

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **WREN PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Mickleover, Derby

LEA area: Derby City

Unique reference number: 112758

Headteacher: Mrs J Fitzhugh

Reporting inspector: Mr P Gadsby  
5281

Dates of inspection: 29 October - 2 November 2001

Inspection number: 194606

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

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Jackson Avenue  
Mickleover  
Derby

Postcode: DE3 5AR

Telephone number: 01332 512732

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr P Barlow

Date of previous inspection: 24 April 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
5281	Mr P Gadsby	Registered inspector	Art and design	What sort of school is it?
			Religious education	The school's results and pupils' achievements
			Equal opportunities	How well are pupils taught?
			English as an additional language	What should the school do to improve further?
11072	Ms S Elomari	Lay inspector	Special educational needs	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
				How well does the school care for its pupils?
				How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
18346	Mr R Bristow	Team inspector	Science	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			Design and technology	
			Geography	
27710	Mrs S Guy	Team inspector	English	
			History	
			Physical education	
			Foundation Stage	
20707	Mr D Brettell	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Music	How well is the school led and managed

The inspection contractor was:

Staffordshire and Midlands Consortium

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Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Wren Park is a large primary school for boys and girls between five and eleven years old in the City of Derby. It has no nursery class and children who enter its Reception Year have a wide range of pre-school experience. It has 361 pupils on roll with the numbers of boys and girls evenly balanced. At the time of the inspection there were 24 children of reception age, taught in one reception class. The majority of the pupils come from the local neighbourhood, which is a predominantly stable, relatively advantaged community. Movement of pupils to and from the school is infrequent. A growing minority of pupils attend the school from other parts of the city. This provides a broad social mix, with a significant proportion of pupils from ethnic minority families, for some of whom English is an additional language. About a third of these are at an early stage in their learning of English. Currently, six different heritages are represented in the school. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is well below average. One pupil has a statement of special educational need. Children's attainment when they enter the school is close to that found nationally, but there is a wide range of attainment. Pupils in the infants are taught in classes containing one National Curriculum year group. The juniors are taught in six mixed-age classes, three with pupils from Years 3 and 4 and three from Years 5 and 6.

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

This is an effective school. The proportions of pupils reaching and exceeding nationally expected levels in national tests at the age of eleven in English, mathematics and science are consistently above or well above the national average. These high standards show improvement year on year. The performance of eleven year olds in national tests is very high in relation to their attainment at seven. Pupils' attitudes and personal development are very good. They behave very well and relationships within the school are excellent. All pupils are included in all areas of school life. Teaching is good and has a positive impact on the ways in which the pupils make good progress in their learning and achieve high standards. The leadership and management of the school are good. The governing body and headteacher work together very effectively. All areas of school life are closely monitored and evaluated and actions planned to achieve improvement. As a result the school has shown very good improvement since its previous inspection. It gives good value for money.

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

- Achieves high standards in national tests for eleven year olds.
- Provides very effective leadership and management focused on school-improvement through self-evaluation.
- Has excellent relationships, promoting very good behaviour and attitudes.
- Achieves very good moral, social and cultural development of its pupils.
- Provides very good care for its pupils.
- Includes all pupils in all areas of the school.
- Pupils with special educational needs, those for whom English is an additional language and those who are very able, achieve well.
- Has a shared commitment at all levels to raising standards.

### What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology are too low.
- Some weaknesses in the length and organisation of lessons have a limiting effect on the quality of teaching and learning.
- Pupil's independent research and study skills are not consistently developed.
- Information and communication technology is already identified for improvement by the school.

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

### HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the school was inspected in April 1997 it has improved significantly. Under the strong and effective leadership of the headteacher and governing body, working together, a comprehensive programme of self-review has been carried out. The weaknesses identified in the previous report have all been remedied. In particular teaching, much of which was found to be unsatisfactory, particularly for the infants and in the reception class, is now satisfactory for reception and good for infants and juniors. The role of staff with subject co-ordination responsibilities has been much strengthened. They now make an effective contribution to raising the consistency and quality of teaching and learning. All teaching is now supported by comprehensive schemes of work for each subject and curriculum area. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are fully implemented. All of this has impacted on standards, which are now high by the time pupils leave the school and showing a continuing trend of improvement.

### 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
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	A	A	A	A
mathematics	A	A	A	A
science	A	A	A	A

<b>Key</b>	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The pattern of high performance shown by the table has been maintained for several years. Provisional analysis of the 2001 national test results for eleven year olds in English, mathematics and science indicates that the high standards have been at least maintained. Standards in national tests for seven year olds have shown a similar pattern of consistently above-average performance. Standards currently being achieved by eleven year olds in English are high. In mathematics and science they are very high. The governing body set very ambitious targets for the 2000 tests in English and mathematics, which they narrowly failed to



reach. Targets for future performance remain realistically high and challenging. The school is on course to achieve them.

Pupils' learning is good and they achieve well in all years in nearly all areas. This includes those for whom English is an additional language and those with special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented. There could be some improvement in the way pupils develop and use independent research and study skills. Learning of information and communication technology is unsatisfactory and standards are below average. In all other subjects most pupils achieve what is expected for their age. In religious education standards are above average and achievement is good.

By the age of five, when they reach the end of the Foundation Stage of the curriculum, children achieve or exceed the expected levels in all areas of learning.

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

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Pupils display very positive attitudes towards school. They like school. They work hard and enthusiastically and concentrate well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils are very well behaved throughout the school. There are no exclusions.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is very good. They take responsibility for jobs around the school. Relationships in the school are excellent.
Attendance	Attendance is good and pupils arrive at school punctually.

### **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

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

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

The quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory or better in all but one of the 52 lessons observed. Much of the teaching was good and some very good. Most of the very good or excellent teaching was found in Years 3 to 6 classes. The overall quality of teaching is weakened because information and communication technology is not taught well and pupils' learning in the subject is unsatisfactory. Also, pupils are not given enough opportunity to develop self-initiated work, and to develop and apply their research and study skills. The teaching of English is good in both key stages and basic skills of literacy are taught well. Mathematics teaching is good. In many lessons taught to the structure of the National Numeracy Strategy it was very good. Good or better teaching is now leading to good learning by the pupils. The challenge is to improve it even further, by improving the teaching of information and communication technology and independent study skills, so that the high

standards in English, mathematics and science are reflected in all subjects. The quality of teaching in a number of lessons is adversely affected because they are too long. The pace of lessons then drops and time is not used effectively.

Teaching meets the needs of pupils, including those with special educational needs or those with English as an additional language, well. More able pupils are generally taught well, although they are not given enough chance to research their work independently. Overall, pupils make good progress in their learning.

## **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Pupils experience an interesting range of activities in subjects, plus after school clubs, educational visits and visitors to the school. Information and communication technology does not meet statutory requirements. This significantly reduces the effectiveness of all subjects. Lessons are planned to be too long in a number of cases, which affects the quality of teaching and learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers, teaching assistants and support workers and make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There is good provision for these pupils. They are well taught; mostly they learn English quickly and make good progress. The majority achieve at least standards expected for their age.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This is very good for pupils' social, moral and cultural development. The school increasingly uses its diverse social and ethnic mix to enrich its life. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good, but there could be more planned opportunities for it within subjects.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils very well. They are known as individuals and emphasis is placed on their health, welfare and safety. Their personal development is supported effectively and academic development satisfactorily monitored.

The school works well with parents. Its curriculum is strong in regard to the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Provision for information and communication technology does not meet statutory requirements. Standards in the subject are too low. This limits the learning of all pupils in all areas of the curriculum. The school cares for its pupils well and is keen to ensure that they are well supported at individual level.

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

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher has provided determined and effective leadership as the school has shown considerable improvement since its last inspection. Subject co-ordinators make an effective contribution to leadership and management. Management of the curriculum is less good where it leads to lessons which are too long and affect the quality of teaching and learning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is very effective, meets its statutory responsibilities and makes a strong contribution to the development of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	This is a strong feature of the school. All aspects of school life are rigorously monitored and evaluated and action taken to address weaknesses. The school is well aware of its strengths and weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	Good overall. Financial surpluses are targeted on projects. Information and communication technology and some areas of English are under resourced. The principles of best value are applied.

Accommodation, resources and staffing are satisfactory, although in the important areas of information and communication technology, non-fiction books and the library, there are deficiencies. In some large classes older pupils are cramped, which sometimes affects the quality of teaching and learning. Self-evaluation is a particular strength of the overall leadership and management of the school as is its focus on ensuring that all pupils are fully included in the life of the school. There have been no exclusions whilst the current headteacher has been in post. The school is fully conversant with the principles of best value and tries to apply them in all areas.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That their children like school.</li> <li>• That their children make good progress.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• Children are expected to work hard.</li> <li>• The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• Children's behaviour.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homework.</li> <li>• The information received about how children are getting on.</li> <li>• How closely the school works with parents.</li> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>

Inspection findings agree with all that pleases the parents most. The school does provide a suitable range of activities outside of lessons and has very good systems for keeping parents

fully informed about the school and their children's progress. However, the school should address the perceptions of a minority of dissatisfied parents on these issues. There is some lack of clarity in the school's provision of homework.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The inspection took place in the first term of the school year and the evidence at this time gained through observing lessons, analysing pupils' work, hearing them read and talking to them, indicates that they are on track to achieve high standards, particularly in mathematics and science. The school is making good progress towards the challenging attainment targets it has set itself in English and mathematics.
2. Initial assessments of children's attainment when they enter the reception class show that it is generally what would be expected at this age in mathematics, is slightly above the expectation in literacy and slightly below it in their personal, social and emotional development. This is borne out by the findings of the inspection and pupils are on course to achieve the nationally recommended goals in the areas of communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and in their creative development. At this stage in the school year indications are that they will exceed the recommended goals in physical development. Standards and the progress that these young children are making in their learning are improved since the school's previous inspection. However, children still do not initiate their own learning to a sufficient extent to allow progress to be faster and higher standards to be achieved in all of the areas of learning.
3. The results of the national tests taken by seven year old in 2000 show that pupils' reading and writing were well above the national average. In mathematics, pupils' standards were broadly in line with the national average. This pattern of relative standards is the same when the results are compared with those of similar schools. Inspection evidence indicates that although standards are high in all elements of English, they are better in speaking and listening and in reading than they are in writing. Pupils have a good knowledge of basic skills, including phonics. The higher attaining pupils show good understanding of different texts. Seven year olds use writing for a range of different purposes and the higher attainers use capital letters and full stops accurately. Handwriting is consistently formed and legible. Standards in spelling are above average. In mathematics, seven year olds show good understanding of numbers and the number system including knowledge of multiplication facts. They are able to use appropriate mathematical vocabulary to discuss and explain their work. A relative weakness in mathematics at this stage is in pupils' knowledge and understanding of shapes, space and measures. This affects the pattern of overall performance in the subject. In science, statutory assessment by their teachers shows that standards for seven year olds are above those regarded as typical nationally and for those for similar schools. Pupils develop good knowledge and understanding of physical processes, such as light, of materials and their properties, and of life processes, such as animal habitats. They can use skills of scientific enquiry to undertake investigations, for example, of the composition and classification of foods.
4. The overall attainment of eleven year olds in 2000 was very good in English,

mathematics and science when these subjects are taken together. Attainment in each of these subjects individually was well above average. The same pattern exists when the school's results are compared with similar schools, except that the overall results for the combined subjects are very high. The results of the national tests for eleven year olds taken in 2001 show that these high standards have been improved even further.

5. These high standards are reflected in the lessons and work seen during the inspection. In English, the older pupils show above average standards in speaking and listening. They participate confidently in group-discussions, frame questions and speak publicly with assurance. The highest attaining pupils are fluent, accurate and expressive readers. They show very good understanding of a range of texts. They enjoy reading, choose to read and can talk in detail about books they have read. Other pupils have the skills to read unknown words and read simple texts accurately and have the skills to attempt to read. All pupils use a wide range of vocabulary in their writing and many produce lively, thoughtful writing in a range of forms: poetry, play scripts, letters, accounts and persuasive texts. They have good knowledge of grammar and can use this to evaluate and improve their writing. Attainment in spelling and handwriting is above average. Pupils' research and study skills in English are not as good. The planning and resources to improve this area of learning are not sufficiently in place. Information and communication technology is not used fully to support pupils in their learning in English. In mathematics, by Year 6 most pupils have developed good strategies for solving problems, and try out their own methods. They have secure knowledge of number facts and understanding of the number system. They use calculators appropriately. In science, the oldest pupils achieve very good standards in their skills of scientific enquiry. They can test materials for various qualities, observe accurately, predict outcomes and record findings systematically, an improvement since the school's last inspection. They understand the notions of fair testing and of variables.
6. Pupils with special educational needs, those from minority ethnic groups and those for whom English is an additional language achieve well in all subjects. Pupils with English as an additional language get good support and most of them become proficient very quickly. Both groups participate fully in all written and spoken work. Higher attaining pupils are suitably challenged overall. However, particularly in English and mathematics, they are limited in the extent to which they can pursue their own research and develop and utilise study skills because too few opportunities are planned for them. There are no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls with the exception of seven year olds in mathematics. This is largely related to the composition of particular year groups.
7. All pupils achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs reach appropriate standards in all subjects. Pupils from ethnic minority groups, including those for whom English is an additional language, achieve very good standards. There is no significant difference in standards achieved by boys and girls Years 3 to 6.
8. Taken over the last three years, the standards achieved in English, mathematics and science by eleven year olds show improvement year on year. The current trend shows improvement at a rate above the average nationally for the three subjects together.

