the school is well led and managed. About a quarter feel that the school does not provide the right amount of homework, that it does not work closely with parents and that they do not receive sufficient information on their children's progress. One fifth felt that the school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons. Inspectors found that homework is used effectively to support pupils' learning and scrutiny of work and lesson observations during the inspection indicate that it is set regularly in English and mathematics and periodically in other subjects. Inspectors conclude that the school works closely with parents and provides good information on progress. The range of extra-curricular activities provided is satisfactory and is similar to that found in most junior schools.

44. The great majority of parents ensure their children attend school regularly and promptly, although a significant minority allow them to take holidays in term time. This causes some disruption to the pupils' learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

45. The headteacher has been in post for one year. He is a very good leader and manager. He is well supported by the governing body and co-ordinators work hard to manage their subject areas. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting, staff and governors report that the headteacher has improved the morale and communications within the school. As a result all staff and governors are involved in the management of the school and they feel their work is valued and highly regarded. They report that this makes them want to be successful and there is a strong determination to improve the school's work and raise standards. The inspection team agrees with these opinions and finds that the headteacher provides very good leadership and that the school is moving forward rapidly in most key areas of its work. The headteacher uses innovative and constructive solutions to the issues that the school has faced and the atmosphere reflects the clearly expressed aims and aspirations of the school.
46. There is a regular programme of classroom observations based securely on a good teaching and learning policy. Opportunities for observing colleagues, monitoring and feedback have been well established over the past year. This is beginning to improve the overall quality of teaching and learning. During the inspection, for example, no unsatisfactory teaching was seen and the overall quality of teaching is better than at the time of the last inspection. This is particularly noteworthy since many of the staff were in post at the time of the last inspection. There is good analysis of pupils' performance in national and school tests and weaknesses in pupils' performance are built into school development planning. This is having a good effect, for example on improvements in pupils' writing and the development of individual learning targets for the pupils.
47. The school has worked successfully to improve most of the issues identified in the last inspection. The curriculum for art and design, design and technology and geography has improved. In most subjects, except mathematics, satisfactory progress has been made in raising standards. A very substantial investment in information and communication technology (ICT) equipment is beginning to improve the rates of progress in the subject. Policies are consistently implemented and, with the exception of the policy for SEN, are practised well.
48. The governors handle their work well. They have a very good understanding of the needs and priorities of the school. They clearly understand the need to move the school forward and talk of being an above average school in as short a time as possible. This is an appropriate aim and they know how they will achieve this improvement. All of the governors visit the school and report back to the governing body about what they have seen. Governors hold the school to account and understand the thrust of the headteacher's very informative reports. There is, however, one exception to the high quality of their monitoring work and that of the school. There is no system to assess and identify pupils on the early stages of the Code of Practice and governors have had no training about their duties under the Code.
49. Curriculum co-ordinators and governors play a full part in the formulation of the school's good development plan. The plan has a good format and clear short-term priorities guide the work over a school year. Overall the quality of co-ordinators' work is satisfactory. Over the past year they have become much more involved in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning in their subjects. Planning has

improved as improvements to schemes of work have been made. However, they have yet to initiate key improvements in the development of their subjects.

50. Financial planning is very good and resources are used well to support educational priorities and developments. For example, prudent budget management has helped enable the school to replace a great deal of the outdated computer facilities, in a comparatively short space of time. The school is very successful at seeking sponsorship for major activities. For example, the local community has supported the provision of a solar panel and the Millennium Garden. The principles of best value are understood well by the headteacher and governors and are being brought into practice effectively. Good awareness of future pupil numbers, financial commitments and the impact of staffing appointments ensure that governors have a firm grasp of the school's financial position. Budget monitoring is very secure. A key factor in this secure financial position is the competence and awareness of the headteacher and the governors, supported by very good school-based systems and administration
51. The number, qualifications and experience of teachers and support staff match the demands of the curriculum satisfactorily. There is a good programme of in-service training and this is beginning to address weaknesses in some teachers' knowledge of ICT, science, music and dance. Support staff for pupils who have been identified as needing additional help are well trained and provide good levels of support. This enables these pupils to make good progress with their learning. The school's administrative staff provides very good support in ensuring the smooth day-to-day running of the school. Their contribution means the headteacher and teaching staff have to spend the minimum of time on administrative issues. ICT is used effectively to support administration in the school.
52. Accommodation is good. All classrooms have adequate space even though some are small. The facilities and resources for all subjects are at least satisfactory. The space for the library is small but attractive and is used well. The school's total supply of books is good. Especially good resources are available for music and ICT. They are used well to enhance pupils' achievements in these areas.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

53. In order to continue the good progress over the past year, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

(1) raise standards in mathematics and ICT by;

- a) in mathematics, improving teachers' expectations of what the above and below average pupils might achieve,
- b) setting work that offers consistently greater challenge for the above average pupils and reviewing worksheets for all pupils to ensure that they fulfil their purpose more effectively,
- c) ensuring all lessons proceed at a good pace,
- d) devising targets in response to the different rates of progress of individual pupils,
- e) in ICT, continuing to develop pupils' basic skills through regular access to the computer suite,
- f) Ensuring that computers in the classrooms are used more across all the subjects of the curriculum.

