

INSPECTION REPORT

LARKRISE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Great Baddow, Chelmsford

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 115035

Headteacher: Mrs. K. Claxton

Reporting inspector: Mr. A. C. Matthews
Rgl's No. 19410

Dates of inspection: 8 - 11 July 2002

Inspection number: 194661

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Dorset Avenue Great Baddow Chelmsford Essex
Postcode:	CM2 9UB
Telephone number:	01245 471654
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. S. Agar
Date of previous inspection:	May 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
19410	A. C. Matthews	Registered inspector	Foundation stage English as an additional language Science Design technology Physical education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9779	S. Smith	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22157	M. Roussel	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Mathematics Art and design Geography Music Religious Education	
2866	B. Battey	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Information and communication technology History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Larkrise Primary School is situated in the Rothmans Ward and the great majority of pupils come from this area of Great Baddow. Many of the pupils' families live in housing trust accommodation. The roll has remained stable since the last inspection in 1997 and the school is the same size as most other primary schools. The school is slightly under-subscribed. There are 220 pupils – 119 boys and 101 girls aged between four and 11 and taught in eight classes. The pupils come from a variety of backgrounds but the majority are from average socio-economic homes. There are five pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds which at just over 2% is below the national average. There is one pupil with English as an additional language which at 0.5% is well below the national average. There are 50 pupils eligible for free school meals which at 23% is slightly above the national average. Seventy-nine pupils are on the special needs register which is 36%, and this is above the national average. A significant minority of these pupils have challenging behaviour. There is one pupil with a statement of special need which at 0.5 per cent is below the national average. Pupil mobility rate for last year was slightly above the national average at 16%; 15 pupils joined the school and 20 left the school other than at the normal times. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is below average, with particular weaknesses in elements of literacy.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Larkrise Primary School is providing a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and pupils are achieving average standards at the end of Year 6, with higher-attaining pupils doing particularly well in reading and writing. The headteacher and new deputy have, in their short time in the school, correctly identified what the school needs to do to improve. However, the school's strategy for monitoring and improving teaching has not yet had enough impact, with the result that pupils' progress in some classes is not good enough. The school now has a clear action plan for next year and, with its supportive governors, is ready to take the task of improvement forward. Overall, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Consistently good teaching in Years 4, 5 and 6 enables pupils to make good progress in these years and achieve standards that are average in mathematics, English and science by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils make a good start to their education in the Reception class.
- The school has a very effective system of booster classes for pupils in Year 6.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and leads to pupils' good behaviour and attitudes to work.
- The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs, with the knowledgeable teaching assistants playing a significant role in their education.

What could be improved

- The progress pupils make in Years 1 and 2 in English, mathematics and science.
- The monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning by the headteacher and subject co-ordinators.
- The way the school deals with isolated bullying problems.
- The use of the results of assessments to guide teachers' future planning.
- Parents' involvement in their children's learning.
- Pupils' attendance.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection in May 1997. With reference to the issues of the last report, the school has introduced schemes of work for all years and adopted the national guidelines for children in the Reception class. The weaknesses in design and technology, information and communication technology (ICT), geography, history and religious education have all been addressed, with particularly good improvements in history. The school has adopted a commercial computer program to help monitor pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science, and set

targets for individual pupils to achieve by the end of each year. Systems for recording pupils' progress in other subjects are in place, but these have not been standardised. In other areas, there have been good improvements in the proportion of Year 6 pupils attaining the higher levels in their work but a fall in the proportion of Year 2 pupils reaching the higher levels. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was markedly better than during the last inspection; this was particularly the case in the percentage of very good or excellent lessons. Teaching assistants are well trained and knowledgeable, and give very good support to pupils' learning. The curriculum, and quality of teaching and learning in Reception class have improved significantly. The new headteacher has improved the process of school development planning and consults more widely with parents over school issues.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	D	C	C	D
mathematics	B	B	D	D
science	A	C	C	C

Key

well above average A

above average B

Average C

below average D

well below average E

The proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels in Year 6 for 2001 was average in science but below average in English and mathematics. Statistics show that these pupils made below average progress since taking their National Curriculum tests in Year 2. Standards for the present Year 6 show an improvement since last year, being average in all three subjects. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels in reading and writing has improved significantly and is now above average. Since taking their National Curriculum tests in Year 2, this particular group of pupils have maintained average standards in reading and writing but have significantly improved their standards in mathematics. Inspection evidence shows that pupils may miss the very challenging targets set for them but have exceeded expectations in the proportion of pupils achieving above average standards. The Year 6 pupils' trend in attainment over the last five years in English, mathematics and science is broadly in line with the national average, with no marked difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Children in the Reception class settle very well and make good progress, with the great majority achieving the nationally expected standards by the time they enter the Year 1 class. However, the quality of the children's writing is below expectations. Pupils in the present Year 2 have made unsatisfactory progress since Reception and achieve below average standards in English, mathematics and science, with the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels being too low.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are enthusiastic about school and have positive attitudes to their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The great majority of pupils are polite and behave well, but a very small minority are sometimes involved in bullying.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils respond well to the extra responsibilities they are given, have satisfactory relationships with each other and show increasing confidence as they become older.

Attendance	Unsatisfactory overall. However, the great majority of pupils attend school punctually and lessons begin promptly.
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Pupils respond positively to the teaching and most have a good awareness of how their actions affect others. However, a small minority of pupils are having a negative impact on other pupils' enjoyment of school because of their anti-social behaviour. Pupils' attendance has fallen since the last inspection and is now below the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and this relates closely to the overall satisfactory progress that pupils make as they move through the school. Whilst the quality of teaching observed during the inspection has improved since the last inspection, it is still not challenging enough in Years 1 and 2 where pupils are not making the progress they are capable of. The quality of teaching is consistently good in Reception and Years 4, 5 and 6, where a high proportion of lessons observed during the inspection were good or very good. Teachers plan their lessons carefully and most use questioning well to develop pupils' understanding. The teaching of basic skills in numeracy and literacy is good and teachers manage pupils' behaviour well. The knowledgeable teaching assistants give very good support to the teachers and this has a positive impact on the quality of learning in the classrooms and in the way that all pupils are fully included in activities. However, in a small number of lessons, the activities planned by the teachers do not sufficiently challenge pupils of all abilities. Whilst teachers mark work conscientiously, they do not consistently inform pupils what they need to do to improve their work. The teaching for pupils with special educational needs is carefully planned, and this leads directly to these pupils making good progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall and appropriately supplemented by visits, extra-curricular activities and close working relationships with the local nursery and secondary school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The careful planning and very good support by the teaching assistants ensures that pupils make good progress towards meeting the targets on their individual education plan.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school gives good support to pupils with English as an additional language.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Pupils are benefiting from the recently introduced circle time where pupils have opportunities to discuss issues that are important to them.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are satisfactory procedures for looking after pupils' personal welfare but the monitoring of their academic performance and attendance is unsatisfactory.

Parents have a positive view of the school and there is a satisfactory partnership between home and school. Parents' contribution to their children's learning at home is, however, unsatisfactory overall, as a significant minority of parents do not regularly help with reading and other homework. The school is not yet using the results of assessments to inform teachers' future planning. As a result, higher-attaining pupils in particular are not being sufficiently challenged in Years 1 and 2. The school works very hard to meet the need of its pupils, some of whom have serious behavioural problems. Very occasionally the school is too tolerant of unacceptable behaviour, and as a result, being bullied at school is still a fear of a small minority of pupils. Discussions of the school council have not focused on bullying, as the pupils on the council did not consider it a problem in school.

Drama advisers are working in school next term to help develop pupils' understanding of the importance of discussion and tolerance when disputes arise.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and senior teachers have drawn up clear plans to improve the school further and provide satisfactory leadership.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governors are supportive of the school and are playing a much more proactive part in planning its future developments.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. The school analyses its National Curriculum test results and weaknesses are being addressed through individual subject development plans. Subject co-ordinators have carefully analysed recent assessments in English and mathematics for Years 3, 4 and 5 with the school using this information to modify the curriculum for the next school year. The headteacher's monitoring of teaching is now carried out systematically, but it is not sufficiently rigorous. The school is beginning to use a computer program to set long-term targets for all its pupils.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The school makes particularly good use of the strengths of its teaching assistants and its special educational needs budget.

The role of the co-ordinators has not been sufficiently developed this year and they are not having the necessary impact on standards in their subjects. The school applies the principles of best value satisfactorily but could make even greater use of parents to help judge the effectiveness of the school.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children enjoy coming to school and behave well. Parents appreciate the openness of the new headteacher and find the school very approachable. The way that pupils of different ages work and play together. Teaching is good and pupils are expected to work hard. The quality of learning in the Foundation Stage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homework. Information from school and how closely the school works with parents. Challenge for higher-achieving pupils. Bullying. Range of extra-curricular activities.

Inspectors endorse all the parents' positive comments about the school except for the quality of teaching which they judge to be satisfactory overall. Inspectors believe the quality of regular newsletters is satisfactory but feel that reports should give more targets for improvement. Higher-achieving pupils

are well challenged in most years but there is a lack of challenge in Years 1 and 2. Homework is not regularly set and is not impacting sufficiently on pupils' learning. Inspectors accept there are very few activities for the younger pupils, but judge the range and quality of extra-curricular activities overall to be satisfactory when compared to most other schools. Despite the school's efforts with behaviour, bullying is still a problem for a small minority of pupils, and the action taken has not yet made the school a secure environment in which all pupils can learn and work happily together.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The improvement in pupils' attainment over the last four years has been in line with the national trends. The results for the 2001 National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils, showed that pupils exceeded the school's target for English but narrowly missed the target for mathematics. When compared to all schools, pupils' attainment was average in English and science but below average in mathematics. When compared to schools which draw their pupils from a similar background, the pupils' performance was average in science but below average in English and mathematics. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels was below average in English and mathematics but average in science. When compared to their National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 2, these pupils made below average progress in English and science and well below average progress in mathematics. However, the proportion of pupils with special educational needs in last year's Year 6 class had increased since the pupils were in Year 2, and a high proportion of these pupils had behavioural difficulties.
2. Inspection evidence indicates that the present Year 6 group of pupils has average attainment in English, mathematics and science. This represents maintained standards since the last inspection. It is unlikely that the very challenging targets for English and mathematics are going to be met but inspection evidence shows that there is an increased proportion of pupils successfully working at the higher levels. This is particularly so in English. Over the last three years there has been very little difference between the attainment of boys and girls in the three subjects and during the inspection no significant differences were seen in standards achieved by pupils of different gender, ethnicity or background.
3. During the three years prior to this year, standards at the end of Year 2 remained broadly average for reading and writing but consistently below average for mathematics. However, the results for writing in the year 2001 showed pupils' attainment to be well above average as was the proportion of pupils working at the higher levels. When compared to similar schools, Year 2 pupils' attainment last year was well above average in writing, average in reading and below average in mathematics. The proportion achieving the higher levels in reading and mathematics was below average. Inspection evidence for the present Year 2 group of pupils shows that their attainment has fallen since last year, being below average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. The proportion of pupils working at the higher levels has fallen considerably since last year, and too few pupils are now achieving these levels.
4. Pupils under five enter the Reception class with attainment that is below that expected of children of a similar age. Children's literacy skills are often well below average. They make good progress in all of the six areas of learning and, by the time they leave the Reception class, children will achieve the 'Early Learning Goals'¹ in all areas except for writing where the children's attainment is still below average. Children benefit from the consistently good teaching and from the way that the teaching and teaching assistants place a strong emphasis on practical work as a vehicle for the children's learning. As a result, children have many good opportunities to learn in this way. This helps them to gain a real understanding of new concepts and carefully planned activities enable them to practise and consolidate their newly acquired skills. Children's good progress is not only due to the consistently good teaching, but also to the teacher's and teaching assistants' careful planning which successfully promotes the Early Learning Goals in each of the areas of learning. All staff in the Reception class know the children very well and, take every opportunity

¹ Early learning goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the foundation stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with communication language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning, for example, in language and literacy pupils should be able to write their own name and other things such as labels and begin to write simple sentences.

to interact with them about their learning. As a result the development of children's speaking and listening skills is particularly effective.

