

# INSPECTION REPORT

**SHURDINGTON CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Shurdington, Gloucester

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115649

Headteacher: Lynda Dineen

Reporting inspector: Adrian Simm  
21138

Dates of inspection: 22<sup>nd</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> April 2002

Inspection number: 194806

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

© Crown copyright 2002

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior school

School category: Voluntary controlled

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Badgeworth Lane  
Shurdington  
Gloucester

Postcode: GL51 4UQ

Telephone number: 01242 862420

Fax number: 01242 862420

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Craig Simmonds

Date of previous inspection: 16.6.1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21138	Adrian Simm	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science Geography History Modern foreign language (French) Physical education Special educational needs English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are the standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
	Bernard Eyre	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?
	Judith Clarke	Team inspector	English Information and communications technology Art and design Design and technology Music Religious education Foundation Stage curriculum Equal Opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

Chase Russell Ltd  
85 Shores Green Drive  
Wicham  
Northwich  
Cheshire  
CW9 6EJ

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>11</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>30</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Shurdington Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School educates 70 boys and girls. This makes the school smaller than other schools educating the same age range. It is for pupils aged between four and 11 years. The school serves the village of Shurdington, which has a mixture of private and housing association properties. The high turnover in some of the rented accommodation means that it is usual for some children to start or leave the school during a school year. In 2001-2002, this was high at 21 per cent. Nineteen per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is similar to the national average. The number of boys and girls is similar in the school. Twenty two per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs. This is similar to the national average. These pupils require additional support for specific or more general learning difficulties and behaviour difficulties. Two of these pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need. Most pupils are of white United Kingdom or European ethnic background. Three pupils have English as an additional language. Most pupils have attended pre-school provision. Although in the recent past, the attainment of pupils on entry to Reception was lower than that expected nationally, since 2001, it is at the expected level. Most staff are new to the school in the last three years. The governors are committed currently, to funding four classes, which allows smaller pupil-numbers per class. The school gained national Achievement Awards in 2000 and 2001 for its improved standards.

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

The school is good and is very successful in meeting its aims in helping pupils to become independent and responsible and in preparing them for the future. Pupils, whose attainment on entry to the Reception class has, until this year been lower than that expected nationally, achieve well by the time they enter Year 1. This is built on so that by the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is generally above expected standards and pupils achieve well. Pupils achieved very well in 2001 in English and mathematics. Pupils' attitudes to school and their personal development are very good. Pupils are being prepared very well for life in a diverse society. High standards that exceed those expected for pupils of the same age in many subjects are the result of the very good leadership by the head teacher that encourages effective teaching overall. Whilst the school achieves this with funding that is high in comparison with other schools, nevertheless, the school provides good value for money.

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

- Ensures staff are very clear about how to improve pupils' learning. This is because the head teacher, who has the support of an effective governing body, leads the school very well. Together, they are very clear about the school's strengths and areas for further development.
- In 2001, staff ensured that pupils' standards by the end of Year 6 were in the top five per cent in English and mathematics in comparison with similar schools.
- Provides good quality teaching and learning overall that is particularly strong in Years 5 and 6
- Staff provide very good support for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This ensures that pupils' attitudes to work, relationships within school and personal development are very impressive. This is supported through very strong links with parents.
- On entry to the school, staff recognise quickly the particular learning needs of individual pupils and provide for them well, including higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs or English as an additional language.
- Provides very good learning opportunities that are 'brought to life' through excellent links with the community, village playgroups and other schools. The provision in the Foundation Stage, which provides pupils with their first experiences of school, is outstanding.

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

- How well the school uses the information it is collecting increasingly from assessment of pupils' work and checking on the quality of teaching to evaluate, plan and improve its effectiveness.

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

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

The school was last inspected in 1997 and shows very good improvement. Overall, standards have

improved very well, the quality of teaching is now far higher, curriculum planning has been improved and the governing body is now much more active in the life of the school. Much has been done to improve the accommodation, grounds, resources for learning and the exceptionally broad and exciting range of opportunities pupils now have to learn both in the classrooms and at other times. The school has worked very hard on the issues noted for development at the last inspection and chose the right order for dealing with these.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	C	C	A	A*
mathematics	D	C	A*	A*
science	D	D	E	D