(These issues are discussed in paragraphs 1,3,6,8,18,20,61,63,66,67,68,71,85,88 and 91)

(2) improve the provision for pupils at the early stages of SEN by;

- a) developing systems that more regularly and accurately identify pupils at the earliest opportunity;
- b) once identified, ensuring that relevant individual education plans are drawn up;
- c) for pupils who already have individual education plans ensuring there are clear procedures to update any targets so that a relevant curriculum can be provided;
- d) setting up formal arrangements for class teachers to share knowledge of pupils' difficulties so that solutions to problems can be identified and teaching improved.

(These issues are discussed in paragraphs 10,23,26,42,48,56 and 63)

(3) use assessment data more effectively to develop pupils' learning by;

- a) extending and developing the work that has begun on personal targets for pupils so that they become more involved in their own learning,
- b) ensuring that the day-to-day outcomes of their work are built into subsequent lessons,
- c) including more comments on pupils' work that help them see how it might be improved.

(These issues are discussed in paragraphs 21,38,62,69 and 72)

*It is recognised that the school is aware of these issues and has begun to take several relevant initiatives.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	61
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	40

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	7	25	29	0	0	0
Percentage	0	11.5	41	47.5	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	336
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	49

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	17
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	64

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	26

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.5
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	41	55

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	31	28	37
	Girls	44	34	48
	Total	75	62	85
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (74)	65 (74)	89 (87)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	27	28	33
	Girls	39	32	45
	Total	66	60	78
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	69 (73)	63 (69)	81 (82)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	335
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.7
Average class size	28.0

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	153
<i>FTE means full-time equivalent.</i>	

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	641,842
Total expenditure	626,189
Expenditure per pupil	1,870
Balance brought forward from previous year	10,540
Balance carried forward to next year	26,193

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	336
Number of questionnaires returned	89

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	43	53	2	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	34	55	8	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	33	58	4	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	42	22	7	2
The teaching is good.	33	61	3	2	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	24	47	21	8	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	49	43	4	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	46	45	3	0	6
The school works closely with parents.	26	48	18	8	0
The school is well led and managed.	45	46	1	1	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	33	56	3	3	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	21	53	15	6	6

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

ENGLISH

54. Standards are in line with national averages for pupils at the age of eleven and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. Over time, the standards of pupils have shown a gradual improvement in line with national trends. Inspection findings show that for the present Year 6 pupils standards are also improving and are in line with national averages in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Standards in writing are not as high as those in the other aspects of the subject. The school has targeted writing as a priority area for improvement in all year groups and this is having a beneficial effect in raising standards. Trends over time show that since the last inspection standards have been at least maintained in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Given pupils' average attainment on entry, the progress of all pupils is satisfactory overall.
55. In all the lessons seen during the inspection, progress in all aspects of the subject is at least satisfactory and in a half it is good. The development of the literacy hour is proving beneficial in raising reading standards by ensuring that pupils are introduced to a structured programme of increasingly more difficult reading skills. These skills are regularly assessed in most lessons so that learning is well matched to the pupils' levels of understanding. Progress in writing is greater in the classes where the teacher ensures that the pupils have a regular opportunity to plan their writing and then practise writing for sustained lengths of time. Throughout the school, progress is satisfactory in speaking and listening although, without any assessment procedures to judge the progress pupils are making, teachers are unable to further increase the speed of learning by targeting particular speaking and listening skills. Although most lessons include opportunities for pupils to discuss ideas together and listen to the opinions of others, few teachers correct pupils' speech or model correct sentence construction.
56. The progress of pupils with SEN is satisfactory overall. Those pupils who require additional specialist support are making good progress towards the targets in their own individual education plans through the sensitive support and intervention provided by the class teacher, classroom assistants and outside agencies. Lessons are well planned to support their learning needs successfully. However, for pupils at earlier stages of intervention, needs are not always clearly identified, or lesson targets and adult support matched sufficiently to help make their learning easier. Progress for these pupils is no more that satisfactory in some lessons.
57. Standards in speaking and listening are satisfactory by the time pupils are eleven years of age. They will join happily in class discussions or answer questions confidently in whole school assemblies. Many above average pupils have a good general vocabulary and choose words well when writing creatively. Pupils are happy to talk with their teachers in the classroom but colloquial speech patterns are obvious, they are often unchecked by their teachers and are even apparent in their written work. All pupils throughout the school have good listening skills. They listen carefully to instructions or to the opinions of others. In assembly, listening skills are very good and pupils are developing good listening habits. Other opportunities are provided in school for pupils to listen, talk, and appraise work together. The school's council provides a good forum for pupils to express their opinions and describe their experiences. The orchestra and Eco-club give pupils a good opportunity to meet informally together to discuss improvements in the school environment, or appraise music among a group of pupils with a common interest.