5. Standards in English for Year 2 pupils have fallen since the last inspection and are below average. Pupils have made unsatisfactory progress since leaving the Reception class because the teaching is insufficiently modified to meet the needs of individuals. This year there has been a discernible lack of challenge for the higher-achieving pupils and, as a result, pupils' overall standards are below average for both writing and reading. However, pupils' speaking and listening skills are in line with national expectations. Pupils make good progress from Years 3 to 6 and attain average levels in reading, writing and speaking and listening. The proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels in reading and writing has risen markedly this year because of the very successful "booster class" teaching which has helped the school to target far more accurately the needs of the older pupils.
6. Pupils' attainment in mathematics at the end of Year 2 is below average and it is average at the end of Year 6. This represents a decline in standards in Year 2 and a maintaining of standards in Year 6 since the last inspection. Pupils in Year 2 have made unsatisfactory progress since leaving the Reception class and much of this is due to the unchallenging work and overuse of work sheets which do not meet the needs of pupils, particularly the more able. Whilst pupils have average knowledge in time telling and in shape and measure work, there are weaknesses in the way they use their number skills in problem solving situations. Pupils make good progress in Years 4 and 5 and particularly good progress in Year 6, where the booster classes and the work of the special educational needs co-ordinator have led to an increase in the proportion of pupils working at the higher levels. Year 6 pupils have good skills in their number work and use these well in their mental mathematics because this is well emphasised by the teachers. Teachers' planned use of ICT to support and develop pupils' learning in the subject is inconsistent.
7. Year 2 pupils' attainment in science has fallen since the last inspection and is now below average, with a low proportion of pupils working at the higher levels. Pupils' unsatisfactory progress and low attainment are due to a lack of opportunities for investigation work in teachers' planning that does not ensure that all aspects of the subject are covered to the required level. This is particularly so in pupils' knowledge of plants, forces and materials. However, the small number of Year 2 pupils in the Year 1/ 2 class have covered a wider range of science topics than the other Year 2 pupils and these have given more opportunities for investigation work. There is a good emphasis on investigation work in Years 3 to 6. Good teaching successfully challenges the higher-attaining pupils and teachers' high expectations result in a good volume of quality work that is very carefully presented and makes good use of pupils' literacy, numeracy and observational drawing skills. By the end of Year 6 pupils have good knowledge in all areas apart from life and living processes where pupils' attainment is comparatively weaker. Whilst pupils use their scientific knowledge to explain the findings of their investigations, their ability to make hypotheses is less well developed.
8. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) is in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. The school has maintained standards since the last inspection. Whilst pupils benefit from opportunities to be taught ICT skills in the recently developed computer suite, a lack of computers in the classroom means that pupils do not have immediate access to computers to practise their newly developed skills. Year 2 pupils have satisfactory word processing skills and use these appropriately to access information on the Internet about the 'Great Fire of London' as part of their history topic. By the end of Year 6, pupils have satisfactory skills in all areas of the subject and there is some good use of computers to support their work in literacy and geography. However, the opportunity for pupils to improve their standards and apply their skills across the curriculum more is being restricted by the lack of immediate access to computers.
9. Pupils' attainment in religious education is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This shows an improvement since the last inspection when pupils made unsatisfactory progress through the school. Pupils in Year 2 have a sound knowledge of Christianity and other major faiths. They know that different faiths have 'special people' and also 'special books'. Pupils' satisfactory knowledge is appropriately built on and, by the end of Year 6, pupils have developed their understanding of different religions appropriately,

and also make good use of this knowledge to discuss important issues. For example, why did Germans stand by and not help the Jews during the Second World War? Pupils were then able to relate what has happened in history to what happens to them in their daily lives and the issues which they have to confront, such as bullying.

10. Pupils attainment in other subjects is in line with national expectations in all other subjects except for music and history in Years 3 to 6, where pupils' progress is good and attainment is above average. Older pupils benefit from the high profile of music in the school. The standards in Year 4 are particularly impressive, where pupils have benefited from an "adopt a musician" initiative. In this, a professional musician has worked with the pupils and this has led to the pupils performing two compositions they had created at the local civic centre. Other older pupils benefit from the expertise of the music co-ordinator during school singing sessions. As a result they are very enthusiastic about their music making and show good diction and pitch. Standards in history for the older pupils have improved considerably since the last inspection. Year 6 studies on the Second World War are of a high standard with pupils making good use of their writing and investigative skills. Their enthusiasm was further engendered by links with local members of the 'University of the Third Age' who brought in artefacts and talked to the pupils about their wartime experiences as children. Although swimming is only taught in Year 3, the pupils' standards are good for pupils of this age, and some higher attaining pupils have successfully completed survival awards.
11. Pupils' numeracy and literacy skills are satisfactorily developed through the curriculum. The improvement in the quality of writing for the older pupils is due to teachers' careful planning that creates opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills in subjects such as science, design and technology, history and geography. This was particularly evident in Year 6 pupils' writing about World War II. There is also evidence of pupils using their numeracy skills to support their work in science and design and technology.
12. Pupils on the special educational needs register make good progress overall. Children in the Reception and in Years 3 to 6 receive very good levels of assistance in their classes from the teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have not received the same levels of support as the older pupils this year because of day release for some staff training and the way that the support has to been targeted more towards individual pupils. As a result, pupils' progress is less marked in these years. The teaching assistants help to ensure that the pupils are fully involved in the lesson's work and make appropriate progress. There is a good emphasis on improving pupils' literacy and numeracy skills and good attention is given to improving pupils' behaviour and attitudes towards their learning. Careful planning helps pupils with English as an additional language to build successfully on their prior learning and develop appropriate literacy skills.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. Attitudes to learning are usually good; inspection findings confirm the view of the large majority of parents that their children enjoy coming to school. Children in the Reception class settle into school routines happily, they enjoy their work and are eager to be involved in activities; this gets them off to a good start with their learning. Where work is planned well according to individual pupils' ability and explained clearly, most respond with enthusiasm, try hard and learn well. This is seen significantly more often in the Reception and junior classes. Pupils show pleasing levels of interest, and sometimes delight where they have a practical involvement and when they meet visitors to the school, for example during the whole school session about recycling with the 'Cycler Robot'. This has a positive impact on how well they learn. Most are able to maintain levels of concentration well, ensuring that they continue until their work is completed; a few have difficulty with this and need constant refocusing by their teacher and teaching assistants. Where this is managed effectively, they respond well and make good progress in their learning. Most pupils have positive attitudes to the work they are expected to do at home; although their development as independent learners slows as they move through the school because the amount of homework given does not increase sufficiently as they prepare for transfer to secondary education. Their ability to research and find out independently in lessons develops inconsistently according to individual teacher's planning. There are good examples in some English and history

classes, and also in ICT where pupils work well in pairs. Pupils with special educational needs are very positive about school and respond very well to their learning because of the well-planned support they receive. This enables them to make good progress and raises their self-esteem.

14. There is a satisfactory response in school to the clear expectations for pupils' behaviour. Most pupils have a clear understanding of school rules and are usually happy to abide by them. They know right from wrong and expect fairness and justice in their dealings with each other; they also recognise where this is not forthcoming. In lessons, pupils in most classes respond well to the strategies used to manage their behaviour. There is a small minority of pupils, particularly in Years 3 to 6 whose self-discipline has not developed as well as needed. Often they have short concentration spans and find it difficult to remain focused on their work without regular attention from either their teacher or teaching assistant. Occasionally, their behaviour interrupts the learning of their peers, but mostly it is well managed by the experienced staff. At lunchtime, pupils socialise well in the dining room, show courtesy and respect for the staff on duty, and are able to interact confidently with visitors. In the playground, they usually play happily together. Despite this, there are the occasional incidences of bullying and these are not always satisfactorily resolved, resulting in some pupils being unhappy at school. There have been no exclusions during the present school year. There are usually high levels of respect for the school buildings, pupils' work on display and the materials and equipment used in lessons. The site is relatively free from litter and there are no graffiti.
15. Relationships throughout the school are satisfactory, and the pupils show a good response to the extra responsibilities they are given as they become older. Pupils are confident with their teachers and usually happy to approach either them or the teaching assistants with any problems and concerns; this is particularly so with younger pupils. High levels of mutual respect in lessons results in most pupils co-operating well with their teachers and this has a positive impact on their learning. Pupils are usually confident about expressing their own views and opinions and performing in front of their peers. They are usually listened to with interest and without interruption. Pupils representing their classes on the school council do so with pride, but have not yet developed the ability to interact through debate about issues raised or to take responsibility for running their meetings. Pupils are keen to help their teachers and conscientiously carry out the various monitoring tasks showing growing levels of responsibility as they move through the years. In Years 5 and 6, they help willingly in the library, with photocopying, in assemblies and they support staff at lunchtimes with younger pupils. Recent good work done by the school has raised the pupils' awareness and appreciation of environmental issues and pupils take an active interest in the contribution they can make to save and recycle valuable resources. Most pupils show a growing responsibility towards others; for example, Year 6 pupils develop good self-esteem when writing and reading stories for the younger children.
16. Levels of attendance have fallen since the time of the last inspection and significantly so over the last year. They are now below the national average. There is no unauthorised absence. Reasons for absence are always sought and a sample of written explanations from parents show that they are usually sound. During the last year there have been a very small number of pupils with high levels of absence because of ill health and in a small school this has a disproportionate impact on attendance levels. The school is working closely with the school nurse and educational welfare officer to monitor these pupils' attendance. There is also some absence because of family holidays taken during term time. The school has not yet carried out any analysis to identify possible patterns of absence amongst the various groups within its community. Most pupils arrive on time for the start of the day, ensuring that lessons get off to a prompt start.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and this equates closely to the satisfactory overall progress that pupils make as they move through the school. Inspection evidence shows that children make a good start to their education in the Reception class, where the quality of teaching is consistently good. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 also make good progress because the teaching is very challenging and builds well on their prior learning. A particularly high

proportion of lessons seen in these years was of very good or excellent quality. The use of booster classes for Year 6 pupils has had a marked impact on their progress, particularly with the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels. Although no unsatisfactory lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2 during the inspection, the quality of teaching over time is unsatisfactory because it does not sufficiently challenge the full range of pupils in the class and they do not make the progress of which they are capable. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Year 3, although in some of the lessons observed during the inspection the behaviour of a small minority of pupils occasionally disrupted the learning of their peers.

18. Children in the Reception class are enthusiastic about their learning because the teaching is challenging and carefully planned. The quality of teaching is the major reason for the good progress children make in all areas of learning and the positive attitudes that they show in their first year in school. A great strength of the teaching is the emphasis placed on practical learning activities, which helps the children gain a real understanding of the new concepts they have been taught. The practice and consolidation of their newly acquired skills is made enjoyable and interesting for them. The teacher and teaching assistants work very well together and provide very good role models. The teacher uses questioning very effectively to ensure that children understand their ongoing work, and is well supported by the experienced teaching assistants who give very good support to the children.
19. The quality of teaching in English has fallen since the last inspection in Years 1 and 2 and is unsatisfactory, but has improved in Years 3 to 6, where teaching is now good. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make unsatisfactory progress because the work is not sufficiently challenging and is often too teacher-directed. Frequently, pupils spend too long sitting on the carpet listening to explanations and lose interest. Often the tasks set are too easy and higher-attaining pupils in particular do not make sufficient progress. This is resulting in below average standards in reading and writing which the school is going to have to work hard to correct in future years. The older pupils in the school show very positive attitudes towards their work because teachers plan carefully for the wide range of ability in each class, and have high expectations of the quality of work that pupils can produce. The older pupils also use their reading and writing skills very effectively in other subjects because the teachers plan this work very carefully. As a result, some very good writing was seen in subjects such as history, geography and science.
20. The quality of teaching in mathematics has fallen in Years 1 and 2 since the last inspection. It is now unsatisfactory because the overall pace of learning is too slow, there is a lack of challenge, particularly for the higher-attaining pupils and an over-reliance on work sheets. As in English, pupils' progress accelerates in Years 3 to 6 because of the higher expectations and more careful planning which successfully builds on pupils' prior learning. High expectations have led to some strengths in the older pupils' number work which teachers extend in challenging mental work.
21. There has been a disappointing fall in the proportion of Year 2 pupils working at the higher levels in science. Much of this is due to unsatisfactory teaching which does not emphasise the development of pupils' investigative skills. Pupils' attainment is also below average because they have not covered all elements of the subject. The Year 2 pupils have not built on the sound progress that they made in Year 1 where the quality of teaching is satisfactory and pupils successfully cover all areas of learning. Consistently good quality and challenging teaching in Years 3 to 6 raises the rate of pupils' learning and inspires them to work hard. Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning because much of it is practically based and teachers plan good opportunities to use their scientific knowledge to explain their findings. However, pupils' ability to hypothesise is less well developed because this is not so well emphasised by the teachers.
22. The quality of teaching of information and communication technology (ICT) has remained satisfactory. Teachers have benefited from their national training and are more confident to teach the subject than at the time of the last inspection. The decision to put all the school's computers together in the ICT room is having a positive impact on the development of pupils' skills. However, the majority of the classrooms no longer have a computer and this means pupils do not have immediate access to a computer to support their work in other subjects. The teaching of pupils in Year 5 and 6 is consistently good and pupils are able to use their skills more effectively across the curriculum as they have access to computers in their classrooms. Teaching assistants

provide good support during lessons, and their skills have also been enhanced through some well-focused in-service training.

23. The quality of teaching has been maintained in religious education and leads to pupils making satisfactory progress through the school. Teachers use questioning well as a way of developing pupils' interests and knowledge. For example in Year 2, the questioning revised and extended pupils' understanding of the significant books and places of worship for different faiths. Careful planning by the Year 6 teacher made good use of pupils' subject knowledge to discuss the persecution of the Jews in pre-war Germany and related this to the way that pupils treat each other in the school playground.
24. In Years 1 and 2 the teaching in other subjects is satisfactory. Teachers have sound subject knowledge and use this appropriately in their questioning. Teachers make satisfactory use of their teaching assistants to ensure that all pupils are fully included in the lessons activities. Whilst teachers' marking is carried out diligently, there is too little indication to the pupils of what they need to do to improve their work. This is particularly so with the Year 2 pupils, where unsatisfactory work is often not challenged. Teachers expect pupils to behave well in lessons and classroom routines are generally understood by the pupils. As a result, little time is lost on the disciplining of pupils.
25. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' progress accelerates because good use is made of the teachers' knowledge and the basic skills are taught very well. This is particularly the case in history and music, where the quality of teaching is particularly effective. The teachers plan very carefully to ensure that pupils of all abilities and background are appropriately challenged. This results in pupils working hard and producing a good volume of work. The pupils want to do well for their teachers and this is symptomatic of the good relationships that exist in the classes. Pupils behave well because there is a high expectation placed on them. Occasionally a small minority of pupils misbehaves and disrupts the learning of their peers. Teaching assistants are used particularly well in the pupils' learning. They are knowledgeable and sensitive to the pupils' needs and make a strong team with the class teacher. Teachers make appropriate use of assessment from previous lessons to inform future planning. This was clearly seen in a physical education lesson where pupils practised throwing and catching skills which the teacher felt were not good enough in a previous lesson. As a result of the extra practices, the skills increased and these were well incorporated into a future games lesson.
26. The use of homework to support pupils' learning is unsatisfactory. Parents' concerns about homework were confirmed in discussions with pupils who commented that much of the homework set had often been finished in class by the majority of pupils and that most homework was unchallenging. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good overall and they generally make good progress towards the targets on their Individual Education Plans. Occasionally, opportunities are missed to help these pupils when the teaching method and resources are not appropriate to the individual pupils' needs. However, the needs of these pupils are generally planned for appropriately and this ensures that they are fully included in the learning of the class. Particularly effective is the way that the teaching assistants work closely with these pupils in literacy lessons, redefining the pupils' tasks and giving a well-focused approach to meet their respective needs. This enables them to complete their tasks successfully alongside their fellow pupils, giving them a strong feeling of self worth. The quality of teaching for pupils with English as an additional language is good and the individual needs of the pupils carefully planned for. The school can call on the help of a local authority specialist language teacher when the need arises. At present this is not necessary, and the careful planning by the classroom teachers helps pupils to make good progress in developing their literacy skills which enables them to take a full part in the curriculum.

