

INSPECTION REPORT

PARKWALL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bristol

LEA area : South Gloucestershire

Unique reference number : 109020

Headteacher : Mr. R. Harrison

Reporting inspector : Elizabeth Camplin

Dates of inspection : 18th – 21st March 2002

Inspection number : 194154

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. A. Dent
Date of previous inspection:	12 th – 16 th May 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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3586	E. Camplin	Registered inspector	Art and design English as an additional language	Information about the school The school's results and achievements Teaching and learning The curriculum and other opportunities for learning Key Issues for action Leadership and management
8937	H. Allen	Lay Inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Pupils' welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and carers
25778	A. Hicks	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Music	
23010	L. Watson	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Geography History	
29378	K. Watson	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Physical education	
19386	T. Watts	Team inspector	English Religious education Equality of opportunity Provision for pupils with special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Parkwall Primary Community School has 404 registered pupils and is bigger than most schools of its kind. Its nursery caters for 55 part-time children whilst 40 full-time reception children are taught in three classes that also contain pupils from Year 1. There are 10 other classes organised in single year groups. The school is in the middle of the Park council estate in Cadbury Heath, an urban community on the outskirts of Bristol. Pupils come from relatively disadvantaged family backgrounds compared with the average household in England, though the percentage of pupils known to be entitled to free school meals is broadly average for primary schools nationally. All except four pupils are white with English as their first language. Three pupils whose home languages are German or Thai are competent in English. When children start full-time education attainment is below average for their age. Their speech and language is much less advanced than most five-year-olds. Approximately 22 per cent of pupils, (about the national average) are on the school's register of special educational needs and include 32 pupils who receive support from outside specialists. Of these, eleven have moderate learning needs. Other needs, in order of the number of pupils, include speech and communication, emotional and behavioural, visual impairment, physical impairment, autism and profound and multiple learning difficulties. The number with statements of special educational needs is broadly average for primary schools. There are no teaching vacancies, though one teacher is sick and her class has been taught by supply teachers for most of the current term. The school has seen a high level of staff turnover since the previous inspection for reasons beyond its control.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Parkwall is an effective school. It serves its community well and provides good value for money. Good teaching is enabling pupils to make good progress from below average levels of attainment when they start school. In Year 6, standards broadly match national targets and pupils are achieving better than might be expected. The school is well led and managed. The headteacher inspires the respect and loyalty of staff, governors, pupils and parents, by the example he sets in promoting high standards of care, welfare, good relationships and equality of opportunity. He is well supported by the deputy headteacher and whole staff team.

What the school does well

- It ensures that pupils progress well from Year 2 to Year 6 in English, mathematics and science.
- Teaching is good, especially the sensitive management of behaviour, leading to very good relationships between pupils who are nearly all very keen to learn.
- It works in close partnership with parents and a wide range of educational support agencies.
- It is very successful in its approach to inducting new staff and developing teamwork.
- It successfully promotes pupils' and parents' pride in the school.

What could be improved

- Standards could be higher in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 2.
- Pupils could make better use of information and communication technology (ICT) in other subjects.
- The school could be more effective in raising standards, setting objectives for improving school management, and in evaluating progress towards agreed goals.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in May 1997 and has made good progress since then. Teaching is much better and standards are rising in subjects that were previously inadequately taught. There is now a more successful emphasis on spiritual and cultural development. Subject co-ordinators are steadily developing balanced programmes of work. Governors know more about the standards pupils achieve. However, they and the staff have yet to be fully effective in defining specific targets for improvement. They still need to strengthen planning for the school's future development.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

In 2001, results in mathematics were average by national standards but were very low in English and science. Compared with similar schools, achievement was satisfactory or better, except in science. Reception pupils enter school with low levels of attainment; in fact poor results for three years in succession in Year 2 have clearly reflected infants' slow progress, especially that of girls. Nonetheless, standards at the school have risen in line with the national trend. In 2002, Year 6 pupils are likely to reach targets in English and mathematics that match national targets. In science, the percentage of pupils likely to reach level 4 is also in line with last year's national averages. Standards are below, rather than well below, average at the end of Year 2. Children under six are likely to meet expected goals in all areas of learning, except literacy and knowledge and understanding of the world. There is no significant variation between the attainment of girls and boys. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, are now achieving well in the Foundation Stage areas of learning and most statutory subjects. Pupils make good use of literacy and sound use of numeracy in class work. However, they are inexperienced in ICT and weak in some aspects of physical education.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are very proud of their school and eager to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Most pupils respond very well to expectations and standards are high in many lessons. Some troubled pupils occasionally lose self-control and hinder their own and others' learning.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils get on very well and enjoy taking responsibility. They need to get better at making decisions and using their own initiative.
Attendance	Satisfactory. The rate this year is close to last year's national average.

Exclusion rates are higher than other primary schools yet the sanction is fairly applied in the interests of all pupils. Parents are always consulted and co-operate with the school's management strategies.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching has distinct strengths and these include teaching methods in English, mathematics and religious education. Just over a quarter of lessons are of very high quality. Most are carefully planned for the wide range of individual needs. Pupils benefit from being taught in higher and lower ability sets in literacy and numeracy lessons where adults concentrate on precise learning objectives. Pupils make overall good progress in reading, writing and spelling, and in learning a wide range of mental and written calculation methods. A small percentage of lessons, predominantly in Years 2 and 6, though sound, are not sufficiently stimulating to capture all pupils' full attention. Exercise books are regularly marked but comments do not often explain how pupils can improve their work. Brighter pupils could be more independent and tackle more demanding homework activities. Relationships between pupils, teachers and classroom assistants are impressive. Pupils with special educational needs and from ethnic minority backgrounds are managed sensitively. All pupils usually concentrate well and work hard. They are particularly highly motivated in the mixed-age classes and in Years 3 to 5. Nursery and reception children learn well and steadily gain independence.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Sound overall. It is good for children under six. Strengths are in provision for personal, social and health education, literacy and community involvement. Aspects of physical education, design and technology and ICT could be improved.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	High quality. Pupils' individual needs are carefully diagnosed and teachers and classroom assistants meet them very well. The school works closely with support agencies and parents to ensure pupils receive as much help as is practically possible.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The school makes sure pupils feel welcome and they are treated with respect. It seeks advice about how to help them. They make similar progress to their peers.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Pupils' social, emotional and personal development is very well managed in the nursery and reception. Assemblies and most subjects make a good contribution to pupils' development. Rewards and sanctions are fair and work well.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Child protection and care and welfare procedures are very good. The headteacher and staff are vigilant in ensuring pupils' safety and well-being at school. Assessment systems are sound but need to be more consistently applied to ensure links with planning are effective.

Parents have a high regard for the school. Links with them are good and especially effective when pupils are newly admitted to the nursery. The management of behaviour is very good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher's pastoral leadership is of high quality. His partnership with the deputy headteacher and senior teachers is effective and helping to improve curriculum organisation and other aspects of school management.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors are actively involved in promoting the school's aims and teachers' professional development. They are not fully up-to-date with national expectations for effective school governance and have not established a clear timetable for reviewing school policies.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school's strengths and weaknesses are well known to the headteacher and senior management team. The will to improve is strong. The development plan is not clear about which standards need to improve the most or how to take action to raise them.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Specific grant is very well used for supporting pupils with special educational needs, developing international educational links, the professional development of staff and facilities for new technology.

Accommodation is very good and allows the curriculum to be taught effectively. Staffing levels and learning resources are good but there is a need for more ICT resources, to retain a stable staff and ensure that all subjects have designated leaders. Principles of best value

are soundly applied.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children enjoy school very much.• Children are taught well and make good progress.• The school has high expectations and is well led.• The headteacher and staff listen to their questions and help to resolve problems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some are concerned about the troubled behaviour of a small minority of pupils.• Parents would like the school to organise more learning activities outside lessons.• A small minority of parents would like homework to be better organised.

Parents' views of strengths and weaknesses are fully consistent with inspection findings. They show how well parents know their school and how it can improve.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In the three years following the previous inspection standards rose sharply. In 2000, results in statutory tests in English, mathematics and science were above national averages. Compared with similar schools, they were very high overall and so very high in mathematics that the school was placed in the top 5 per cent of these schools. Girls' results were particularly high in English. Pupils exceeded the targets predicted in both English and mathematics and they could hardly have done better. In recognition of its achievement, Parkwall won the South Gloucestershire Local Education Authority's most improved school award and a school achievement award from the Department for Education and Employment.

2. In 2001, standards fell by a significant percentage. Results were very low compared with all schools and below average when compared with schools with a similar entitlement to free school meals. Even though standards were average in mathematics and above average compared with similar schools, outcomes of tests in English and science dragged the overall average grade down. The most dramatic decline was in girls' performance in English. The school failed to reach predicted statutory targets in either English or mathematics.

3. Several separate factors contributed to the depressed outcomes. The school acknowledges that inexperience resulted in inferior teaching compared with the high quality of teaching in the previous school year. There were also factors linked to the pupils' unusual circumstances. Two out of a total of 41 joined Year 6 after the start of the school year. One girl could speak no English and the other had special educational needs in English and mathematics. When setting its targets the school took into account two pupils in the year group with statements of special educational need but it had not predicted the effect of mobility. This made a difference of minus 5 per cent in the school's average results. In addition, having had 100 per cent attendance in the two previous years, three higher-achieving pupils were absent for one or more subject. The weak performance consequently changed the school's position in the local league table and how well it compared with the national trend in school improvement over a three-year period. In 2001, it was in line with other primary schools rather than well ahead of the trend.

4. Standards at the end of Year 2 have been consistently low for four consecutive years. These results are justifiably an issue for the school. Pupils' performance in mathematics was in the bottom 5 per cent nationally in 2001, due primarily to girls' very poor results. The results of statutory assessment show boys outperforming girls in all three tests and doing almost as well as boys nationally in reading. Though pupils' attainment when they start full-time education is below average, and well below in some year groups, the school recognises standards should show more improvement after two years in infant classes. From this data it appeared that boys in 2001 made at least sound progress, whilst girls underachieved.

5. The school sought reasons for infants' poor results and decided to explore several working hypotheses. One was based on the effectiveness of baseline assessment methods in the reception year; others concerned teachers' expectations from reception to Year 2. The school concluded that expectations should definitely be higher. Since September 2001, new teacher appointments and changes to the way in which classes are managed have had a very positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning and standards achieved.

6. Children in reception are achieving well and making good progress in all areas of learning. They are likely to reach expectations in social, mathematical, creative and physical development and be just below expectations in communication, language and literacy and knowledge and understanding of the world. These differences are explained by the higher than average percentage of pupils in the year group who have low levels of literacy when they start school but who, nonetheless, are responding well to individual education plans for improvement.

7. Standards in Year 2 are still below national benchmarks. It is unlikely that the school's performance compared with all schools nationally will measurably improve this year. They should, however, be better in literacy and numeracy when compared with similar schools. Compared with results in baseline tests when aged five, pupils' overall progress is good but there are a significant number of pupils in Year 2 who take a long time to learn and many are on the register of special educational needs. These pupils are still making up for gaps in their prior learning of letter sounds and blends. They still need to develop more confidence in spelling and writing independently and in solving problems using mental mathematics. Progress in science is sound. The more able can communicate findings clearly in simple diagrams and descriptions, but middle and lower-achieving pupils' use of scientific language is weak. This is not because there is a difference between boys and girls, but because teachers need to give better instruction and to mark pupils' work more constructively.

8. Year 1 pupils are more advanced than Year 2 were at their age. The brightest are achieving as well as pupils in the year above them in English and in mathematics. Standards were average for their age in every lesson observed. Additionally, work since September is consistently matched to national targets for the halfway point of the infant stage. Pupils in both the upper and lower ability bands are achieving very well and there is a realistic prospect of significant improvement, therefore, in the standards Year 2 pupils will achieve in 2003.

9. The situation is similar in Years 6 and 5. Standards are broadly average in Year 6, though achievement is good in the light of the number in the year group with special educational needs. Pupils' performance is likely to be in line with national minimum targets for English and mathematics and should also meet the level 4 benchmark in science. Very few pupils, however, are likely to reach the higher level 5 in any of the three core subjects. This is not a symptom of significant underachievement by either boys or girls. It is clear, nonetheless, that one class is making slower progress than the other due to the absence of the permanent teacher who has more knowledge of their needs. Working in ability sets, however, and access to additional booster support from a temporary part-time teacher, is helping this class to maintain at least sound progress. The other class is progressing more rapidly and, overall, the school should reach challenging targets that fairly reflect pupils' good efforts and progress since Year 2. These targets are sufficiently challenging, being broadly in line with last year's national averages for level 4 and above. Year 5 pupils are forging ahead and should easily exceed national targets in English, mathematics and science in 2003.