58. In reading, most pupils are making good progress and across the school most have standards in line with expected levels. Most of the above average pupils achieve well and read challenging texts accurately and with good understanding. Every week pupils have opportunities to read in small groups and individually with an adult. Good reading habits are additionally promoted in school each day through specially identified reading groups. Younger pupils are still developing the word-building skills which were initially introduced in the infant school, and they are also learning further spelling rules. All pupils have weekly spelling tests in order to improve their use and understanding of words. However, spelling results are varied and there are a number of pupils throughout school who do not yet correctly spell any newly acquired vocabulary in their own writing. Most pupils use a dictionary successfully and many will use them voluntarily to improve their spelling skills. Little use is made by pupils of a thesaurus. By the age of eleven most pupils in the year group have developed more advanced reading skills. Above average and average pupils read expressively and name favourite authors or stories they have enjoyed. They have good library skills and research independently for information from non-fiction material.
59. Standards in writing are improving in all year groups. Pupils write for a range of audiences and in story writing above average pupils have a good literary style. All pupils are beginning to recognise the need to organise their ideas more systematically to produce the greatest effect. Above average pupils write a good piece of persuasive writing and recognise bias in the writing of others. All pupils make good progress in improving the grammatical structure of their writing, for instance, the younger pupils learn that adverbs and adjectives give more interest to verbs and nouns. The older pupils practise how to vary their choice of connectives in a sentence to give more variety in complicated sentences. Standards in handwriting are satisfactory overall. In general, the presentation of work is good with care taken to produce neat, precise work for others to see. However, some below average pupils across the year groups have poor pencil control and do not write in a consistent cursive style.
60. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and in the lessons observed during the inspection just over a half were good. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. The basic skills of reading and writing are taught well in most lessons. When the teaching is good the expectations of the teacher are high, the pace of lessons is more effective in keeping pupils motivated in their learning and the teachers use a greater variety of teaching strategies to interest and excite pupils in their new learning. For example, in a Year 5 lesson a teacher acts the part of Wackford Squeers from the story of Nicholas Nickleby by Charles Dickens. This captures the imagination and interest of the pupils in her dramatic presentation, and shows pupils the importance to the reader and performer of clear stage directions for a character study. All teachers make good use of homework to provide pupils with opportunities to practise skills and sometimes to undertake research for school projects.
61. In all lessons the management of pupils is good and supports the development of good relationships between pupils. The teachers have a good knowledge of children's favourite classics and make good use of the wide range of school reading material to provide enrichment and interest in their lessons. The library is pleasantly arranged and, although it is small, it provides a good learning environment to encourage pupils to visit regularly and choose books to read at home. The teachers make good use of this resource on many teaching occasions. Good links are made to provide opportunities to use English skills in other subjects of the curriculum and good use is made of literacy lessons to develop research skills that support other areas of learning. For instance, in a literacy lesson in Year 5, pupils read about "The Working Children" in a passage from a book by Wes Magee. They build up a good picture as they work about the lives of Victorian children. In a history lesson in Year

5, pupils show good levels of empathy for Victorians during some historical story writing. The newly opened ICT suite is beginning to provide opportunities to use reading and writing skills in another setting, although this has not yet been extended to computer work in the classrooms.

62. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. There is an enthusiastic co-ordinator who has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the teaching and learning, which are taking place in this subject. Alongside the head teacher, she is developing well the systems to analyse the progress of individual pupils to ensure that their progress is sustained. Some good monitoring of teaching and learning takes place annually in line with the school policy. This has helped focus school developments, for example, in writing. The co-ordinator ensures that resources are of good quality and quantity to provide a lively and interesting curriculum for all the year groups. She reviews the curriculum framework regularly and ensures all pupils are introduced to a good literary environment.

MATHEMATICS

63. Standards in mathematics are improving but remain below average and are not high enough. Until two years ago, most pupils entered the school with below average attainment. This has gradually improved and attainment on entry is now similar to the national average. The trend in the school's performance has steadily climbed since the last inspection and more pupils are attaining the national level. Overall progress, however, has been inconsistent and barely satisfactory. Not enough pupils attain the higher level and this depresses overall standards. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. Pupils identified as having SEN receive good adult support and make effective progress. Due to shortcomings in the provision for pupils at the early stages of SEN, progress for these pupils is only satisfactory.
64. Pupils in Year 3 have a sound knowledge of place value and the order of numbers to 100 and the above average pupils add and subtract numerals less than 100 accurately. Almost all know the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes. All pupils solve simple problems and recognise pattern in groups of numbers, for example, the two times table. At this stage of the academic year pupils in Year 3 have not experienced all aspects of the curriculum but as they move through the school, pupils' knowledge of number, algebra, space, shape and measures and data handling increases. Pupils in Year 6 use fractions and decimals and understand how to multiply and divide large numbers and decimals. Pupils with average and above average ability understand the relationship between multiplication and division and use the inverse operation to check their answers. Pupils in the lower ability set for mathematics are consolidating their knowledge of place value, effectively and identifying the value of digits in four-figure numerals. Pupils measure lines and angles accurately and use different methods to record data. All interpret data from charts and graphs.
65. Average and above average pupil apply their mathematical skills to solve problems and predict outcomes satisfactorily. They use mathematics in other subjects well. For example, in a Year 5 history lesson pupils construct bar charts accurately to show the occupations of families in the immediate vicinity of the school derived from the census of 1891.
66. Pupils are taught in ability sets within each year group. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school are satisfactory overall and there are pockets in the school where both are good. During the inspection all the teaching was at least satisfactory and two-fifths of it was good. There was one very good lesson. However, there is a lack of consistency in the expectations of the teachers. For