The trends for science and mathematics are significantly better than the national average. Standards in English are rising at about the same rate as those nationally. The proportion of pupils achieving higher levels, beyond the expected attainment for their age, has risen considerably since the school's previous inspection. A provisional analysis of national test results for 2001 shows that the trend of improvement is strengthening. This is true for boys and girls. Improvement trends in attainment for seven year olds is more erratic, but overall they are at least in line with national improvement averages. A dip in results at Key Stage 1 in 1999 has been remedied. Teachers' formal assessments generally correlate well with pupils' test results, an indication of improvements in assessment policy and practice in the school since its previous inspection.

9. The governing body set very challenging targets for attainment in mathematics and English, for 2000 in terms of the proportion of pupils who would achieve the nationally expected levels in national tests. It narrowly failed to reach them. Its targets for future attainment remain challenging. They are realistically so and the inspection evidence indicates that they are making good progress towards meeting them. The school now uses its data to carry out rigorous analysis of its performance in all areas. This self-evaluation is a major factor in the school's improvement. It has used it as the basis for taking actions to improve teaching and learning in the core and other foundation subjects. Recently, the school set improvement targets for individual pupils. This is particularly used in their 'special books' of assessed and moderated work. This is beginning to increase pupil's own awareness of their strengths and weaknesses and what they have to do to improve, although this focus on improvement is not apparent in all marking.
10. It is only in information and communication technology that the school has failed to improve sufficiently. The judgement made in the school's previous inspection that attainment and progress in the subject were below national expectations remains true. Standards are too low. Pupils make unsatisfactory progress. The school has initiated plans to address the situation through improved resources and better teaching but these have not been fully carried out yet.
11. Standards in religious education are high and exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at each key stage. Standards are enhanced by the school's successful use of its culturally diverse population. This represents an improvement in standards since the previous inspection.
12. Standards in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education are broadly in line with those expected for pupils at the ages of seven and eleven. Pupils have high standards in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, which they use well in other subjects, with the exception that their use of research and study skills is limited.
13. Standards in all subjects, but particularly those outside the core of English, mathematics and science, are affected by some weaknesses in the way the curriculum is timetabled. Over-long lessons, particularly in the afternoon, adversely affect the quality of teaching and learning and the pace of lessons drops as pupils and teachers tire, lose enthusiasm and concentration. This particularly affects the younger pupils in

mixed-age classes. There are occasions in other lessons, particularly in Reception and Years 1 and 2, where teachers allow whole class sessions to be too long. Occasionally, behaviour is affected. Standards are also adversely affected because information and communication technology is not used to support learning. However, the very enthusiastic attitudes of pupils towards their learning and the excellent relationships in the school have a very positive effect on standards.

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

14. Pupils are keen to come to school because they enjoy the lessons and activities provided. They take a pride in the school, appreciate their teachers and are happy at school. Almost all the parents who responded to the questionnaire stated that their child liked school. Pupils generally have positive attitudes to their work and often show enthusiasm for it, working very hard. For example, in a history lesson for Years 3 and 4, when pupils were amazed to see how limited World War II rations were and compared the food they ate today with what their grandparents would have eaten.
15. Pupils settle quickly to work in almost all lessons and usually all concentrate well. They try hard to complete the work they are set. Children in the reception class share these positive attitudes and enjoy the activities provided for them. However, at times when the lessons extend to an hour for younger children or longer for older ones, significant numbers of pupils find it hard to sustain their concentration.
16. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language share in the positive attitudes to work. They show enthusiasm for their work and concentrate hard in lessons. They try hard, especially in those lessons where the work matches their needs well and when they have adult support. The good quality of individual support provided for these pupils means that they are able to participate fully in their lessons and in the life of the school. For example, in a Year 1 literacy lesson, the teacher worked with a small group of pupils with special educational needs who were writing a poem about fireworks. This enabled them all to achieve a poem they were proud of to share with the class.
17. Behaviour in lessons is very good overall. Pupils respond positively to the high expectations teachers have of their behaviour. They are well motivated by the team points and praise they receive routinely for behaving appropriately. During the inspection, no unsatisfactory behaviour was observed in lessons. Behaviour in the reception class was good or very good in all lessons. In Years 1 and 2, behaviour in a third of lessons seen was good and it was very good in a quarter. In Years 3 to 6, behaviour was judged to be good in a third of lessons. In over a third of lessons it was very good or exemplary. The very high quality of pupils' behaviour makes a significant contribution to the progress they make. Teachers do not have to spend time on managing behaviour, so the lessons keep a good pace and pupils are not distracted from their work.
18. Behaviour at breaks and lunchtimes is very good. Movement around the school is quiet and very orderly. Pupils are supervised when whole classes are moving around the building; but at other times they still keep up the high standards they know are expected of them. In the dining hall, pupils are almost always polite and well



mannered. Lunchtime is a pleasant social occasion. Junior pupils are expected to help the infants at lunchtime and in the playground and they take a pride in doing so. In the playground, pupils play harmoniously together. As a result of the school council's deliberations last year, there is a good range of games, such as hopscotch, marked out on the playground. These are popular, especially with the younger pupils, and encourage friendly relationships. Lunchtime supervisors and teachers encourage pupils to play together by joining in, especially in skipping games. Pupils are almost always polite to one another and to adults. Pupils take good care of their own property as well as treating the school's books and other resources with respect. Almost without exception, parents who completed the inspectors' questionnaire or attended their meeting stated that behaviour was good. There have been no exclusions during the tenure of the headteacher.

19. Pupils take responsibility for their own learning well when they are offered the opportunity to do so. For example, pupils work well in small groups during the literacy and numeracy lessons and usually stay on task well when the teacher does not directly supervise them. In a Year 3/4 personal, health and social education lesson, pupils discussed their personal strengths with a partner: they listened very well and showed sensitivity in their responses. However, opportunities to work independently are not consistently well developed throughout the school. In particular, the limited access to computers and to the Internet affects the way pupils are able to undertake individual research tasks. The lack of library facilities also handicaps progress in research and study skills, which are not systematically taught.
20. Pupils are willing to help their teachers by undertaking a wide range of classroom jobs. They take such responsibilities seriously and take pride in having a tidy classroom. The school council enables pupils to have a voice in the school community. The school provides a good range of opportunities for pupils of all ages to take responsibility and pupils respond well to them. Opportunities for pupils to show initiative are less well developed but the school does support individual pupils ideas, for example, for raising money for charity.
21. The school is successful in fostering pupils' personal development. Throughout the school, pupils have a good range of opportunities to discuss their feelings and responses, for example at 'circle time' and in personal, health and social education lessons. They learn to listen with respect to the views of others. Pupils enjoy the opportunities they have to work together in pairs and small groups. They are very willing to help one another. For example, pupils spontaneously help those with English as an additional language and pupils with special educational needs by helping with reading, spelling and other tasks. Pupils share books and equipment sensibly.
22. Relationships throughout the school are excellent and a major strength of its work. Pupils and teachers show mutual respect. Pupils are confident to talk to adults about their work and any concerns they may have. Staff support pupils very well, and consistently use praise and rewards, such as team points, to good effect. Pupils especially like the special stickers given during the Friday assemblies, which means that their name is put into the Golden Book. Pupils believe that their teachers are firm but fair. Pupils understand what is expected of them and comply willingly. They co-

operate very well with each other. They develop a growing understanding of the impact of what they do on others as they move through the school, and this helps them to show respect for other's views and beliefs. Staff, including lunchtime supervisors, work hard to ensure that pupils learn to see the other person's point of view in any disputes. Instances of bullying and racial harassment are infrequent. Pupils understand the importance of reporting bullying to staff and are confident that teachers and other staff take their concerns seriously. Pupils feel safe in school.

23. Attendance is good. It is broadly in line with the national average and the school has maintained this level over a number of years. The level of unauthorised absence is low. Registration procedures comply with statutory requirements. The school analyses attendance data effectively and involves the education welfare service appropriately in the rare cases when absence becomes a cause for concern. Almost all pupils arrive promptly in the mornings and lessons begin on time.

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

24. The children are organised into one reception class, another will be formed in January when new children are admitted, and six classes for Years 1 and 2 each containing one National Curriculum year group, taught by their class teacher. Pupils Years 3 to 6 are taught in six mixed-age classes, three with pupils from Years 3 and 4 and from Years 5 and 6. Classes are taught by their class teachers for all subjects with the exception of mathematics, where teaching groups are selected on the basis of their attainment in mathematics.
25. The quality of teaching is good overall. This represents a very significant improvement since the school's previous inspection, when a third of it was found to be unsatisfactory. A fifth of teaching seen during the inspection was very good or excellent. In only one lesson was the teaching unsatisfactory. This good teaching makes an effective impact on pupils' learning and makes a major contribution to the good standards achieved.
26. Fifty-two lessons were observed during the inspection, six in the Foundation Stage, 17 in Key Stage 1 and 29 in Key Stage 2. The quality of teaching seen ranged from unsatisfactory (one lesson) to excellent (one lesson), with 19 lessons satisfactory, 22 good and nine very good.
27. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and it leads to satisfactory progress for children in the reception class. There is some good teaching in the areas of mathematical and physical development. This represents improvement from the previous inspection. Behaviour is managed well and there are high expectations of the children. The teacher and nursery nurse work well together and show caring attitudes towards the children, setting a good example. Teaching at present, however, does not allow the children to show sufficient independence in their learning tasks; and opportunities for self-initiated activities are not planned or provided often enough.
28. The teaching of five to eleven year olds is good. In English, it ranged from satisfactory to very good in the lessons seen. The school has successfully implemented the

National Literacy Strategy; and uses its objectives to plan effectively for different groups of pupils. The good teaching seen showed good subject knowledge supported by this planning. Most lessons are characterised by making sure that pupils are aware of the learning expected. Questioning is used effectively to target pupils with a range of attainment. Resources are used well and support staff well deployed, particularly to make sure that pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, are fully included in lessons. Less effective teaching does not use time well, the pace of lessons is too slow and therefore the rate of pupils' learning drops. Teaching of mathematics seen ranged from satisfactory to very good. Very good lessons are characterised by an effective use of assessment. Teachers constantly check progress by the use of well focused questioning. They probe and discuss learning with individuals and groups. The pace of lessons, taught through the structure of the National Numeracy Strategy, are often characterised by very high levels of challenge to the pupils' thinking, high expectations of how they will respond and very brisk pace. This sometimes leads to some lower attaining pupils, and younger pupils in mixed-age sets, not being able to keep up when the lesson objectives are not fully appropriate for them. The management of pupils' behaviour is very good and there are good relationships between teachers and pupils. In science, teaching is consistently good, with some very good teaching in Years 3 to 6. The best teaching shows good subject knowledge, which enables teachers to make it clear to pupils what it is they have to learn. There is challenging questioning, a brisk pace, effective use of support staff and consistent checking of pupils' progress, with feedback given which helps learning to improve.

29. Overall, the teaching of literacy, including phonics, is good in Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils speak, listen and use language to good effect and pupils with English as an additional language are taught. They soon learn English. Numeracy is taught well and standards in basic skills are high. The school's overall strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are good.
30. In information and communication technology, although teachers' subject knowledge has improved as a result of in-service training, teaching does not have a satisfactory impact on pupils' attainment, which is below average, or on their progress in learning, which is unsatisfactory. Teaching is hampered by the lack of resources and inadequate organisation of the subject. Nor is enough time allocated to information and communication technology. Pupils within all groups are equally affected by teaching which does not lead to sufficient learning in the subject.
31. Two lessons were seen in religious education, for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Teaching was good and led to the achievement of high standards and good progress. Pupils have good knowledge and understanding of the religious education, in particular their knowledge of the richness and diversity of religions, their distinctive traditions and the similarities and differences between them. They show a thoughtful and sensitive approach to the diversity of faiths within the school.
32. Teaching in all other subjects seen ranged from satisfactory to good. The one unsatisfactory lesson, in music, did not lead to satisfactory learning on the part of the pupils because the subject matter was inappropriate to their attainment and experience.