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

27. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the curriculum is good for children in the Foundation Stage. For other pupils, the National Curriculum requirements are met

satisfactorily. The school has improved the provision for design and technology, information and communication technology (ICT) geography, history and religious education since the last inspection. It has put into place schemes of work for all subjects and for the Foundation Stage. The schemes give good support to teachers' planning and have led to the improved quality of planning seen during the inspection. The provision for ICT has been improved with a new computer suite, which allows for whole class teaching. Pupils do not, however, have sufficient access to computers in class as most of the computers have been moved into the new suite. As a result, the use of ICT to support pupils' work in other subjects is underdeveloped. The school has satisfactorily implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Teachers' plan more opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills than their numeracy skills in other subjects.

28. For children in the Reception class there is a good breadth, balance and relevance to the curriculum. The curriculum has improved since the last inspection with the full implementation of the six areas of learning. Across the rest of the school, there is a satisfactory breadth and balance to the curriculum. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, have full access to the curriculum and the school works hard to ensure that all pupils are fully included in all aspects of learning. Pupils with English as an additional language are well supported in class. There are some occasions when pupils are withdrawn for extra help; for example, pupils with special educational needs are given extra support for literacy and numeracy. Other pupils are sometimes withdrawn for reading support, and when the need arises, for behavioural support. However, great care is taken to ensure that what they are taught relates closely to the work of their peers. Overall the way the school ensures that all pupils are fully included in the curriculum is very good. The new regulations to ensure promotion of good race relations are in place and no pupils are excluded from attending the school because of gender, race, ability or religion. For example, pupils from a community of Exclusive Brethren families attend the school and the school very sensitively respects and takes account of their religious views.
29. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good overall and has improved since the last inspection. Pupils have good individual education plans that are reviewed regularly. These plans include specific targets, and provide helpful guidance for class teachers and support staff. Very good levels of support are given to pupils by teaching assistants and by the special educational needs co-ordinator who, occasionally, withdraws pupils for teaching in small groups where the teaching is clearly focussed on their specific needs. The special educational needs co-ordinator also withdraws more able pupils for numeracy support in Years 5 and 6. This support has impacted well on the increase in the proportion of pupils working at the higher levels. Older pupils benefit more from this support, as similar support is not given to the younger pupils.
30. The school's extra-curricular provision is satisfactory. At present the school offers pupils opportunities to play football, netball and cricket after school and also competes against other schools. Other activities include environmental studies, dance, percussion and computer clubs. Teachers, teaching assistants and outside agencies effectively support the running of these popular clubs.
31. Links with the local community are good. These include visits from people to talk about their work, such as a local vicar, the local police officer, road safety and environmental officers, and representatives from charity organisations. Visiting musicians and drama groups, visits to local art galleries and places of interest, such as the church enrich the pupils' learning. For example, a local organisation called The University of the Third Age, supported by the local parish council, made a significant contribution to the work in history when the older pupils studied World War II. Here, members have visited the school and described their experiences during the war. Pupils talked enthusiastically and knowledgeably about their visit.
32. There are good relationships with other schools. Effective links with the local High School have led to pupils from Years 10 and 11 working in the school. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 visit the High School. The school gives good support to students from other schools and colleges who work in school as part of their own course work. There are good links with the local authority advisory services and loan services. Here the provision of artefacts and books does much to support the curriculum for subjects such as history and geography.

33. The school is making a satisfactory provision for pupils' personal, social and health education through a recently implemented policy and programme of learning. This includes teaching about the dangers of alcohol and smoking, and drugs and sex education for older pupils. These are mainly taught within the science programme of work supported by input from the school nurse. Good emphasis is placed on sharing thoughts and feelings during 'circle time' and through focussed lessons for older pupils. For example, in a good Year 6 lesson pupils discussed racism, and their understanding was enhanced by the good use of recently purchased resources. Pupils are encouraged to be aware of their responsibilities as well as their rights. Topics for discussion, such as 'making choices' and 'responsibilities' are well integrated into other subjects as well as assembly times. The school actively encourages pupils to take on a range of tasks around the school to assist with its smooth day-to-day running. There are register monitors, pupils operate the over-head projector in assemblies, help with the organisation of the school library, and in the school office. The school council gives opportunities for pupils to take the views of their peers to this forum. However, there are missed opportunities for pupils to take a greater role in this council, such as chairing and minuting meetings, and for more debate, before the headteacher makes a decision on matters raised. The council does, however, give opportunities to raise issues that are important to them; a good example of the involvement of pupils was seen in the positive responses they made to a recent incident of bullying.
34. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is a similar judgement to that of the previous inspection. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is particularly good. Members of staff value each individual and help them understand school rules and acceptable ways of conducting themselves. Parents are pleased with the way the school is helping their children become mature and responsible.
35. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to gain insights into the values and beliefs of others in order to develop their spiritual awareness. The collective acts of worship are regularly led by visiting clergy and school staff. In the week of the inspection, the vicar took the first assembly of the week on the theme of 'Tears and Smiles.' Good opportunities were given for pupils to contribute their ideas on what makes people happy, sad, excited or afraid. Other visitors to the school promote pupils' spiritual awareness, such as visits from Christian charities. Pupils also have opportunities to appreciate the exciting nature of the world around them through their own school environment and of the wider world. Examples of the world around them are seen in artwork and displays in the school, such as the textile wall hanging in the hall that was made by all the pupils, with contributions from parents and the local community. By displaying and valuing their work, the school successfully promotes the pupils' self-esteem.
36. The school's approach to pupils' moral development is good. Teachers and their assistants provide good role models and their positive approach combines with a focus on clear values to which pupils respond positively. This results in good standards of behaviour and a clear awareness of the difference between right and wrong. Pupils are generally well disciplined and, by their actions, help to create an orderly school. This is enhanced by a school code of conduct that highlights one rule for all, "Everyone will act with courtesy and consideration to others at all times." This is followed by seven statements about how this rule will be conducted in classrooms and around the school. If rules are broken there is an appropriate series of sanctions involving parents when necessary. Positive rewards are given, for example at a celebration assembly where pupils are publicly praised for their efforts and commitment to the school. Despite the school's hard work to make pupils' aware of their actions on others, there are still some occurrences of bullying about which the school needs to take a firmer line.
37. The provision for encouraging the social development of the pupils is good. The school values its members and encourages pupils to integrate well both at work and at play. For example, older pupils write stories for younger pupils, which they read to them. Year 6 pupils take on specific responsibilities, such as collecting and delivering registers to and from the school office, help with the music and overhead projector in school assemblies and deliver letters to classes for sending out to parents. In the classroom, there are opportunities for pupils to work together in pairs or groups. They are encouraged to take a pride in seeing their classroom is tidy and to undertake various tasks to help their teachers.

38. Pupils' awareness of people outside the school community is developed through visits to places as well as visitors to the school. There has been a range of visitors to the school; these included a professional musician who worked regularly with the Year 4 class in the 'Adopt a Musician' project. Past visitors have included an African Artist in residence who worked with pupils on clay mask making, and a storyteller and poet who visited during the school's 'arts week'. During the week of inspection, there was a visit from the 'Waste-buster' bus which was followed by a recycling assembly where the 'Recycling Robot' reinforced the message of 'Reduce, Reuse, Recycle'. A residential visit is undertaken by pupils in Year 6 to Cardfields Field Studies Centre. This makes a very good contribution to the pupils' social development. Pupils raise money for charities and are very closely involved in the school's Summer Fayre.
39. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils start to understand their own cultural background from nursery rhymes, poetry, stories, music and historical studies. Painting and music help them to develop a greater awareness of beautiful things, as does the beauty of the world about them. This can be seen in pupils' studies of artists and designers such as Georgia O'Keefe, Clarice Cliff and Pablo Picasso. Pupils visit museums, but visits to art galleries are limited. There are opportunities for pupils to experience the rhythms and music from various cultures as well as their own, through the use of the wide range of recorded music and school instruments. In historical and geographical studies, pupils gain knowledge and understanding of other cultures, past and present. The pupils learn about Christianity, Hinduism and Judaism and of the range of festivals and celebrations, especially Christian festivals. However, the concentration on Christian festivals limits the opportunities for pupils to gain an understanding of the celebrations and festivals of other cultures. However, the school has recognised that pupils' cultural development is an area that needs further development, especially in gaining knowledge and understanding of the diversity of multi-cultural British society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. Testing of children in the Reception class is carried out during the first half term and the results used carefully to plan the individual children's work. For older pupils, the school uses a range of tests in reading, spelling, writing and mathematics to determine their attainment. These results together with teachers' records are effectively used to assist in the early identification of pupils with special educational needs. However, in class, teachers do not make enough use of this data to monitor the pupils' academic performance and to analyse trends in performance; for example between year groups or the relative achievement of boys and girls. The planning of a majority of teachers for English and mathematics does not make effective use of this assessment information, and in many lessons, pupils are often given the same task which do not sufficiently challenge the wide range of ability in each class. However, in the classes of the older pupils, the teachers are beginning to make greater use of the assessment results to set individual targets for the pupils. This is a good initiative that is beginning to help pupils understand what they need to do to improve. However, the targets are often too broad and do not sufficiently inform pupils of the small steps which must be taken to meet the end target. The school will have in place common assessment procedures for the beginning of next term, but not a record sheet for the different subjects. This makes it difficult for teachers to plan challenging work for their new classes at the beginning of the new school year. The newly appointed assessment co-ordinator has some relevant ideas, which are included in the school's new development plan.
41. Arrangements made by the school for the health, safety and welfare of pupils are satisfactory. Effective links with the local nursery school gives the children the confidence to settle quickly and happily into the Reception class. There is a suitably trained person with designated responsibility for child protection and the educational welfare officer (EWO) has recently provided training for all members of staff; there are, however, no formal arrangements for the regular updating of staff on these procedures. The policy to support this aspect of the school's work needs reviewing fully to reflect current guidance. Support from the local police is targeted at raising pupils' awareness about personal safety issues. The school works assiduously to secure support services where individual pupils need specialist help, particularly those with special education needs. There are suitable arrangements to deal with first aid emergencies and the school has ensured a high level

of staff training for this purpose. Although there is a regular and conscientious inspection of the premises each term to identify possible health and safety hazards, this is not informed by a formal assessment of risk as required. The school has suitable arrangements for assessing the risks involved with the trips and visits arranged for pupils. No unsafe practices were seen in lessons during the week of inspection.

42. Registration procedures meet statutory requirements for recording those present in the school, and there are suitable procedures to ensure that registers are secure and accessible in the event of emergency, although these are not always consistently used. Parents are contacted promptly on the first morning of unexplained absence. The school has started to monitor the time taken for family holidays during term time. Attendance levels have dropped over the last year to an unsatisfactory level. The school is working closely with the school nurse and educational welfare officer to monitor the attendance of the small number of poor attenders. This intervention has been successful in improving attendance of two thirds of these pupils. There are, as yet, no routines in place to monitor for patterns of absence amongst the various groups that make up the school community. There is also some absence because of family holidays taken during term time. The school has not yet carried out any analysis to identify possible patterns of absence amongst the various groups within its community.
43. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour have been reviewed recently. The headteacher spent considerable time and effort in this work, and was rightly determined to consult as widely as possible, and in particular with parents and pupils. This has resulted in a clearly expressed policy that offers suitable guidance to staff when dealing with problems and rewarding achievement. There are awards for achievement in all aspects of school life ensuring that all pupils have the opportunity to be successful. Strategies for managing behaviour in the classroom are used successfully in most classes to ensure that learning is not disrupted. Whilst there is a stepped approach to dealing with behaviour problems, this has not been effectively used to deal with some persistent bullying that is causing distress to a small minority of pupils. Recording systems to monitor pupils' behaviour, where there is concern, are not consistently well kept. However, the school has recently made a good start in its work to develop an anti-bullying culture through programmes involving pupils in Years 5, 6 and Reception.
44. The school has recently produced planning for pupils' personal, health and social education (PHSE) that gives good support to their personal development. At present the school monitors pupils' personal development satisfactorily. Their understanding of citizenship is beginning to develop through the school council and there are further, as yet unexplored, opportunities in this through taking responsibility, for example in minuting and chairing meetings, and through debate. The school gives good encouragement to pupils to take responsibility through a range of tasks, particularly for those in Years 5 and 6. For example, helping teachers with PE equipment and photocopying, paired reading with younger pupils, and writing some of the material they use for this. Pupils help in the library and with the overhead projector in assemblies. Some older pupils also give good support to younger pupils in the playground.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45. The large majority of parents have good levels of satisfaction with what the school provides and achieves. They feel comfortable about approaching staff with problems and most say their children like coming to school, are taught well, expected to work hard and make good progress. Some have concerns about homework, and inspection evidence confirms that, although satisfactory overall for younger children, there is insufficient work set for those in Years 3 to 6, particularly as they prepare for transfer to secondary school. There is also some dissatisfaction with the information received about children's progress and the way in which school works with the parents. Inspectors agree that, although they have ample opportunity to discuss this with teachers, the annual reports do not currently provide sufficient information about how well pupils are doing or set targets for improvement. The school has plans to improve these for the next school year. Inspection findings did not support those parents who are dissatisfied with extra curricular provision. The variety of clubs and other activities available is suitably focused more on

older pupils who are less tired at the end of the school day. However, the range of trips, visits and visitors to the school benefit all pupils and helps to enhance their learning.