example, lower ability pupils who are now in Year 4 made good progress throughout Year 3 because their teacher set realistically challenging work that was relevant to the pupils' abilities. The top set in this and other year groups often repeat work unnecessarily at the same level. Extension activities for those who achieve well are too frequently set only after most of the time has been spent on work that is too easy. In some lessons, below average pupils only achieve the objectives for the lesson with adult support and they are not taught the steps they need to enable them to work independently. These inconsistencies occur because the teachers do not set targets in response to the different rates of progress of individual pupils. Although the objectives for each lesson are shared with the class, pupils do not have targets in response to their individual needs to help them improve. In all but one or two classes the teachers' marking rarely shows pupils how to improve their work. Teachers ask questions in the lessons that encourage pupils to think but this is not extended to the marking with questions like *'What would happen if...?'* or *'Does this always work?'*

67. Teachers have a secure understanding of the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy and all plan for and apply the three-part lesson structure well. In one or two lessons, and especially in the very good lesson observed during the inspection, teachers set a brisk pace during the first session by challenging the pupils to exceed their previous record for the amount, accuracy and speed of their calculations. This generates enthusiasm and dedication to the task. Some of these sessions are not so successful, lacking pace and challenge so pupils do not try so hard. Teachers explain the work clearly and encourage the pupils to use the correct mathematical vocabulary. They have good relationships with their pupils and encourage them to work co-operatively. As a result, pupils respond well, working diligently and behaving very responsibly when working in pairs or small groups. Mathematical resources are usually used appropriately and pupils take good care of their equipment. However, on occasions, the whole class uses the same worksheet when some pupils are capable of greater challenge. In one lower-ability set, for example, some pupils finished a six-minute task in two minutes while others struggled with the same worksheet. This is understandable at the beginning of the academic year, but pupils' books show that pupils in the same mathematical sets are often set tasks that do not reflect their individual capabilities.
68. Pupils are beginning to use ICT to support their data handling but in general computers have not been used enough. The new computer suite with regular access will help to address this. A strength of the teaching is the application of mathematics within other subjects. Teachers within the three parallel classes in each year group plan together and extend the learning in the mathematics sets by applying it to other subjects. Social training is strong and pupils support each other well. In several lessons observed during the inspection, above average pupils supported others as a matter of course, often without prompting.
69. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Regular testing using optional national tests for each year group has been introduced over the past year. The results of these tests are shared with parents and the mathematics co-ordinator analyses them to identify strengths and weaknesses. These are used as a good prompt for school development and to set targets for each year. The headteacher is beginning to track the progress of year groups as they move through the school. These are good procedures. Teachers now need to establish what they expect from each ability group within each year and to track the progress that individual pupils make over time. Pupils are not clear about what they need to do to improve and what their teachers expect of them, in the form of individual targets.

SCIENCE

70. Standards in science are similar to the national average. Inspection evidence confirms this and shows that pupils in this current Year 6 achieve the expected level and the higher levels of the National Curriculum in about the same proportions as pupils nationally. In 1997 test scores show that standards were well below average. This means that standards have improved at a faster rate than national results. Test results show that there was no significant difference between the standards achieved by boys and girls and again this is confirmed by a scrutiny of pupils' books, observations of lessons and discussions with pupils. Pupils on the higher stages of the SEN Code of Practice receive effective support and make good progress. However, there is not enough support for pupils on the early stages of the Code.
71. Learning throughout the school is satisfactory overall. Pupils in all year groups have good practical learning experiences. Through these they develop a good understanding of the principles of scientific enquiry and a sound knowledge of life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes. In Year 3, for example, pupils compare materials and use words such as transparent, opaque, strong, hard and flexible correctly. They make accurate notes of their observations and record their results on grids. In Year 4 pupils make electrical circuits and understand that a switch will break the flow of electricity. In this year group, pupils compare switches and think hard about how they work. They know that only certain materials will conduct electricity and that to make an efficient switch metals have to be used with insulating materials to protect the switch and users. In Year 5 pupils dissected a flower and saw how the main organs of the flower worked towards fertilisation. Above average pupils began to compare different flower species in this lesson and looked to see if there were common parts of each flower. In Year 6 pupils predicted that floating an object in water would decrease the force as water 'pushed up' on the object. They talked of water pushing up more than air pushes down and began to use the correct scientific terminology. Pupils have very little experience of using computers and other ICT equipment in their science work, as the school's equipment has only recently been upgraded.
72. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Some teachers' subject knowledge lacks sharpness at times; however, all teachers plan lessons that contain a large proportion of practical work. Usually this required pupils to make observations, investigate how, for instance, flower heads were made up, and at times use skills gained in other subjects. For example, an analysis of pupils' books showed that pupils make notes when watching videos and used graphs to record their findings. At times graphs were used to predict, for example, the length of shadows after taking a few measurements. This good use of mathematical knowledge helps pupils to understand the scientific ideas they explore. Relationships between pupils and teachers are good and this helps teachers to maintain pupils' interest in their work. This also means that pupils have good attitudes towards science and they enjoy their lessons. The one area for development is the quality of teachers' marking and how they keep track of pupils' progress. At times marking amounts to ticks and one or two word comments. It does not help pupils to work towards their targets nor help them to see what they need to do beyond the current lesson.
73. A key feature in the development of science has been the work of the co-ordinator who has just left the school. A scrutiny of the science co-ordinator's file shows a careful analysis of the school's achievements and highlights the areas that need improving. Interesting methods have been introduced to help pupils learn more effectively. For example, pupils draw up a map of their ideas that shows at the beginning of each topic how much each pupil knows and whether they can link important ideas. At the end of each topic pupils complete an 'important ideas' list, which again helps to reinforce what has been learnt. Pupils are asked to evaluate their science lessons and complete questionnaires, which help teachers to see what