33. Since the previous inspection, as a result of a clear focus on teaching and learning in the school's improvement plan, teaching has been much strengthened. Planning is now much more effective. It is guided by detailed schemes of work which enhance teachers' subject knowledge and enable them to set appropriate learning objectives for lessons. These are shared clearly with pupils and expectations are made explicit. The best teaching now challenges and stretches pupils at all levels of attainment. The management of pupils' behaviour is very good. Assessment, supported by teachers' understanding of appropriate learning objectives within subjects, has improved. In particular, targeted questioning helps pupils at different levels of attainment to build on what they already know and make good progress in their learning. This includes boys and girls, pupils with special educational needs, those for whom English is an additional language, ethnic minority groups and the gifted and talented.
34. The appropriate use of time varies. In the best lessons, often but not exclusively within the structure of the National Numeracy Strategy, the time available for activities is just right. Too often, though, lessons are too long. As a result of this, teaching becomes more difficult and the pace of learning slows. This is caused both by the structure of the timetable for lessons in the school and by teaching which allows one activity to go on for too long, even when the total lesson time is appropriate. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 and in the reception class can spend too long sitting listening to the teacher and not enough time in activities. These weaknesses in teaching and timetabling have a deleterious effect on the quality of pupils' learning and the standards they achieve.
35. The quality of marking varies. At its best, it is clearly focused on specific objectives and gives clear feedback to pupils on how they can improve. It is sometimes used, particularly in pupils' 'special books' to set targets for individual pupils. But much marking is too brief and does not focus on learning.
36. Teaching does not enable pupils to initiate their own learning enough. This is true for all classes. Self-initiated activities, the learning and use of independent research and study skills and the accompanying opportunities for self-assessment are not planned or offered frequently enough. This does inhibit the pace of learning particularly of the pupils with high attainment in English and mathematics. The application and use of their skills are not stretched far enough.
37. Teaching is now much better placed than it was in the school's previous inspection to ensure consistent progress in pupils' learning through the school. It supports them as they acquire new knowledge and skills and build on their previous learning. Pupils respond well to the challenging teaching to work hard, show interest and enthusiasm. Teaching at present has less impact on pupils' ability to be independent and to fully understand for themselves how well they are doing.
38. Pupils with special educational needs are well taught. Individual education plans are of good quality and are available to all teachers. The quality of the individual education plans has recently improved and the targets are now well focused to the needs of the pupil, being achievable, but challenging. The quality of support provided by the education care support staff is of a very high standard. They know the pupils well and are able to provide well-focused and sensitive support, either in lessons or in small groups withdrawn from the classroom. This enables pupils to learn well and make

good progress. However, teachers do not consistently provide work that is matched to the needs of all pupils in all lessons so that there are times when pupils with special educational needs find the work too hard.

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

39. The curriculum provided by the school for pupils aged five to eleven is now satisfactory. With the exception of information and communication technology, all legal requirements are fully met, including those for religious education and collective worship. The curriculum is now planned in such a way that all pupils receive their entitlement and have access to a suitable range of curriculum experiences. Skills, knowledge and understanding are systematically taught throughout the school. The school is careful to ensure that all pupils have full access to the range of curriculum opportunities offered. This is achieved less successfully when timetabling arrangements impair the way in which the curriculum is taught and learned. This is particularly the case when whole afternoon sessions are devoted to one subject. The aim of full access is also limited when in attainment sets in mathematics significant groups of pupils are taught objectives which are not those for their year group.
40. The introduction of an overall plan for the curriculum has greatly improved the quality of the curriculum since the last inspection, which is now more balanced. However, the length of some lessons is beyond that recommended, especially in the reception class and in Years 1 and 2. Often pupils become restless towards the end of lessons. Consequently, the degree of challenge for teaching increases as the good climate for learning diminishes. This also applies to sessions in Years 3 to 6, when the delivery of some areas of the curriculum areas in two-hour sessions is inappropriate, with some younger pupils becoming visibly tired.
41. There are now clear guidelines for class teachers to identify what pupils are to be taught each week, each term and each year. The school provides religious education for all pupils in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus and parents have been informed about their right to withdraw their children. The school complies with statutory requirements by providing a daily act of collective worship. Arrangements for sex education and the raising of awareness about the use and misuse of drugs are appropriate, linking to the programmes of study for science and personal, social and health education.
42. The national strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy have been implemented well, and planning has created many good opportunities to link the acquired skills to other areas of the curriculum. The school now monitors teachers' lesson planning in a systematic way in order to ensure that pupils have regular opportunities to use and develop skills in these areas, and check that gaps do not occur which prevent pupils from building on their skills, knowledge and understanding in a regular way. For example, numeracy skills are promoted through charts, diagrams and graphs in science; time lines in history help the pupils to develop a greater understanding of how their experiences link together; diagrammatic representations and scale are used as pupils learn about landmarks in geography.
43. Transferring pupils' writing skills to other areas of the curriculum has been given a

high priority. Evidence from the inspection indicates that literacy skills are being applied effectively in other areas of the curriculum, with no obvious differences between boys and girls. Pupils are given the opportunity to write using a wide range of styles. For example, pupils in Year 2 are encouraged to describe the Great Fire of London; and to express their likes and dislike when investigating the local environment. By the age of eleven, pupils write persuasively about improvements in the environment. Drama and role-play support all curriculum areas from pupils in Year 1 retelling accurately the story of the *Little Red Hen* to pupils in Key Stage 2 making history live by acting out, in costume, the burial and subsequent coronation of the new pharaoh.

44. Although resources are managed well to ensure that information books are available to support topic work in each class, the lack of a central library and the inconsistent use of information and communication technology limit the development of research and study skills.
45. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is firmly based on the early learning goals and planned to achieve them. All areas of learning are covered. Within this structure, there is not enough emphasis in the curriculum on allowing children to choose for themselves, engage in role play and initiate their own activities.
46. National guidelines are now used for the teaching of all subjects. Teachers' planning of work for their classes has improved, not only for each year and term, but also for each week. Teachers have clear targets for each learning activity, and where appropriate for each group of pupils. This added thoroughness is often strengthened where teachers use the information gained from their on-going assessment of pupils' learning to amend the planning for the next activity, as was observed in the reception class and a Year 3/4 mathematics set.
47. Teachers' planning takes very good account of pupils with special educational needs whose individual education plans clearly provide for gains in skills, understanding and knowledge in a range of subjects including mathematics. In the best lessons observed, the work provided for this group was well structured and classroom assistants supported pupils effectively. Equally, the provision for pupils at the early stages of learning English as an additional language is good and pupils make good progress.
48. There are strong community links and opportunities are welcomed to extend and enrich the quality of the curriculum. Pupils are taken out to investigate the locality, making well planned visits to the hospital, churches and museums, as well as travelling further afield, for example, when comparing their toys with those of the Victorians. In addition to a very good range of visits, pupils benefit widely from a good range of visitors. Theatre workshop, artist 'in residence', storytellers, all contribute to the quality of the curriculum. Families are invited to support learning experiences whether coming in to support mathematical development, or sharing wartime experiences. Provision for out-of-school activities during the period of the inspection was good. Staff gave generously of their time and experiences provided added to the quality of learning. There was a range of opportunities including football for boys and girls, chess and dance, together with recorder groups for older and younger, choir and art

- club. Opportunities for developing games skills are also provided for pupils in Year 2.
49. The school has developed positive and very constructive relationships with other schools and where appropriate shares resources. There are good links with the local education authority through its support services, as when supporting pupils with special educational needs, or those at an early stage in the acquisition of English. Work experience is offered to students from local secondary schools and colleges. In recent years there have been no links to provide training for teachers of the future, although links with the local university encourage familiarisation visits from students from overseas. There are strong Education Business Partnership links which offers residential experience to pupils in Year 6. Links with local secondary schools ensure that pupils' transition to the next stage of education is smooth.
50. The ways in which homework is used to support the curriculum are not consistent. Sometimes pupils are not clear about exactly what is expected of them for homework.
51. Overall, provision for the four aspects of a pupil's personal development, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Despite the increased rigours of the wider curriculum and the commitment to a demanding action plan, these aspects have been maintained since the last inspection. Moral, social and cultural development remains very good. Spiritual development remains satisfactory.
52. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. During the period of the inspection there were planned opportunities for pupils to reflect. In a Year 5/6 class assembly, pupils were encouraged to reflect on the story of Pandora's box and shared views as to what they would do if a birthday present arrived bearing the message 'Do not open'. Pupils were challenged to identify repeated 'phrases' in music used to introduce collective worship. Year 1 pupils were fascinated and transfixed as the teacher skilfully used a puppet, which they applauded enthusiastically and spontaneously after they had helped him successfully to explore letter sounds. 'Circle time' is used to investigate spiritual awareness. Pupils may be challenged to reflect on the qualities of what makes a good friend, what are their likes and dislikes, or what they are good at or need to improve. Of particular note were the experiences of pupils in a Year 3/4 class, during personal and social education, when others intervened to comment on, and added to the self-esteem of, the few who did not believe that they had any strength. Pupils are increasingly becoming more involved in reflecting on their achievements. They are encouraged to make comments on their annual reports; progress in their home reading records; and their achievements in relation to targets set for improvement. During the summing up session in lessons, teachers often challenge them to reflect on their achievements 'How many believe that they understand ...better?' or 'How many have succeeded in achieving their target?' Pupils consider and reflect on issues, which are significant to human experiences such as love, caring and suffering. However, too often opportunities are missed to develop a greater spiritual awareness and for pupils to reflect on themes to be investigated.
53. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. The commitment to developing consistent strategies to make pupils more responsible for their own behaviour has been effective, including the involvement of individuals in negotiating their own class rules, sanctions and rewards. Behaviour seen within the classroom was consistently very

good, as was the behaviour outside the classroom, particularly in the playground. Isolated incidents of inappropriate behaviour were responded to positively and there were no incidents of bullying or racism. The few examples of pupils becoming restless were as a direct result of some pupils finding it more difficult to concentrate when introductions to lessons were too long, or more commonly when lessons were too long. The consistent approach to a high expectation of behaviour results in pupils being constantly reminded of what is acceptable. Pupils are reminded regularly of the need to show respect, be well mannered, helpful, caring and polite by all members of the school community.

54. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Relationships are excellent, and a strength of the school. They contribute significantly to the very good behaviour observed. Pupils work well together and value the contributions and feelings of others. Many examples were observed of pupils sensitively helping each other to succeed, with no better example than the Year 3/4 circle time, when the many contributed to the self-esteem of the few. All pupils benefit socially from being valued and fully included in all activities, regardless of age, gender or ability. Older pupils care for younger, particularly at lunchtime whether in the dining room or in the playground. Pupils are given responsibility as when carrying out duties in the classroom or at lunchtime, whether assisting the dinner supervisors or children in the soft play area. Pupils are often challenged to say how they could improve their environment such as by tidying litter and improving road safety. Residential experience for Years 5 and 6 has contributed to pupils' social skills.
55. Pupils have a very good understanding of how to relate to others in society and how to become good citizens. They have experienced visits by the fire, police and health services and have links with the elderly in the community and the Women's Institute provide story sacks at Christmas. Pupils are most generous when providing food parcels, collecting for the local hospice or supporting the 'Poppy Appeal'. The school council has been given the responsibility to make real decisions and have contributed to improvement in the school environment by redesigning markings for the playground. Older representatives were involved in costing and ordering resources such as skipping ropes to improve the facilities at dinnertime. Although all pupils are challenged to work independently as individuals or groups, there are insufficient consistent opportunities for pupils to make decisions and choose for themselves topics which they wish to research whether using a reference library or information and communication technology.
56. Provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. There is an appropriate balance between an awareness of their own culture and a greater knowledge and understanding of the experiences, beliefs and cultures of others. Visits, visitors and the range of activities linked to citizenship have provided pupils with a rich understanding of their own and other cultures. Pupils have celebrated the Chinese New Year and the Hindu and Sikh Festival of Light – Diwali. The sharing of music, dance, food and clothes has enabled pupils, parents and teachers to gain a deeper understanding of other cultures represented within the school. By contributing to, and sharing, experiences with other schools and groups, pupils have shared music and art workshops from throughout the world. They respect the richness of the faiths and cultures represented within the school community. Displays that include artefacts from



other faiths play an important part in raising an awareness and insight into the customs and values of others.

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

57. The arrangements for ensuring the welfare of pupils are very good. The excellent quality of relationships throughout the school helps to ensure that adults in school know the pupils very well. This enables the care pupils receive to be of a high quality and tailored well to the needs of the individual. Procedures for Child Protection are in place and take full account of the locally agreed procedures. Appropriate training has taken place and there is a good level of awareness amongst staff. Good attention is paid to health, safety and hygiene in lessons such as physical education, design and technology, and science. A formal health and safety audit is carried out regularly and the school has good systems in place to ensure that any issues are picked up quickly. Procedures for first aid are good. Parents are informed routinely of any illness or injury suffered by their child at school.
58. Throughout the school there is good support for pupils with special educational needs. Their needs are identified at an early stage through appropriate, well-established assessment procedures. The special educational needs co-ordinator has recently introduced a new system for writing individual education plans for these pupils. This has already led to improvements, so that all individual education plans are specific and well focused on the needs of the pupil. They are used effectively by teachers and support staff, enabling these pupils to make good progress. Targets are reviewed regularly. The school ensures that the conditions of the statement of special educational need are fully met. Support staff are deployed effectively and provide sensitive help in the classroom. Pupils are also withdrawn from lessons for small group work, such as additional support for literacy, and individual support. This is well matched to the needs of the pupils and makes a positive contribution to their learning. The school works effectively with a range of outside agencies, such as the educational psychology service and special needs support service, to ensure that pupils with special educational needs receive appropriate support. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are well supported.
59. The school monitors attendance very effectively on a day-to-day basis. Good procedures are in place to follow up the few unreported absences and parents and carers are made aware of the school's expectations for regular, prompt attendance. Almost all comply. The education welfare service is involved appropriately in isolated cases where attendance is a cause for concern. Almost all pupils attend well and the school rewards those achieving 100 per cent attendance. Lateness is monitored closely and parents involved at an early stage so that a pattern of late arrival does not develop.
60. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good, based on praise and a positive approach. All staff have very high expectations of behaviour and pupils almost always rise to these. Pupils know what is expected of them and understand the code of conduct. Lunchtime supervisors are well integrated into the school behaviour systems and help to develop pupil's ability to negotiate compromises, for example, over sharing equipment and turn taking. The positive discipline system is very effective in motivating pupils and is used consistently well throughout the school.