10. Work seen in Years 4 & 5 in English, mathematics, science, history, geography, music and religious education was almost all of at least an average standard and sometimes above average. From Years 3 to 5, pupils in higher, middle and lower ability bands, and with special educational needs and English as an additional language, have made good progress since summer 2001. In Year 3, though standards are still below expectations in English and mathematics, very few pupils are well below average, and a majority are now reaching expected levels. Inspectors could find no evidence of girls underachieving now. Junior pupils make good use of literacy and sound use of numeracy in most subjects. For example, pupils in Year 3 described how to make healthy sandwiches in design and technology and pupils in Year 4 wrote historical accounts of life in Tudor times compared with the present day. In Year

5, they summarised investigations into materials in science and analysed mathematical data in geography, arising from a traffic survey.

11. Since the previous inspection, standards have improved at a good rate in English, science, art, geography and religious education, and satisfactorily in mathematics, ICT, design and technology and history. Improvements in ICT have been relatively recent and pupils are still not making sufficient use of ICT in most other subjects. There is insufficient evidence to measure development in music. There has been a decline in standards at the end of each stage in aspects of physical education. In Years 2 and 6 pupils of all levels of ability, but particularly talented pupils, are not being fully challenged. Standards achieved could be higher in dance in Year 2 and in gymnastics in Year 6. This is in marked contrast to standards in gymnastics in Year 1 where pupils are achieving better than expected levels.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils' attitudes are very good and their personal development and relationships are good. Behaviour and levels of attendance are both satisfactory. There has been significant progress in pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development since the previous inspection.

13. Between 1999 and 2001, the school has consistently had attendance levels slightly below the national average for similar types of schools. However, the most recent figures show the school to be above national norms and on track to achieve the national target for primary schools of 95 per cent during the current year. Nonetheless, there are still a small number of pupils who have attendance records well below the national average and there is a significant amount of absence associated with family holidays during school term times. This has an adverse affect on the standards that these pupils are able to achieve.

14. Children in the nursery and reception age groups respond very well to adults' guidance and expectations of them. They rapidly gain confidence after admission to the nursery and become independent in much of their learning. They are curious, friendly and co-operative. Just under half of the nursery children transfer to the mixed-age classes for reception and Year 1. The remainder moves on to other primary schools in the surrounding Bristol area. Those children who stay at Parkwall are mainly middle and lower rather than the higher-achieving nursery children but they settle well, are comfortable in their surroundings and most are very keen to listen and learn.

15. Pupils have great pride in Parkwall and really enjoy school. Most are very eager to get to classes at the start of the day and their positive attitudes to learning help them make good progress in two-thirds of lessons. They are eager to answer questions. They respond well to teachers' considerable efforts to hold their interest during discussions with the class, when working individually or in small groups. Pupils are also co-operative and work well when withdrawn to work bases adjacent to classrooms for support or extended learning with teaching assistants. The few incidents when attitudes deteriorate usually occur where lessons are unimaginative, or because the work set is not entirely appropriate for all needs.

16. Pupils are thoughtful, reflective and calm during assemblies and enjoy the chance to share views about right and wrong, healthy and dangerous habits, and what helps to make school and the world around them a better place in which to live. They show appreciation of cultural diversity and are interested in customs and practices that are different from their own. Pupils loved the recent Arts Festival week, especially the opportunity to watch a group of African dancers and an Australian body percussionist. The experiences strengthened pupils' respect for traditional ways of life and helped them to confront stereotypical views of race and gender.

17. Pupils want to become more independent and responsible. The recently established School Council is popular with pupils. Elected representatives from all year groups are enthusiastic about their roles and are already contributing ideas in discussions with adults about things to improve, such as the condition of the girls' toilets and making homework more interesting. Pupils from most year groups readily take turns to return registers to the school office and they help put out and clear away resources at the beginning and end of lessons. Some senior pupils take on extra responsibilities, such as raising the school flag on the school flag pole at the start of the day, acting as litter-monitors, helping younger pupils in the infant packed-lunch hall and clearing up in the dining hall after everyone has finished lunch. These opportunities all contribute to raising pupils' self-confidence. Pupils have fewer opportunities to be as independent in lessons. In a minority of classes pupils act as a group leader, scribe or spokesperson, report on progress with solving problems and frequently review how well they are learning. In others, they rarely take initiative and many pupils lack confidence to take decisions. This is the result of teaching methods that are over-directive and formal.

18. Pupils do their best to sustain high standards of behaviour. Behaviour was at least good in over three-quarters of lessons and excellent in one in eight. Significant progress has been made in recent years in developing self-discipline and pride in good conduct. They look up to staff at the school because they recognise that they are excellent role models. Teachers' success in raising pupils' self-esteem is enabling pupils with special educational needs and from ethnic minority backgrounds to contribute more fully to lessons. However, there are a number of troubled pupils who can be disruptive and who find it difficult to conform to adults' expectations. There are a high number of temporary exclusions for this type of school. Pupils to whom the sanctions apply accept that they are deserved when they put other pupils at risk or prevent them from learning. All pupils are aware of the consequences of their actions and nearly always show respect for others. Pupils think that behaviour is generally good and they feel safe in school. They speak positively of the few pupils who they consider to be naughty. They understand many have personal problems and are keen to help them overcome their difficulties.

19. Behaviour outside the classroom is also generally good. When moving around the school between lessons or outside during break and lunch-times pupils' sensible conduct aids the success of other activities taking place in the school. Pupils have trust in lunch-time supervisors and appreciate the way they help them play well together and enjoy leisure time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

20. The headteacher was confident, in his own review of change since the previous inspection, that the quality of teaching and learning would be better. This proved to be accurate, as two-thirds of the teaching observed was at least good, whilst a quarter was very good or better and none was unsatisfactory. The benefits of recent recruitment to the infant department and strategic staff deployment in each of the three primary stages have outweighed the disadvantages resulting from a relatively high turnover of teachers in recent years.

21. Teaching in the nursery is consistently good and gives children a solid start to learning. The teacher and nursery nurses are very experienced and work very well as a team. They provide a broad and stimulating range of activities that keep children motivated and busy throughout each session. They demonstrate high standards of care and expectations of behaviour and have close ties with parents and extended families. Children soon settle happily in a secure and welcoming environment. Those children who are reluctant learners when they start nursery and lack confidence to chatter with other children or speak to

unfamiliar adults soon improve their communication skills. More able children are observant and curious. They ask questions and are quick to extend their vocabulary, mathematical knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Irrespective of background and levels of attainment on entry, nursery children progress well in all areas of learning. They are well on the way to meeting expectations of the age group by the time they reach the end of the reception year.

22. The good quality of teaching in the early years continues in the mixed reception and Year 1 classes. Two newly appointed teachers have been very well inducted and have made a very positive contribution to the way in which the areas of learning are planned and taught. Links with nursery staff and parents are good and assessment of individual needs and capabilities is thorough. Adults organise and manage lessons well. Children receive plenty of worthwhile practical experiences that build effectively on prior learning. Reception children are making particularly good progress in the foundations for music and physical education. Teachers and their assistants take full account of children's different stages of development in literacy and numeracy. They ensure that all children are appropriately supported and challenged. None are defeated because tasks are too hard, but equally children are rarely held back because tasks are too easy. In this respect being mixed with older pupils helps the more able group considerably, as they work with Year 1 pupils on more ambitious reading, writing and recording tasks. Just occasionally, the concentration of a small minority with learning difficulties deteriorates. They then become restless and distract their peers. This happens when adults have not planned enough alternative tasks to help restore pupils' interest and co-operation.

23. Overall, girls and boys of reception age continue to make good progress in every area and there is no evidence of either gender group falling behind the other due to shortcomings in teaching methods. The same can be said of pupils in Year 1. They are taught effectively with appropriate emphasis on letter sounds, word building and other basic literacy and numeracy skills. The practice of dividing pupils into higher and lower ability groups for English and mathematics lessons works very well. Pupils are encouraged to concentrate and make good use of their time but they are not spoon-fed. Overall, pupils in Year 1 are more confident than pupils in Year 2 in their knowledge of sounds, spelling patterns, number and mathematical language and are also more resourceful and willing to manage tasks independently.

24. Teaching in Year 2 is predominantly satisfactory with notable strengths in the quality of planning for literacy and numeracy lessons. Plans for each term match the targets from the national strategy guidance in both subjects. Teachers know what needs to be taught and are careful to take account of the success of previous learning when planning each lesson. Less able pupils continue to gain much from the security of working with classroom assistants where they have regular opportunities to ask questions and learn in very small groups. Their needs are not as well met in science because they receive less individual help and some worksheets are too difficult for them to read and understand. The more able concentrate on more formal work and are beginning to use skills to write independently and apply number knowledge to solve simple mathematical problems. However, these pupils do not make as much progress as they potentially could. They are occasionally uninterested and lose concentration when expected to listen and answer the teachers' questions rather than ask questions or show what they know by writing answers on the board. They have too few opportunities to describe and demonstrate ideas for solving mathematical problems, such as identifying intervals of time, or how to write about science experiments.

25. Teaching in junior-age classes is good overall. It is very good in Year 5, consistently good in Years 3 and 4 and sound in Year 6. The absence of a permanent teacher in Year 6 means that the needs and prior learning of one class group are not familiar to the relief

teacher. More time is spent in finding the best ways to motivate and encourage pupils than would normally be necessary. A few pupils with behavioural problems find it difficult to cope with changing circumstances. Nonetheless, over one third of lessons in Year 6 were good and a third of junior class lessons were very good or better because teachers know how to involve pupils successfully and secure their ready co-operation. Throughout the higher primary stage, organisation into literacy and numeracy sets works very well. Indeed, the scrutiny of work indicates that management of the literacy strategy is particularly strong and having a positive impact on learning across the curriculum. Most lessons in English, mathematics and science result in very good learning because they are thoroughly planned, with each part of the lesson taking account of pupils' differing needs. Teachers' knowledge and use of subject vocabulary is often very good, such as reference to the properties of materials in science, or, in mathematics, explaining how to measure and draw angles to 180 degrees. Learning objectives are shared effectively and pupils are very clear about what they are going to learn. Lessons move along at a lively pace and include some splendid oral sessions, about the use of similes in rhymes and poems, for example. Pupils are challenged by plenty of searching questions from teachers and assistants. They think carefully and often provide perceptive answers. They clearly enjoy sharing views and ideas and rarely need to be reminded of adults' expectations to make constructive use of time. Group work is usually well organised, with many stimulating resources available that promote curiosity and help pupils' to persevere with learning activities. Religious education is imaginatively planned and captures pupils' interest. These lessons promote pupils' awareness of spiritual matters, such as reflecting on life and death, forgiveness, and self-worth.

26. Where teaching is least effective it is because expectations could be higher and instructions could be clearer. Pupils are not sure what to do or how they can improve on their previous performance. For example, two lessons in physical education lacked sufficient challenge to meet all pupils' needs, especially those of the most gifted, or did not sufficiently promote collaborative planning and teamwork. Teachers do not plan well for ICT in other subjects. This limits pupils' opportunities to see how work on the computer can help with drafting, editing, presenting or interpreting information, or controlling moving devices. Sometimes, when marking work, teachers are complimentary about pupils' effort but do not provide sufficient guidance on how to remedy errors, or improve their use of literacy and numeracy. Some pupils would like 'harder homework' with more opportunities for initiative and research.

27. The school now needs to focus more on helping pupils to identify what they have gained from each lesson and how they can become more independent in their learning.

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

28. Learning opportunities are well planned for children under six in all six areas of learning. They provide pupils with firm foundations for programmes of study in the infant stage. Careful account is taken of what children can do when they enter the nursery to determine what they are ready to learn. When children move into the reception year teachers are fully informed of every child's stage of development. They tailor work to meet girls and boys' needs equally whatever their level of ability.