was successful in their teaching and the learning experiences they plan. This is a very valuable exercise.

74. The school environment is also an important key to pupils' learning. The school has made determined efforts to involve pupils in ecological discussions and work. The school takes every opportunity to be involved in community activities concerned with the environment, technology and a range of conservation projects. The school has been very successful in these projects and the Millennium Garden, the school's solar panel and the regular recycling work all add to the school being a focus of science and technological activity for the local community.

ART AND DESIGN

75. The need to raise standards in art and design was a key issue in the last report. At that time, standards were below average and pupils' progress was slow. Inspection evidence now indicates that standards have improved significantly since that time and the quality of the work seen is better than expected for pupils' age and their progress in the development of key skills is good. This has been brought about by the implementation of a good action plan, the effective work of the co-ordinator in raising the profile of the subject and the commitment of the staff in implementing the good scheme of work. Weaknesses in pupils' knowledge of other artists and the lack of sufficient experiences in working with materials and techniques have been addressed successfully.
76. Pupils in Year 3 produce good work in the style of the sculptress Elisabeth Frink. This includes good pencil sketches and three-dimensional models. This work was linked well to work in English with pupils writing good poems inspired by her work. Pupils in other year groups produce good work in the style of Van Gogh, Kandinsky and William Morris. Art makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development with pupils drawing inspiration from Ancient Egyptian, aboriginal and Indian art. Teachers link work in art to other areas of the curriculum and this has a good effect on pupils' enthusiasm for the subject. In a topic on the Egyptians, for example, pupils in Year 3 produced good representations of Egyptian figures in collage and pupils in Year 4 made Tudor style weaving patterns. By the age of eleven, pupils have experienced working on tie and dye, paste batik and a good range of printing techniques. Drawing and painting skills develop well so that by the age of eleven most pupils use pencil, charcoal and paint effectively to represent what they see and imagine. During the inspection, some pupils were using painter computer programs effectively to support their work. However, the scrutiny of pupils' work over the year indicates that computers are not used sufficiently to support work in the subject.
77. The quality of teaching is good overall and ensures that pupils learn at a good pace. Pupils are encouraged to talk about their work and how it might be improved. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, the teacher asks a pupil 'how could you improve this part of your design?' In one class, work from last year indicates that older pupils are encouraged to use their writing skills to write excellent evaluations of their own work. This helps the pupils to become self-critical and develop a good knowledge of their own learning. All lessons are well prepared and good use is made of good quality finished pieces of work to inspire the pupils. Good praise and support for individuals and effective questioning helps the pupils to maintain good concentration and enthusiasm for the activities. Teachers enjoy the lessons and have good subject knowledge so that the correct techniques are taught. Where the teaching is less successful, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to choose their own materials and equipment and there is too little discussion of ongoing work.

78. The subject is well led and managed. National guidelines have been successfully integrated into the school scheme and this gives a good basis for planning the development of skills from year to year. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject and has worked alongside colleagues to help improve their expertise and confidence in the subject. There are no formal systems for recording pupils' progress and consequently it is more difficult for teachers to build on pupils' skills securely from year to year. Useful portfolios of completed work have been introduced to set a starting point for each year's work. Pupils' art books are monitored and feedback given to the teachers. These initiatives are a good base from which to develop the subject even further.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

79. Standards in design and technology are similar to those expected for pupils' age and are better now than when the school was inspected in 1997. At that time pupils' progress and the quality of teaching in design and technology were unsatisfactory. There are now sound learning experiences and although there was only one observation of teaching, scrutiny of pupils' work shows a satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.
80. In the one lesson seen teaching was good as pupils in Year 4 were asked to test whether a collection of fabrics would be suitable to make a money pouch. Pupils carefully investigated the fabrics using hand lenses and testing for durability. After consideration of the properties of fabrics such as cotton, felt and wool, pupils judged the uses of each sample and which be useful when making their money pouch. This investigation was carried out after pupils had inspected commercially produced products. The teacher identified that pupils needed to learn technical vocabulary because she checked on pupils' progress in the task. Devising a model and how some fabrics are made up of warp and weft, she taught each group the correct vocabulary and this made pupils work more productively.
81. The design diaries used across the school are a useful record of what pupils have achieved. Showing initial thoughts, they chart the progress of the work and ask pupils key questions to help them design better products. Food, wooden structures, bridges, mechanical structures, pneumatics and hydraulics are used within the design diaries. Older pupils use the diaries to record the materials they require and the measurements of designs. However, teachers could expect more of all pupils in the presentation of their work and of the older pupils in the views they draw of their products and designs.
82. Pupils talk of enjoying design and technology. They understand the designing and evaluation process. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has collected a useful range of evidence to show progress in the subject. She is aware of the need to develop the use of computers and an assessment system in order to track pupils' progress.