Pupils perceive staff to be firm but fair. Teachers use praise very well to motivate and encourage pupils. The excellent relationships and the mutual respect shown by teachers, staff and pupils help ensure that behaviour is very good and that the school is a harmonious community.

61. The procedures to deal with bullying and other forms of harassment are good. This issue is addressed in assemblies and circle time as well as in personal, health and social education lessons. Pupils are taught to respect the feelings of others and to have a good awareness of the effects of their actions on others. Teachers provide very good role models. This results in a low incidence of bullying and other forms of oppressive behaviour. Pupils feel safe in school. From the reception class up to Year 6, pupils are confident that there is always an adult to turn to in times of need. The school records and reports all incidents of racial harassment appropriately to the local education authority.
62. Pupils have opportunities to celebrate their own and others' good work in lessons and through the system of team points. Pupils' personal development is fostered very well through the programme of personal, health and social education lessons, and circle time. In one personal, health and social education lesson, the teacher worked hard and very successfully to build pupil's self knowledge and self esteem as well as working on listening skills and confident speaking. Teachers know their pupils well and use this knowledge effectively in their work, both to motivate pupils and to deal sensitively with any problems that arise.
63. Assessment was found to be a weakness in the school's previous inspection. It is now guided by a clear policy, which identifies the purposes of and procedures for assessment throughout the school. The school has made significant improvement in the assessment of how well its pupils are doing academically. It has an effective process in place.
64. The school follows statutory requirements to use an accredited baseline assessment scheme when children enter the reception class. The information provided by the scheme is used, along with assessments made by the teacher and nursery nurse, to help them in planning appropriately for their teaching.
65. The school's assessment arrangements fully conform to the statutory requirements for the assessment of pupils in national tests and tasks at the ages of seven and eleven. They follow national guidelines. The school then uses a series of nationally recommended tests year by year so that pupils' progress in performance is tracked and recorded. The information gained from all of these assessments is used in overall planning of the curriculum but also for targeting specific groups of pupils for further support, through national initiatives such as the additional literacy strategy, booster classes and the early literacy strategy. Particular pupils and groups of pupils are also targeted for extra help from school and local agency support staff. The assessment and recording elements of the National Numeracy Strategy are also used and are effective in helping teachers to plan work for different attainment groups in lessons. Assessment of pupils with special educational needs is carried out effectively and in line with the nationally set out Code of Practice.

66. Teaching in all subjects is now guided by clear schemes of work. This enables teachers' assessment to be far more effective. Teachers are now clearer about learning targets and the kind of information they will need to assess pupils' achievement of them. This is evident in their short term planning. All subject co-ordinators also maintain useful portfolios of pupils' work samples. They exemplify the standard of work required to meet particular levels in the National Curriculum. They give good support to teachers' accurate assessment of pupils' attainment and progress, which is fed back into planning. Assessment now makes a satisfactory contribution to teaching, learning and the standards pupils achieve. It leads to greater consistency between teachers in their assessment judgements. This is evident when teachers use the system of 'special books', where pupils regularly record their work for the purposes of assessment, monitoring progress and setting targets for improvement. Targets for improvement have recently begun to be set more systematically. This is helping pupils to understand their strengths and weaknesses and what they have to do to improve. However, this work is at an early stage and will need to be reviewed and consolidated if it is to lead to pupils taking more control of their learning and being secure in their self-assessment.
67. The quality of the marking of pupils' work is variable. In the best practice, teachers offer encouragement and suggestions as to how work might be improved. Often however, there is little recognition of what pupils have produced. However, plenary sessions at the end of most lessons observed do enable teachers to carry out assessment against the objectives of the lesson and help pupils to pinpoint the essential learning that has taken place.

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

68. The replies to the pre-inspection questionnaires, written comments and the comments of those who attended the parents' meeting with inspectors indicate that the majority of parents and carers are extremely supportive of the school. Just under half of the parents returned the questionnaire and the parents' meeting was well supported. Virtually all state that their children like school and are happy there. Parents particularly appreciate that the school achieves high standards of behaviour and expects their children to work hard and achieve their best. They believe that their children make good progress due to good teaching. Parents are also confident that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. The large majority would feel comfortable to approach the school with questions or a problem. Inspection evidence fully supports the parent's positive views of the school. However, approximately a third of parents who responded expressed concern that they were not kept well informed about their child's progress. Inspection evidence does not bear this out. Annual reports are of good quality and parents have three opportunities each year to consult formally with teachers as well as being able to talk to teachers informally at any time during the school year. A similar number did not agree that the school works closely with parents. Inspection evidence indicates that the school works hard to involve all its parents. However, a number find it difficult to attend events that are held during working hours. Dissatisfaction was also expressed about the range of activities outside lessons. Inspection evidence shows that there is a good range of extracurricular activities. The school also enriches the curriculum in other ways, for example, by bringing in visitors and becoming involved in arts projects. Pupils are offered many opportunities to enhance their learning through visits to places of interest and Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to go on a residential trip.
69. The school has established a number of good links with parents, with the basis of the home-school partnership set out clearly in the home-school agreement. Parents receive good quality information on a regular basis. The prospectus is a well-produced document that contains the full range of required information. The annual report of governors to parents provides a useful overview of the school year. Parents are well informed about school life and events through the regular newsletters. These are of high quality and celebrate pupils' achievements as well as reinforcing the school's expectations about issues such as attendance and punctuality. In order to gain parents' views of the school, the school sent out a questionnaire last July to all parents with children in the reception class and in Year 6. As a result of this, some changes have been introduced, for example the informal opportunity for parents to talk about how their child is settling into school is now held earlier in the autumn term.
70. Good arrangements are in place to keep parents informed about their children's progress. Parents have three formal opportunities each year to discuss their child's progress with his or her teachers. Levels of attendance at parents' consultation meetings are high. A positive feature is that parents have the opportunity in the spring term to look at all their child's work before discussing their progress with the teacher. However, a number of parents expressed the opinion that they were discouraged from attending the summer term consultation meeting unless they had concerns about their child's report. The written evidence does not support this view. At other times, parents are welcome to discuss their child either at the beginning or end of the school

day or by appointment with the teacher concerned. Parents are also welcome to make an appointment to talk with the headteacher if they have any suggestions or concerns. The annual reports use a clear format. The quality of reports is good; teachers work hard to ensure that reports are free of jargon and give parents a very clear picture of attainment in all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Reports for children under five provide a clear picture of their strengths and areas for development in all the areas of learning. When pupils start to study the National Curriculum, the comments about the core subjects of English, mathematics and science give a clear picture of what the pupil has achieved. In most cases the pupil's strengths and weaknesses in each subject are identified. However, targets are not set within subjects and the suggestions as to how school and home could work together, although useful, are not sufficiently clearly developed to enable parents to provide well-focused help. Reports show that teachers have a very good knowledge of pupils as individuals. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are well informed about their child's progress and appropriately involved at all stages and in the review process.

71. The school has a well-established induction programme that allows parents and children to become familiar with the school before children start their education. Pupils start in Reception by attending part time. They settle very quickly into school life and become confident members of the community.
72. The school benefits from an active parents' association that raises significant amounts of money to support the school in its work. For example, the association has raised funds for the proposed computer suite. The newsletters provide a list of curriculum areas to be studied each term, however, a significant number of parents would appreciate more detailed information including an indication of ways in which they can support their child. Meetings have been held to inform parents about aspects of the curriculum such as the school's strategies for literacy and numeracy and more are planned. The meetings were very well supported by parents, some of whom were disappointed that none took place last year, due to the high number of staff new to the school. Support for school events such as concerts and performances is very good. A small number of parents help in school on a regular basis, for example, helping with reading and with extracurricular activities such as football. Homework, such as reading and weekly spellings, is regularly set but some parents would prefer more detailed information about how to help their child at home, so that they use the same strategies and do not confuse their child. All pupils have a reading record that goes home regularly but not all parents or teachers use it to comment on the child's reading. The school might wish to consider, as a minor issue, the provision of a homework diary designed to be used for communication between parents and teacher. A significant number of parents support their child with their work, for example, by taking them to the library and to places of interest associated with topic work pupils or by loaning artefacts to the school.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

73. Overall, the leadership and management of the school are good. Since the last inspection, under the very good and dedicated leadership of the headteacher, the school has moved forward significantly. The headteacher, governors and staff have a shared vision for the future development of the school. There is a strong commitment to the further raising of standards, which are already high and have been rising since the last inspection.
74. Under the strong and very good leadership of the headteacher, well supported by other staff and the governing body, the school has responded very positively to the issues raised in the last inspection. The improvements made, which have been considerable, have come about as a result of teamwork of the teaching and non-teaching staff and partnership with the governing body. The governors' action plan to address the outcomes of the last inspection has been followed rigorously, with the result that almost all issues have been addressed; those that have not been completed are the subject of priorities within the school's present improvement plan.
75. The school's improvement plan (SIP) provides a useful working document and an agenda to help the school move forward and improve standards. It successfully identifies priorities for action for the forthcoming school year, but as yet does not suggest, even in outline, any proposals for action in the longer term. The school would do well to consider taking an expanded view in its vision of future development, outlining priorities beyond the current year. The SIP does, however, express the vision that has been derived through wide consultation and debate with the teaching staff and governors. It is clearly focused on improvement through self-evaluation. It sets an agenda to raise standards and, crucially, puts in place systems for monitoring and evaluating progress towards achieving its success criteria. The work of the governing body through its SIP has been a major factor in the improvement the school has made since its previous inspection. The school is thus well aware of its strengths and weaknesses. For example, it has in place clear plans to address the weaknesses in information and communication technology.
76. Curriculum planning and delivery have become increasingly effective as a result of the development of the role of subject co-ordinators. They have carried out their management functions to good effect in ensuring that there is coherence in the curriculum plan for their subject across the whole school. They have ensured, as far as possible, that colleagues have received appropriate professional development and support. Overall, subject co-ordinators have successfully ensured that teachers have the necessary subject knowledge and expertise to deliver the curriculum. The SIP identifies where further professional development or training is required, for instance in music and information and communication technology. The headteacher, deputy headteacher, senior teacher and co-ordinators rigorously monitor teachers' quality, regularly reviewed policies and schemes of work are now in place for all subject planning of work for their classes, giving written and oral feedback to teachers. They observe lessons based on the priorities set out in the SIP and feed back to teachers on strengths and areas for improvement. The recently established governors' curriculum sub-committee receives reports on the monitoring outcomes, which helps it to offer strategic direction for future curriculum development.

77. Overall, the work of the governing body is very good and it fully complies with its statutory requirements. Governors bring to their work a range of skill and expertise that is making a valuable contribution to their strategic role. They are hard working, committed, well informed and active in their dedicated support for the school. They provide a beneficial combination of support and critical friendship in their work. They share with the headteacher and staff an enthusiastic adherence to the principle of raising standards. Their loyalty to the school has been well expressed by the fact that there have been few changes to the membership of the governing body since the last inspection. Collectively they have demonstrated a strong determination to address the issues with which they were presented. They know their school well and they are fully aware of both its strengths and weaknesses.
78. The governing body have effectively delegated much of their work to sub-committees that deal with matters of personnel, finance, premises and curriculum. In addition to the appointment of link governors for special educational needs, literacy, numeracy, child protection and performance management, the governing body has now enhanced its effectiveness by providing link governors for all areas of the curriculum. These strategies are providing powerful vehicles for the exchange of information between staff and governors, the maintenance of high morale and the creation of a school-wide commitment to raising quality and standards.
79. Governors' involvement in the school has been further advanced by the presence of governors in school, observing teaching and learning in classrooms in accordance with the agreed code of practice for governors' visits. This is creating a most advantageous understanding of the work of teachers and children and is instrumental in helping governors to make appropriate and well informed decisions.
80. Governors have ensured that they are sufficiently well prepared and trained to discharge their statutory functions effectively. The link governor for training organises appropriate training through the local education authority packages. All governors have taken advantage of these events. The induction of new governors is fittingly carried out and includes information gathering visits to the school, accompanied by the chair of governors.
81. The performance management of teachers and the headteacher has been fully and effectively implemented. The first round of teachers' performance management has been successfully completed and all teachers, with the exception of the one newly appointed this term, have been set rigorous targets which are associated with pupils' performance and their own professional development. The headteacher took on the responsibility as team leader for the whole staff, though in the next round of the process, the responsibility will be appropriately delegated to include the deputy headteacher and the senior teacher. The performance management of the headteacher has also been successfully completed, with governors setting rigorous targets to help the headteacher to take the school forward.
82. There are good procedures in place for applying the principles of best value. Governors have a clear understanding of the process and all spending decisions are carefully considered against best value criteria. They are clearly aware that they need

to evaluate the impact of their decisions on the raising of standards. Governors have shown this through prudent spending decisions, based upon agreed priorities, for example the identification of an appropriate carry over of funding from last year's base budget to support the development of the planned computer suite.