29. The quality and range of opportunities for learning in the infant and junior stages meet statutory requirements and are satisfactory overall. The way the curriculum is organised has improved steadily since 1997. Teachers make effective use of national guidance when planning teaching programme in English, mathematics, science and most National Curriculum subjects. Good use is made of the syllabus for religious education and acts of collective worship fully meet statutory requirements. Reading, writing, spelling and numeracy

are taught competently, though the development of good handwriting needs more emphasis. The impact of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy has been most pronounced at the junior stage. This is due principally to a decision some time ago to teach pupils in higher and lower-achieving ability groups. This practice of setting pupils has now been adopted in infant year groups with increasingly measurable benefits. It enables the brightest pupils to make faster progress as they learn with older peers. It also enables pupils with special educational needs to consolidate knowledge and skills by working alongside younger pupils. There are still some subjects, such as ICT, design and technology and physical education that need further development before provision can be described as fully effective. Crucially, teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to make use of ICT outside lessons in the subject. They are inhibited in doing so by insufficient ICT software for most foundation subjects.

30. Participation in transnational and national initiatives, such as the 'Language for Communication' and 'Healthy Schools' projects, contributes to a richer curriculum for linguistic development and personal, social and health education. For example, from Year 3 onwards, all pupils receive at least one French lesson each week and it is remarkable to see how well pupils respond to these opportunities. Pupils with special educational needs are as eager as the rest of the class to practise conversing in French and they do so with a high degree of confidence and competence. Pupils reflect seriously on the challenges and opportunities presented by living in a modern society, including consideration of safe and dangerous use of drugs and responsible family relationships. The recent Arts Festival added interest to the school's normal programme of teaching in art and design, music, dance and drama, concentrating as it did on African, Asian and Australian customs and traditions.

31. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is of high quality. Pupils' individual needs are carefully diagnosed and each has an education plan that is realistically matched to next steps in learning. Teachers and classroom assistants concentrate on planning activities that enable pupils to achieve them well. The school works closely with support agencies and parents to provide special help for pupils. This support is equally effective for pupils with statements, specific disabilities, such as visual and speech impairment, and those with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

32. Provision is good for pupils with English as an additional language and those from minority ethnic groups. Pupils are welcomed and treated with respect. When necessary, advice is sought about how to help them so that they make similar progress with their peers. All pupils have at least sound access to the statutory curriculum but the teaching pupils get in some classes, for example, Year 5, is better than in others. The school is aware that it needs to eliminate difficulties caused by a high turnover of teachers, particularly in Years 2 and 6.

33. The range of extra-curricular opportunities is satisfactory and includes a recorder group, a choir, a computer club and football and tennis coaching. Children whose families can afford to pay also attend the popular tae kwon do classes. Teachers themselves do not at present organise any after-school activities for sport, though plans are in hand to remedy this situation next term. If implemented as expected, these new opportunities should meet the aspirations of a significant percentage of pupils. The school arranges for every class to experience an educational day out at a study centre of some kind. These contribute well to topics covering many areas of the curriculum. For example, junior pupils recalled learning about African snails and sounds and vibration when visiting the University of the West of England. Infants enjoyed drawing and writing about Oldown Country Park, especially the experience of riding on a tractor and feeding farm animals. Year 6 is looking forward to performing in a music festival in Bristol's famous Colston Hall.

34. The school has good links with community groups that contribute effectively to pupils' learning. There are, for example, strong links with a local church and a very special feature of the relationship is co-hosting a visit each year from teachers and pupils from Belarus. The Arts Festival involved members of the local and wider community. It considerably enhanced pupils' knowledge and appreciation of art, craft, music and drama. A Year 6 teacher liaises regularly with the secondary school to which pupils transfer. He and a Year 7 teacher organise several shared assignments during the summer term. Their collaboration helps pupils make a smooth transition from primary to secondary education.

35. The school successfully cultivates pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. All four elements are embedded in its daily practice. Social, emotional and personal development is very well managed in the nursery and continues into reception. The result is that four-year-olds make a confident transition from part-time to full-time education.

36. 'Pride in Parkwall', the school's motto, is a live philosophy and central to pupils' all-round development. Every member of staff is committed to promoting the school's shared values and beliefs. Assemblies, collective worship and religious and personal and health education lessons often have a spiritual dimension, to which pupils respond well. A talk and songs about being a good friend struck a chord with younger pupils. Similarly, discussions about the importance of Palm Sunday and Easter to Christians engrossed junior pupils. A Year 3 teacher was equally effective when exploring the harmful effects of smoking with her class. Adults provide an excellent example on how to work well together, behave responsibly, and respect each other and the school environment. Teachers, classroom support assistants and governors also listen carefully to parents' aspirations and concerns and work hard to make sure common values are shared and understood. Displays of work, an attractive, clean and tidy environment, routines, such as raising the school flag each morning, and an 'open door' policy, are all representative of the school's approach to developing a welcoming climate and fostering pupils' self-esteem.

37. The behaviour, bullying, citizenship and sex and drugs education policies are well thought through. Pupils are given regular opportunities to explore how their behaviour affects others and to come to terms with their own feelings. There are effective procedures for rewarding good conduct and effort and for dealing with bullying and inappropriate behaviour, though there is a need to make sure these procedures are implemented consistently at all times. Counselling arrangements are sensitively organised for the small percentage of disaffected and troubled pupils. The appointment of a special classroom assistant with particular child management skills has reduced the disruption these pupils cause during lessons and playtimes. The newly formed School Council is already making a positive difference to pupils' willingness to make suggestions for improving school facilities and extending learning opportunities outside of lessons. The experience of electing class representatives has given many pupils their first insight into how democracy is intended to improve the way in which a community functions. There is untapped potential, however, to foster initiative and independence both in lessons and when pupils take work home.

38. Cultural development is much better than it was in 1997. Opportunities arise each year for pupils to participate in drama, music art and other cultural events. For example, Year 6 pupils are busy preparing for a production of Shakespeare's 'Twelfth Night' and the whole school is looking forward to it. More than anything, the recent Arts Festival week extended pupils' understanding of how the active involvement of community groups supports their learning. Many pupils explained how much they enjoyed the week. It helped them appreciate the contribution that the arts make to the quality of people's lives in multi-cultural Britain and around the world.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. The school has improved its practice since the previous inspection and is very effective in providing for pupils' welfare, health and safety. There is a common approach across the school from all staff, including non-teaching staff, to creating an atmosphere of warmth, security and well being where pupils feel very safe and valued. Very good procedures for child protection are carefully implemented by the headteacher. There are only a few staff who have qualifications in first aid but sufficient staff have had first aid awareness training to ensure incidents are appropriately handled, fully recorded and parents notified when necessary. However, the school has undergone many recent staff changes and a review of health and safety policies would help to ensure everyone's understanding and consistently good practice. The school also needs to keep records to show that members of staff with responsibility for health and safety undertake formal risk assessment training. Buildings are in safe condition and the grounds secure. Any matters of concern with regard to health and safety are quickly addressed by the very effective site manager in conjunction with the governing body.

40. Procedures are sound for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic and personal progress. Teachers check pupils' progress regularly and keep records to show how well the class has coped with new learning. Teachers have made sound progress since 1997 in their use of assessment information when planning next steps in learning, though still have more work to do to achieve exemplary practice throughout the school. Assessment records are detailed and do much to help raise achievement in English. They support the needs of pupils with English as an additional language but are not as consistently useful in noting the extent to which all groups develop skills and understanding in all subjects. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported both in the classroom and when involved in booster sessions supported by classroom assistants. Their individual education programmes are of a very high standard and contain manageable objectives that promote steady, continuous learning. Health and care arrangements specified in statements are meticulously followed. The school has not yet devised a similarly rigorous approach to identifying able and gifted pupils and planning their next steps. This lack partially explains why pupils do not always make the progress they could, for example, in ICT, physical education and science.

41. Nonetheless, all teachers and teaching assistants understand pupils very well and are excellent role models. Pupils feel confident to discuss problems with any adult in the school. The strong caring and supportive ethos allows teachers throughout the school to monitor pupils' personal development effectively. Parents overwhelmingly believe that children like coming to school because they are treated with respect. Parents know that high priority is given to pupils' physical and emotional well being and that this ensures a very good environment for learning.

42. Very effective procedures exist for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. Parents acknowledge there has been a considerable improvement in pupils' conduct since the headteacher arrived at the school. School policy emphasises positive reinforcement as the preferred means of improving behaviour and policy works very well in practice most of the time. Teachers and pupils are familiar with school rules and feel ownership of them because each class has helped to develop procedures that are appropriate for the age of the children. Any incidents of inappropriate behaviour that do occur are managed responsibly. For example a teaching assistant has designated 'time-out' and is readily available to support children who need to be temporarily withdrawn from class because they are upset or being disruptive. 'Time-out' sessions are also extended to lunch-times when pupils with particular problems related to their ability to play effectively with others are well supported. There is a process of escalation that includes the involvement of the headteacher and parents where appropriate. The school's effectiveness in promoting and encouraging positive behaviour helps produce a happy and orderly community and contributes very significantly to pupils'

progress. However, a high number of exclusions last year compared with the previous years resulted from older juniors' breakdown of self-control. The circumstances in which this sanction is applied need to be continually reviewed and evaluated to ensure fair and effective outcomes.

43. There are very good school procedures for monitoring attendance and procedures for improving attendance are satisfactory. Registers are marked both morning and afternoon and comply with legal requirements. The school encourages parents to ensure pupils arrive punctually and this means there is an effective start to the day with few disruptions. The school follows up unexplained absences well and contacts parents if pupils fail to arrive when expected. However, more opportunities could be taken to celebrate the excellent attendance of some pupils and to remind parents of the importance of good attendance in ensuring their children receive the best possible educational opportunities. For example, pupil and whole-class attendance certificates could be awarded to children and their value promoted to parents.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. Parents and carers have very positive views of the school and many see it as an anchor for both pupils and their families. The overwhelming majority who responded to the inspection questionnaire or attended the pre-inspection meeting stated how very pleased they are with the way their children are taught and managed. They think children enjoy school life and parents also feel welcome and part of the school community. They believe the headteacher and his colleagues work closely with them and are comfortable to approach the school when they have any anxieties or queries. Some have particular concerns about their children's or other pupils' behaviour but they are confident that the approach to managing behaviour is effective. During the period of the inspection other parents confirmed they too have a very high opinion of the school and appreciate its open-door policy. They are quick to acknowledge that the headteacher is available to greet parents and pupils as they arrive each morning. He always makes time to listen and even parents without appointments are seen as soon as possible. Parents were also complimentary about the accessibility of class teachers at the start and end of the day and about the very good links with support agencies, including speech therapists, pupil counselling and education welfare services. These links are even extended to include provision for children's families. For example, the school has arranged ICT training that is much enjoyed by many parents and the Citizens' Advice Bureau also holds regular sessions at the school.

45. The school has a sound record of consulting with parents about school policy. It involved them appropriately in writing the home/school agreement and has recently undertaken a consultation exercise requesting views on different school day closing times for infant and junior children. The school is now evaluating their response to decide whether any change would be appropriate. However, the school needs to do more to ensure parents are properly consulted on a wider range of issues so that the long term strategic planning of the school reflects a true partnership. For example, parents' views about the quality and range of extra-curricular activities and the effectiveness of the homework policy could be explored to achieve a shared understanding of issues and how best to address them.

46. Parents are very complimentary about the standard of the school newsletters. They appreciate the efforts of the very active Parent Teacher Association that provides important funding to support the purchase of resources that benefit all children. For example, play equipment recently installed in the junior playground was part-funded by the association. The school also sends useful curriculum information to parents at the beginning of each term. This helps parents to support their children's learning at home.

47. Parents consider parents' evenings are well managed and that communication is good about children's progress and targets for improvement. However, written annual reports for parents are not all of a sufficiently high standard. Progress in English, mathematics and science is summarised reasonably well, but other subjects receive inadequate coverage. Teachers concentrate too much on describing pupils' attitudes to the work that the whole class has covered during the year. They say too little about pupils' individual progress and areas requiring extra effort. Similarly the school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents, although conforming to statutory requirements and containing much useful information, are not of the same high quality as the school newsletter. However, reviews and reports on pupils with special educational needs provide a clear indication of areas where parents can help their children's learning.

48. Overall, the school has made significant progress in strengthening its partnership with parents since the last inspection.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. Overall, leadership and management are good. The headteacher has worked hard to promote the school's effectiveness and makes sure that pupils' achievements are shared with the wider community. He was rewarded for his efforts in 2000 when the school received a visit from the government minister, Margaret Hodge, in recognition of its success in raising standards over three successive years. The headteacher provides strong pastoral support for pupils and their families and is very effective in his approach to promoting the school motto 'Proud of Parkwall'. During the inspection period he spent considerable time with parents and representatives of community services trying to resolve some children's emotional and behavioural problems and dealing with a sensitive child protection issue.