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

83. Standards in both history and geography are similar to those expected for pupils' ages. In history, standards have been maintained since the last inspection. In geography, where the need to raise standards in the subject was a key issue in the last report, they have improved. A major factor in this improvement has been the incorporation of national guidance for curriculum planning within the school plans. The development of the acquisition of historical and geographical skills has been a strong focus of curriculum planning.

84. The subjects are taught through topics with a historical or geographical focus. However, there are opportunities for pupils to maintain and develop their skill in both subjects within each topic. For example, in a very good history lesson observed during the inspection, pupils in Year 5 used a local map from Victorian times to find the workplaces of the population listed in the census of 1891. Ancient civilisations are positioned on a map of the world and compared with life in the modern country. Pupils have a sound knowledge of chronology and key dates and geographical regions and features. In both history and geography lessons, pupils are encouraged to use research skills to find things out.
85. In history, pupils in Year 4 know the difference between primary and secondary evidence. They are studying the Tudor age and use clues from accounts of everyday life to match homes to social classes and to compare settlements with life today. Pupils in Year 6 use local documents to find out about life in Britain since 1930 although, unfortunately, many of the original school documents were destroyed in the fire two years ago. In geography, pupils are encouraged to find out how people in other countries live by studying the environment, climate, occupations and wealth of the population. The local area is used effectively for local studies for both subjects. Environmental and ecological issues have a high profile in school and whole school initiatives like the Eco project extend the curriculum. However, although all aspects of the history and geography curriculum are covered, there are too few opportunities for pupils to use ICT in pursuit of their studies. The subject leaders know that this is a weakness and the new computer suite is helping to address this.
86. In the small number of history lessons observed during the inspection the teaching was never less than good and in one lesson it was very good. It was good at the time of the last inspection and key strengths have been maintained. Key strengths in the teaching are the good relationships between the pupils and teachers, the good subject knowledge of the teachers and their high expectations. The teaching in the geography lessons is at least satisfactory and was good in half the lessons. It has improved since the last inspection when there were significant weaknesses in planning and the development of skills. In both subjects, pupils identified as having SEN receive appropriate support in lessons and make satisfactory progress. However, in one or two lessons in both subjects there was not enough challenge for the above average pupils and not enough support for pupils who find the work difficult but do not receive additional adult support. This slows their progress to a satisfactory level. In both subjects, particular strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning are not built sufficiently into subsequent lessons. This makes it difficult for teachers to guarantee consistently good progress for all pupils by developing their strengths and remedying any weaknesses.
87. In both subjects, the enthusiasm of the teachers and the high expectations of good behaviour ensure that pupils enjoy lessons and work hard. The emphasis on research skills maintains the pupils' interest and concentration. The good relationships that are the norm in this school ensure that pupils help each other and work well together. Older pupils show some thoughtfulness and sensitivity as they emphasise with people from the third world or social issues in Victorian Britain. Both subjects make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the development of literacy and numeracy. Leadership and management of both subjects are satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

88. Standards in ICT are below those expected for this age group. Although it would appear that standards have deteriorated since the last inspection, the curriculum for ICT has changed considerably. The school recognises this and has very recently

installed a computer suite and, since the beginning of this term, classes are taught in the suite for one hour each week. Until the installation of the suite the pupils used what the school described as very old and outdated equipment. The school has taken advice and has constructed a good quality provision. There has been too little time for the new equipment to make a significant impact on standards; however, all of the strands of the curriculum are in place although they have not been taught to a sufficient depth. This means that although pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are below the levels set out in the National Curriculum, progress over the recent past has been rapid and the school is rightly confident about future standards.