83. Systems for the administration of the school's finances are most effective. The school secretary has a high level of skill in managing the day-to-day processes and she makes very effective use of appropriate technology to support the work. The school has recently undergone an audit, which clearly indicates that the school is managing its finances properly and the few recommendations in the report have been fully implemented. Designated grants in addition to the base budget have been spent suitably. Funds from the National Grid for Learning have been appropriately carried forward, to be used to support staff development in information and communication technology, in readiness for the completion of the planned computer suite.
84. Teaching staff have a suitable range of qualifications and experience that are mostly well matched to the needs of the curriculum. There is a need for further training to ensure that all teachers have sufficient subject knowledge to deliver information and communication technology and music more effectively. Staff work hard and they have formed themselves into a united and productive team. They support each other well and reflect the shared vision of the headteacher and governors. They give generously of their time and provide a range of extracurricular activities at lunchtimes and after school. They enjoy good classroom support from curriculum co-ordinators and have access to professional development opportunities provided by the local education authority. There is an appropriate induction policy for newly qualified teachers and those teachers new to the school.
85. The school is accommodated in a well-maintained building that has been supplemented by additional mobile classrooms for reception classes and a recently built classroom block set apart from the main building. The classrooms are mostly adequate as teaching areas, except for those that accommodate Years 5 and 6, where large size classes create a cramped environment for learning. The centrally placed hall is used effectively for assemblies, physical education and some musical and concert activities. Classrooms are bright and stimulating, with pupils' work carefully displayed. Facilities for a school library are inadequate. There is an insufficient range of good quality non-fiction books to support the subjects of the curriculum. There is no planned system of access for pupils to what does exist. Library and research skills are not taught systematically enough. This prevents pupils from fully following up their class based studies in a wider context. It inhibits the possibilities for their independent learning.
86. Resources for learning are adequate, and in some cases good or very good. There are good resources for maths, science, music and religious education, for instance, but despite the spending on computers that has taken place since the last inspection, information and communication technology remains seriously under-resourced. There are only 15 computers and a small number of antiquated Acorn computers that are still used in Years 1 and 2. The current SIP, when fully implemented, will address this issue.
87. The outdoor environment is very attractive with pleasant grounds and good, grassed



areas for play and games lessons. The playground, however, is too small for whole-school use, resulting in there having to be separate play times for the older and younger pupils. There is a particularly useful and attractive soft play area adjacent to the reception classrooms. This is well used by the younger children; some Year 6 pupils were observed helping the reception children with their play, illustrating the good relationships and caring environment that exists in the school.

88. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is effectively managed by the special educational needs co-ordinator, who is well supported by the governor with responsibility for special educational needs. Records are comprehensive. The conditions of statements of special educational need are met. Individual education plans are of good quality and readily available to teachers and support staff. The school maintains good working relationships with a wide range of external support agencies.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

89. The headteacher, staff and governors, with support from the local education authority should:

- (1) Improve standards in information and communication technology throughout the school. To do this they should:
  - provide the resources of hardware and a suitable range of software that will enable the requirements of the National Curriculum to be met;
  - further improve teachers' subject knowledge in information and communication technology;
  - ensure that pupils are taught a comprehensive programme of planned work throughout the school.

*(see paragraphs 10, 13, 19, 30, 96, 112, 142, 152, 154, 158, 166, 171-176, 193)*
- (2) Ensure that the organisation of allocated curriculum time has a positive impact on teaching and learning in lessons. To do this they should ensure that:
  - the length of planned lessons in each class is appropriate for the age and attainment level of pupils;
  - lessons for mixed-age classes in Years 3 to 6 include learning objectives appropriate to both year groups;
  - the pace of lessons is kept consistently high and that all teaching time is used effectively.

*(see paragraphs 13, 40, 93, 94, 95, 121, 140, 141, 148, 186)*
- (3) Raise the achievement of pupils in their independent use of study and research skills. To do this they should:
  - plan more opportunities for the teaching and use of study skills in all subjects and all year groups;
  - improve information and communication technology provision and raise attainment in information and communication technology to enable pupils to use its research capability;
  - improve provision of books, in particular provide a wider range of non-fiction texts to support teaching and learning in all subjects;
  - organise a library research area and ensure that pupils are systematically taught the skills required to use it in a way that supports their normal classroom work;
  - further develop pupils' ability to initiate, plan and evaluate their own learning through the setting and sharing of learning targets.

*(see paragraphs 19, 27, 34, 44, 66, 92, 106, 110, 158, 166)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	52
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	29

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	9	22	19	1	0	0
Percentage	2	17	42	37	2	0	0

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	365
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	31

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

<b>Special educational needs</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	35

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	16

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	22
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

## Attendance

### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1
National comparative data	5.2

### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	22	27	49

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	18	20
	Girls	26	26	27
	Total	44	44	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (94)	90 (94)	96 (95)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	20	20
	Girls	26	27	27
	Total	45	47	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (94)	96 (97)	96 (97)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2000	19	28	47

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	18	17
	Girls	26	28	28
	Total	40	46	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (90)	98 (86)	96 (92)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	18	19
	Girls	26	28	28
	Total	41	46	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	87 (90)	98 (86)	100 (96)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	4
Black – African heritage	3
Black – other	6
Indian	24
Pakistani	4
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	0
White	317
Any other minority ethnic group	6

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

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

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

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28
Average class size	30

**Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	108

***Financial information***

Financial year	2000-1
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	£
Total income	569939
Total expenditure	592880
Expenditure per pupil	1647
Balance brought forward from previous year	45046
Balance carried forward to next year	22105

***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
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.*

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	365
Number of questionnaires returned	149

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55	42	3	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	44	49	7	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	44	52	1	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	48	15	3	3
The teaching is good.	42	50	3	2	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	25	41	24	7	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	54	36	7	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	44	3	1	3
The school works closely with parents.	26	43	22	6	3
The school is well led and managed.	44	40	7	5	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	43	50	5	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	41	17	7	10

### **Other issues raised by parents**

Some parents were concerned about mixed-age classes in Years 3 to 6.



## **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**

90. During the inspection six lessons were observed in the reception class. Discussions were held with the teacher and nursery nurse as well as the co-ordinator for early years and Key Stage 1. Children were heard read and their work analysed. Discussions were held with the children and records of their assessments and entry profile were analysed.
91. Children are admitted to the reception class in September and January of the year in which they are five. Children enter school with a variety of pre-school experiences. When children start school their attainment is generally in line with what would typically be expected for children of this age in mathematics, slightly above in literacy and slightly below in personal, social and emotional development. Taking into account the early stage in the year at the time of inspection, children in Reception are making satisfactory progress overall and good progress in physical development. They are on course to attain the nationally recommended goals in the areas of communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. They are on course to exceed the recommended goals in physical development.
92. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and it promotes satisfactory progress in the reception class. There is some good teaching in the areas of mathematical and physical development. This represents good improvement from the previous inspection. Planning is good and clearly identifies the learning objectives for the lesson. These are often shared with the children. There are high expectations of behaviour and the nursery nurse provides good quality support which is used well to support the children's learning. Support for children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language is satisfactory throughout the six areas of learning. There are still, however, too few opportunities overall for children to engage in activities which they have planned or initiated themselves. When they have finished their work they are not always clear about what opportunities are available for them and frequently ask the teacher what to do.

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

93. The school places a strong emphasis placed on children's personal, social and emotional development; and the children are on course to attain the expected goals at the end of Reception. Relationships in the class are good and there is a calm atmosphere, which results in high standards of behaviour and attitudes. Children are encouraged to develop independence, for example, in getting dressed and undressed for the physical education lesson. Children are able to share and are beginning to take turns. For example, whilst playing on the fire engine, children were taking turns in wearing the fire-fighter uniforms. Adults set good examples for the children by treating them with care and respect, valuing their individuality and expecting them to be responsible. This leads to a trusting relationship and helps the children to understand one another's points of view. Children are allowed to make some choices

about their activities. However this is limited, and children depend too much on teacher direction. Children settle into the class quickly and come to school with confidence. When engaged in group discussions, some children are able to take turns, putting up their hand if they have a point to make. The majority of the children are able to concentrate for appropriate periods of time. However, children lose focus and concentration when the activities last too long or are too hard or too easy for them.

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

94. The majority of children are on course to attain the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception class. Some children are on-line to exceed the goals. The teaching of communication, language and literacy is satisfactory. The teacher and the nursery nurse extend children's spoken language by taking every opportunity to ask them questions and encouraging them to expand their answers by giving reasons. Children are developing self-confidence to speak to each other and to initiate conversations. For example, when children were playing on a fire engine they had built they talked to each other about the equipment. Children are attentive and listen carefully to instructions. They listen with enjoyment to stories and have begun to join in with repetitive phrases, for example, when the teacher read *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*. Through good use of resources, the teacher helps children learn their letter sounds and names. For instance a puppet was used to help the children learn the letter 'g'. Children take reading books home and parents are encouraged to make comments in the reading diaries. The highest attaining children are able to read simple texts and sound out words to help them. Other children enjoy sharing and talking about books. They make informed guesses about the text, using clues from the pictures. Although it is early in the year, children are already developing their writing skills. The highest attaining children are able to form letters and are beginning to write words independently. Progress in writing, however, is limited by the lack of opportunities for children to write independently, rather than copying or writing over the teacher's writing. There is a good range of small equipment for writing in the classroom, however, children were not given sufficient opportunity or encouragement to make use of these resources.

### **Mathematical development**

95. Children are on course to attain the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception class. The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory and sometimes good. The teacher provides many activities for children to count and learn about numbers. She makes learning fun, for example, by providing 'washing line' numbers and by the use of number songs and rhymes. The teacher provides many activities for children to count and learn, such as when taking the register. The highest attaining children recognise numbers up to 20 and the majority of children are able to match ten objects to the numeral. Where the teaching is good there are clear learning objectives that are shared with the children, good behaviour management and high expectations. This ensures that children make good progress in their learning. However, where the pace of the session is slow and there is a lack of match of work to individuals' needs some children lose concentration and the learning is limited. Children enjoy their mathematical work and their behaviour is good.

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

96. Children make satisfactory progress and are on course to attain the early learning goals by the end of Reception. The teaching is satisfactory; however, there are too few opportunities for children to learn through play, talk and through participation in practical activities. Teaching provides opportunities for children to observe carefully, for example, when looking at the autumn interest table or when looking for fire equipment on their walk around school. One child spotted 'fire exit' signs on the doors and drew the teacher's attention to this. Children create well constructed models using construction kits, such as cars and go-karts from 'sticklebricks'. Children were able to talk about the photographs displayed in the baby clinic, and about how they had grown since they were babies. They develop a good idea of maps; for example, during their walk around school the teacher used a large map of the school and children were able to identify their position. There is little evidence of use of information and communication technology, for example, the two computers in the classroom were not used during the lesson observations.

## **Physical development**

97. The teaching of physical development is good and children are on track to exceed the early learning goals. There are, at present, no opportunities for children to play outside with wheeled toys. Children use the soft play area where they are encouraged to climb on small apparatus, such as the fire engine made from large blocks. Children also have regular physical education lessons in the hall and on the playground. These are well planned and enable children to make good progress. Children are able to move with confidence and co-ordination. They are able to control their bodies and move with imagination, for example, when making firework movements and moving to a piece of classical music. They show awareness of space and of others. Children have a satisfactory level of skill in using small equipment, such as scissors. For example, they were able to cut tape and use it to make a patterned printing block and use different size paintbrushes to create firework pictures. Planning for the use of a variety of small equipment in all areas of learning enables children to have ample opportunities to practise and improve their skills in a safe way.

## **Creative development**

98. Children are on course to meet the early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year. The children enjoy imaginative play, such as the home corner, the baby clinic and the fire engine, where they assume different roles. These areas contribute to the development of speaking and listening skills. The children develop their skills using paint, crayon, felt tips, pastels and collage materials, where they have made picture frames. Children concentrate well on their tasks, such as making the printing blocks using tape and cardboard. Children sing in tune and know songs by heart. They listen to music and are able to respond in movement, for example in a dance session using a piece of classical music.

## **ENGLISH**

99. The inspection evidence includes the observation of twelve lessons, discussions with a

large sample of pupils about their reading and study skills, as well as hearing them read, analysis of pupils' work from all classes, discussions with teachers and in particular the subject co-ordinator. Library areas, books and resources, and teachers' planning were also analysed.