46. The effectiveness of the school's partnership with parents is satisfactory overall. Parents feel they are warmly welcomed into the school and that access to teachers enables them to share concerns. They say that this has recently improved. They feel that concerns are taken seriously by the school, but feel that a follow-up meeting would assure them that the concern had been effectively addressed. The prospectus and governor's annual report provide a suitable range of information about expectations, routines and performance. The regular newsletters keep parents well informed. Arrangements for new parents to find out about the school are well planned and ensure they know key staff before their children start in Reception. Information about what their children will be learning during the next term is sent home to parents, and this encourages them to take an interest in their children's work. The school has involved parents in a survey about behaviour, as part of the process of producing a new policy. Some feel that though this was a good initiative, it has not yet had sufficient impact, particularly on bullying.
47. The format of annual reports has improved since the time of the last inspection and they now report on individual subjects; despite this positive move, further improvement is needed. Reports are produced during the summer term and parents are able to attend an open evening to see their children's work and discuss their child's progress with teachers. Progress reports give good information about the work covered by the whole class and in English and mathematics there is often some evaluation of what pupils know and can do and reference to the progress they have made. They do not, however, always give an accurate reflection of standards achieved or the progress made. In the best examples, useful information is given about what pupils need to do to improve. In other subjects, reports often recount work covered by the class and describe positive aspects of pupils' attitudes, but give little indication to parents what their children know and can do or the progress they have made. Where pupils do not attend school regularly, parents are not told specifically what impact this has had on their child's learning. There is good involvement of parents with children with a statement of special need. They are fully involved in annual reviews of the statements and in the setting of new targets. Those parents whose children have individual education plans are encouraged to discuss the targets set with staff and agree how they can support their children at home. There is good attendance at these meetings, and parents of these children value the high quality and caring support they receive.
48. The impact of parents' involvement with the work of the school is unsatisfactory. Parents provide effective support through an active parent and teacher association that regularly holds both social and fundraising events. Funds raised are used well to extend and enhance opportunities for learning. Several parents help regularly each week in the school, providing valuable additional support. Most are interested in their children's learning, but a significant minority does not regularly help their children with work that is sent home. This is not helped by the unsatisfactory homework provision nor the lack of knowledge that most parents have about their children's short-term targets. The school is aware that current reading books do little to encourage parental involvement and has plans to improve these for the next school year. There is an expectation that parents with children in the Reception class will help their children with work that is taken home. Most give good support that helps to consolidate the new skills learned in school. However, some parents do not regularly help their children, and this limits the progress these children make.
49. Parents appreciate the improved channels of communication between home and school. Both parents and pupils had a significant input into the drawing up of a new behaviour policy for the school. However, the school has not yet evaluated the success of this initiative by canvassing the views of parents and the pupils themselves. As a result, the school was not sufficiently aware of parents' continuing concerns that the new behaviour policy was not fully addressing the bullying problem. However, bullying has been discussed at school council meetings but was not considered a problem.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50. The overall management by the headteacher and her deputy is satisfactory. The headteacher has been in place since the beginning of the school year. She appointed a new deputy who joined her after one term. The headteacher decided to evaluate the school's provision before making changes. Resultant changes have been made. These include the increased involvement of both staff and governors in the drawing up of the school development, greater responsibility for co-ordinators' in the development of their subjects, and the introduction of an 'open door' policy for parents. Feedback from staff, governors and parents is very positive on the improvements that these changes have made. The organisation of the Year 6 booster classes this year and the involvement of the special educational needs co-ordinator has led to improved achievement, particularly in the proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels in reading and writing. The monitoring of lessons by the headteacher has helped to identify teachers' strengths and weaknesses. Improvements have been made through teachers observing each other teach. However, there has not yet been sufficient time to ensure that the quality of teaching is consistent through the school, and this is the principal reason for Year 2 pupils' unsatisfactory progress this year. The new deputy complements the headteacher's skills well, and they provide a balanced team with a shared vision for school improvement. Since she started at the school, much of the deputy's time has been spent in setting up the new computer suite and teaching a lively Year 5 class. The use of the deputy's skills in this way was right for the school, but has meant that her time for school management issues has been limited.
51. The subject co-ordinators in English, mathematics and science have had no opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning this year, and as such their role has been unsatisfactory. However, the English and mathematics co-ordinators have done a useful analysis of the assessments by Years 3, 4 and 5, which will be used by teachers to adjust their planning for these groups of pupils next year. Similarly, the National Curriculum tests taken by this year's Year 2 and Year 6 pupils will be analysed to enable shortcomings to be addressed. The role of the subject co-ordinators is undeveloped in the non-core subjects and they have too little impact on standards. The exception is the role of the music co-ordinator, whose specialist skills are used well by the school, particularly in the juniors. However, in several non-core subjects, co-ordinators have been developing new schemes of work to replace the two year rolling programme of work. This is a good initiative and will make it easier for the school to make greater use of the national guidance for individual subjects. The school is aware that co-ordinators need to have more impact on standards in their subjects, and from the beginning of next term all co-ordinators will have regular release time to monitor the quality of teaching, learning, standards and resources in their subjects. From next term the school will also be using a revised computer program which sets annual targets for individual pupils in English, mathematics and science. This will give a clear focus to the co-ordinators' monitoring role, and will give teachers of all classes a clear understanding of the standards that pupils should achieve at the end of each academic year.
52. The governing body successfully fulfils its statutory responsibilities and is supportive of the school. Governors' understanding of their role has improved noticeably since the arrival of the new headteacher. Collectively they have a range of skills and experience, although more could be done to use these skills to help the school evaluate the quality of its developments. Some of the governors work in the school, and several help in classrooms or visit regularly. In this way they have a good understanding of the school's activities and its areas of concern. For example, governors became concerned about some behaviour problems in Years 4 and 5 and, as a result of discussions, the governors' finance committee agreed additional funds for extra support for these pupils. Governors regularly observe lessons and give feedback to co-ordinators. This successfully increases the governors' involvement in a particular subject and makes them aware of the development of the curriculum through the school. There are good systems in place for the dissemination of this information at full governing body meetings. There are good opportunities for governors who cannot regularly come in to school to meet staff. An informal meeting is arranged for all staff and governors prior to formal governing body meetings. This creates valuable opportunities to meet and exchange information. Governors study the National Curriculum test results at the beginning of the autumn term and discuss the strengths and weaknesses that these show. They are also informed of the assessment results in English and mathematics in Years 3, 4 and 5 but have not as yet used this information to track the progress of year groups through the school. The revised monitoring system should enable governors to have a clear understanding of the targets that are set for each group and, at the end of each year, they should be in a stronger position to see how well each year group has performed.

53. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection in May 1997. With reference to the issues of the last report, the school has introduced schemes of work for all years and adopted the national guidelines for pupils in the Reception class. The weaknesses in design and technology, information and communication technology, geography, history and religious education have all been rectified, with particularly good improvements in history. The school has adopted a new computer program to monitor pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science and to set targets for individual pupils to achieve by the end of each year. However, whilst systems for recording pupils' progress in other subjects are in place, they have not been standardised. In other areas, there have been good improvements in the proportion of Year 6 pupils achieving the higher levels but a fall in the proportion of Year 2 pupils achieving higher standards. Judged by the observations of lessons during the inspection, the quality of teaching has improved, particularly the percentage of very good or excellent lessons. Teaching assistants are well trained and give very good support to pupils' learning. The curriculum, its organisation and quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage have improved significantly. However, pupils' progress in Years 1 and 2 has declined since the last inspection.
54. The quality of the school's development planning has improved since the last inspection. Although the school has weaknesses, the great majority of these have been clearly identified by the school in its new development plan, and there is every reason to believe that these will be successfully addressed through the well-focused initiatives. The plan gives opportunities for governors and staff to give a steer to the school's development, makes clear reference to the staff who are carrying out the improvements and the criteria to be used to judge the quality of the improvements. Allied to the school development plan is an individual development plan for each subject, which is a new initiative, introduced by the headteacher. In these plans, co-ordinators detail the developments for their subject during the next year. Previously teachers had simply evaluated developments that were not necessarily part of the larger school development plan. The new annual development plan for each subject is a good initiative but is let down by the fact that co-ordinators do not as yet have regular release time to initiate and monitor the developments in their subjects. The future improvement in standards at the end of Year 2 is rightly to be a most important initiative.
55. The school's aims are satisfactorily reflected in its day-to-day routines. They highlight the importance of the development of pupils' learning skills, independence and positive attitudes and values towards their work and others in the school community. The school works very hard to ensure that all pupils are fully included in all activities and acquire an appropriate range of skills and knowledge. However, the aims do not emphasise strongly enough the development of pupils' potential which, at present, is lacking in some of the younger classes.
56. Support staff play a significant role in supporting pupils with special educational needs across the school. Good use is made of the local authority's support services for supporting pupils with behavioural and learning difficulties. The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school is rightly continuing to develop the support staff's expertise through regular in-service training, even though some of this takes place during the school day. The governor for special education needs is employed in the school as a member of the support staff. She has a good awareness of the school's provision and gives good support to the school SENCO.
57. The school's finances have been carefully managed since the last inspection. The present finances are in sound order. There are secure financial systems and effective control, with the headteacher and governors having a clear picture of the ongoing financial position. Whilst governors have a good awareness of how school initiatives are financed, there has historically been little evaluation by the governing body of the impact of its spending on school standards. However, the school gives overall sound consideration to the principles of best value through the work of the headteacher and finance committee. It gives careful consideration to the comparison of its standards with local schools, consults appropriately with parents, and gives due consideration to the best interests of minorities represented in the school. The school shows good attention to competition by carefully ensuring that it gets the best possible deal when buying resources. As a result, good savings have been made on the purchase of computers and the development of the ICT suite. Specific grants and additional funding are used appropriately and

particularly well to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs. The school secretary provides good support. School administration is efficient with routines well established. The recommendations of the last audit report have been successfully addressed. Co-ordinators are given a budget for the replacement and development of resources for their subject. However, the budget for the Reception class has been historically too low and has not allowed for the systematic renewal and development of resources.

58. There is satisfactory accommodation to allow the curriculum to be taught. The school makes effective use of its buildings and grounds. These are well maintained, and effective use is made of space to display pupils' work. Whilst classrooms are of a suitable size for the number of pupils, class sizes are smaller than is usually seen. The computer room becomes cramped when used by a whole class. The grounds are spacious, well provided with apparatus and used effectively. The school hall is sufficiently spacious to enable the whole school community to gather together. Office accommodation is sufficient to meet the needs of the school.
59. The school has sufficient, suitably qualified teachers to meet curriculum needs. Replacements for staff leaving at the end of this term have been appointed to ensure that the school continues to have the range of specialists needed. Careful placement of teachers should ensure that weaknesses in Year 2 will be addressed and strengths in Year 6 further developed. Teaching assistants are very well qualified and provide support of a high standard that makes a considerable impact on the quality of provision, particularly for pupils with special education needs. Job descriptions for key staff are not always sufficiently specific to ensure that responsibilities are clear. The school is aware that the role of co-ordinators is an area that needs development to ensure they have regular release time to carry out their responsibilities effectively. Staff work well together and this places them in a good position to move the school forward as a team. There are suitable procedures to secure effective performance management, but lesson observations are not rigorous enough and have not been successful in raising standards.
60. Resources for learning have improved since the time of the last inspection and are adequate to support the curriculum and range of pupils. There is satisfactory provision in most areas; however, there are too few computers, some are old and run on different programs resulting in incompatibility between them. In geography, good use is made of field trips to support pupils' work, and in history the range of visitors to the school, particularly to discuss with pupils their experiences in World War 2, ensures good access to prime sources of evidence. In music there is a good and varied range of instruments, together with CDs that support pupils' multi cultural education well. For children in the Reception class, some of the reading books and large wheeled vehicles are in poor condition and need replacing.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

61. In order to improve standards of attainment, the headteacher staff and governors should:
 - (1) Improve the progress pupils make in Years 1 and 2 in English, mathematics and science by:
 - *ensuring that the quality of teaching is regularly monitored and targets for improvement set;
 - *using the skills of subject co-ordinators in the monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning and the standards that pupils achieve;
 - *making greater use of the results of assessment to guide teachers' future planning;
 - *creating more opportunities for parents to support their children's learning at home.
 (Paragraphs 40, 45-49, 50, 51, 85, 93, 103)

* indicates that the issue is in the present school development plan
 - (2) Ensure the school's behaviour policy successfully eliminates bullying within the school.
(Paragraphs 43, 49)
 - (3) Develop strategies to improve pupils' attendance.
(Paragraph 42)

In addition the school may wish to consider including procedures to address the following minor weaknesses in its future development plans.