89. Progress is improving because of the good quality equipment, the employment of a support technician and the knowledge and experience of the headteacher and recently appointed co-ordinator. Most teachers are keen to work in the new suite but recognise that they need training to develop their subject knowledge. Confidence is rising and this shows in lessons where teachers' attitudes are as positive as those of the pupils. The short-term employment of a skilled technician helps to improve the knowledge available to teachers in lessons and means that if they choose to use his skills then lessons are successful and worthwhile. For example, when the technician demonstrates a procedure for the whole class, lessons were conducted at a brisk pace.
90. In most of the lessons seen pupils learn at a good rate and make up for their low starting point. Pupils in Year 3 know how to make changes to a piece of writing. They replace words and change the appearance of fonts successfully. These youngest pupils in the school know how to open files, retrieve their work and save it when they have finished. In Year 4 pupils use illustration programs to draw and paint on screen effectively. They understand how to reposition an illustration and use the tools of the program to produce examples of wrapping paper. Pupils in Year 5 use a spreadsheet successfully to record information about how many merit marks each has achieved. Pupils label cells, enter their data and use the spreadsheet to calculate totals. Pupils in Year 6 use search engines on the Internet to find information about decorated elephants for their geography on India. They understand how to use the address bar and how to narrow the search with specific commands. Pupils record the results of their searches noting how better descriptions reduce the number of Internet pages they needed to search. Pupils' knowledge and use of the keyboard are underdeveloped along with other skills and knowledge. This is because there have been insufficient opportunities to use computers. There is little evidence to suggest that assessments of pupils' progress are used to inform what they do in subsequent lessons.
91. Teaching in most lessons is good as teachers work with the technician to ensure that pupils learn new skills and ideas. During the inspection the computers available to pupils in classrooms were not used to any great extent. This means that skills developed in the computer suite are not practised sufficiently. It also means that pupils do not benefit from using computers in the other subjects of the curriculum. However, in the computer suite teachers work hard to teach pupils new skills and their management of behaviour is good. Pupils are given lots of opportunities to work in pairs and this helps them to develop good social and work skills. All teachers are currently taking part in a national training enterprise. They report that this is giving them increased confidence and expertise.
92. The co-ordinator is a knowledgeable and experienced manager. Pupils have benefited from participating in a website competition judged by professional web designers. The school's priorities are appropriate and the headteacher and co-ordinator have ensured that the school is well placed to improve on the present

position.

MUSIC

93. Standards are in line with those expected for pupils' age and have been maintained since the last inspection. Most pupils are making good progress in lessons in performing and appraising music. Achievements over time have been restricted by a limited time allocation to the subject. Pupils enjoy music and respond well to the infectious enthusiasm shared by many of their teachers for this subject. The pupils with additional support for special educational needs also make satisfactory progress overall.
94. Throughout the school, pupils enjoy singing and since the last inspection there has been good improvement in this aspect of the subject. The quality of singing is now good. In assemblies the pupils sing tunefully, have good pitch and diction, and respond well to the different tempo of a piece of music. Following on from discussions in assembly of the recent catastrophic experiences in America, pupils showed true feelings of empathy in their singing. This shared experience helped them to better understand the issues involved. Two school choirs for older and younger pupils offer further opportunities for pupils to improve the quality of their singing, or join together to perform in concerts and at local music festivals.
95. In lessons, pupils have sound opportunities to perform on tuned and untuned percussion instruments, making satisfactory progress over time. They compose their own simple tunes recording their music in more complex styles of notation, as they move through the school. Younger pupils can clap simple rhythms or musical syllables accurately as first efforts to understand tempo, and by Year 4 they learn about simple keyboard structures. Older pupils study the musical styles of different composers, such as the jazz of Glen Miller, or the classical composition of Edward Elgar. They learn about syncopation, ostinato, or the pentatonic scale. By Year 6, pupils are beginning to perform simple melodies in small groups. They share and repeat sequences of sounds on a variety of percussion instruments playing together in a musical round. They are learning to appreciate the work of others and above average pupils undertake a self-evaluation of their own compositions. Many pupils can describe favourite pieces of music and above average pupils explain the identifying features of their choices.
96. In the lessons seen, the quality of teaching is mostly good. School timetable arrangements for music teaching for each year group ensures that in most lessons music is taught by teachers with good subject knowledge and appropriate understanding of the requirements of the National Curriculum. This has a good effect on pupils' learning. One strong feature of all lessons is the good use by teachers of appropriate musical terms so that pupils learn a good musical vocabulary. The school has recently developed a good link with the secondary high school and good additional specialist help in the classroom is now available. The teachers provide interesting lessons and on each occasion include a good variety of activities for the class, introducing a structured programme, which increases pupils' skills and knowledge through repetition and practice. Lessons are planned carefully and musical instruments, CDs, videos and other teaching aids are all organised effectively prior to the lesson. All the teachers have good systems of organising and managing lesson, and pupils are taught how to respect and use instruments carefully. There is no evidence of pupils using computers to work with relevant programs related to the subject.
97. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. All pupils in school have opportunities for peripatetic instrumental tuition on strings and brass instruments

taught by visiting specialist teachers, and school staff offer recorder lessons on a voluntary basis. The school organises a school orchestra as an extra-curricular activity, as well as the two school choirs, which meet regularly. As a result, pupils have many opportunities to perform music together. Other regular music concerts are organised for the whole school at Christmas and Easter. Music makes a good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