100. Currently standards achieved by eleven year olds in national tests are above average compared with similar schools and compared with all schools nationally. The highest attaining pupils achieve well above the national average. The trend over time is broadly in line with the national trend. Attainment of eleven year olds is higher in reading than in writing. The very ambitious English targets for Year 6 pupils set by the governing body in 2001 were not achieved. Evidence from the inspection confirms that governors have set challenging yet realistic targets for Year 6 pupils in 2002.
101. The achievement of seven year olds in national tests is above the national average in reading and writing. The highest attaining pupils achieve well above average compared with similar schools and all schools nationally in both reading and writing. The trend over time is slightly above the national trend.
102. These high standards in recent national tests are reflected in the standards of work seen in the school during the inspection.
103. Standards in reading are generally higher than for writing. The school has usefully identified writing as a priority for development. Improvements, for example in handwriting and spelling, are already evident.
104. Standards in speaking and listening are above average. Pupils listen thoughtfully to their teacher and to each other's contributions. During literacy lessons teachers give pupils good opportunities to speak at length and to explain their thinking. For example, Year 3 and 4 pupils talked enthusiastically about the newspapers articles, based on nursery rhyme characters. Teachers explain new ideas carefully and pupils respond sensibly to teachers' questions. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 demonstrate their knowledge of phonemes and rhymes. A particularly effective example of speaking and listening was seen when Year 5/6 pupils planned questions about Lady Macbeth, which they then delivered to the teacher, who acted as Lady Macbeth. Pupils prepared their questions thoroughly and delivered them without embarrassment. In Year 2 pupils enjoyed asking questions of the teacher, in role as Samuel Pepys' maid. Generally good use is made of discussion at the end of lessons to talk about what has been learnt and what needs to be improved. This has a beneficial effect on pupils' learning.
105. Standards in reading achieved by pupils at ages of seven and eleven are well above average. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 enjoy reading and very often read at home. They choose their own reading material from class and school collections. Their choice is limited, however, by the lack of range of books available in school. The highest attaining pupils are fluent and read with good expression and understanding. They are able to recall texts and talk in detail about books they have read. Pupils discuss texts for which they have a passion, for example *Harry Potter* and *Horrible Histories*. Some pupils in Years 3 to 6 choose texts that they find too difficult and this limits the development of their reading skills. Younger pupils make sensible predictions about what might happen next in stories and explain what words might mean from gaining

the sense of the sentence. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are enthusiastic readers and take books home regularly to read with parents. Pupils in Year 2 who excel in reading are fluent, accurate and read with developing maturity. They use a wide range of skills, which enable them to read unknown texts with little hesitation. Other pupils are developing their basic skills. They read simple texts by sight and some are able to attempt unknown words using the skills they have learned.

106. Teachers and other adults working in classes take care to ensure that reading skills are taught and reinforced during the literacy lessons. Teachers encourage pupils to think deeply about texts and to think what the author was trying to convey. Reading diaries are not used consistently and teachers do not regularly monitor the range of pupils reading. The location of reading books in the hall makes it difficult for pupils to spend quality time in their selection of books. The location and quality of the reference library limits opportunities for pupils to develop research skills, an issue of which the school is aware. The majority of Key Stage 2 pupils understand the use of dictionaries and thesauri. However, in many cases they are unable to use the index and glossary in non-fiction books, or to retrieve information from reference books. There are also few chances for pupils to use computers to find out the information they need.
107. Standards in writing are above average by the time pupils reach the ages of seven and eleven. By the time pupils reach the end of Year 6 their writing is mainly organised and clear. Higher attaining pupils write in a range of styles which are lively and thoughtful, for example poetry, playscripts, letters and persuasive texts. All Year 6 pupils use a wide range of vocabulary, for example when describing events from *Macbeth*. Pupils are able to use grammatical structure and are able to make improvements to pieces of writing. Attainment in spelling and handwriting is above average, with pupils using a legible and joined script. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are able to use writing for a range of different purposes, for example newspaper reports, poetry and stories. In Year 2 pupils wrote a diary from the point of view of Samuel Pepys' maid. The highest attaining pupils in Year 2 use capital letters and full stops accurately and are able to spell many common words. In handwriting, their letters are consistently formed and legible. The attainment of pupils in Year 1 is sometimes limited by the use of inappropriate worksheets which do not motivate them to do good work.
108. There is good use of English across the curriculum, for example Year 2 pupils wrote newspaper reports on the Great Fire of London and Year 5 and 6 pupils described their visits to local churches.
109. Pupils' attitude to work is very good throughout the school, with pupils being well motivated, enthusiastic and keen to contribute. Most are able to sustain concentration during direct teacher input and when working on tasks. Behaviour is good with pupils knowing, and adhering to, the rules of the classroom. Pupils take pride in their work and work collaboratively, for example when planning questions for Lady Macbeth in Year 6. There is a good emphasis on the presentation of written work throughout school.
110. The quality of teaching is good. In all classes, teaching seen ranged from satisfactory to very good. This represents good improvement since the last inspection. The school

has effectively implemented the National Literacy Strategy and this has enabled teachers to develop their subject knowledge. Learning objectives for lessons, which are communicated to the pupils, ensure a clear focus for the teaching and learning. There is an appropriate use of a range of texts and good use of questioning. Behaviour management is very good, with staff having high expectations and giving constant verbal feedback and encouragement. There is good use of resources, for example, white boards and overhead projectors are used effectively during the literacy lessons. Classroom assistants are well used, particularly during the activities, to support pupils with special educational needs. Where there is very good teaching, there is good match of work to pupils' needs and ability, good pace and encouragement for pupils to work independently. Where teaching is less good there is an ineffective use of time and over dependence on worksheets. There is inconsistent use of marking. Where it is good, it is focused and used to set targets for individual pupils' future learning. The school has developed effective assessment strategies which link to the planning. This is not yet impacting consistently on the target setting process.

111. Achievement overall for all pupils is good and they make good progress in their learning of English. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. They are well supported by their teachers and the adults who work with them. They participate fully in all written and spoken work. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress and most have become proficient in English very quickly. This is the result of the good level of support and sensitive targeting of tasks.
112. Although there are examples of information and communication technology being used in literacy sessions, for instance in a Year 5 session where pupils were drafting and editing a piece of writing on computer, this is inconsistent. Information and communication technology is not regularly used to access information.
113. The subject co-ordinator is new to the school, but is already aware of what needs to be improved and has ideas how this may be achieved. She is effectively supporting staff and beginning to implement the school's monitoring strategies. The school has removed many old and inappropriate books from the library; however there is now an insufficient number and range to support the curriculum. The school has a good stock of guided and class reading sets. The reading areas in classrooms vary in quality. Where they are good there is a wide range of books of high quality, appropriate to the age of the pupils, organised and well labelled, creating a stimulating environment. In many classrooms, however, there is a poor range of books, with inappropriate storage and organisation.

## **MATHEMATICS**

114. During the inspection a total of eleven mathematics lessons were observed. Discussions were held with the co-ordinator about the management of the subject and with pupils about their work. A sample of pupils' work from across the school was scrutinised.
115. The school's overall performance in mathematics at Year 2, on the basis of the national tests, is close to the national average. Performance is also broadly in line with that found in similar schools. Performance would have been higher, had it not been for a

weakness in the study of shape, space and measures. The trend in performance since the last inspection has been somewhat erratic, although over time it has been in line with that found nationally.

116. There is a noticeable difference between the attainment of boys and girls by age seven, with girls performing better than boys. The school is aware of this and is investigating reasons, although none are as yet identified.
117. In the Year 6 national tests (2000), the attainment of pupils was very high in comparison with the national average, and it was also well above average in terms of pupils reaching higher grades. National test results for 2001 confirm that these high standards of attainment have been maintained. The trend since the last inspection has been upward, and performance has consistently been above the national trend. When compared with similar schools, performance was also well above average. Inspection findings confirm that attainment in mathematics at Year 6 is very high.
118. The difference in the performance of boys and girls is less significant in the older age group and all pupils show high levels of achievement and make good progress in their learning. Pupils with English as an additional language or with special educational needs both make good progress in all classes. In Years 3 to 6, they make very good progress and by Year 6 most pupils' attainment is well above expectation for their age.
119. Pupils respond very well to the way that mathematics is delivered through the National Numeracy Strategy. By Year 2, the mental and oral part of the lesson has resulted in pupils having a good understanding of multiplication facts as they count forwards and backwards in multiples of 2, 5, and 10. They are able to read and write numbers to 100 and beyond and they understand the processes of doubling and halving. Most Year 2 pupils can identify common two and three-dimensional shapes and are able to classify them according to edges, faces and corners. They are able to discuss their work and explain what they are doing, using appropriate mathematical language.
120. By Year 6 most pupils have developed their own strategies for solving problems. They have been encouraged to know and understand a range of approaches and to try out their own ideas in seeking solutions. They have a secure knowledge of multiplication facts to at least  $10 \times 10$ . They know number bonds of whole and decimal numbers and are able to add and subtract decimals to two places. They have explored and can use a number of approaches to calculations using the four rules and are recording their calculations in written form. They have developed calculator skills and use calculators where appropriate.
121. The school organises pupils in Years 3 to 6, who are already in mixed-age classes, into a number different teaching groups for mathematics. Those in Years 3 and 4 are divided into three sets, based upon their past attainment. A different method is used to organise pupils in Years 5 and 6, whereby two of the sets consist of discrete year groups while the third has a mixture of the more able Year 5 working alongside a small group of below average pupils from Year 6. Inspectors noted that some younger pupils in the Years 3 and 4 sets were having to work extremely hard to keep up with the older members of the group - to such an extent that by the end of lessons, some were overstretched and showing signs of tiredness. It was also evident that younger

pupils were working on the teaching programme more suited to their elders.

122. In the Year 5 and 6 sets, it was evident within the mixed-age group that many of the more able, younger pupils were more advanced than those in the small Year 6 group. In both methods of organising sets there were pupils working either on an inappropriate programme of work or at an inappropriate level. For example, a small group of Year 6 pupils in the middle attainment set were clearly disadvantaged as they worked on different strategies for solving subtraction problems. The lesson objectives were from the Year 5 element of the National Numeracy Strategy, but pitched at a pace and level they found difficult to reach.
123. Class sizes are very large in some of the Years 5 and 6 sets with up to 40 pupils in a class. Even though teaching was very good, it cannot compensate for the inappropriate ratio of pupils to their teacher. It was also evident that some pupils were working in a cramped environment.
124. It is important to note that despite these constraints in grouping and accommodation, pupils were still achieving well, due to a combination of good teaching and commendable effort by the pupils.
125. The teaching of mathematics is good. Since the last inspection there has been a greater cohesion in the teaching of mathematics curriculum. The key stages are no longer using different schemes of work and all teachers are now using the National Numeracy Strategy. There were no examples of unsatisfactory teaching during the inspection. In Years 1 and 2 there were examples of good teaching, while in Years 3 to 6 there were examples of good and very good teaching. Good quality planning exists throughout the school, and this has contributed significantly to the improvement in teaching quality in Years 1 and 2. In all lessons observed, teachers exercised good skill in the management of pupils and they demonstrated secure subject knowledge and familiarity with the numeracy strategy.
126. In the better lessons, where teaching was good or very good, teachers were using a variety of questioning strategies to involve all pupils, probing to check on knowledge and understanding. The pace of the lesson was brisk with no wastage of time between activities and teachers kept interest and concentration at a high level by using game like activities.
127. The best lessons were characterised by the effective use of assessment where teachers were constantly checking progress, through high quality questioning, discussion with groups and individuals, careful marking of books and the use of helpful feedback and comment. Homework, usually set for the weekends, was used as a tool to consolidate work done in school, to involve parents in their pupils's learning and as a useful vehicle to assess pupils' understanding.
128. Pupils have a very good attitude to their work. They enjoy their maths activities and respond positively to the tasks set. They are particularly enthusiastic where the activities are made enjoyable by the use of number games and where they enter into the quick-fire question and answer sessions with their teacher. Behaviour is very good and there were no examples observed of pupils engaged in unacceptable behaviour.



Teachers have fostered excellent relationships with pupils, and this is well reflected in their interest, concentration and productivity.

129. The school has put in place a number of effective strategies to ensure that provision for mathematics is good and that standards are raised. In addition to the use of day-to-day assessment, which is good, the school carries out half termly formal assessments, which help teachers to plan effectively. The progress of pupils is individually monitored from entry to the school through to Year 6 and performance data is carefully recorded on tracking sheets. Good use is made of the optional tests in Years 3, 4, and 5, to ensure that pupils are on track to achieve well at Year 6. Optional extension work in maths is offered to older, more able pupils before the start of morning school.
130. The subject co-ordinator is a well organised and effective manager. He sets out to assure good quality learning and high expectations. He monitors teachers' planning to ensure continuity, especially between the key stages. In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the mathematics provision he has monitored planning, observed lessons with feed back to teachers and provided support and advice where required. As yet, he has not fully reviewed the organisation and effectiveness of the school's setting arrangements for the teaching of mathematics. He has ensured that the resources for the teaching of mathematics are of good quality and sufficient in quantity to provide all classrooms with a range of suitable equipment.