- (1) Ensure that pupils' annual reports clearly evaluate pupils' achievements and set targets for improvement. (Paragraph 47)
- (2) Follow up parents' concerns to ensure that they feel that these concerns have been successfully addressed. (Paragraph 49)
- (3) Seek parents' views about how well the school is functioning, particularly before a new development plan is drawn up. (Paragraph 49)
- (4) Introduce a formal risk assessment policy for the whole school. (Paragraph 41)
- (5) Ensure that child protection training for staff is regularly updated. (Paragraph 41)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	41
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	11	14	12	2	0	0
Percentage	5	27	34	29	5	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 two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		220
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		50

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		79

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	20

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.9
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
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	2001	11	15	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	9	11
	Girls	14	15	15
	Total	23	24	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (91)	92 (85)	100 (97)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	9	10
	Girls	15	12	15
	Total	25	21	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (94)	81 (97)	96 (97)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	25	16	41

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	17	21
	Girls	15	12	16
	Total	31	29	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (77)	71 (77)	90 (81)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	17	22
	Girls	15	15	16
	Total	32	32	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (71)	78 (71)	93 (77)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	1
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	215
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	1	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	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)	9.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.7
Average class size	27.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	111

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001
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	£
Total income	514715
Total expenditure	509055
Expenditure per pupil	2346
Balance brought forward from previous year	19461
Balance carried forward to next year	25121

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	220
Number of questionnaires returned	71

Percentage of responses in each category 32%

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	38	3	2	1
My child is making good progress in school.	44	49	7	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	15	68	9	0	8
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	22	45	21	10	2
The teaching is good.	42	54	4	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	24	52	20	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	55	38	3	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	55	41	4	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	25	52	19	4	0
The school is well led and managed.	36	47	7	0	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	34	55	7	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	13	37	24	21	5

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

62. Most children who start in Reception have been to the local nursery school, with whom the school has built good relationships and works closely in the exchange of relevant information. There are good induction procedures, including morning visits by the children. The meeting for new parents has been improved this year and, as well as parents meeting the headteacher and class teacher, they also meet the school nurse, education welfare officer, a member of the Friends and a governor. This is a good initiative and gives new parents to the school a much wider understanding of how the school functions, the personalities their children will meet and the help that is available. The great majority of children begin in the Reception class in September but some parents choose to send their children part-time and then full-time for the spring and summer term. This particular group of Reception children is larger than average. As a result, eight of the higher-attaining children joined the Year 1 class in January. As most of them had already attained the Early Learning Goals by the end of the autumn term, they are now following a mixture of a Foundation Stage curriculum and the National Curriculum for Year 1 pupils. These children have settled well and are making good progress.
63. There have been good improvements in the Foundation Stage since the last inspection. A well-planned curriculum is now in place that covers all six areas of learning. Very good assessment procedures are in place, and the teacher and teaching assistants use these extremely well to plan carefully targeted work for the individual children. There is extremely good teamwork between the teacher and teaching assistants and children benefit greatly from the very good quality support they are given. Improved opportunities for children to learn through practical work are now in place and prudent purchase of resources enables children to work and experiment with a wide range of materials. This has led to good improvements, particularly in the children's physical and creative development.
64. Children enter the Reception class with attainment that is below average generally, and well below average in their reading and writing skills. Consistently good quality teaching successfully addresses many of the children's weaknesses and, at the end of the Foundation Stage, the great majority of children in the Reception class will attain the expected level in all but one of the six areas of learning as described later. The only exception is the standards in communication, language and literacy, specifically in pupils' writing, which is below average for children of this age.
65. During the inspection, the teaching was of a consistently good standard and had some very good features. This shows a clear improvement since the last inspection. One of the great strengths of the teaching is the way that the teacher and teaching assistants plan and work closely together to develop the skills, knowledge and understanding of the individual children. Wherever possible, the children are involved in practical learning activities to which they respond enthusiastically. These activities help the children to gain a real understanding of new concepts and to practise and consolidate their newly acquired skills. The children benefit from working together and respond well to the whole class sessions at the beginning and end of lessons. The teacher shows very good skills in ensuring that the children understand their ongoing work through careful questioning and through well-focused interaction from all adults working in the classroom. The experience of the teaching assistants is evident when they work with small groups of children and enables them to give particularly good support to children who have learning and behavioural difficulties. This means that these children are fully involved in all the learning activities and are making good progress towards the targets on their individual education plans.

Personal, social and emotional development

66. The planning and teaching for this aspect are particularly good and help children to settle in to the class quickly and confidently, and benefit from the learning opportunities that are planned. Children are very well motivated because of the enthusiastic approach of all the Reception class

staff. This helps the children make good progress in this area of their development and gives them positive attitudes to their learning. Children enjoy their work because of the good range of learning opportunities and develop confidence as learners. They are keen to solve problems and to make choices and decisions about their work. Much emphasis is placed on ensuring that children cover a range of activities during the day but also on the children making their own decisions about the order in which these activities are addressed. At present there is not always time at the end of a session for pupils to review together the work they have been doing. Children show good levels of independence. For example, they play a 'rainbow fish' game together using a dice whilst another group set themselves up as a small orchestra with their own musical instruments under the direction of a 'conductor'. Children follow verbal instructions well and quickly settle to the task they are set. Good support from the teacher and the teaching assistants ensures that no time is lost and, as a result, children make good progress in lessons. Children have a clear understanding of classroom routines and how they should behave and work as a group because these are consistently reinforced by all the Reception staff.

67. The children take part in a wide range of activities that successfully promote their social skills. Everyday they have opportunities to work independently, in pairs and small groups. The great majority share resources well and support each other sensitively when working as a group: for example, in the role-play area where children choose their characters, dress-up and create short plays. The children take turns well and understand that, in activities such as painting, not everyone can use the same pot of paint at the same time.

Communication, language and literacy

68. The teaching of communication, language and literacy is good. The promotion of spoken language skills is an ongoing priority, helping the children to become confident communicators by the time they leave the Reception class. Both the teacher and assistants provide many good opportunities for discussions where children learn to take turns and to listen and value the contribution of others. This was particularly evident when Reception children in the Year 1 class talked about their portraits of family members and shared why these people were important to them.
69. Children are learning to see the link between reading and writing and all are making good progress in their work. The teacher uses a good range of techniques to help the children learn key words, which helps them to meet success with their early reading books. By the end of the Reception year, most children recognise initial letter sounds and are beginning to use these to pronounce unknown three letter words. This work is strongly emphasised in all the literacy lessons and is helping children to become confident readers. Children have been taught to look carefully at pictures to help them make an educated guess at a word they cannot pronounce. Higher-attaining pupils are able to recognise consonant blends such as 'sh' and 'th' and use this knowledge well when reading unknown words. Letter formation is taught well and children are given a range of tasks to help them to develop left to right orientation, such as tracing patterns. Most children have satisfactory tracing skills but some find difficulty in forming their own letters. Despite the carefully planned work, a significant minority of children do not reach the expected level by the end of the Reception year and still rely heavily on support when writing. Higher-attaining children show good confidence when writing their own sentences. The children's target book that is taken home every night, is an effective means of communication between home and school. Words and reading books are also taken home every night but, despite the school's best efforts, there are still some parents who do not regularly support their child with this work.

Mathematical development

70. By the end of the Reception year, children are working at the expected level in this area of learning and have made good progress since joining the school as a result of the good teaching. Children benefit from carefully planned numeracy sessions that rightly focus on the development of children's number awareness through practical activities. Children recognise numbers 1 to 10 and most are able to write these unaided. Children are excited about numbers and greatly enjoy counting up and down to twenty in twos and to a hundred in tens. The use of a number square showing all the numbers from 1 to 100 would help to further reinforce children's visual knowledge

of these numbers. There is good reinforcement of children's mathematical language, such as 'add' and 'equals' and children use these words well when adding together two single digit numbers. There is a very good emphasis on practical work. For example, children used 1p, 2p and 5p coins to make a given amount. This open-ended task allowed higher-attaining children to use interesting combinations of the coins that improved their confidence and ability to manipulate numbers. Children are interested in their number work because the staff plan fun yet challenging activities that are relevant to the children's stage of development. For example, as part of their story on the 'rainbow fish' children use plasticene to make their own octopus whilst discussing amongst themselves how many legs each one has and how many more they need to make. There is a satisfactory range of accessible mathematical resources in the classroom that are used by the children to support their learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

71. Children make good progress in this area because the teaching is consistently good and the activities are carefully planned and relevant to the children's needs. For example, the children are fascinated by the different scents and smells that they have to sort into those that they like and those they do not like. Children understand how maps help them to find their way, and have created their own as part of their visit to the seaside. Children are developing a sound understanding of chronology by the opportunity to question the teacher's husband about his memories of going to the seaside as a child. A fascinating scrapbook of photographs has been the source of much discussion by the children who now have a clear understanding of how fashion, swimwear and even buckets and spades have changed in the last fifty years. Children have made their own coloured glasses and noted how the colours of objects change when viewed through these. They are fascinated by the collection of shells in the classroom. "Listen to this one mister," said a child to an inspector, "the sea's in it". Children are confident in using the computer and make very good use of a paint program to help them create their own rainbow fish. Children are beginning to learn about their own culture through local visits and are also learning about the culture and beliefs of other people. For example, children are fascinated by the display of Indian clothes in the classroom. The higher-attaining Reception pupils in the Year 1 class benefited from a talk from the school nurse about medicines and now have a greater understanding that whilst medicines help to cure illnesses, they can also cause illness if not used properly. Teachers and support staff take every opportunity to develop the children's knowledge and understanding in interesting ways. For example, the children were asked to answer the register by calling out the name of a four-legged animal. This not only extended the children's knowledge but also led to an interesting debate as to whether kangaroos had four legs or two.

Physical development

72. Children make good progress in this area because of the consistently good teaching that is built on careful planning and good use of resources. In physical education lessons, children make good use of space, show good bodily control and a good awareness of the limits of their own bodies, such as how far they can stretch and how long they can hold a set position. Children work hard in these sessions and co-operate well. Fine skills are developing well, clearly seen when the children fit construction materials together to make wheeled vehicles. Regular access to a range of malleable substances, such as plasticene and 'playdough' helps them to improve hand-eye co-ordination as well as the finer manipulative skills. Children also show good skills with scissors and were rightly proud of their card sculptures in the style of Henry Moore. Children have good access to the outside areas and will often, as their free-choice activity, select different size balls to play with. A particularly effective practice was when a group of children bounced a ball a set number of times to match the number in a playground square. This not only improved their physical co-ordination but also reinforced their mathematical skills as well as their personal and social development.

Creative development

73. The teaching for children's creative development has improved significantly since the last inspection. It is now consistently good and leads to good progress being made by the children in this area. A range of carefully planned activities ensures that children have regular access to

sand, water and role-play areas and also receive regular art and craft activities where they have the opportunity to practise the skills of cutting, sticking, drawing, painting and making. Teaching assistants give good support to children but are careful not to be over-prescriptive in the way that children approach their activities. As a result, pupils' responses to a task are individual but are appropriately praised by all staff to ensure the continual building of the children's self-esteem. Role-play areas are regularly used as part of the children's free choice activities and the outside playhouse is popular for playing 'families' and 'schools'. Children show particularly good awareness of the importance of clearing up at the end of each activity. Children regularly sing action songs, recite number rhymes and most know the alphabet song. Satisfactory opportunities are created by the teacher for the children to make their own music.

ENGLISH

74. Since the last inspection, standards in English have fallen to below average in both reading and writing for Year 2 pupils. Pupils in Year 6 have maintained the average standards of the last inspection. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.
75. Results in the 2001 National Curriculum tests show that pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 was well above average in writing and average in reading when compared to all schools and also similar schools. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels was also well above average in writing. Trends over the last five years indicate standards in reading have been maintained at average levels except in 1998 when they were above average and in 1999 when they were below average. Standards in writing have been rising since 1999 when they were below average. During the week of inspection, evidence from lessons shows pupils learning satisfactorily in reading and writing. However, the scrutiny of their previous work indicate that they have made unsatisfactory progress this year overall, with standards in both reading and writing being below average. The more able pupils are not attaining high enough standards. Much of this because assessment information is not used well enough to ensure all pupils are suitably challenged.
76. The attainment of Year 6 pupils in the 2001 English tests was average when compared to all schools nationally, and below average when compared to similar schools. The last five years has shown an even trend with English being close to the national average except in 1999, when there was a slight dip in standards. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils are attaining average standards. Due to the improved provision for the older pupils through 'booster classes', these pupils achieve well, with the proportion of pupils that attain the higher levels being above average. Pupils' good progress in writing is further enhanced by the carefully planned opportunities they have to apply their writing and English skills across the curriculum.
77. When pupils enter the school, most are below average in their speaking and listening skills. Some are starting to develop an interest in books, picking out recognising words and are developing sufficient pencil control to write letters and words, such as their name. Teaching in the Reception class successfully builds on these skills, supporting their good learning. Teachers of pupils up to Year 2 effectively build upon the pupils' speaking and listening skills. They are encouraged to answer in sentences and communicate their ideas clearly, adapting their speech to the listener's needs. For example, Year 2 pupils talk confidently about the content of books they have read, the main characters and their preferences in reading. Pupils learn effectively to use an appropriate vocabulary linked to their studies. For example, pupils in a Year 6 history lesson, after an extensive study on life at the time of World War II, use an appropriate formal language when they very clearly identify and discuss what life was like for people living at that time.
78. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain below average standards in reading. By the end of Year 6 they are average. Younger pupils have an insufficient grasp of letter sounds and do not use them with confidence to construct and read unfamiliar words. There are insufficient opportunities taken to hear these pupils read and to build upon the good start they have made in the Reception class. By Year 2, the pupils are starting to read their storybooks with increasing degrees of fluency but are insecure to build up words they do not know. Average and above average pupils respond equally to fiction and non-fiction books, knowing the difference between the two and usually read

a variety of texts accurately and fluently. They are keen to talk about their favourite books, describing with clarity the title, author and the content and why they like it. Examination of Year 2 personal reading diaries and reading records show that the skills they need to develop their learning are insufficiently recorded and developed by teachers and parents. Average and above average pupils have insufficient opportunities to read a sufficiently wide range of books matched to their levels of attainment. By the end of Year 6, pupils have positive attitudes to their reading and have good fluency and expression. They identify the crucial features, themes and characters in their books and the materials they are reading, and retrieve and organise information from a range of different sources.