50. The headteacher meets regularly with the chair of governors and consults him appropriately about how well the school is performing and where it needs to improve. The partnership with the governing body is harmonious and informal communication between governors and the school is good. Written reports produced each term do not, however, tell governors enough about progress on initiatives in the School Development Plan. References to improvements in subjects other than English and mathematics are rare. This is because the plan does not include a separate section for each subject.

51. The headteacher is very effective in encouraging and developing a dedicated team of teachers and other members of the school's workforce. He firmly believes that good teaching is essential if the school is to provide as good an education as possible for the community it serves. He therefore places a very strong emphasis on the professional development of staff, including a newly qualified teacher's access to induction of high quality. This teacher is already making a positive difference in the infant department and is being coached towards taking responsibility for physical education next September. She attributes her effectiveness not just to her primary training but equally to the high quality of support she receives compared with newly qualified teachers in other schools. Under the headteacher's guidance, and in partnership with governors, the school has successfully introduced statutory performance management procedures. The headteacher has developed a classroom observation programme that individual teachers find useful in helping them and pupils to get the most out of lessons. They feel that professional development targets are improving the quality of their teaching and helping to raise standards. Inspection evidence strongly supports this view. Overall, the headteacher's open and supportive style of leadership and personal example commands the respect and loyalty of parents, pupils, governors and staff. Yet he knows that he has little time at his disposal to lead curriculum initiatives. In this respect he relies strongly on delegating leadership and management to the deputy headteacher and the teaching team.

52. The newly appointed deputy headteacher and other members of the senior management team support the headteacher well. They play an increasingly key part in the sound management of the school. The deputy headteacher has a considerable workload but copes with it capably. He has made a positive difference to the way in which the curriculum is organised and evaluated. The impact of his efforts is already strongly in evidence in reception and Years 1 and 2. Though standards in statutory tests in Year 2 and Year 6 in 2002 are not likely to be significantly better than last year, they show every sign of being average or higher in 2003 due to teachers' higher expectations of what pupils can achieve. The deputy headteacher is also revitalising the approach to managing foundation subjects, such as art, history and geography. Supported by another senior teacher, he is also co-ordinating a thorough review of the strengths and weaknesses in the school's assessment methods. Both have a clear vision of what the school needs to do to gradually fill gaps in provision and gain a better understanding of pupils' achievements and standards in every subject at both key stages.

53. The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is very effective due to the enthusiasm and skill of the very experienced co-ordinator. She helps to write individual education plans. She also has a thorough grasp of how well pupils are performing and how to direct resources to enable pupils with special educational needs to benefit as much as possible. The quality of teaching in literacy, numeracy and religious education has improved too, because of the efforts of designated co-ordinators. They have good oversight of curricular planning in each key stage and are increasingly effective in monitoring how well pupils are learning. They have started to make constructive use of statutory and voluntary test results to identify weaknesses but have not yet analysed how well different groups of pupils perform compared with similar groups in other schools. The humanities committee has also begun a review of policy and practice in history, geography and art. There have already been improvements in the way in which topics, such as 'Ancient Greece', are planned and resources are used. Its members know they also need to focus in the near future on design and technology and to make sure that continuity of knowledge and skills is smoothly planned and managed in all foundation subjects. Time is made available for teachers to observe colleagues and provide feedback, but it has been a couple of years since some co-ordinators have reviewed the quality of teaching. Science and physical education have suffered more than most subjects, with detrimental effects on standards. This is because the co-ordinator has been absent sick or has left and the post has remained vacant. These shortcomings are recognised and plans are in hand to address them.

54. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities satisfactorily. Governors are purposefully involved in promoting the school's aims and teachers' professional development. Many are parents and frequent visitors to the school. Consequently they are well aware of what is happening on a week-by-week basis. Governors acknowledge how hard staff work to meet pupils' needs and develop a positive learning atmosphere. They have taken effective action to improve the building and grounds, and have noted how these improvements have increased pupils' care of their school environment. They are justifiably proud of the new library and computer suite but are not so sure of their impact on pupils' learning. They acknowledge that they need further training to be up-to-date with national expectations for effective school governance and fully effective in accounting for the performance of the school in annual statutory assessment tests. They identify a specific need to know more about how to measure the value added by recent initiatives and expenditure.

55. The school's evaluation of its performance is sound. The headteacher, and the senior management team, are very aware of relative strengths and weaknesses in standards and are concerned about the low levels of achievement in Year 2, especially in mathematics. Their targets for performance management are firmly matched to aspirations to raise

achievement to levels that compare favourably with similar schools. The will to improve is strong and staff have been very effective in ensuring that children receive a good introduction to learning in the nursery and then build well on this start in the reception year. The School Development Plan, however, is not as comprehensive and useful a tool for managing change as it needs to be. Though it includes some relevant objectives, such as improving standards in writing and methods of assessment, there are significant omissions. These include: - aims to raise standards in mathematics and science; the future organisation of classes and staff deployment in the context of a falling roll and plans for training governors to understand and manage their roles and responsibilities with confidence. There is also a lack of a clear timetable for the review of school policies, with the result that there have been changes in practice that are not documented and have not been approved by the governing body. These include, for example, the lettings and staff recruitment policies.

56. The strategic use of resources is good. Specific grant is very well used for supporting pupils with special educational needs, developing international educational links, the professional development of staff, facilities for new technology and upgrading the buildings and school environment. Accommodation is very good. The building is spacious and includes two halls for physical education and assemblies and areas outside classrooms where small groups of pupils can work with a supporting adult. Staffing levels and learning resources are also good. Teachers are competent professionals and classroom assistants, administrative, supervisory and maintenance staff all contribute effectively to the smooth day-to-day running of the school. There is an urgent need, however, to retain good teachers and maintain staffing stability in order to ensure pupils' continuity of learning and emotional well-being. Though new appointments to the school have led to many changes for the better, a high turnover of staff has disrupted some pupils' learning, notably in Year 6.

57. Educational priorities are properly supported through the school's financial planning and principles of best value are soundly applied. For example, the office staff ensures any stationery and materials they buy represent best value and are not just lowest cost. The principles are, however, mainly interpreted as judicious expenditure on building improvements, learning resources or on support services for pupils with special educational needs. There has been less focus on finding out how well the school serves girls compared with boys, or middle and higher-achieving pupils. Governors receive information about the school's results and take account of the school's position in the local league table. They want to sustain the improvement in standards so evident up until 2000 and have set realistic targets in English and mathematics that, if met, will maintain the steady upward trend. Nonetheless, governors have been too ready to accept that results in Year 6 represent the best standards possible when taking account of pupils' low levels of attainment on entry to school. They have not sought to find out whether girls achieve better or worse standards than neighbouring schools or why boys perform better than girls in comparison with their peer-groups nationally. They are concerned about exclusion rates but have not set targets to reduce the use of this sanction. Overall, governors now need to make better use of performance information and be more pro-active in monitoring the success of priorities in the School Development Plan.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

58. Give first priority to helping pupils to achieve national benchmarks in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2.

(Paragraphs 7, 24, 67, 76, 87, 91)

1. Ensure that pupils throughout the school make better use of ICT in other subjects.
(Paragraphs 11, 26, 29, 40, 86, 92, 131)
2. Improve the approach to planning and address the school's weaker aspects of provision by making sure that: -
 - A. Information about pupils' performance is analysed in sufficient depth to establish whether, and explain why, some groups of pupils make better progress than others;
(Paragraphs 32, 57, 96, 139)
 - B. Improvement targets are identified in order of importance and include objectives for raising standards in physical education and reducing the number of times pupils are excluded from school;
(Paragraphs 11, 26, 29, 42, 55, 57, 146)
 - C. All subjects have designated co-ordinators who have the skills and time to systematically monitor and report on standards in each key stage;
(Paragraphs 111, 122, 145)
 - D. Homework and the quality of marking are consistently good in all classes.
(Paragraphs 69, 74, 112)
 - E. Governors receive regular information about how well the school is progressing towards targets in the School Development Plan;
(Paragraph 50)
 - F. Teachers and governors receive training to improve their understanding of the four principles of best value as described in the School Inspection Framework.
(Paragraph 45, 47, 54)

Minor issues

Governors could also consider including the following in the post-inspection Action Plan: -

Improving opportunities for sport outside lessons. *(Paragraph 33)*

Introducing awards for good attendance. *(Paragraph 43)*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	72
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	46

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	15	29	24	0	0	0
Percentage	6	20	41	33	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	28	349
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	78

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3	83

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	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	18

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.10

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.10

National comparative data	5.60
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National comparative data	0.50
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	24	29	53

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	20	20
	Girls	22	17	19
	Total	42	37	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (83)	70 (85)	74 (91)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	19	18
	Girls	19	18	19
	Total	39	37	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (81)	70 (89)	70 (78)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	22	19	41

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	17	18
	Girls	11	10	14
	Total	26	27	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	63 (86)	66 (88)	78 (92)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	18	19
	Girls	12	14	15
	Total	27	32	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	66 (74)	78 (82)	83 (84)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	3
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	305
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14.40
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.20:1
Average class size	26.80

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	226

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28:1
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	52
Number of pupils per FTE adult	9.30:1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	9
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	17	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000
	£
Total income	810024
Total expenditure	788861
Expenditure per pupil	2020
Balance brought forward from previous year	19853
Balance carried forward to next year	26409

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	404
Number of questionnaires returned	116

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	32	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	64	32	2	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	41	9	3	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	49	3	2	4
The teaching is good.	66	30	1	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	53	41	6	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	75	23	0	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	33	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	51	46	3	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	62	31	3	2	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	34	3	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	44	9	3	11

Other issues raised by parents

None.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

59. Attainment on entry to the nursery and reception is lower than that reported in the previous inspection. Many children need additional support to develop their literacy and social skills. Overall, they are taught well in the nursery and in reception and soon develop very positive attitudes to school. The result is that, by the end of the reception year, standards in personal and social development, mathematics, creative and physical development match expectations for their age. Standards in literacy and knowledge and understanding of the world are just below expectations. Given their lower starting point, all children are achieving well. The school has worked hard to successfully improve the quality of teaching since 1997.

60. The reorganisation of the reception classes, combined with significantly improved teaching in this school year, enables all children, including those with special educational needs, to make good progress in all areas of learning. All adults in the nursery and reception classes are involved in planning, teaching and assessing children's needs. They know the children and their families very well and ensure children feel secure, valued and happy in school. They prepare them well for transfer to the infant stage. All the classrooms have plenty of books, practical apparatus and materials for creative activities. They provide very stimulating environments in which children are keen to explore and learn.

Personal, social and emotional development

61. This area of development is emphasised throughout the nursery and reception classes and children make good progress. By the time they leave the reception classes, most children have achieved the early learning goals and this reflects the very good teaching in this area. Children are encouraged to be independent and are regularly given opportunities to plan their own activities and learning. They thoughtfully select tasks, such as painting, using the computer, running the 'garden centre' or working with friends using construction materials. Older children take turns reporting back to the whole class. They learn to listen to each other and politely ask questions when they would like more information. Adults provide very good role models, always treating one another and the children with courtesy and respect. Children learn to look after their environment and are encouraged to tidy up at the end of each session. Most children work well together, sharing resources and helping one another, for example loosening stiff cogs when making wheel systems and sweeping up sand spilt by other children. Adults promote independence by ensuring that equipment is accessible and easy to use.

Communication, language and literacy

62. Teaching is consistently good in this area in all three classes. In the nursery and in reception children are encouraged to listen with interest and concentration to stories and instructions and to speak clearly when talking to each other. Adults show children that they value their efforts at communicating by listening to what they say and by joining in the activities the children themselves have devised, such as grouping farm animals into different fenced areas or constructing houses with wooden blocks. Teachers praise children's efforts and encourage them to think of ways in which they can improve what they are doing. Children enjoy looking at and sharing books with adults and with other children. They know that books contain stories. Children are very keen to read and write and they are encouraged to do so by adults in all three classes. When reading to the children, teachers bring stories alive and hence enrich the children's experiences and promote a greater interest in the books. The children are given opportunities to select reading or writing activities and well-prepared group

work enables children of all abilities to make good progress. Children with special educational needs are supported well by nursery nurses and teaching assistants. Many reception children are beginning to read and write simple words and most form letters correctly. Higher-attaining children write short sentences and enjoy reading back what they have written.