## **SCIENCE**

131. Evidence on which to base judgements in science was gathered through observing five lessons, looking at current and previous work in pupils' books, analysing teachers' planning, talking to pupils, class teachers and the co-ordinator, as well as looking at the many displays available.
132. In the year 2000, teachers' assessments in science for pupils in Year 2, indicated that standards were not only above the level regarded as typical for pupils aged seven nationally, but also above the standards typical for pupils in schools of a similar nature. In addition standards at the higher Level 3 were also above what is typical for pupils aged 7. By the end of Year 6, national testing showed that pupils are well above the standards which are typical of pupils aged eleven both nationally and when compared with schools of a similar nature. There were no significant differences between the performance of boys and girls in the tests at either age.
133. Standards for pupils aged seven have improved significantly since the last inspection when they were judged to be only satisfactory. The very high standards for pupils by the age of eleven have been maintained since the last inspection both for pupils achieving the typical Level four and for those reaching the higher Level 5. In the comparisons for 2001 which were available for the inspection, good progress and high standards have been maintained.
134. In Year 1 pupils identify different sources of light and demonstrate their understanding of day and night, and of forces by investigating pushing and pulling. Year 2 pupils investigated animal habitats to understand cause and effect, and could use their

knowledge of using simple circuits to light a bulb. They showed a good understanding when classifying food into protein and minerals, carbohydrates, and fats. They could record their findings on a chart when sorting materials into groups.

135. In Years 3 and 4, pupils looked at different rocks and recorded their observations before classifying their samples. In their groups pupils collaborated to devise different methods of sorting such as according to size, colour and texture. Pupils in Years 5 and 6, investigated different powders, compared them with an information sheet, observed them in solution and then predicted their origins. In all four year groups, pupils demonstrated a good understanding of fair testing with one variable. The use of a two-year cycle of topics in Years 3 to 6 ensures that pupils do not repeat their experiences whilst in the same class, and that all requirements of the National Curriculum are met.
136. The development of pupils' ability to apply their scientific skills, knowledge and understanding has been given a high priority since the last inspection. This has resulted in pupils learning science by exploring and investigating, rather than being given information and being told what is going to happen. Year 3 and 4 pupils have investigated materials and have tested the durability of different materials with a particular purpose in mind. Their findings were linked to choosing the most suitable material at their disposal for car seat covers. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have explored soils in solution, and will be investigating changes as to whether they are reversible or irreversible. Since the last inspection pupils have been taught to devise methods of recording their findings systematically. In Years 1 and 2 pupils describe their observations and record them using simple tables. In Years 3 to 6 younger pupils follow precise procedures until by the end of Year 6 they have begun to introduce an element of choice, with pupils devising their own variations on the theme of good preparation, prediction and fair testing, detailed observation and analysis.
137. Teachers' planning of work for science is now good, with activities more closely matched to the needs of pupils including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Pupils encounter a wide range of experiences across the range of the National Curriculum requirements. As a result, all pupils make at least good progress as they build on their skills, knowledge and understanding term on term and year on year.
138. First-hand experiences are carefully planned to extend learning with the nature trail area now used effectively to explore habitats. Visits to prepare pupils for topics are well planned. Visits to Derby University Sci-tech for Year 5 and for Year 3 and 4 pupils to Birmingham Science Museum have paved the way for pupils to be well prepared for the investigations planned. This was most apparent when an excellent strategy was used to involve pupils in what they wished to learn about rocks. This involvement of pupils in aspects of their own learning produced a highly stimulating discussion in which pupils demonstrated good knowledge and understanding.
139. Teachers know their pupils well and plan to include everyone in all aspects of learning. This adds significantly to the quality of learning for all pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Self-esteem and confidence are high. This is as a direct result of the value

which teachers place on the contributions of pupils and the very good strategy to base new learning on everyday experiences of pupils, and by building on what they already know. Although given a high priority in the co-ordinator's action plan, as yet there are no formal assessment procedures to record the gains made by pupils in their learning. Marking is done conscientiously but again there are inconsistencies in the quality and use. At its best, marking informs pupils when they have achieved their targets and then prepares them for further challenges.

140. Overall, teaching is consistently good with some very good teaching in Key Stage 2. The best teaching was characterised by the teacher's very good subject knowledge; the sharing of what was to be learned with pupils; brisk pace to the lesson; challenging use of questioning to consistently check what pupils understood and could do; effective use of support staff; and appropriate time for pupils to complete their range of activities by investigating, exploring then recording. Pupils enjoyed their lessons and were eager to share their ideas. They collaborated very well in group activities; thrived on the opportunities given to explore and investigate; and gained in confidence as teachers valued their contributions. In some lessons pupils become less focused towards the end of long sessions when the pace of teaching and learning varied.
141. Science makes an effective contribution to developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils are developing more precise observation skills; using a range of writing skills such as report writing and recording. Teachers promote good speaking and listening skills. Pupils are encouraged to share their findings thus developing good speaking skills with an increasing use of accurate vocabulary. Pupils apply their mathematical skills as when using Venn diagrams to classify rocks in Years 3 and 4, or classifying foods in Year 2. Pupils use charts and graphs to record their findings as when interpreting a column graph recording the colour of pupils' eyes in Year 2. During the period of the inspection, information and communication technology was under used to support learning in science. Opportunities for pupils to carry their studies beyond the lessons through independent research were limited by the lack of books and an organisational structure within which this could take place.
142. Science is managed enthusiastically by the subject co-ordinator who was appointed earlier this year. He has a clear vision for maintaining and raising standards which includes a greater use of information and communication technology. Appropriate curricular guidelines are based on nationally produced materials but have not yet been closely matched to the needs of the school. He has contributed to raising standards in science by monitoring all stages of planning, reviewing work in pupils' books, and monitoring teaching and learning in order to identify, then share, what is going well and what needs to be improved. He has analysed in great detail the weaknesses shown by results in national testing and has amended planning accordingly. Resources are good for all areas of learning and are well maintained, with the exception that information and communication technology resources are inadequate to support teaching and learning in science.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

143. Observation of lessons was limited during the inspection as a result of the way in which the school organises curriculum coverage in its mixed-age classes. However, evidence

was also gathered from the analysis of teachers' planning, pupils' sketchbooks, photographic evidence and the work pupils produced in the many displays around the school. There were also discussions with pupils. It was not possible to speak to the subject co-ordinator who is on long term sick leave. The school has maintained the average standards found in its last inspection.

144. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use observation well when they represent what they see, using a range of media: paint, collage, pastel, charcoal and multi-media techniques. This can be seen in the still life studies of flowers produced by pupils in Year 2 using paint and the portraits of Year 1 pupils, using pastel and charcoal. Year 2 pupils mix colour well. Pupils showed evidence of using great care in producing paper sculptures and various collages. Year 2 pupils making puppets evaluated their work and discussed the appropriateness of the materials and media they used.
145. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 showed good understanding of pattern as they investigated patterns in different contexts: for example in the natural world and in different cultures. Their work on Islamic patterns supported their cultural development. They also used their art skills to produce powerful pictures of refugees as part of their historical studies of World War II.
146. Pupils at both key stages showed very positive attitudes towards the subject. They were enthusiastic, behaved well and showed very good levels of concentration and perseverance. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are fully included.
147. The teaching seen during the inspection was satisfactory. Clear planning, high expectations and feedback on how to improve, for example in comments in sketch books, help the pupil's learning. Teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory. Teaching is guided by a detailed curriculum plan. However, inspection evidence shows that some elements of the art and design curriculum are relatively undeveloped, in particular three-dimensional work and the use of information and communication technology to generate ideas. Pupils' awareness of the ideas of artists and crafts people from a wide range of times and cultures, is limited.
148. The length of art and design lessons is too long. Teaching can be seen to expand to fit the time made available, and in whole afternoon sessions the pace during significant parts of the lesson is too slow. A more efficient organisation of time, through how the subject is timetabled, would allow those elements of the art and design curriculum now relatively neglected to be given more attention. The art and design curriculum is enhanced by an after school art club, where the older pupils who attend produce work of high quality.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

149. Two lessons in Years 1 and 2 were observed. Pupils' work, displays around the school, records and teachers' planning records were analysed. Discussions were held with pupils and with the co-ordinator for the subject. The standards of work seen and the achievements of pupils are broadly in line with what is expected of pupils for their age. This represents satisfactory improvement from the last inspection, when

standards in the subject were found to be below national expectations. Pupils in both key stages plan, design and make good quality products and can evaluate them in terms of suitability and appearance.

150. Pupils in Year 2 are able to design glove puppets, using a simple sketch to start with. They choose which materials to use to join the different parts and evaluate their choices, beginning to develop an awareness of the conflicts inherent in this. For example, pupils discussed the fact that using staples to join felt was quick and easy, but the join was insecure when it was pulled. They decided that stitching, although slower, was better. Pupils in Year 1 identified the main features of houses following a trip into the local neighbourhood, discussed their uses and drew simple annotated diagrams as a prelude to modelling them. Pupils in Year 1 made fruit salad, developing their knowledge of how things are made and the importance of the end product to the consumer. They also learned the importance of hygiene in handling food. All pupils in Years 1 and 2 use a wide range of constructional materials to investigate their properties and to design and make structures.
151. Pupils in Year 3 used a range of materials to design and make Tudor houses of high quality. A range of tools and techniques are employed. Pupils in Year 4 produced annotated designs of various electrical artefacts, suggesting the suitability of different materials. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 designed and tested containers and this culminated in an 'egg carrying' contest. Pupils at both key stages handle tools safely.
152. All pupils have full access to the curriculum and those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress. The curriculum is planned to cover the full range of the programme of study. Pupils show positive attitudes to their work in the subject, show enthusiasm, are willing to discuss what they are doing and when given the opportunity can show initiative. There is insufficient use of information and communication technology.
153. Teaching seen was at least satisfactory. Teachers are well planned, know what they want the pupils to learn and employ appropriate methods. Their expectations are high although they could plan more self-initiated work with pupils carrying out more independent research. Teachers manage behaviour well and have very good relationships with pupils in lessons.
154. The subject is well managed by a well-organised, effective co-ordinator. She ensures that teachers are given good guidance and support. She has ensured that the subject is supported by high quality resources. She has monitored the subject closely by looking at teachers' planning records, by analysing pupils' work and through direct observation of teaching and learning in classrooms. Feedback is given. She supports assessment in the subject through the maintenance and availability of an exemplar portfolio of assessed work. This demonstrates the standards required for pupils to achieve the levels of the National Curriculum. Information and communication technology is seldom used to support the subject as there is a continuing lack of resources and under-developed expertise amongst the teachers.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

155. Evidence indicates that standards have been maintained since the last inspection and are broadly in line with what is typical for pupils at the ages of seven and eleven. A judgement on standards has been reached after observing lessons, talking to pupils and the subject co-ordinator, observing teachers' planning, viewing displays, and scrutinising pupils' current and previous work.
156. By the age of seven, pupils have developed appropriate mapping skills when exploring the local environment and build on the skills used in Year 1 to plot their routes from home to school pictorially by using simple keys and symbols. First hand experiences play a large part in the learning process and enable pupils to share opinions about environmental and conservation issues. Pupils are encouraged to identify their 'favourite places' and share reasons why.
157. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 gain a greater understanding of places in the world such as when comparing similarities and differences between their own locality and the Indian village of Chembakolli, or nearer at home Cromford. Pupils develop geographical skills term on term and year on year, with fieldwork playing an important role. Younger pupils explore the school environment; the oldest pupils go on a residential visit. Pupils are encouraged to comment on environmental issues such as conservation and traffic calming and investigate patterns when studying the weather or land usage.
158. Literacy skills are developed through a range of writing styles including non-chronological writing about the use and conservation of water. Numeracy skills are used appropriately when reading scales, considering compass points and measuring temperatures. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are encouraged to extend their studies at home by researching water usage or the features of rivers. However, the lack of a school reference library and inconsistency in the use of information and communication technology skills has resulted in research skills being below that typical for pupils of these ages and abilities.
159. It is not possible to comment on teaching overall due to the small number of lessons observed. However, in the two lessons seen, one in each key stage, teaching was at least satisfactory. Where teaching was good in Years 3 to 6 the pace of learning was good and pupils were challenged in groups to take notes when identifying the features of rivers such as waterfalls, meanders, dry valleys and estuaries. Pupils demonstrated good speaking and listening skills when comparing aerial photographs with river features worldwide. They are managed well and activities are well matched to the needs of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. The very good relationships contribute significantly to the quality of learning and pupils thrive when their contributions are valued. Overall pupils make satisfactory progress.
160. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to introduce procedures to identify and record pupils' gains in skills, knowledge and understanding so that future activities might be given a sharper focus. She has begun to collate previous work and photographic evidence, which will contribute to the raising of standards as teachers and pupils are made more clearly aware of the standards to be achieved. Curriculum guidelines and a two-year cycle of topics ensure that skills and knowledge are acquired term on term and year on year. She is aware of the need to develop the use of information and

communication technology to enrich learning and develop pupils' research skills.