79. By the end of Year 2, pupils have not been consistently challenged in their writing and attain below average standards. In lessons, they demonstrate that they could do better. For example, in a Year 2 lesson the pupils showed that they could attain average standards when opportunities arose. The task, planned by the teacher, was for the pupils to record the main facts of the Great Fire of London after listening to a story. An unchallenging worksheet did not help to develop the pupils' writing skills. However, the pupils showed they could reach satisfactory levels when the teacher asked them to write full sentences on the back of the worksheet. Marking and assessment are insufficiently used to match work to pupils' respective needs, and insufficient attention is given to its presentation.
80. Due to more challenging teaching in the juniors, Year 6 pupils attain average levels in writing. Older pupils, in particular from Year 4 onwards, write sustained stories with a good attention to characterisation and plot. They use different forms of writing appropriately, as for instance when reporting on their geographical, historical and scientific investigations. Poems modelled on the style of William Shakespeare, supported by excellent resources and teaching, were very well written by pupils in Year 4. Here, with a good awareness of the correct basic grammatical structure, the pupils interpreted the different structures and produced a series of exciting poems with words chosen in the style of Shakespeare. Pupils in Year 6, after examining the content and structure of a range of poems, used these very successfully, together with a carefully-chosen resource, to construct their own poems. They showed a very good awareness of similes and used these well to express ideas in a poetic style. Different forms of writing are well developed. Supported by good teaching and the careful preparation of resources matched to the pupils' needs, pupils in Year 5 effectively learnt the difference between a fact, an opinion, a half-truth and bias. They learnt how to use these in their letters to encourage the reader to understand and see their point of view. The lesson seen produced a very good example of modifying the task to enable pupils with special educational needs to have the same curriculum entitlement as the other pupils. In this, the special educational needs co-ordinator and a teaching assistant took a small group of pupils with special educational needs into the computer suite to develop the same skills as the rest of the class by using computers. This very successful focussed withdrawal enabled the pupils to improve both their English and information and communication technology skills. Great care was taken to ensure that the six pupils involved returned to their class to be involved in the final session where they were able to hear the responses of their peers and share their own. This provides an example of the teacher's excellent awareness of the importance of including all pupils in all aspects of the curriculum. Teachers of older pupils give a greater range of opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills across the curriculum compared to the teachers of the younger pupils in Years 1 and 2.
81. Standards of handwriting are satisfactory but vary across the school. All pupils are given handwriting exercises but samples of work show that insufficient thought is given to the pupils' presentation of their work. There are too few opportunities, in particular for younger pupils, to re-draft their work, correcting their mistakes, and to present their work in an improved form. Pupils are not encouraged to follow up teachers' written comments on their work. Standards of spelling are satisfactory throughout the school. Most words used by the pupils are accurately spelt and if in doubt, older pupils readily use dictionaries to look up their words. The school gives pupils spelling lists to learn. Weekly tests show pupils generally acquiring high levels of accuracy. Assessment is insufficiently used to match the levels of spellings to the pupils' abilities.
82. During the week of inspection no unsatisfactory teaching was seen in English. The majority of teaching seen, for older pupils, was good or better. Teachers of older pupils show a greater understanding and knowledge of the subject than the teachers of the younger pupils. Their planning and teaching methods are more effective. They have a higher expectation of their pupils.

This leads to more effective learning and the good achievements of the older pupils. Motivated by the good or better teaching, older pupils show a very positive attitude towards their work. They work with high levels of understanding, motivation, interest and enthusiasm.

83. Overall the quality of teaching for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is unsatisfactory because pupils are not making sufficient progress. Samples of pupils' work in Years 1 and 2 show that teachers do not sufficiently match tasks to pupils' individual needs. Lessons seen during the inspection were never more than satisfactory. The good progress that the children make in the Reception class is not sustained. The younger pupils' attitudes are not as strong as when they are older and their work is often too teacher directed. Pupils often sit for too long on the carpet for the introductory sessions and lose interest. However, pupils work hard when given tasks, but often the tasks are too easy and unchallenging.
84. The procedures for assessment are satisfactory. Teachers are starting to use records that illustrate clearly the pupils' growing competences. Teachers grade samples of pupils' work according to the standards they have attained. They set targets for pupils and share these targets with the pupils. The use of assessment information to guide teachers' planning is under-developed. In particular the teachers of younger pupils have not started to match the pupils' task to their assessed needs. This hinders the progress of pupils across the whole ability range. Teachers satisfactorily evaluate lessons as they progress, supporting groups and individual pupils with their tasks. Pupils with special educational needs have detailed plans that clearly indicate their literacy needs. Teaching assistants, when deployed in class, support pupils well, enabling them to learn and make good progress alongside their fellow pupils. When withdrawn for support, the work is clearly focused on their needs, and the inclusion of these pupils in lessons is very good.
85. The co-ordinator teaches full time. After having time to monitor and evaluate the teaching across the school in the previous academic year, she has had no time to do so this year and as such her leadership role has been unsatisfactory. However, her subject development plan clearly identifies what needs to be done to raise standards further, and her analysis of assessments in Years 3, 4 and 5 has provided useful information for teachers to use in their future planning. There is a clearly defined role for the co-ordinator to follow next year, which will enable her experience to be used more effectively in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom and the standards of pupils' work. Most teachers plan and evaluate their own delivery of the subject. The National Literacy Strategy has been successfully introduced and pupils' English skills are appropriately developed across the curriculum. The school has made a good attempt to improve resources for the subject and they are now satisfactory. Good use is made of local loan services. The use of ICT is developing but there are insufficient opportunities for all pupils to use this to support their work in the subject. There are two small libraries, one for infants and the other for juniors. They are suitably stocked and good use is made of local loan services to replenish their stocks and to provide a satisfactory range of books in classrooms. There are, however, insufficient opportunities for pupils to use these libraries for independent study. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' cultural development.

MATHEMATICS

86. National test results for 2001 show that the percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 2 at the end of Year 2 and the expected Level 4 at the end of Year 6 was below the national average. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 at the end of Year 2 and the higher Level 5 at the end of Year 6 was below average when compared to all schools and also when compared to similar schools. Inspection evidence shows that the present Year 2 pupils have made unsatisfactory progress and are still below average. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels is well below average because their work is not challenging and they are not stretched. However, pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
87. By the end of Year 6, pupils have made good progress and standards are in line with national averages with a significant proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels. This is an improvement in standards since the last inspection where standards were judged as needing some

improvement. These encouraging improvements are a result of target setting for individual pupils, grouping pupils by ability for the majority of their lessons, and the use of 'booster' classes to raise pupils' attainment further. Furthermore, pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and the higher attainers achieve well because they are taught well and set challenging work. The success of these strategies has been enhanced by the quality of teamwork between the class teachers, teaching assistants and SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator) and this has been significant in the raising of standards by the end of Year 6.

88. The school has recognised that pupils' practical and investigative skills, and elements of their number work needed to be improved. As such, they have been the focus of development in the school development plan, together with a focus on teaching and learning. The work samples from older pupils indicate that they have more opportunities to develop flexible approaches to problem solving, with pupils becoming more adept at choosing the correct process to calculate the answer. Progress in data handling throughout the school is satisfactory and a number of good displays were seen around the school where pupils had collected data and then represented their findings in a range of graphical representations. For example, the range of data handling included displays of work completed by younger pupils where they had drawn around their hands, cut out the shapes, measured their hand-spans, then displayed their findings as a block graph. Other examples involved the use of computers to represent data in different graphic forms, such as block graphs, pictograms, line graphs and pie charts.
89. In Year 1 pupils are engaged in number work which includes counting to 20 and back. In a lesson observed, pupils were engaged in a 'Brain Gym' where they counted enthusiastically backwards and forwards in 2's and 5's to 60. They sequence missing number such as 45,_,47 and add 3 numbers accurately as in $6+2+4=12$, with more able pupils adding 32p +60p. The progress in Year 1 is satisfactory overall. However, this is not so in Year 2 where progress is unsatisfactory because of a lack of challenge for more able pupils and little opportunity to extend their learning through homework. However, although by the end of Y2 some pupils have learned their tables for 3x, 4x, 5x and 10x and can use repeated addition to calculate $4+4+4+4$, they are less confident in choosing methods of calculation to solve problems. There were examples of pupils measuring using both metres and centimetres, but they are less confident in estimating and recording measurements. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of time, including using digital clocks and a stopwatch. However, although they were confident with hours and minutes, they experienced difficulty with the concept that after 00.59 the next hour will be 01.00, with many writing it as 00.60. Pupils accurately identify common 2D shapes, but are less confident about 3D shapes such as sphere, cube, cuboid and cylinder. Many pupils' 'record of progress' books were not marked or graded. This makes it difficult to judge progress over time, and does not provide a clear picture of pupils' attainment for teachers taking over a new class at the beginning of a school year. In contrast, the English work in these progress books was clearly marked and graded, and was far more useful for a receiving teacher.
90. By Year 6, pupils have made good progress in all aspects of the subject. They undertake a range of number work that includes: standard methods of calculating using the four rules, converting fractions into decimals and percentages, the links between ratio and proportion, measuring accurately in metres, centimetres and millimetres, and producing tally charts and frequency graphs, including the use of information communication technology (ICT). They have a good knowledge of time, and confidently use timetables to plan a journey and work out its cost. Lesson observations indicate that the higher-attaining pupils are also making good progress, a significant improvement on the previous year. This was well illustrated in a lesson taught by the SENCO (special educational needs co-ordinator) who was working with a group of six higher achievers from Year 5. In this lesson, the group were investigating how to identify the rule for a number of sequences and then writing the rule. Pupils were very focused and by means of good interaction and discussion were able to achieve the set tasks. For example, in using a sequence of negative numbers such as -48, -42, -36, -30 pupils agreed that the rule was 'keep on adding 6'. In a more challenging task, they were able to work out that the sequence 4,40,20,200,100,1000 could be continued by dividing by 2 and multiplying by 10. An equally challenging and well planned lesson was where the Year 6 class were using all four operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division to solve challenging mental starters. Pupils were obviously used to the routines as they were enthusiastic, engaged and were confidently using squared and cubed numbers and brackets to solve quick-fire questions. However, although there were examples of data handling on

display in the ICT suite there is too little opportunity for pupils to practise and refine new learning skills independently using computers.

91. The quality of teaching overall in Years 1 - 2 is unsatisfactory, but good in Years 3 - 6. Generally, the National Numeracy Strategy format is used in all lessons. In the best lessons observed, the teachers used good questioning at a range of different levels carefully backed up by resources such as practical equipment and number lines. This has a positive impact on the way that pupils are developing their mental and oral skills and their understanding of number. The good start to the lessons sets a brisk learning pace and high expectations, which the pupils respond to well in their follow up work. Where teaching is less effective, the pace of learning is too slow and there is a lack of challenge, particularly for the higher-attaining pupils. These lessons are uninspiring and often the worksheets used for a follow-up activity are not carefully graded to ensure pupils of different abilities are sufficiently challenged. A common feature in all lessons is the good provision for those pupils with special educational needs who are well supported by knowledgeable teaching assistants. Teachers' management of pupils' behaviour is good overall, with pupils generally working hard in lessons. Teachers' planning is generally satisfactory. Where it is at its best, it clearly identifies different learning for groups of pupils in the class. The plenary at the end of lessons are often insufficiently used to reinforce and consolidate the learning that has taken place and to share with the class how their learning is going to be developed. Assessment procedures are in place but not consistently applied across the school and information is not always used sufficiently to guide future planning, especially in teachers' daily and weekly planning.
92. Pupils' attitudes to learning are generally good and they are keen to answer questions and have good attitudes to their learning. They show interest in their work and are keen to communicate what they understand. The pupils generally show respect for each other's ideas and listen well to their teachers. Occasionally behaviour is less than satisfactory; this is generally due to a lack of challenge in the work and the disruptive behaviour of a small number of pupils who do not respond immediately to the teacher's behaviour strategies. When this happens, other pupils lose concentration and do not make appropriate progress. However, in the better lessons these incidents are dealt with quickly, and disagreements are resolved. In some classes there are insufficient opportunities for pupils' personal study, such as solving problems requiring decision making.
93. The co-ordinator has worked very hard to develop the curriculum, and this is well supported by an ongoing numeracy diary in which is recorded the development of the mathematics curriculum over time. Procedures for planning, monitoring and evaluation and an up to date action plan for mathematics have been developed. Monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning by the co-ordinator is at present unsatisfactory, although her analysis on the assessments recently taken by pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 gives useful information for teachers to use in their planning for the next academic year. At present, the headteacher monitors teachers' planning. Whilst this gives the headteacher an overview of the curriculum, it does not make effective use of the co-ordinator's skills and expertise.
94. The use of ICT to support the subject is satisfactory overall and new programs have been installed on the computers. However, the lack of computers in the classrooms and the problems with printers has lessened the impact of ICT on pupils' learning. Teachers plan appropriately for the development of pupils' numeracy skills across the curriculum. Good examples were seen in science and design and technology.

SCIENCE

95. Results of the National Curriculum test results for Year 6 pupils in 2001 show that standards were average when compared to all schools nationally and also to similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels was below average. Statistics show that this group of pupils had made below average progress since they were assessed at the end of Year 2. The teacher assessment for last year's Year 2 pupils showed that the proportion achieving the expected standards was above average when compared to all schools nationally and also similar schools.

However, the proportion attaining the higher levels was well above average when compared to similar schools.