98. Standards in the work seen in dance, games and gymnastics are similar to those expected for pupils' age. There is no difference in the standards between boys and girls. Weekly swimming programmes are provided for pupils in Years 3 and 6 and this ensures that the large majority of the pupils are able to swim at least 25 metres by the time they are eleven. Pupils who have special needs participate enthusiastically in all aspects of the subject and as all other pupils, their achievements are satisfactory. The range and quality of pupils' work has been maintained since the last inspection.
99. The pupils' good listening skills have a marked effect on their learning in the subject. They listen to instructions carefully in dance, for example, and move their bodies in rhythm to the music. They work constructively in pairs and larger groups to build up the sequence of a traditional country dance.
100. In gymnastics, pupils successfully mirror the movements of a partner to build up a good sequence of different balance positions. Above average pupils refine these well to build more sophisticated sequences. Pupils are not so good at commenting on skills, techniques and ideas used in their own and others' work. This is because this aspect of their work is not developed sufficiently across all aspects of the subject. All pupils co-operate effectively by helping each other to achieve the objectives set for them. Boys and girls work well together.
101. Teaching is always at least satisfactory, with just over a third being good. All teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and involvement in activities. This ensures that lesson management is good, pupils' behaviour is good, and they enjoy the activities and want to do well. All teachers change into appropriate clothing and participate in the activities with the pupils. This sets a good example for the pupils. Teachers recognise that their expertise in dance is not as strong as in other aspects but have overcome this well by using commercial tapes of dance lessons to help them. This gives a good structure to lessons and keeps activity moving at a good pace. A good example of this was in a Year 3 lesson on country dancing where skills and confidence were built up progressively as the lesson developed. The teacher stopped the tape appropriately to reinforce key teaching points and this helped pupils' to focus on their own performance and how it might be improved. This technique is also used in other year groups. Overall, however, it is not developed as well as it might be, for example, to develop the critical appraisal skills of the pupils and celebrate the work of individuals.
102. Teachers make pupils aware of the effects of vigorous activity on their body and how this can benefit health. This was illustrated in a Year 4 lesson where links to science work on the body developed pupils' understanding of the function of the heart well. Pupils were able to model the beat of the heart to an appropriate piece of music. Teachers' planning, which is securely based on nationally approved guidelines and identifies what the pupils will learn, provides a sound platform for assessing how well pupils are doing. However, the use of such assessment is not developed effectively enough to plan what is taught in subsequent lessons.

103. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning to ensure that all aspects of the subject receive coverage and that skills are being developed as outlined in the scheme of work. She is attending courses on dance and disseminating information and ideas to help staff improve their confidence and expertise. It is recognised in the current school development plan that whilst standards have been maintained, the subject has not developed as fast as it might since the last inspection. In response to this, the school has brought in local authority support to look at developments in gymnastics and has already had two teacher training sessions on the development of games' skills. The capacity for further improvement in the subject is good.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

104. Standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for pupils by eleven years of age and have been maintained since the last inspection. The school has addressed the issues of the last inspection report and is now providing a curriculum that includes Christianity and the other major world faiths. A good balance is achieved between the study of Christianity, Judaism, Sikhism and Islamic faith. Artefacts and other resources have been increased so that pupils have greater opportunities for first-hand experiences.
105. Satisfactory progress is made in pupils' understanding of the importance of religious customs and actions at different stages in childhood and adult life. Younger pupils in Year 3 study customs and traditions for children in the home, and then extend this work successfully in Year 4 to look at the way people will behave in various places of worship. They consider religious furniture and symbols, and undertake research on customs of prayer, music, and dress in the church, temple, synagogue or mosque. They look at the way men and women follow the customs of their faith, and then find the reasons on which these actions are based. Good use is made of pupils' own personal experiences to add relevance to these studies. Some pupils undertake personal research and several of the higher attaining pupils are already able to compare differences in major faiths.
106. Older pupils in Year 5 study in more detail the special books of each religion and learn how the teachings of these books are shared among the believers. Particularly good work is done in this year group on illuminated scripts. By Year 6 pupils are able to make comparisons between the facts and customs of a number of faiths and reflect and express their own feelings and opinions about issues such as trust and caring. They know stories from both the Old and New Testament and even write their own comparable stories well providing the same moral structure to their stories. For example, they used the teachings of the story of "The Good Samaritan" to write a story about a passenger on a train set upon by bullies, rejected both by a teacher and a vicar, and then cared for by a "punk rocker" until he was recovered. This work gives pupils valuable opportunities to explore issues of citizenship and responsibilities. It also makes a good link to English as the pupils undertake a story writing exercise. In all lessons, attitudes to learning are good. Pupils are eager to learn about different religions and treat artefacts of different faiths respectfully and reverently.
107. Few lessons were observed during the inspection, but a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning shows that the teaching in this subject is satisfactory. Teachers have a sound knowledge of major world faiths and provide a balanced range of opportunities in line with the expectations of the local agreed syllabus. Planning shows that lessons follow a format of discussion and then a written record of events and information to explain pupils' knowledge and understanding. In the better planned lessons teachers incorporate a variety of recording strategies including

quizzes, book reviews, personal accounts, story writing and drama to add further stimulation for the pupils. Pupils with identified special educational needs receive good support with activities planned specifically targeted towards the development of their individual education programme. However, some pupils at the earlier stages of identification of special needs receive limited support targeted to their individual needs.

108. The subject is managed well by a co-ordinator who ensures that study of major faiths of the world is undertaken sensitively. Good consideration is given to offering the pupils a relevant curriculum through regular monitoring of current practice. The co-ordinator realises the value of first-hand experiences to give greater relevance and enrichment to the curriculum. Displays are used well to interest the pupils, and a good selection of resources is available in the classrooms. At present there are few visits out of school to places of worship or few visitors from other faiths invited into school to meet and talk with the pupils. The co-ordinator is seeking to address this issue.