Mathematical development

63. Many children enter the nursery with less developed skills than expected for this age. The teaching of numeracy skills is good and children in all classes achieve well. This is an improvement since the last inspection. In the nursery, careful planning provides children with a wide range of experiences. Whilst making bead chains, they are encouraged to count the beads and introduced to appropriate terms, such as *more*, *less* and *how many altogether*. Many nursery children confidently count to ten and they are developing an understanding of measure. They confidently talk about measuring the playground using feet, strides and measuring sticks, with the more able explaining the purpose of a trundle wheel. Teachers organise resources well, enabling children to gain confidence in using them correctly. When experimenting with weighing balances, reception children develop their mathematical vocabulary, correctly using words, such as *heavier*, *lighter* and *the same as*. When collecting leaves, these children discuss who has found the biggest and smallest. Reception children identify a number that comes before or after one to nine. Teachers provide good opportunities for children to learn the names of two-dimensional shapes. Most children correctly draw triangles, circles and rectangles and make good attempts to label them. Lower-attaining children sort these shapes but have yet to develop confidence in labelling them. Reception children have a good understanding of symmetry and teachers link this well into their sessions in the computer suite.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

64. As a consequence of good teaching, children make good progress in this area of learning. Given their low level of attainment on entry, most children achieve well. Adults work extremely hard to broaden children's experiences and help them develop a greater understanding of the world around them. The well organised 'garden centres' reinforce learning of what plants need in order to grow, and knowledge of the world of work. Children are given 'hands-on' experiences of sowing their own seeds and caring for the young plants. Teachers stress the importance of treating resources with care and washing hands after handling compost. Stimulated by the wide range of accessible resources, nursery children confidently name farm and wild animals but have yet to learn the names of their young. Teachers provide a good range of fruit for children to touch, smell and taste. This valuable experience broadens their knowledge of healthy foods and provides an opportunity for them to extend their observation and language. Children notice patterns and describe tastes using terms, such as *delicious* and *sweet*. Looking closely at the insides they express amazement at the number of seeds some fruit contains. Similar reactions are created when blowing bubbles. Children are fascinated by the way in which they grow, rise and burst and by the rainbow colours they see. These opportunities contribute significantly to children's spiritual development. Children's moral and social development is enhanced by well-planned hunts for minibeasts. They are encouraged to handle creatures with care and to share in the preparation of suitable habitats for them. All children are encouraged to use the computers in their classrooms and they have access to a good range of suitable software. They are developing their mouse and keyboard skills to a satisfactory standard. Higher-attaining reception children successfully draw their own pictures and use their skills well to place missing sections into pictures on the screen. Boys and girls demonstrate equal interest and skill in this area of learning.

Physical development

65. Children enter the nursery with less developed skills than those expected for children of this age. As a consequence of good teaching, most attain the early learning goals in this area and some reception children exceed them. This is consistent with the findings of the last inspection. Children are encouraged to move with care and awareness of others. In the nursery, they respond well when confidently using outdoor equipment such as tricycles. Adults provide good opportunities for children to develop their skills when using benches and hoops and they make good progress when sliding, crawling and jumping. Good support enables lower-attainers to gain confidence and progress equally well. These activities could be used even more effectively to extend children's understanding of language, such as *under, over, in* and *out*. Older children continue to develop their skills well in lessons with Year 1. Good planning enables children to learn about the importance of exercise and the effect this has on their bodies. Children are encouraged to work co-operatively which they do well. Good support for lower-attainers enables them to participate fully. Teachers challenge children to practise movements they find tricky and do their best and children respond very well to their high expectations. They demonstrate good control when using indoor apparatus, such as the climbing frames. They quickly learn to handle and move equipment carefully, sensibly and safely. The regular use of praise and encouragement enables children to gain confidence and improve their performance.

Creative development

66. When they enter the nursery, the creative skills of most children are below those expected of children of this age. Teaching is good and children progress well in the nursery and reception classes. Self-portraits are immature but in proportion and children correctly name the colours they use. Teachers provide good opportunities for children to experiment with a wide range of resources, such as paint, play-dough, card, tissue and fabric. As a result, children produce attractive collages, mobiles and well-made puppets. Careful supervision by staff ensures children learn how to use scissors and successfully attach materials using glue or tape. Children are regularly given opportunities to sing rhymes and songs and to play untuned instruments. Children respond very well. In the reception year they sing tunefully and demonstrate a developing sense of rhythm. They enjoy playing a range of instruments and many correctly name triangles, tambourines, shakers and castanets. Teachers' good knowledge of the subject enables children to gain understanding of loud and soft music and to control their playing so that they start and stop at given times. All children are encouraged to participate and good support is provided for those who are less confident. This enables these children to achieve equally well. Children's performance in music is a significant strength.

ENGLISH

67. Standards in English have shown good improvement since 1997 despite a reversal in fortunes in 2001 when standards fell back from the high levels achieved in 2000. Pupils have, however, been slow to reach expected standards in statutory tests at the end of the infant stage. Very few make sufficient progress to reach above average levels at seven years of age in speaking and listening, reading or writing. The school has redoubled efforts this year to raise standards and this is paying off. In Year 1, pupils are achieving well, and are on course to attain the level that is expected nationally by the age of seven. Already the more able Year 1 pupils are attaining higher standards than many pupils in Year 2. This is partly due to differences in the ability range of both year groups. It is also clear that some pupils in Year 2 are making up for gaps in their prior learning. They have not reached the level that is expected nationally. Older pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language, make good progress in junior year groups. The present

Year 6 pupils are likely to attain the standards expected for English although few are achieving at a higher level. Pupils in Years 3, 4 and particularly in Year 5, are making substantial progress and are well on course to reach good standards by the time they leave the school.

68. Year 2 pupils achieve at their best in reading and most achieve well in speaking and listening. Spelling is also satisfactory, but pupils' writing is the weakest skill and the one they most need to improve. Access to good resources and a strong emphasis on story and non-fiction in literacy sessions, in separate lessons, in other subjects, and at home, has helped to raise standards in reading. By the time they are seven years old, more able pupils are reading familiar stories with confidence. They read their own stories aloud to the rest of the class, and put a lot of expression into their voices. Less able pupils read in an 'automatic' voice and do not always understand what they have read. They do, however, try hard to build words up, use the pictures for clues, and do not give in easily. The majority of pupils learn to listen to their teachers and their classmates during discussions, and they take turns in speaking. They speak well about things that interest them. A few less able pupils find it difficult to listen to other people's opinions, and do not pay good attention when their classmates are speaking or reading their work aloud. Higher-attaining pupils write several sentences independently, for instance, about a story they have read or to explain how to mount a horse. Their printing is neat, and they spell simple words consistently accurately. They use capital letters and full stops correctly, and are beginning to write longer sentences with connecting words, such as *then*, *because* and *but*. More than half of seven-year-olds, however, has untidy handwriting and badly formed letters. Pupils with special educational needs manage to write only a few words during a lesson, and have not learned to use capital letters and full stops consistently. Their spelling is developing, but it is sometimes difficult to understand what is meant.

69. By the time they are eleven years old pupils meet national expectations in reading. They make appropriate sense of a range of fiction and non-fiction texts. Higher-attaining pupils are reading well and are exceeding the expected standard. They read fluently, and, when reading a story with different characters, they put on different voices and expressions for each one. These pupils remember what has happened in previous chapters and explain the implications of what they have read. They imagine what might happen next, and they justify why they think certain things could happen. These most able pupils, however, have not fully developed their library skills. Many were not able to say how they would use the library system to find story or reference books about, for instance, Henry VIII, dinosaurs or horses. They know how to use dictionaries, and the index and contents pages in books. They do not necessarily use this knowledge outside their English classes, however, such as when searching for people and places in geography or history lessons. Many pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 have developed a very neat style of cursive writing. Most of them try to keep up this neatness when writing stories, poems or notes about what they have learned from a book. A minority, however, write less neatly but teachers do not correct them, or insist on them doing the work again, even when the writing is clearly less careful than it could be. The lower-ability pupils are still writing untidily, with poor spelling or grammar, and crossing out many mistakes. Though they try hard their work looks poorly presented. Pupils write for a wide variety of purposes and they understand that the style of writing needs to be different when, for instance, making notes, writing a story, making up a poem or giving instructions.

70. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons are good. They are particularly attentive and enthusiastic when the teaching is lively and they have lots of opportunity to contribute, such as when the more able Year 2 pupils were making a list and describing the use and meaning of words beginning with 'wh'. Pupils throughout the school usually concentrate very well on listening to the teacher. They also listen carefully to each other's contributions, such as when talking about 'forgiveness' in one very good lesson in Year 5. They persevere when

undertaking individual and group tasks and have a good rapport with teachers and classroom support assistants. Pupils are very occasionally inattentive, usually when the teacher-led part of the lesson has continued for too long.

71. The teaching of English is good. Lessons are very well planned and are often imaginative, with very good use of a wide range of learning resources. These include overhead projectors, videos, work sheets and a variety of story and reference books. Teachers have very good knowledge of the subject. This shows as they develop pupils' understanding of spelling rules, alliteration and grammar. Teachers begin their literacy lessons with clear reminders of what pupils have learned previously, and descriptions of what they are going to learn this time. In some lessons, the teachers remind individual pupils what their own targets are. They are very good at leading 'question and answer' discussions that fully involve pupils at different levels according to their ability. In one very good lesson with the older pupils, for instance, the teacher showed pupils how to extend their writing skills by making their sentences longer and more interesting. She had several different activities on the theme of editing sentences, adding adverbs and adjectives and using connecting words, such as *nevertheless*, *although* and *however*. The lesson included opportunities for pupils to practise these skills by writing about the Romans and their food. This was a good link with recent work in history lessons. As the lesson progressed, the more able pupils began to make notes, looking for key words in the pages of text they were scanning. Two pupils competently used a computer to make their notes.

72. Teachers are effective in extending pupils' literacy in other subjects. In geography, for example, infants recorded their memories of a visit to a country park. They described how they felt when they saw animals being fed and their pleasure at eating a picnic together. The infant block is full of lively, interactive captions celebrating pupils' work in science about minibests, in mathematics about pattern and shape, and in art about the work of famous artists. Year 5 pupils were inspired by African paintings and used the techniques to paint their own versions of the Easter story. They wrote captions for their artwork, editing them on the computer to display prominently beside their pictures. The visual and spiritual impact was striking and typical of the variety of ways in which teachers promote pupils' personal development through English and literacy. Junior teachers miss opportunities to encourage pupils to label their art work on pattern with mathematical vocabulary, such as 'tessellation' and 'rotational symmetry'.

73. The school makes very effective use of classroom support staff who provide additional help in reading, writing and comprehension. This is not always for the least able children. Sometimes the most able pupils have special booster lessons, to increase their chances of obtaining higher results in statutory assessment. Support assistants are very well trained and competent. They organise and run lessons very well with their groups.

74. There are other areas the school could develop further. Teachers do not always consider whether their expectations for listening are realistic. They could be more aware of loss of concentration, especially during the times when pupils are working without the teacher's direct attention. Some of the group work is very different from one group to another. This makes it difficult for teachers to finish lessons with a review of what pupils have learned, because they are all learning different things. Teachers' written comments are often positive but they are not consistently well aimed at describing how the average ability and more able pupils can improve their work. More demanding marking for the higher ability pupils would be one way of helping to push standards upwards. Having more difficult homework for higher-attaining pupils would also help to improve standards.

75. Overall, the school's provision has improved considerably since the previous inspection. The subject is very well led and managed by a very well qualified and experienced

co-ordinator. The system for assessing pupils' progress is now good, especially for less able pupils. The practice of setting pupils in ability groups works well as pupils receive work that is well matched to their stage of development. The scheme of what will be taught each year is now very good. Pupils are learning across a very wide range of topics, from different forms of poetry and plays, such as the current production of 'Twelfth Night', to making notes from CD-ROMs and library books. There is a very good library that is used well by some classes, with scope to make even better use of this new facility in the future. Resources are now very good and very well organised. The action plan for future improvement is well conceived. This includes more consistent use of computers and other ICT resources across the school and a continuing focus on writing. These plans should be sustained to maintain an effective drive towards raising standards, especially by the end of Year 2.