96. Standards for the present Year 6 are in line with national averages and standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels is also average. However, the present Year 2 pupils' attainment is below that reported at the time of the last inspection, with the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level being below average and the proportion working at the higher levels now well below average. The main reason for the decline in standards at the end of Year 2 is the lack of challenge for the higher-attaining pupils and too few opportunities for investigative work. There is no difference in the school between the progress of boys and girls, or of pupils of different abilities and backgrounds.
97. At the end of Year 2, pupils' investigative skills are unsatisfactory because of the lack of opportunities for practical work. Too often investigations are carried out by the whole class and do not give pupils enough opportunities to work either individually or in small groups. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their understanding and knowledge of living things. They note the different features of animals and birds and understand how their personal development and growth enables them to do things now that they could not do as babies. They have a clear understanding of the difference between living and non-living things. However, their knowledge of plants and the senses is below average. Pupils understand the changes that come about when bread is turned into toast and that this is not a reversible process. Whilst pupils understand how to create a circuit using batteries, wires and bulbs, their knowledge of forces, light, materials and their properties has not been sufficiently covered and is unsatisfactory.
98. Pupils in Year 6 have made good progress during the year. They have a good understanding of a fair test and evaluate their investigations well to enable them to improve future work in this area. There are opportunities to make predictions before they start an investigation, but pupils do not consistently make hypotheses so that the teacher can assess their scientific knowledge in a specific area. Pupils' knowledge of living processes is comparatively weaker than other areas of the subject. They have a sound understanding of the human body and the importance of a healthy diet. However, their knowledge of plants is below average. Pupils develop a good scientific vocabulary because this is consistently reinforced by the teacher. For example, words such as 'soluble' 'insoluble' and 'saturated' are used accurately when pupils are testing different substances. Due to good quality teaching, pupils have developed good methods for separating substances. This was clearly shown when given a mixture of rice, staples from a staple gun and wood shavings. Good opportunities exist for pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills in their investigations. Pupils also have opportunities to use their scientific knowledge to explain the findings in their investigations. For example, a group of pupils investigating the size of a parachute and the rate of descent as part of their work on air resistance, concluded that too much string and sellotape on their larger parachute made it perform less efficiently than a smaller parachute. Pupils have a good understanding of circuits that they use effectively to make an electronic quiz card.
99. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Year 1. They carry out investigations such as water soaking into different types of paper. They know that they have five senses and understand the different parts of a plant. They use this knowledge appropriately in their work on the life cycle of a plant. Good opportunities were created by their teachers to sort mini-beasts into different categories, depending on the number of legs and whether they had wings or not. Pupils benefited from a talk by the school nurse and understand the importance of keeping healthy and not spreading germs.
100. Pupils make good progress in Years 3 to 5. This is because of good emphasis on practical work and opportunities for pupils to use their scientific knowledge to explain the results of their findings. The consistently good teaching in these years results in a good range of activities for pupils that successfully challenges the higher-achieving pupils. This was clearly evident in Year 3's work on skeletons and how muscles are used for movement. Pupils make particularly good progress in Year 4 in all areas of the subject. Pupils make very good use of diagrams to explain the investigation they are undertaking. Pupils' presentation is particularly good and there are carefully planned opportunities for them to use their literacy, numeracy and observational drawing skills as part of science recording. Good opportunities for prediction in Year 5 enable pupils to reflect at the end of an investigation on their initial thinking. However, opportunities to use their scientific

knowledge to back up their prediction are in the early stages of development. Pupils are encouraged to develop original approaches to an investigation. This was clearly seen in their approaches to find ways of discovering which magnet was the most powerful.

101. Whilst the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, it is unsatisfactory in the Year 2 class because of the lack of challenge for the pupils. As a result pupils' progress declines. The small number of Year 2 pupils in the Year 1/ 2 class make satisfactory progress and the teaching ensures all aspects of the subject are appropriately covered. The strengths in teaching are the overall good use of investigations, high expectations of pupils' recording skills and the consistent opportunities that pupils are given to provide scientific reasons for the findings of their investigations. Teachers make good use of teaching assistants to support pupils in their work and create good opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively. Because of this good support, pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress in their work and are fully included in all activities. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' social and moral development.
102. In the lessons observed, pupils' attitudes are good overall, ranging from very good to unsatisfactory. Where pupils' attitudes are at their best, the teaching is lively, the lesson accurately pitched to pupils' needs and high expectations of behaviour in place. As a result pupils work hard and collaborate well. In the unsatisfactory lesson, the teacher's strategies for the management of the pupils was not consistently effective, resulting in pupils losing concentration and not making the progress they were capable of. Evidence from pupils' books shows that the older pupils work very hard, produce a good amount of work and take a real pride in its presentation.
103. The new co-ordinator has worked hard in her short time in charge of the subject. A new scheme of work has been adopted which has broken away from the two-year rolling programme. Assessment procedures have been brought in at the end of every unit of learning. It is planned that these assessments will be evaluated and passed on to the co-ordinator who will then make decisions about how the curriculum should be adjusted for the different year groups. This is a good initiative as it should help to ensure that, as pupils move through the school, their strengths are built on and weaknesses addressed. However, the co-ordinator's impact on the standards of teaching and learning has been unsatisfactory during the last two terms because she has not had release time from her classroom for this work. As a result, weaknesses in some years have persisted and some pupils have made unsatisfactory progress. Resources are satisfactory overall and are used well in most classes to support pupils' investigative work. The use of ICT to support pupils' learning in science is under-developed as most pupils do not have immediate access to computers during lessons.

ART AND DESIGN

104. The standards in art and design have been maintained since the last inspection and are in line with national expectations through the school. No lesson in art and design was observed. Evidence is taken from samples of pupils' recent work, portfolios of work completed during the last year, displays around the school and discussions with the co-ordinator, teachers and pupils. This evidence shows that pupils have engaged in a satisfactory range of art and design work. By the end of Year 2, pupils colour mix confidently and have experience of multimedia, such as when they use coloured chalk artwork on black sugar paper with glitter and cotton threads. Pupils improve their sketching skills when they use a viewfinder to help them focus on a small section of a picture. An outstanding example was of an observational sketch that was developed further by the use of different media. In this, pupils completed a pencil sketch of a shell, and then developed this further by the use of ink, coloured pencils and textile.
105. By the end of Year 6, pupils show satisfactory painting and sketching skills as seen in their work on landscapes, self-portraits and cave paintings. Good links are made with history when pupils make Viking jewellery as an extension of their topic work. There were some good examples of pupils' work in the style of famous artists. These included, animal skull sketches in the style of Georgia O'Keefe, teacup designs in the style of Clarice Cliff, Picasso portraits and photographic

evidence of clay mask-making, stimulated by an the work of an African artist in residence who spent time in the school working with pupils.

106. Pupils' work is valued by the careful way that it is displayed around the school. Excellent examples of computer aided art were seen in the style of Piet Mondrian. Some very good examples of textile printing were also on display in the school hall that had been completed by the younger children. Pupils have regular opportunities for printing, using both block printing and press-printing techniques. A good link to the study theme of 'Journeys' was seen in pupils' work, where they were developing their own abstract work based on their own ideas of a journey over a period of time. The present two year rolling programme of work is leading to pupils having too few opportunities for 3 dimensional work, such as clay modelling. The school kiln is also not being used to its full potential. Pupils' use of sketchbooks is under-developed, and the work seen in them does not match the good quality examples seen in the portfolios of previous work samples.
107. The subject co-ordinator is knowledgeable in the subject and has ensured that the scheme of work is in line with national guidance. She has created a good range of resources to support the units studied. In addition, there has been extra attention paid to development of pupils' use of specific subject vocabulary that is displayed in classrooms. The subject co-ordinator has identified areas for development and is aware of the need to ensure a consistency of practice and progression of skills for pupils of all abilities. At present, the assessment of the quality of work is undertaken by the class teacher at the end of each unit. However, the results of these assessments are not effectively used to inform teachers' short-term planning. To redress this, from September 2002, a one-year planning cycle will be introduced. This, combined with the co-ordinator's monitoring of teaching and the standards of pupils' work, should ensure that assessment information is used more effectively to inform future planning and thus impact upon standards.
108. There is a sufficient range of resources for the subject and the organisation of resources into themes has enabled teachers to focus and target their planning more carefully to stretch the more able pupils. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

109. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6 and this represents the maintaining of standards since the last inspection. There has, however, been an improvement in the use of design and evaluation, and this is leading to the refining of pupils' skills as they move through the school. Only one short lesson was observed during the inspection, and this was too small a sample on which to judge the quality of teaching. However, the satisfactory progress that pupils make through the school is commensurate with overall satisfactory teaching.
110. By the end of Year 2, pupils show good joining skills when creating a chassis for their moving vehicles. They also show good skills when joining freewheeling axles to this chassis. Pupils demonstrate a good awareness of the importance of the appearance of the finished product. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Year 1 in their cutting skills but opportunities for pupils to design a face in which to incorporate a sliding mechanism were restricted when they used a template. Year 3 pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the importance of design to aid the making process and also to itemise the materials needed. This was clearly evident in their moving monsters using pneumatics. These pupils show good evaluation skills and use these appropriately to determine how a greater range of movement could be made. Pupils in Year 4 are making satisfactory progress in their planning and making skills and use their artistic skills well to enhance the finished product. Year 5 pupils show satisfactory cutting and joining skills and good originality in their hats for the 'Mad Hatter's Tea Party'. Particularly impressive was the way that the planning was clearly reflected in the finished product. Year 6 pupils build well on previously learnt skills. They have satisfactory cutting skills and make good use of their knowledge of electrical circuits to fit a battery-driven motor to their four-wheel vehicles. Their evaluation of the finished product gave insightful improvement ideas which pupils will incorporate in future work.

111. The progress that pupils make over time is satisfactory through the years and this shows an improvement since the last inspection where pupils in Years 3 to 6 did not make sufficient progress in their designing, evaluating and practical skills. The main reason for the overall improvement is the adoption of a national scheme as the basis for all teachers' planning. This, together with the teachers' improved subject knowledge, is enabling pupils to make appropriate progress in all aspects of the subject. Assessments are now being made at the end of each unit of work. The intention is to use these in future work to build on the strengths and address the weaknesses. This is a good use of assessment and should result in higher attainment through the school. The co-ordinator does not see teachers' planning nor has had time to monitor the quality of pupils' ongoing work. This is a weakness as the school is not making effective use of her subject knowledge. Resources are satisfactory overall but the replacement of some saws and the acquisition of more bench hooks are needed as a matter of urgency. Little use of ICT was observed, but older pupils made good use of computers to word process their evaluations.

GEOGRAPHY

112. The last time the school was inspected, standards in geography were below that expected for Years 2 and 6. This has changed and standards in geography are now in-line with those expected of pupils of the same age. The present subject co-ordinator has only been in post for two terms but is building appropriately on the previous co-ordinator's work. She has planned a new one year scheme of work, based on national guidance, and has identified assessment as an area needing further development. This is because the procedures for assessment are not consistently applied through the school. For example, the present procedure is to evaluate at the end of each unit and highlight the objectives met and comment on the strengths and weaknesses. However the need to highlight the activities covered has not been included in the evaluation and this has led to inconsistency of practice across the school because teachers were unsure as to what work had been covered previously. In addition, the evaluations were only sent to the headteacher and not shared with the subject co-ordinator. However, as from the beginning of next term, the subject co-ordinator will now be fully involved and the procedures will be to:
- monitor the quality of teaching and learning in the classrooms in the autumn term;
 - interview pupils and monitor their work standards in the spring term; and
 - evaluate the scheme of work in the summer term.
- This is a good initiative and should ensure that present weaknesses in the co-ordination of the subject will be addressed.
113. There are displays around the school that show that pupils have made satisfactory progress this year. For example, Year 5 pupils have studied the locality of Maldon. Good links with other subjects were evident in pupils' graphical representation of the most popular shops in the town. Pupils made good progress in developing their mapping skills which were extended to the identification of local rivers and estuary. Pupils are confident in the vocabulary related to their study of rivers and use technical vocabulary such as the source, tributary, meander, estuary and explain the meaning of terms such as 'deposit' and 'erosion.' Pupils in Year 6 have extended their studies of rivers from the United Kingdom map to world rivers such as the Amazon, Mississippi and Ganges. However, although the pupils could confidently identify the main oceans and mountain ranges in the world, they were less confident about the channels and seas around the British Isles. To enhance pupils' geographical knowledge of the world, the school has a Barnaby Bear who travels the world with pupils and sends postcards and photographs back to the school.
114. Year 3 and 4 classes' geography work has focused on the school environment. Year 3 pupils have a greater awareness of the amount of rubbish generated from their lunchboxes and successfully devised ideas to reduce the amount of waste. Year 4 undertook a survey of the amount of litter there was to be found in the school ground and, after analysing it, concluded that most of the litter came from outside the school boundaries. As a result of their concerns, they developed a list of proposals to help improve the state of the school grounds. This included signs outside the school to ask the general public not to drop litter. The interest in environmental issues was enhanced in the week of the inspection by the 'Waste-buster bus' which visited the school to show the benefits of recycling and to encourage the pupils to remember the slogan, 'Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.' The pupils were very motivated by the topic, which has successfully raised their awareness of the importance of reducing waste and looking after the environment.
115. It is not possible to make a judgement on the quality of teaching across the school as only one lesson was seen. However, the interview with pupils demonstrated the interest that pupils had in the subject, especially the time they visited the Cardfield Field Study Centre. Overall there are sufficient resources to teach the subject, including Ordnance Survey maps, wall maps, globes, aerial photographs and atlases. There are some CD-ROMS that are used by the infants in their learning about towns and to label maps and the juniors make good use of the Internet for their research. Through pupils' study of a village in India, caring for the environment, awareness of global environment issues and being able to express and value other peoples' views, the subject makes a good contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