## **HISTORY**

161. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and remain in line with those expected for pupils at the age of seven and eleven. Overall, progress is satisfactory for all pupils including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. A judgement on standards has been reached after observing lessons, talking to pupils and the subject co-ordinator, observing teachers' planning, viewing displays, and scrutinising pupils' current and previous work.
162. Detailed curriculum guidelines, based on national recommendations, are now in place, enabling pupils to make regular and progressive gains in knowledge and understanding term on term and year on year. National Curriculum requirements are divided into a two-year cycle so that pupils do not repeat topics. Pupils show a good understanding of the differences and similarities between 'then and now'. In the one Year 1 lesson observed, an impressive selection of artefacts had been collected so that pupils could explore the similarities and differences of the kitchens beyond pupils' living memory such as irons, carpet sweepers, and milk containers. This built effectively on their visit to a Victorian kitchen in the reception class, with pupils' recall being impressive for all groups of ability. By the time the pupils reach the end of Year 2, they have developed their sense of sequencing events from simple terms such as 'today' and 'yesterday'. Younger pupils have plotted events during their short life span until, by the end of the key stage, pupils have investigated and considered events beyond their living memory. By the age of seven, pupils have investigated what makes someone famous, knowing, for example, the main features in the life of Florence Nightingale, and have studied events such as the Great Fire of London.
163. In Years 3 to 6, pupils showed a greater understanding of the way the past is represented. They have developed a deeper understanding of chronology using time lines and researching the features of previous civilisations and societies such as those of Ancient Greece, together with their legacies of democracy and the Olympics Games. The visit by a visiting theatre group enabled pupils to gain a greater understanding of the values and customs of Ancient Greece through drama and craft activities.
164. In Years 3 and 4, pupils have observed an impressive range of artefacts, such as ration books and headgear; and visits by grandparents have brought added stimulus to pupils' understanding of how the war affected people's lives at home. They talk enthusiastically about 'Digging for Victory', and demonstrate a very good awareness of sacrifices made to support the war effort. These experiences added significantly to the quality of pupils' writing, including diaries, letters from 'evacuees' and note taking. By the age of eleven pupils accurately link study periods such as the Romans, Vikings, Tudors, Victorians, and Britain since 1958. Displays contribute well to a stimulating environment.
165. In the Year 3/4 lesson seen, pupils had been challenged to carry out individual research to very good effect. One pupil was fascinated by her grandmother's reasons for not wishing to eat her pet chicken nor that of her sister. She had extended her interest to carry out further research about the 'black market'.

166. Although a good range of resources had been made available, the lack of opportunities for pupils to carry out individual research during lesson time, and the inconsistent use of information and communication technology to support and extend their learning, have resulted in opportunities being missed for pupils to develop independent research skills. The range and organisation of books to support the subject is not good enough to support activities requiring research and independent study.
167. In the three lessons observed, teaching ranged from satisfactory to good. Where teaching was good planning matched the needs of pupils and there were clear objectives for teaching and learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge and pupils are managed very well. Relationships contribute significantly to the quality of learning, and pupils thrive when their contributions are valued. There is a good appreciation of the need to develop skills as well as knowledge, with sound strategies to promote historical enquiry. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to develop assessment procedures so that targets for individual pupils could be more focused on improving pupils' historical knowledge and skills. Marking is carried out systematically but is inconsistent in its purpose. At its most effective, pupils are informed when their targets have been achieved, and comments are included to challenge pupils even further.
168. Pupils enjoy their lessons and respond enthusiastically to the challenges posed. They work well together in groups; and their very good behaviour and the capacity to listen to and learn from each other contributes significantly to the quality of learning. Relationships are very good and pupils enjoy and value each other's company regardless of age, background, ability and gender.
169. The co-ordinator maintains an overview of the subject, and has maintained good subject knowledge by attending courses. She has evaluated teachers' planning and observed pupils' books. She has not yet had the opportunity to contribute to the raising of standards by observing the teaching and learning of others in order to pass on and share the most successful strategies with her colleagues. She has begun to collate previous work and photographic evidence, which will contribute to the raising of standards by exemplifying what pupils of different age and attainment can achieve.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

170. Evidence of information and communication technology was very limited during the inspection. Only one lesson was available which was dedicated specifically to the teaching of information and communication technology. The report, therefore, is based largely on observations of use of information and communication technology in other lessons, discussion with the headteacher and the subject co-ordinator, scrutiny of pupils' work and observation of information and communication technology found in displays around the school.
171. Standards in information and communication technology throughout the school are low. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 are not taught the required skills and understanding well enough and in sufficient depth to allow them to reach the standards expected in the National Curriculum.



172. By the time pupils reach Year 6, standards are still low, though many have accumulated some skills through the use of computers at home. This unsatisfactory situation accentuates the disadvantage suffered by those pupils who do not have such facilities.
173. Progress of all pupils in the school is unsatisfactory, though no more or less for those with special educational needs or with English as an additional language. The previous inspection report refers to the school's failure to cover the range of information and communication technology applications described in the National Curriculum. The findings of this inspection are that there have been no significant improvements, despite the purchase of more resources in the interim period. The report further states that the school had identified information and communication technology as an area for development in the near future; the school has failed to carry out such a development.
174. Teachers' expertise and subject knowledge have improved as a result of in-service training that has taken place, though the school identifies that there remains a range of capability. Further staff development is needed. Teachers do have a scheme of work to follow that is based on nationally provided guidance. However, the lack of resources and teachers' expertise means that the scheme is not sufficiently followed. It does not, therefore, provide for progression in work done through the school when it is fully in use.
175. Where pupils are able to engage in the use of computers, they show much enthusiasm and have a very positive attitude. Unfortunately, such opportunities are too infrequent, with only one or two pupils at a time able to use a computer. Pupils have very limited access to the Internet. There is only one computer on-line and this is inappropriately based in an area designated for the use of teachers only. This means that information and communication technology cannot be used to support teaching and learning in other subjects.
176. A further factor which inhibits the development of information and communication technology is the unsatisfactory provision of curriculum time to the subject, with only 2% being allocated. The school plans to review the allocated time for information and communication technology when the planned computer suite is completed and in use.
177. There are plans to extend a classroom block to incorporate a computer suite, with 20 computers networked and on-line. Governors have identified funding for the project and the school hopes to have the facility in use early in 2002. This will provide a solution to the weaknesses in accommodation and equipment, though the school will still have the issues of staff development and time allocation to address.

## MUSIC

178. Lesson observations were limited to three during the inspection. In addition there were several occasions when singing and music making were going on in assemblies, singing practice and part of a Foundation Stage (Reception) lesson. There was an interview with the headteacher, acting as temporary subject co-ordinator, and a scrutiny of music resources and teachers' planning.

179. Standards throughout the school are broadly average in music. In both key stages, pupils reach a level of attainment appropriate for their ages with all elements of the music National Curriculum included. All pupils are fully included in music activities and those with special educational needs and with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.
180. A strong emphasis is placed on singing with weekly half hourly singing practices taking place in both key stages. Pupils sing well and those in the younger age group are quick to learn new songs. They use tuned and untuned percussion instruments effectively; and they enjoy composing responses to themes and poetry, rehearsing and performing them with others. They listen attentively to a wide range of music and are able to verbalise their responses. In a lesson with a Year 5 and 6 class, the teacher provided pupils with a range of well chosen, recorded music, which the pupils were able to interpret and appraise. The pupils were able to express in words the feeling or mood that the music created for them. In another lesson observed the pupils composed an interesting musical accompaniment to a piece of poetry, in order to enhance the atmosphere and effectiveness of the poetry reading.
181. The teaching of music that was seen was satisfactory. Good quality planning, which contains clearly stated learning objectives and assessment opportunities, is based upon the school's scheme of work. Despite the satisfactory level of competence in teaching the subject, the school identifies that there is need for further staff development in this area of the curriculum. Teachers manage pupils well and there is a good standard of behaviour in music lessons and singing practice.
182. Since the last inspection, the school has shown improvement in that there is now a good quality scheme of work, based upon published national advice, and there is a structured system for the assessment of pupils' progress.
183. At present the subject co-ordinator is on long-term sick leave and the role has been taken up by the headteacher. She provides effective management of the subject and offers appropriate support and guidance to teachers. Music is a priority in the school's improvement plan for the Year 2002, and within the plan will be an allocation of funding to provide for the identified staff development needs.
184. Music can be found in the wider life of the school. Two concerts per year are performed for parents and friends and all pupils take part. Extracurricular activities include two recorder groups and a school choir.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

185. Four lessons were observed during the inspection. Discussions took place with pupils, teachers and the subject co-ordinator. Pupils attain standards that are broadly typical of those found in other schools by the time pupils reach the ages of seven and eleven. Pupils receive a well-balanced programme of work, focusing on gymnastics, games and dance. Additional activities include swimming, in Year 5, and outdoor and adventurous activities. For example, older pupils undertake a residential visit in the summer term to Osmington Bay, where they enjoy outdoor pursuits. The curriculum is

also enhanced by the provision of extracurricular clubs, including football, netball, dance and sports club. In addition, the school takes part in a variety of inter-school team games. These activities extend the curriculum well and make a strong contribution to pupils' social development.

186. Teaching throughout the school is satisfactory. Teachers pay close attention to health and safety issues and pupils have a good understanding of the need to exercise their muscles before and after activities. Lessons are well planned and identify a clear focus for pupils' learning. Teachers make good use of direct teaching and positive encouragement to improve skills. For instance in a Year 6 games lesson pupils were shown how to bat balls effectively both with their hands and bats. Expectations are appropriate for the age and ability of the pupils. Behaviour is generally managed well and pupils were enthusiastic and motivated in all lessons observed. Resources are well prepared for sessions. Non-teaching support staff are used effectively so that all pupils are able to take part in the lessons. However, where time was not used well and activities went on too long, some pupils lost concentration.
187. Pupils in Year 6 work with others to organise and keep the games going. For example, during one lesson pupils worked well together to develop a small sided tennis game. In Years 3 to 6 pupils vary their movements in speed, level and direction and are able to balance on a given number of parts of the body. They also use appropriate language, such as extended, body points, to evaluate the performance of others. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 get out and put apparatus away safely. They balance and travel on different parts of their bodies, both on the floor and when using benches and mats; they use space effectively.
188. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is good. Sometimes they have the support of an adult helper or the extra attention of the teacher and this has a beneficial effect on their learning. Pupils for whom English is an additional language achieve standards in line with the rest of the class because teaching is well adjusted to their needs.
189. The accommodation is satisfactory and generally well used. The exception to this is when three classes in Years 3 to 6 are timetabled to have games at the same time. This leads to an inappropriately small amount of space for the number of pupils involved. Since the last inspection there has been a clear focus on the development of physical education and this has resulted in good improvement. The co-ordinator has been effective in her review of the scheme of work, the support and monitoring of staff and in the identification and organisation of professional development needs. Finances have been well targeted and resources are now good. Physical education is valued by the school, for example, achievements during the Osmington Bay trip and extracurricular clubs are displayed in the hall.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

190. Evidence shows that standards in religious education are above average. This represents good improvement since the school's last inspection. Evidence was collected by observing lessons in Years 3 to 6, and analysing pupils' work, teachers' planning, school displays, and by discussions with pupils and the subject co-ordinator.

191. In Years 1 and 2 pupils know the major Christian festivals and are gaining knowledge of other faith's festivals, such as Hannukah (Judaism) and Diwali (Hinduism). They know Bible stories and some of the basic teachings of Jesus. They are synthesising their knowledge into an understanding of major religious concepts, such as worship and belonging. Pupils in Years 3 to 6, in lessons in which they investigated the key features of the Mosque and its significance to Muslims, showed good knowledge of the meaning of 'sacred' and compared the information gained in the lesson with that they had gained on visits to local churches. They used this knowledge to synthesise similarities and differences between the religions.
192. These lessons were considerably enhanced by the teachers' use of Muslim pupils to answer questions about the Mosque, framed in discussion with their classmates. The subject makes a very positive contribution to the social, moral and cultural development of the pupils. They learn, reflect on and value the beliefs of others. They show very good knowledge of the diversity of faiths represented in the United Kingdom. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 showed good knowledge and understanding of the core beliefs of Hinduism. They related the family life and customs of Hindu families to their own lives and the Christian traditions of this country. They show good knowledge of the relevance of artefacts, symbol and story in religion. They produced good recounts of the Hindu story of Svetekur.
193. Pupils develop and use their skills in literacy during religious education lessons, for example, in the excellent reports that pupils from Years 5 and 6 wrote following visits to local churches. Opportunities are also provided for pupils to use their speaking and listening skills, for example, in group discussions as they thought up questions to ask about mosques. The curriculum is also enhanced by visitors to the school, for example, in the running of a multi-faith workshop.
194. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in lessons, with work planned for their level of attainment and support provided by classroom support staff where this is appropriate. Pupils from ethnic minority groups play an important part in supporting high standards, as they bring their personal knowledge and understanding to lessons. Pupils with English as an additional language are well supported in lessons. All pupils work hard and behave well in lessons.
195. Teaching is good, characterised by good subject knowledge, clear planning to appropriate learning objectives which are shared with pupils, high expectations and the use of a wide range of methods. Information and communication technology was used as pupils in a Year 5/6 class worked on a CD-ROM encyclopaedia package to research features of the mosque. However, it was clear that they lacked the knowledge and skills to carry out the task independently and were heavily supported by the classroom support assistant.
196. Provision for religious education is in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and supported by national guidance on a scheme of work. Resources are good and the curriculum co-ordinator is very well organised. She provides good support for colleagues, including advice and documentary guidance on lesson planning. She is helped in this by the knowledge and insights she gains from monitoring

curriculum planning and samples of pupils' work.