MATHEMATICS

76. Standards in mathematics are below national averages by the end of Year 2. In 2001, results in the national tests for seven-year-olds were very low compared to national averages. Similar results are expected this year. However, given the low standards with which pupils start school, pupils achieve satisfactorily in reaching these levels of attainment.

77. In 2001, results in the national tests for Year 6 pupils were in line with national averages overall, and were above the standards attained by pupils in similar schools. This year, more pupils than in 2001 are on target to reach level 4, the level expected for eleven-year-olds, but fewer are on target to reach higher levels. Overall standards are therefore very similar to last year. Pupils make good progress in Years 3 to 6 and achieve well in relation to their earlier standards.

78. In the past boys have performed better than girls in both tests. Inspection evidence shows that this imbalance has been rectified. There are currently no differences in the standards attained by boys and girls or in the progress made by pupils with special educational needs or English as a second language.

79. Standards in mathematics rose steeply in the years 1997 to 2000 but have declined since then. They are now similar to the satisfactory standards by Year 6 reported in the previous inspection. The fall is largely attributable to high levels of staff turnover at critical times, which affected the quality of teaching that pupils received and interrupted their learning. This year the school has stabilised its staffing and set up additional teaching groups for lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. These arrangements are proving beneficial.

80. By the age of seven, pupils add and subtract numbers to 100, but many pupils make mistakes because they do not recall basic number facts correctly. Most pupils are beginning to learn multiplication tables for 2, 4, 5 and 10, and to use this information in simple divisions, for example to find how many sweets each child will have if 10 sweets are shared among 5 children. Pupils know the values of coins and add small amounts of money correctly. A few higher-attaining pupils work with larger amounts and record totals using decimals. Pupils measure familiar objects in centimetres and they are learning to tell the time, although lower-attaining pupils are often confused when working out the 'half-past' times.

81. By the end of Year 6, pupils use a good range of mental and written methods to calculate with numbers up to 1000 or more. Most pupils calculate accurately on paper, although some find division difficult, and lower-attaining pupils are noticeably less confident and accurate because they do not know basic number facts well enough. In a top set lesson, pupils demonstrated a good understanding of prime numbers and factors when investigating assertions, such as *"every even number can be written as the sum of two prime numbers."*

Pupils explore the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages and many know how decimals are used in the metric system of measurement. In discussion, a group of higher-attaining pupils showed a good level of understanding. In work on shapes, pupils find areas of shapes based on rectangles. Some pupils also work with shapes that include triangles and circles. Most pupils use angle vocabulary, such as *acute* and *obtuse* to describe angles, and they measure and draw angles up to 180 degrees.

82. The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics is good overall. Some teaching is very good or excellent, and all teaching is at least satisfactory. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Lessons are well organised with resources to hand so that they proceed smoothly. The school's practice of 'setting' for mathematics, that is teaching pupils of roughly the same ability together, is generally effective and helps teachers to plan well for pupils of different abilities. Teachers' planning is good overall. Lessons are often based on a commercial scheme of work that is very closely linked to the National Numeracy Strategy. This provides a good structure to learning. In the best teaching, work from this scheme is further adapted to match the needs and abilities of the pupils. Good examples were seen of a top set using protractors to measure and draw angles, and of a bottom set working on multiplication tables. In both of these lessons, teachers set demanding work to extend pupils' understanding well at their respective levels of ability. However, in one lesson, teaching was judged to be only satisfactory because the teacher had not sufficiently adapted the tasks set out in the commercial scheme and a few able pupils found the work too easy.

83. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in mathematics lessons. Where classroom assistants are available, they make a valuable contribution to teaching and learning. They often take small groups of pupils to work outside the classroom on simpler but related work. This works well, because tasks are well matched to the pupils' abilities and teachers and classroom assistants can give close support to pupils with behavioural and learning difficulties. This helps pupils to concentrate on their work and complete the work set. A good example was in Year 1 when the lower set of pupils made very good progress in finding out about measuring short intervals of time by using one-minute sand timers.

84. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and manage classes well. Pupils enjoy mathematics. Nearly all pupils behave well and lessons generally proceed briskly. Most lessons are a good mix of class teaching and group or individual work. However, in some lessons, teachers do not vary teaching methods sufficiently to retain all pupils' interest, and the teaching pace is slower. As a result, some pupils quickly lose concentration and behaviour begins to deteriorate. This further slows the lesson down, affects others in the class and restricts the progress that could otherwise be made.

85. The subject makes a sound contribution to pupils' personal development and there are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to practise numeracy in other subjects. Overall, there is more substantial evidence of worthwhile links in the infants than there are in the junior school. Display is used very well to illustrate what younger pupils have learnt about shape, ordinal numbers, odds and evens. Photographs show pupils working collaboratively to make human chains and to share fruit into equal sets. Pictures and charts show they sort and classify minibeasts according to whether they have wings or have similar habitats. Junior pupils enjoy counting rapidly and telling the time in French lessons. They applaud each other's efforts and are keen to converse in pairs. They make good use of their knowledge of standard measure in science and geography as they record temperature on graphs. They investigate databases about animals and have produced a broad range of work on pattern and shape, but there is nothing to show how this work advanced their knowledge of mathematical properties.

86. The National Numeracy Strategy is well established. Teachers follow the recommended lesson structure, and occasionally adapt it to suit better the needs of the pupils, for example spending longer on mental mathematics at the start of the lesson. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress are satisfactory overall. However, not enough use is made of assessment information in planning work. Although data is used to predict future performance in general terms, it is not used sufficiently to identify pupils' strengths and weaknesses, thus enabling teachers to set targets for improvement. The absence of a mathematics element in the School Development Plan is a weakness. This is recognised by the co-ordinator, who has started to develop an action plan to raise standards through improvements in assessment and further development of the curriculum. The school has sufficient learning resources to support teaching, but teachers make insufficient use of ICT in teaching and learning at present.

87. The school has made satisfactory improvements in mathematics since the last inspection. The role of the co-ordinator has been strengthened through the development of lesson monitoring, the quality of teaching has improved and the curriculum has improved with the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. The effect of these improvements is just beginning to be felt. Standards in future years look set to rise but efforts must be sustained to enable pupils in Year 2 to achieve higher standards.

SCIENCE

88. Since the time of the last inspection pupils' attainment in science, as measured by national tests taken at age eleven, has risen steadily. It reached a point where in the year 2000 standards were above average when compared with all schools nationally, and well above average when compared with similar schools. There was a marked dip in 2001, but the evidence seen during this inspection indicates that this reversal has been temporary and the positive upward trend is likely to continue over the next few years. Pupils in Year 6 are achieving in line with national expectations, and work in Year 5 suggests that attainment will once again exceed national averages next year. Overall, pupils are making good progress from Year 3 to Year 6.

89. Standards at the end of Year 2 have not been as high and attainment remains below the national average. However, as pupils enter the school with below average language skills this represents satisfactory achievement. The good foundation being laid for scientific understanding in the reception and Year 1 classes indicates that standards for the younger pupils are rising and are in line with national expectations for six-year-olds.

90. There are no marked differences in results between different attainment targets, but the work of the older pupils shows that there has been a particular improvement in the target for scientific enquiry. Pupils with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress in years 1 and 2 and good progress after that. There are no significant differences between the performance of boys and girls.

91. In Year 2 pupils have an appropriate knowledge of things which are powered by electricity and of how simple electrical circuits work. They are beginning to understand the principles of scientific investigation, for instance when testing how far model cars will roll on a smooth or a rough surface. They know that applying force, such as pushing or pulling, can move objects. In their work on growing plants, they are beginning to make predictions about what will happen to the plant if it is deprived of essentials such as water or light. The more able communicate their findings clearly in simple diagrams and descriptions, but many lower-achieving pupils still find it very difficult to explain their ideas clearly and their use of scientific language is underdeveloped. In their recording and presentation of work, some have not moved on from the level they achieved at the end of Year 1.

92. By Year 6 pupils are using a wide range of approaches to scientific investigation though they do not make sufficient use of ICT either for research or for collecting and presenting data. They understand what constitutes a fair test and recognise that scientific ideas are based on evidence. For example, in their work on gravity they have studied and then replicated the experiments of Galileo. All know how to set out their work using basic scientific principles of predictions, observations, and conclusions. They are making observations and measurements and recording data in different ways, for instance when plotting temperatures on a graph during an experiment to test heat loss. However, pupils often fail to relate their findings to previous learning or wider scientific understanding. In their work on green plants as organisms, most were able to identify and name the parts of the flower, such as stamens and stigmas, but many were unsure if all flowers would be the same and lacked the scientific curiosity to ask the question. Lessons in Years 4 and 5 showed that these skills are being developed well further down the school. For example, in Year 4 pupils made confident use of scientific terminology when they discussed how to separate liquids and solids. In Year 5 they already have a firm grasp of how the earth rotates and is dependent on the sun for light because the earth makes no light of its own. Their attainment was above the level expected for their age.

93. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in infant classes and good in the junior department. The management of pupils and variety of teaching methods are good features of most lessons in both key stages. Activities are well prepared with all materials and equipment to hand. In the most effective lessons tasks are planned that inspire pupils of all abilities to further inquiry and investigation. Teachers make effective use of scientific language and make very effective use of classroom assistants to provide good support for lower-achieving pupils and pupils with special educational needs when carrying out experiments. For example, in a lesson on separating materials, Year 4 pupils all successfully carried out investigations and were able to identify the best ways of separation, such as sieving, magnetic attraction or filtering. A higher-achieving girl suggested and demonstrated how to separate matches from marbles, by floating the matches. In a lesson on the Earth in space, Year 5 pupils were able to offer clear definitions of such words as *axis*, *orbit*, *planet* and *star*. The teacher had devised imaginative ways to show how the moon orbits the earth and how they both orbit the sun. Almost all the pupils could confidently talk about how this affected the length of days, months and years and by the end of the lesson most had a very good idea of why we have night and day.

94. Where teaching is not as good it is usually because teachers are less confident in explaining scientific ideas and the tasks given do not inspire pupils. Objectives are not as clear, and teachers do not give pupils the opportunity to express their own opinions or suggest ways to find things out. When talking about what happens to plants deprived of water or light, pupils in Year 2 were unable to give independent opinions because the teacher had already given them the correct answers. Literacy is well supported in most lessons. Much of the recording is of a good standard and shows good quality handwriting and presentation. However, more could be done to practise numeracy through the use of measuring, data collection and graphical representation. These opportunities are very rarely identified in planning.

95. Pupils' behaviour is usually good, and where the tasks are appropriate and interesting it is often very good. Pupils listen carefully and collaborate sensibly in groups. They show independence and maturity in the way they handle apparatus correctly and carefully. When they are given the chance to do so, they discuss their investigations in an open-minded and enquiring way.

96. There have been several different co-ordinators over the last few years, which has led

to leadership and management in the subject being very fragmented. There are few formal procedures for evaluating teaching and learning or for such things as updating resources. There is no current action plan and science does not feature in the School Development Plan. However, policy documents and planning are sound, and every class is making use of government guidance to ensure sound coverage of all the programmes of study. A new co-ordinator has now been appointed. Her priorities should be to carry out a thorough subject audit, to ensure that skills are being progressively developed across each age group, and to monitor teaching and learning so that best practice can be spread throughout the school.

ART AND DESIGN

97. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' attainment matches national expectations and standards of achievement are satisfactory. There is no significant variation between the attainment of different groups of pupils in either the infant or junior year groups. This represents good improvement since the previous inspection.

Strengths in the subject

98. The responsibility for art is effectively delegated and management of provision is good. Due to the efforts of the co-ordinator and her colleagues, the issue of underachievement stemming from poor knowledge of art and design skills and techniques has been substantially addressed. A policy document and a comprehensive set of curriculum guidelines set out what should be taught in each key stage. Their use means that teachers provide pupils with experiences that focus well on art, craft and the evaluation of designs and products. The school also takes advantage of opportunities to extend pupils' critical awareness of the purposes and value of art historically, culturally and geographically. A recent Arts Festival week gave pupils a great deal of pleasure and satisfaction and did much to reinforce their enthusiasm and positive attitudes.

99. Overall, evidence suggests that the quality of teaching and learning is at least sound and pupils thoroughly enjoy art. In some year groups, where teachers have a particular interest and aptitude for the subject, teaching and learning is much better than that. In an excellent lesson in Year 4, for example, the inspirational description of lesson objectives, imaginative use of resources and links with history, and skilful review of special techniques resulted in an impressive response from pupils as they sketched pots based on examples from ancient Greek designs. Pupils' behaviour and effort was excellent, for example, in their quiet and careful attention to perspective, pattern, light and shade.