HISTORY

116. During the period of inspection little history was being taught in the school. Inspectors observed only one lesson, in Year 6. Further evidence was obtained from the analysis of pupils' previous work, school documentation and discussions with pupils. The co-ordinator's monitoring last year and evidence obtained from inspection confirm that the subject is now given a higher priority than at the time of the last inspection and has improved substantially since then. History is now taught as a discrete subject and pupils' progress has improved. Standards are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and above expectations at the end of Year 6, where pupils achieve well.
117. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress. For example, in Year 1, pupils have developed a deeper understanding of chronology by studying the evolution of the train, from the early steam trains to the present day diesel and electric trains. Pupils in Year 2 have successfully made contrasts between life today and Victorian times. They know about some of the changes that have happened in the last 100 years by comparing the differences in seaside holidays of Victorian times to their own experiences. Pupils make good use of computers to support their learning. For example, during the week of the inspection they accessed the Internet to find out information on the 'Fire of London' and then made good use of their literacy skills in their written account. Pupils in Year 3 have a good understanding of aspects of the Vikings. Good links with geography were seen in Year 5's topic on the Ancient Greeks when pupils completed maps of the time and compared it to present day Greece. These pupils have also made good use of their writing and investigative skills in their work on World War 2.
118. With only one lesson seen, there is insufficient evidence to make a firm judgement of the quality of teaching across the school. In the one lesson seen in Year 6, the quality of teaching was excellent with the teacher bringing alive the subject with very good use of resources. This gave the pupils a real insight into how war affected people's lives and how they felt at the time. Pupils' understanding and empathy was further developed through the excellent connections the school has made with the 'University of the Third Age'. As a result, a range of visitors have shared their experiences of life during the war with the pupils. They also brought artefacts, that the pupils were able to examine and ask questions about. As a result of the excellent topic, pupils have a very real perspective of the times, which is clearly shown in the most informative display of wartime memorabilia. This topic has had a significant impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, clearly seen in their reaction to a genuine letter from a woman whose house was bombed in Coventry.
119. The co-ordinator has given a good lead to the subject, following her evaluation two years ago. She has audited the resources, which have been carefully built up and provide a good backup to the teaching of the subject. The school has put in place a relevant scheme of work and has appropriate priorities for the subject's further development. Information and communication technology is successfully used both within school and for pupils to use for homework for research and for recording their findings. The procedures for assessing pupils' progress and using the information to plan their future work are under-developed.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

120. Pupils achieve standards in information and communication technology that meet national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6. The school has maintained standards in this subject since the last inspection. The school has recently developed a computer suite, where the majority of the teaching takes place. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, take a full part in these lessons and achieve satisfactorily.
121. Teachers' confidence and expertise in teaching ICT have increased since the last inspection as they have received training under the government's New Opportunities Funding. Teaching through the school is satisfactory overall with some very good examples seen during the inspection, particularly in the juniors. Teaching assistants have also benefited from quality training and provide good support in lessons.

122. Pupils show confidence when working at the computer. For example, in Year 2, the pupils, with minimal assistance from the teacher, log on to the Internet to access information on the 'Fire of London', as part of their history topic. They understand the need to enter the password and know how to select the appropriate programme to gain the required information. They have successfully learnt to use ICT to organise and classify information and know how to enter and retrieve work. They have satisfactory knowledge of how to control equipment by a series of instructions.
123. Pupils make clear progress as they move through the school. Pupils in Year 5 have satisfactory data handling skills and add and change data on a spreadsheet. For example, in a lesson they entered their chosen purchases from a selection of goods whilst making sure that they kept within a budget of £30. They show a good ability to produce, organise and amend data. The pupils show good confidence with the range of programs. In the lesson observed, pupils of all abilities, including a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, made very good progress because of the quality teaching and very good support of the teaching assistant.
124. Pupils in Year 6 show good confidence using databases. They are very enthusiastic about their work, clearly seen when they designed a spreadsheet to help calculate prices for different meals at a Chinese restaurant. In this lesson they made good use of their previous knowledge, understanding how to enter information and apply a formula to find the total cost. Aided by the good clear explanations from the teacher the pupils carefully framed their questioning, interpreted their findings, and showed a clear understanding that inadequate information fed into a spreadsheet will give unreliable results.
125. Samples of previous work and displays around the school show that ICT is used satisfactorily to support pupils' learning in other subjects. For example, in Year 1, art and design is supported with the use of computer-generated pictures and in Year 2 pupils have successfully used a paint program to design faces. In Year 4, pupils have successfully incorporated ICT into their work on graphs. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have computers in their classrooms and as such are able to use them more widely across the curriculum. In Year 5 they have produced computer generated book designs and Year 6 pupils have used computers to develop their literacy skills. Pupils have also word processed their stories, using a range of different font sizes and used the Internet to research their geography work on world rivers. However, due to the majority of computers in the school being moved out of classrooms to furnish the computer suite, there are limited opportunities for pupils in Years 1 to 4 to support their work in other subjects.
126. The newly appointed subject co-ordinator has a good awareness of the developmental needs of the subject. The governor responsible for the subject and the co-ordinator correctly see the need to replace some of the old computers, up-date the software, and make more computers available for use in the classroom. Staff and pupils cope well with the restrictions of the present equipment and software, adapting well to the different formats that are in use. The present resources are satisfactory to support the work in the computer suite but unsatisfactory to support pupils' learning across the school. Assessment procedures are still to be developed.

MUSIC

127. Standards in music are in line with that expected of pupils of a similar age at the end of Year 2 and above that expected at the end of Year 6. The standards in music show an improvement since the last inspection. Only a small number of lessons were observed and no lessons were seen in Year 6. Judgements were made on the lessons observed, the school singing practice, discussions with pupils and information from classroom and school displays.
128. Music is a high profile subject and is seen as a strength of the school. The present Year 4 teacher is the music co-ordinator and has been involved in a project during the school year called 'Adopt a Musician'. It has been so successful that the school has been approached to continue the musical developments into the next school year. The work has entailed pupils working in school with a professional musician from the Britten Sinfonia. The class has made very good progress in developing their music skills over the year. The highlight for the pupils was a visit to

the civic centre where they performed two compositions they had developed with the professional musician during the project as part of a programme called 'On a High Note'. The quality of the pupils' work was evident when, during the inspection, the pupils performed one of their vocal compositions from a large graphic score on the board. This was an outstanding performance and demonstrated the quality of teaching and learning that had gone on during the project. However, during this very good lesson, the pupils extended the performance by using tuned and untuned percussion to add melody and rhythm to the composition. This project has involved pupils of all abilities and pupils with special educational needs have gained considerably from this experience, not only in performance skills, but also in self-esteem and confidence.

129. At the end of Year 2, pupils are making satisfactory progress in their early composition and performing work. For example, after being stimulated by a short sound bite of rainfall, pupils created different sounds that they had heard which the teacher then scribed on a sheet. Words such as 'pitter-patter', 'drip-drop' and 'clack-clack,' as well as sounds like 'pssshhh' were annotated on the sheet to record the pupils' responses. The teacher encouraged her pupils to create body sounds to imitate the recorded sound. Pupils enjoyed the challenge and their responses included patting their hands on their thighs to create 'pitter-patter' and using musical instruments to re-create some of other sounds they had heard. At the end of Year 6, pupils have made good progress in developing their skills and knowledge in their composition, music appreciation skills and in their singing. No judgement could be made on their performing skills as no lessons were seen.
130. The range of music in the school is good and the whole school has a singing practice once a week which is led by the music co-ordinator. The quality of singing is high, being warm and tuneful, with good diction. Pupils thoroughly enjoy this part of their music making and are also keen to hear and celebrate the contributions of other musicians who are learning to play musical instruments. For example, in the celebration assembly, the performance of soloists and small ensembles playing clarinets, trumpets and saxophones was warmly applauded as was the pupil who played the piano while the school came into, and left, the assembly.
131. The music curriculum is in line with the requirements of the National Curriculum programmes of study for music and the scheme of work is planned from national guidance for the teaching of music. Assessments are undertaken and are used effectively to inform teachers' daily and weekly planning. There are a sufficient range of musical instruments to support the pupils' learning and a comprehensive range of CDs that supports music of different cultures.
132. The teaching of music is satisfactory in the infants and good in the juniors, enhanced by the musical expertise and enthusiasm of the music co-ordinator who brings a great vibrancy to the subject. Pupils greatly enjoy their music making and, as such, it makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The use of ICT to support pupils' learning, such as in composition work, is under-developed.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

133. Pupils' attainment is average and achievement satisfactory at the end of Year 2, but no judgement can be made of pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 as no lessons were observed. Standards in Year 2 are the same as they were at the time of the last inspection and the quality of swimming in Year 3 remains above average. The quality of teaching remains satisfactory overall as it was at the time of the last report. However, during the inspection, good teaching was observed in Years 3 and 4, where pupils worked particularly hard and showed great desire to improve the quality of their work.
134. By the end of Year 2, pupils show satisfactory movement skills in dance. They interpret music creatively, such as when depicting the effects of the sun. They make appropriate use of space and show some good collaborative skills in working out their routines. Good use of demonstrations and teacher interaction help to raise pupils' performance and raise their awareness of different responses to the music.

135. Pupils in Year 3 make good progress in swimming. They benefit from regular access to a good-sized local pool, and good quality teaching in small groups. As a result, pupils make real gains in developing their swimming skills whilst successfully addressing weaknesses in such areas as stroke technique and body position. Higher-attaining pupils have well above average skills, with the great majority successfully completing some personal survival awards. Non-swimmers have made good progress this year and all pupils in the Year 3 class are at least able to swim five metres. Year 4 pupils have developed good stamina over the year and respond well to their teacher's introduction of orienteering and problem-solving activities. For example, good planning by the teacher ensured that pupils had to co-operate effectively to solve problems and make decisions. They worked very hard in this particular lesson, and showed good concentration skills because of high expectations and their interest in the challenging activities. The activities successfully involved all pupils, including those with special educational needs, who were fully involved and well supported in the lesson.
136. Year 5 pupils make satisfactory progress in developing throwing and catching skills. This was an assessed weakness from previous rounders lessons. Carefully planned practices made good use of pupil exemplars to demonstrate the skills, and successfully addressed these weaknesses. This gave pupils greater confidence and skills to join in future rounders games. Teachers' planning shows that Year 6 pupils have covered all aspects of the subject, except for swimming which, because of available pool time, is only taught in Year 3. At present the school has not developed any strategies to ensure that pupils, who finish Year 3 as non-swimmers, are given later opportunities to learn.
137. The co-ordinator provides good leadership for the subject and has successfully developed the subject further since the last inspection. A new curriculum has been introduced to ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are appropriately covered, and all staff have benefited from in-service training as part of a national initiative that has also given extra resources to the school. There are good assessment procedures in swimming which lead to some well-focused teaching. In most other aspects of the subject, assessment is carried out informally and no consistent records of pupils' attainment are passed up to the new teacher in September. However, teachers do evaluate their planning so that proposed improvements can be incorporated into the following year's school development plan. This is a good initiative that should ensure the constant refining of pupils' learning opportunities. There are useful links with the local cricket club and high school that is leading to quality coaching for some of the pupils. The subject has a high profile in the school. Recently a Year 5 class assembly focused on the pupils' physical education work and a recent skipping demonstration to the whole school has led to good interest in this activity. Competitive matches in netball and football take place regularly, and the school runs some popular extra-curricular sporting activities. Overall, the subject makes a good contribution to pupils' moral and social development. Resources are satisfactory, and their range has improved since the last inspection.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

138. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils have made satisfactory progress and attain standards that are in line with expectations in the locally agreed religious education syllabus. This shows an improvement since the last inspection when pupils' attainment was unsatisfactory. The policy for religious education is based on the local education authority agreed syllabus for religious education, 'Open Worlds.' The present scheme of work in the infants is to be replaced with a published scheme of work following the advice of the county adviser for religious education. However, the juniors will continue to use the county scheme of work.
139. Only a small sample of lessons was seen, and evidence was gained from the scrutiny of pupils' work, displays across the school, and from talking to pupils. The range of recorded work was limited. This is due to the high focus placed on discussion in lessons. However, in the interviews with pupils, it was clear that they have a sound knowledge of Christian beliefs and the beliefs of other major faiths. In a lesson observed in the infants, pupils talked about the theme of 'Special People'. The teacher revised pupils' previous learning through well focused questioning on 'Special Books' with pupils confidently talking about the importance of the Bible and the Torah for different

faiths. Pupils have satisfactory knowledge of different places of worship, such as the church and synagogue. Teachers make good use of resources. For example, the Year 1 teacher displayed a poster of an Indian family and the pupils tried to identify the different members of the family. Pupils were then encouraged to talk about members of their family and say why they were special to them. Teachers use their subject knowledge appropriately to help pupils to compare different faiths. For example, Year 2 pupils were helped to compare the Hindu religion they were studying with Christianity and Judaism through careful questioning that helped to consolidate their knowledge. The pupils' understanding was further developed when they studied the Hindu festival of Raksha Bandan and made their own decorative bracelet to give to a special friend.

140. Pupils in Year 6 combined their knowledge of Judaism and World War 2 well in their discussion about the persecution of the Jews. Pupils' knowledge was further enhanced by the teacher reading an extract from 'Rose Blanche' which described the life of a young girl living in Germany during the war. This was a very focused lesson where the pupils were able to think very carefully about the questions, "What makes people treat others like this?" and "Why do people stand by and not help?" Both questions helped pupils relate to what had happened in history and in relation to what happens to them in their daily lives. The theme of bullying was raised and pupils found that both questions gave them a good focus to think about the effect that bullying has on them and others, and why some people see what is going on and do nothing to help.
141. Teachers make effective use of relevant resources, including visits to the church and the regular visits by the clergy to take assemblies. In addition, the school has purchased artefacts that support the studies of other world faiths. Only a small sample of lessons was seen, and in these lessons the quality of teaching was satisfactory. However, there has not been any in-service training to improve teachers' subject knowledge, and the coordinator has identified this as an area of development for next year. The subject coordinator has only been in post for two terms. In that time he has audited resources and has drawn up an action plan which has not yet had time to impact upon standards. He has had no opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom, and this has hampered the development of the subject. The subject, however, makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The use of ICT to support pupils' learning in the subject is under-developed.