100. Pupils make a good start in learning to appreciate art and in developing creative skills using lots of different media in the mixed Year R/1 class. These aptitudes and skills are reinforced and extended in Year 2. The younger infant classrooms especially are full of colourful images and patterns, beautifully displayed by adults who obviously value children's efforts. There are also striking displays, though not quite so many, in the Year 2 areas. Some, such as the sunflowers and water lilies, made from a combination of paint and tissue paper, are inspired by the work of famous artists, such as Monet. Other, more individual works, stem from pupils' careful representations of plant and animal life, or are outcomes of experimenting on the computer using different colours and thickness of lines. A display called 'The Minibeast Song' is a lovely example of Year 1 pupils' observational paintings of garden insects and plants. In Year 2, a well-captioned display of a range of colours made from mixing prime colours reflects pupils' ability to make different shades such as purples and pinks. They have then used these different shades to make some very striking patterns based on African art.

101. Techniques, such as weaving and printing, are also taught well and used very

effectively to illustrate pupils' growing awareness of patterns and texture in the world around them. In addition to two-dimensional work, infants are introduced to three-dimensional work. For example, there are glove puppets in Year 1, carefully made with paper sculpture and pieces of fabric, and flying balloons in Year 2 made from papier-mâché and card.

102. The impact of pupils' response to the stimulus of African, Aborigine and Indian artists' work can be seen in many communal parts of the school and in junior pupils' classrooms. They reflect growing skill in selecting and using a range of media, including binca and thread to make intricate curved patterns. Camouflage pictures of zebras, leopards, tigers and lions, reflect junior pupils' increasing awareness of scale and movement. Two displays in the Year 5 classrooms of paintings inspired by greeting cards from Africa are the most striking and empathetic work in the whole school. They are all good, but a few are outstanding in the way they reflect some talented pupils' keen awareness of colour, mood and movement. Clearly, pupils in Years 4 and 5 often work to capacity in art lessons.

103. There was little to fault in junior pupils' interest and effort in lessons observed. For example, it was impressive to see how many pupils with special educational needs in academic aspects of learning, such as writing and numeracy, held their own in art lessons. They excelled as highly as their peers in their use of sketching and colour blending techniques. Some lower-achieving Year 6 pupils even voluntarily told the class about examples of the work of Impressionists that appealed to them, and why.

Areas for development

104. Some teachers plan effectively for cross-curricular links with other subjects and literacy and numeracy. Captions are used particularly well in the lower-age group classrooms and pupils enjoy reading them. They also consolidate pupils' vocabulary and spelling. Further up the school opportunities are frequently missed. For example, there is a display of some very good circular patterns produced either on the computer or from using a protractor. Yet pupils have not displayed any writing alongside them to exemplify how they evaluated their work or developed understanding of rotational symmetry and tessellation. Junior pupils have too few opportunities to use ICT to support their learning.

105. The art co-ordinator has presented a report to governors about plans to buy additional resources with her next budget allocation. Her report, however, lacks a review of standards achieved at each key stage. This means governors do not have access to precise information about strengths and weaknesses in the performance of particular groups of pupils. Additionally, parents are not as well-informed as they should be of pupils' progress. Annual reports concentrate more on attitudes than they do on describing advancing skills and knowledge and outlining areas where pupils could improve.

106. Overall, pupils' work in art is valued and contributes very well to their spiritual, social and cultural development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

107. At the time of the last inspection standards of attainment in design and technology were in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 but below at Year 6. Although no lessons were observed during this inspection, enough evidence was gained from the scrutiny of pupils' work and photographic and other evidence to say that standards are now broadly in line with expectations at both infant and junior stages. There is some variation in the quality of work produced by different classes but overall, achievement is satisfactory throughout the school.

Strengths in the subject

108. As no lessons were observed it has not been possible to make a firm judgement on teaching and learning, but enough work was seen to indicate that some sound teaching is taking place. Each class teacher bases their planning on national guidelines. This ensures sound coverage of the programmes of study and a reasonable progression of knowledge and understanding throughout the school. Planning and making skills are soundly developed with examples of good work from most age groups. In the infant classes pupils show skill in shaping and joining materials. Year 1 pupils have made houses from cardboard boxes and Year 2 some brightly decorated wheeled vehicles with axles. Year 1 work on display includes some nicely drawn plans and Year 2 work from earlier in the year shows that when pupils designed a puppet with moving parts they gave appropriate consideration to the technical aspects of the design.

109. By Year 3 pupils are investigating different types of packaging, and planning and making a cereal box. They fold, cut and join card to planned dimensions. There is also some evidence that they are beginning to evaluate, such as when they say how they would improve their healthy sandwich next time. Last term, Year 4 evaluated some commercially produced novelty cards and then made a model of a room with various moving parts. This project contained many of the elements of design and technology, such as realistic planning, thinking ahead about the order of the work and evaluating fitness for purpose. In Year 5, there is photographic evidence of moving toys, together with drawings showing the working parts, and a display of good quality musical instruments designed, made and played by the pupils themselves. Pupils in Year 6 were able to talk about their designs for a rotating fairground ride and how they would carry out necessary strengthening of the joins.

110. The work seen in photographs or on display was generally of a good quality, and the pupils had obviously taken a pride in the finished product. Less able pupils and those with special educational needs are clearly given appropriate support so that they too can produce something to be proud of. In shared work pupils have co-operated well and are quick to praise each other's efforts when recalling what they have done. In this way the subject is making a good contribution to pupils' personal development by promoting collaboration, independence and creativity.

Areas for development

111. There is at present no co-ordinator for this subject, and despite the evidence of some good work going on there is no systematic evaluation of teaching and learning, or assessing of attainment. The progression of skills from one year-group to another is not secure. For example it is difficult to see the progress made by pupils between Year 1 and Year 2, or between Year 5 and Year 6. There is insufficient evidence that pupils in Year 2 independently select appropriate tools, materials and construction techniques. Pupils in Year 6 were unable to say how they generated ideas by collecting information, or give an example of when they had produced step-by-step plans or used a computer program to simulate the movement of

mechanical devices, such as safety barriers. The knowledge and understanding needed for pupils to be able to move on to the higher level skills at the end of the infant and the junior stage are not being systematically taught.

112. The way work is recorded, and the quality of planning and evaluating, is very variable. Marking, too, is inconsistent, with some teachers showing that they have a good understanding of specific, subject-related objectives, others marking only for language or effort. The school needs to designate someone to oversee the whole curriculum so that these inconsistencies can be ironed out. Examples of good work should be celebrated and samples collected so that the good work going on in some classes can provide a benchmark for standards throughout the school.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

113. At the end of the previous inspection, standards of attainment in geography and history met national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. During the present inspection, evidence confirmed that standards in history have been satisfactorily maintained and pupils' achievement is in line with expectations. Standards in geography attained by seven-year-olds have also been maintained and their achievement is sound. By the age of eleven, pupils' attainment in geography is now above national expectations and they achieve well. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

Strengths in these subjects

114. Overall, teaching and learning in these subjects has improved and practice is consistently sound in the infant and junior stages in history. In geography, it is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in the junior stage. Pupils are now offered a broader, more challenging range of activities and experiences as teachers have become less reliant on worksheets. The geography scheme of work is being revised to ensure good coverage of all areas of learning. Good use is made of features within the local area and firm links have been established with other European countries. Resources have been improved, enabling the curriculum to be enriched. Year 6 pupils benefit from their residential trip to the Isle of Wight. The history scheme of work has been reviewed and more opportunities are now provided for pupils to make greater use of ICT to aid their learning. Planning now incorporates more effective links with the development of pupils' literacy skills. In both subjects, pupils are encouraged to consider different life styles, regimes and a wide range of issues that affect the communities they study. They learn to share ideas and resources very well. This approach to lessons has a significant impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and personal development. Pupils of all abilities are encouraged to participate fully. Teachers ensure appropriate support is provided, particularly to those pupils with special educational needs. Adults enable all pupils to feel their contributions are valued and appreciated.

115. Older pupils make good progress in geography. Teachers' knowledge of the subject enables them to extend pupils' vocabulary and broaden their views on issues, such as planning a new road system or building a new supermarket. Pupils use their literacy skills well to present reasoned arguments. They also deploy and develop their mapping skills when investigating the environmental aspects of planning. Pupils demonstrate good listening skills and the ability to retain information. They produced detailed accounts of what they had learned about India when addressed by a speaker from Action Aid. Pupils are encouraged to take an interest in current affairs and produce interesting articles that demonstrate their awareness of events occurring around the world.

116. By the age of seven, pupils have a sound knowledge of how life in Britain has changed over the last hundred years. They compare old toys, household appliances and

forms of transport with those that are familiar to them now. Pupils are able to distinguish between old and very old examples. They learn about life during World War II and use their imagination well to write postcards they think might have been sent home by evacuees.

117. By the age of eleven, pupils are developing their research skills and learning to use a wider range of resources. When studying the Ancient Greeks, they gain knowledge and understanding by examining artefacts, watching videos, looking through reference books and using computer programs. Higher-achieving pupils make good use of literacy when searching for key points and making notes. While studying the Tudor period, pupils learn to appreciate the importance of artefacts. They express horror when they discover the use of various instruments found on the Mary Rose and appreciate the fact that life at sea has much improved since then.

Areas for development

118. The school recognises that links with the National Literacy Strategy need to be incorporated into the geography scheme of work. This review and revision is planned for completion by the end of the year.

119. Currently, there are limited opportunities for pupils to use numeracy within the geography and history programmes of study. There is some evidence of data handling skills being used when children conduct traffic surveys and compare temperatures in Bristol and Sydney.

120. When reviewing the geography curriculum, teachers need to make sure it includes details of the role ICT has to play in broadening pupils' knowledge of the subject and in providing an additional strand to pupils' learning.

121. The school also acknowledges that more careful assessment of pupils' attainment and progress in geography and history would enable teachers to plan more appropriately to meet the needs of all their pupils.

122. Good support for teachers is provided by the subjects' co-ordinators. However, the school does not have a programme for monitoring teaching and learning in either of these subjects. Monitoring is necessary to enable co-ordinators to check that pupils make consistent progress as they move through the school and achieve their best possible standards.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

123. Pupils' standards in ICT have improved since the previous inspection. This is due to the establishment of a computer suite, the introduction of a scheme of work that addresses all strands of the subject, staff training and the introduction of a weekly lesson for all pupils. However, standards at the last inspection were low and, although they are rising, they are still below national expectations overall. Teaching has so far focused on ICT skill development and pupils have not yet had sufficient opportunities to consolidate their understanding by using what they know in other areas of the school curriculum.

124. Pupils have appropriate computer skills for their age. For instance, infants practise using the mouse by drawing pictures of animals. They choose different colours, change brush thickness and produce recognisable, attractive pictures. Junior pupils use the computer network confidently, and many have good computer skills. They log-on to the computer network and use the keyboard and mouse efficiently to run a range of programs. Many work with very little adult support.

125. Some examples of work in word processing and graphics are up to the standards expected. For instance, prose writing on 'The Tiger' in Year 2 and 'Hiderhip' poems linked to work in English in Year 3 are well set out. They use an appropriate range of text effects that add to the quality of the work and have clearly been edited to remove spelling and punctuation errors. Older pupils create attractive posters that include text and 'clipart' pictures to advertise a school disco or Halloween party. A small group of Year 5 and Year 6 pupils have created a 'Pupils' Prospectus' under the guidance of the school's ICT technician. This work is well up to the standard expected. However, all of these are isolated examples of pupils' work, and in general this strand of the subject is under-developed.

126. Year 2 pupils learn to enter information about themselves using a graph drawing program. They draw pictograms of the results, to see, for example, how many pupils have brown hair. Older pupils use data handling programs to draw graphs for 'favourite crisps' surveys, for instance. They are beginning to learn how to search computer information sources efficiently. For example, Year 6 pupils look for information on the World Wide Web to answer questions, such as "What is the name of the baby okapi just born at London Zoo?" and "What is today's temperature in London?"

127. In work on computer control and modelling, pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 program small 'robots' to move around the floor. Pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 write sequences of instructions to control a screen 'turtle' (tracing out the letters H E L P for example). In Year 5 and Year 6 pupils use a computer spreadsheet to budget for a party. In discussion, a group of Year 6 pupils explained well the principles involved. They know for instance how and why the computer changes the amount of money spent if the cost of a can of drink or the number bought are altered.

128. Four ICT lessons were seen during the inspection. In two lessons teaching and learning were satisfactory and in the other two they were good. Taking into account also the rising standards seen across the school, teaching overall is good. Teachers and assistants are growing in confidence as a result of recent training. They demonstrate techniques well and involve pupils effectively in class discussions. In one lesson in Year 5 a pupil demonstrated how to use a graphic modelling program while the teacher asked questions round the class. This gave all pupils good opportunities to show what they already knew, and prepared them well for the work that followed. Lessons are well planned and prepared. Learning objectives are clear and lessons build well on what pupils can already do.

129. Teachers ensure that pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively. In one lesson in Year 2, for example, the teacher taught half of the class in the classroom, while the ICT technician taught the remainder in the computer suite. This was done deliberately so that all pupils could benefit from the closer support that this allowed. The group made good progress in understanding how to sort data using a binary tree and each pupil produced a pictogram of results. They were working at the expected standard. In other lessons, teachers and classroom assistants are mindful of the different ability levels in the class and work well with individual pupils and small groups, correcting errors and checking understanding. All pupils make equally good progress and achieve satisfactorily in relation to their ability.

130. Pupils have good attitudes to ICT. Nearly all behave well in lessons and want to learn. As a result teachers are able to move lessons on briskly, and class management is made easy. Although most pupils concentrate well on their work, in one lesson attention began to slip towards the end. The teacher was not assertive enough in managing the class and the lesson pace slowed down. Many pupils were not sufficiently attentive in the final discussion to evaluate what they had learned. As a result, over the whole lesson pupils made less progress

than they could have done.

131. The new scheme of work meets National Curriculum requirements. However, systems for assessing pupils' progress and monitoring standards are in their infancy and require improvement. The co-ordinator recognises these as priorities and has included them in the ICT development plan. The school has sufficient learning resources to support all areas of the ICT curriculum, English and mathematics. More are desirable to support other areas of the curriculum. The computer suite contributes well to pupils' learning. It is well equipped and is a good size with sufficient working space at each computer. There are sufficient other computer systems around the school, but they are not regularly used to support teaching and learning beyond the weekly ICT lesson. The school now needs to persevere with its action plan to raise standards and ensure efficient and effective use of ICT in all subjects.

MUSIC

132. There is insufficient evidence to judge pupils' overall standards in music at the end of Year 2 or Year 6, to assess the quality of teaching and learning, or to evaluate improvement since the previous inspection. There is, however, some evidence of good practice in planning, teaching and learning.

Strengths in the subject

133. The school makes good provision for pupils to learn to play musical instruments. It successfully employs peripatetic teachers who are highly qualified in music. More than twenty pupils receive tuition on violin, flute or trumpet from visiting teachers. A violin lesson with three Year 4 girls was very good. Because of skilful teaching pupils gained confidence in their performance, produced a good tone and played with secure technique. Standards were above what is expected for pupils of their age. All Year 3 pupils learn to play recorder and are taught by a visiting specialist. The lesson seen was impressive. Expert teaching simultaneously developed pupils' listening, playing technique and understanding of musical notation. The pupils' response was excellent. They worked very hard and joined in very well in a series of progressively harder tasks.

134. The school choir sings well. They rehearsed for a concert at the Colston Hall where they are to join with pupils from other schools, singing songs from around the world. Unison singing is good. It is in tune and pupils sing with a good musical tone. However, pupils are much less confident when singing in two parts, and there is some way to go before they achieve this successfully.

135. The single lesson seen in Year 1 was satisfactory. It was well organised around the theme of adding sounds to accompany a story about 'Meg's Car'. The teacher involved all pupils in playing a range of instruments to create sounds as diverse as quiet 'tinkly' sounds and loud crashes. Questions, such as "How can we make the sound louder or softer?" developed well pupils' awareness of dynamics. Although much of the lesson was good, it was judged satisfactory because the overall teaching pace was rather slow. Too much time was spent on experimenting to make the various sounds, which left insufficient time at the end to practise and improve the performance as the teacher read the story.

136. The scheme of work for music is good. It is based on a commercial publication, and meets National Curriculum requirements. The co-ordinator has worked hard to develop detailed guidance for teachers who are less confident in their musical expertise.

137. Music makes a good contribution to pupils' social, spiritual and cultural development.

This was a weakness at the last inspection. The scheme of work refers explicitly to songs and music from other countries and to opportunities to share feelings about extracts of music. Teachers make good use of the ideas suggested. Calm, quiet instrumental music was used very effectively in an art lesson in Year 4, for example, to help pupils concentrate on their drawings. The school is well equipped for class music teaching, with a good range of instruments from around the world, and a good selection of recorded music of all types. Those who learn to play instruments take part in school concerts, and many pupils participate in school productions. This year, singers are required for a performance of 'Twelfth Night', for which rehearsals are under way. There are additional concerts at Christmas and at other times in the year. Pupils learn to be independent, to take on responsibility and to work constructively in a team. They develop an interest in, and appreciation of, the diversity of musical traditions. Pupils of all ages were particularly impressed with the way a visiting group of Ghanaian musicians played drums to accompany a traditional dance.

Areas for development

138. Discussion with a group of Year 6 pupils shows that the balance of activities is not always satisfactory. For example, they listen to musical extracts from works, such as 'Billy the Kid' by Aaron Copland. Pupils develop a good understanding of musical imagery. The written work on display in their classroom shows a good understanding of how the composer achieves various effects. Pupils then go on to compose their own short pieces to imitate what they have heard. However, they do not have sufficient time to refine the quality of their performance before moving on to the next activity in the module of work. They are also inexperienced in using ICT to compose and experiment with sound effects.

139. The co-ordinator reports to governors about developments in the subject but these lack clear judgements about standards at each key stage. There has been no formal attempt to register pupils with special gifts and talents so governors cannot easily check whether the school enables them to progress well. The school now needs to develop effective procedures for assessing pupils' progress and for monitoring the extent to which all groups of pupils achieve to their best potential.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

140. During the last inspection standards in physical education were found to be in line with expectations at both key stages. Not enough was seen at this inspection to make a firm judgement on attainment, but enough was seen to indicate that standards in some areas could be improved. Pupils in the reception class showed above expected attainment in a gymnastics lesson, and Year 5 pupils showed average skills in a games lesson, but in the dance and gymnastics observed in Years 2, 3 and 6, pupils were achieving standards below national expectations.

Strengths in the subject

141. All pupils receive their full entitlement to the physical education curriculum. Gymnastics, dance, and games are taught in every year group, and swimming, athletics and outdoor activities when appropriate. The subject receives a fair allocation of time on the curriculum. Where there is good teaching, pupils make satisfactory progress and learn well. For example, in a gymnastics lesson with reception and Year 1 pupils, the teachers good planning, organisation and high expectations encouraged these very young pupils to try hard to explore simple skills and move with control and co-ordination. They know how to use apparatus safely and are aware of changes to their body during exercise, such as the heart beating faster. During an indoor games lesson in Year 5, pupils showed good awareness of space and were able to use a racket and ball with good control. They know the correct way to

hold a racket, and how to strike a ball using a forehand or backhand stroke. In a difficult situation, where space was at a minimum because bad weather had forced both classes indoors, they showed great maturity in the way they exercised care and control in their practice of tennis shots.

142. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff are usually very good, and pupils enjoy the activities planned for them. They work together well in pairs or groups, often appreciating each other's efforts, and in this way the subject makes a good contribution to personal development. In the country dance lessons the pupils enjoyed moving in time to the music, and trying to learn the complex patterns of some traditional English and American dances. Many had been inspired by the visit of an African dance troupe during the Arts Festival week that had been recently held in the school.

143. Several sporting clubs use the school facilities, and these are partly subsidised by the school so that all pupils who wish to join can do so. They include football, short tennis and taekwon do, a martial art which has a strong tradition in the school and which encourages discipline and self-control.

Areas for development

144. There are weaknesses in teaching that hinder the progress pupils are able to make. Though lessons are fun, learning objectives are not consistently aimed at improving skills. In the dance lessons observed, the pupils were learning the dances quite well, but the teaching did not focus on improving specific skills that might improve performance. For example, pupils in one lesson were unable to count the requisite number of steps when moving in and out of a circle. In another, although they knew the difference between movements, such as skipping and galloping, they lacked the co-ordination and skill to keep in time or change direction. In one lesson the warm-up activity was inappropriate because the game involved immediate vigorous movement. Pupils are often not as aware as they should be of the effect exercise has on the body, and the important role of warm-up activities in preventing injuries.

145. There is no co-ordinator in post at present, so the school is not organising inter-school or extra-curricular sporting activities. This means that events, such as competitive football or netball matches, swimming galas or athletics meetings are not taking place on a regular basis. As a result an important incentive for pupils to strive for excellence is missing, and although this is partly compensated for by the after-school clubs run by outside bodies it is a situation that should not be allowed to continue.

146. Although the school makes use of national guidelines for physical education, there is no policy or systematic planning to ensure continuity and progression. No one is in a position to identify strengths and weaknesses or gaps in provision because there is no effective monitoring of teaching and learning and no formal system for assessing pupils' attainment. It is likely that games are the strongest area and gymnastics the weakest, but there is no way of confirming this. Physical education does not appear on the School Development Plan and there is no action plan for the subject. If standards are to rise it is important that these issues are addressed. The school is aware of this and is coaching the newly qualified teacher so that she can take on the role of co-ordinator in the near future.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

147. Throughout the school, pupils are making good progress and are achieving well in their knowledge of the Christian religion and other religions. They also learn well about the moral and spiritual beliefs that arise from religions. Pupils think about and discuss these beliefs, such as forgiving others or being kind to each other, as they might apply to their own

experiences and lives. Standards meet the goals in the locally agreed syllabus.
Strengths in the subject

148. Teaching is good for pupils up to the age of seven years and very good for pupils from seven to eleven years old. Teachers have a very good knowledge of the subject and plan and prepare lessons very carefully. They start with a very good reminder of what has been learned previously. Teachers prepare and use a good range of materials and artefacts well, although they often do not need these because they hold pupils' attention through the way they provide information and explore ideas. In one very good lesson, for instance, the teacher read a short story about three trees at the time of Jesus' crucifixion. The story was read so touchingly that the pupils were entranced, and were hanging on to every word. The teacher stressed the message of despair and hope, allowing the pupils to see how the story of Jesus' crucifixion is also one of hope after despair. All of the pupils concentrated throughout the lesson; the teacher had no need to manage or discipline them. They discussed the story and then began their own writing and careful drawings to illustrate it.

149. Teachers involve all of the pupils very well, and successfully motivate them to listen and learn about different religions, such as Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. At each key stage they gradually extend their knowledge of the different customs, clothes, food and buildings of each of these world religions, and they handle the smaller artefacts, such as books, prayer mats, headwear and candles, with interest and respect.

150. A further strength of religious education is the way it is led and managed across the school. The co-ordinator is very well qualified and experienced and has introduced a very good programme of teaching that reflects all the aims of the locally agreed syllabus. Recently, she has introduced a system of assessing how well pupils are progressing, and she has begun to monitor the teaching. The resources are good and are very well managed. There are plans to develop the subject further, including extending the use of computers, mainly for gathering information. The plans also include developing the system of collecting samples of pupils' work into 'portfolios' so that all staff can judge what progress the pupils are making. The school also intends to make more extensive use of visitors and visits to promote pupils' interest and understanding of religious customs and symbols.

151. There has been a good improvement in this subject since the previous inspection report, especially in the quality of teaching that is now very good. This subject continues to make an especially strong contribution to pupils' spiritual development, through raising their awareness of deeper feelings and the beautiful things in life. It also raises pupils' awareness of moral issues, such as equality of opportunity, justice and respect for different lifestyles. These issues are explored through the stories and parables of Jesus and discussing how they might apply to their own experiences.

Areas for development

152. Provision in religious education is one of the school's main strengths and there is little to criticise. The principal area that teachers could improve further is in pace of lessons and in enabling pupils to make good use of reading and writing as well as oral skills. In one lesson with the younger children, for example, the pupils were discussing their knowledge of funerals and their feelings, for instance, when a pet dies. Although they were very interested and talked about their experiences very sensibly, they were quite restless after twenty minutes. The teacher continued with the discussion for too long, and then did a different activity to fill in the lesson time instead of allowing pupils to draw and write in response to the story.