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

Overall, standards have been improving, year-on-year since 1998 when pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science was in the bottom five per cent nationally. In 2001, pupils' standards in comparison with similar schools in English and mathematics were in the top five per cent. Standards were also well above average for pupils at the end of Year 2. From the reception year onwards, pupils now achieve well in their work. This is the same for both boys and girls, and those of different ability and backgrounds. Only in science, do pupils' achievements not compare well with other schools. However, this comparison does not make clear that around thirty-five per cent of the pupils at Year 6 in 2001, were within two or three points of gaining higher levels on their assessments. They were very close as a year-group, to achieving well in science. The statutory target set by the school for improvement this year in English was appropriately based upon an analysis of their previous work. The target for the number of pupils succeeding at Level 4 was exceeded. The target set in mathematics was high and narrowly missed only because of pupil illness at the time of the assessments. Overall, the school's rate of increase in standards is above the national trend for improvement. The school has received national Achievement Awards in 2001 and 2002 in celebration of this.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' are very enthusiastic and keen to learn. This stems from an exciting and stimulating curriculum. Pupils enjoy reading and those in Years 5 and 6 talk impressively about their favourite books.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave well including on the playground. Younger and older pupils enjoy each others company in a supportive way with the 'buddy system'. By Years 5 and 6, pupils' are very mature for their age. This allows learning to progress without disruption.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development and relationships are very good. Opportunities to abound for independent research using the school library or on CD Roms on the computer. Also for older pupils to take some responsibility for helping the younger ones who show great pleasure when their reading "buddy" appears at the classroom door.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils arrive in time for the start of the school day and respond quickly to the bell at the end of break-times so that

	they can start lessons on time.
--	---------------------------------

Pupils, who at times have misunderstood something or are unsure of what to do, have no worries about asking for and accepting advice. The working atmosphere developed throughout the school allows adults to concentrate on teaching and pupils to concentrate on learning. At times, this takes a little longer to achieve with some pupils, but good teaching and the pupils' desire to learn always shine through after a short while. From an early age, pupils respect each other's views and older pupils are at ease 'brainstorming' ideas without fear of criticism.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Throughout the school the teaching and learning are good. The effective support given to pupils with special education needs, higher and lower attaining pupils and those with English as an additional language ensures that all pupils learn and achieve well from the moment they start in the school. There is good teaching overall in the Reception; some lessons are very good and excellent. The basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics are taught well throughout the school. In subjects, the teaching of English and mathematics is good overall; very good in mathematics with Years 5 and 6. Overall, the teaching of science is satisfactory although it is good with Years 5 and 6. Teachers plan well within a school framework for each subject, which helps pupils' learning build through the school. Staff are self-critical and review their work to see how it could be better. Teachers put good quality resources to use effectively to enthuse and encourage pupils' learning. Teaching is particularly successful in lessons where teachers use the teaching methods that are advocated in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. This particular style is used also in most other subjects. Where teaching is satisfactory, it relates to missed opportunities for teachers to pick up on and correct pupils' misunderstandings. Consequently, this limits some pupils' learning. Teaching promotes increasingly, positive attitudes towards the diverse society in which we live. Homework is used successfully to extend learning opportunities.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Overall, the curriculum is very good and meets statutory requirements. It gives all pupils regardless of their attainment levels, gender or ethnic background, a broad and worthwhile experience of all the subjects and a very good understanding of different cultures.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	This is good and generally results in pupils achieving their learning targets that are set out clearly on their individual education plans.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The very small minority of pupils who start at the school with little English and provided for well both by extra support and by classroom work set at the right level.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision is very good. The school is very successful at developing pupils' attitudes of caring and sharing within a strong Christian ethos. Pupils understand the effects that they can have on others and generally 'want to do the right thing'.
How well the school cares for its pupils	This is sound overall. The school is a secure and safe environment in which to work. The teachers know the pupils very well and they are given good encouragement in their activities. All the pupils' many achievements are celebrated within the school. The school has suitable

	systems to safeguard pupils' access to the internet.
--	--

The school's links with parents are very effective. This partnership is part of the success of the school. Staff were well aware of the safety requirements for all activities during the inspection although a written record of these is not yet fully kept. The use the school makes of learning opportunities offered by exploring the local community and further afield is excellent. This is matched by the visitors who come into school to help, the outstanding links with local playgroups in preparation for the children starting in Reception and with the local secondary school to which many of the pupils transfer after Year 6. The school has good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and makes satisfactory use of this information in the planning for teaching. Whilst the school has worked on this area for development, there is still more work to be done.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership is very good. The head teacher ensures that the school sets out to improve continually and is effective in what it offers pupils and their families. The school has developed an atmosphere in which everyone is trying to do their best.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities. They know the school very well informally and what is happening day-to-day from their visits and governing body committee work. The governing body has a very good understanding of the school's strengths and how to use staff's strengths to best effect.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has developed a good range of techniques to monitor, analyse and use data to further improve pupils' achievement. Standards data is not yet available in all subjects and as such, cannot be taken into account in school planning and self-evaluation.
The strategic use of resources	The governors target school finances well. Firstly this was on improving and then maintaining good staffing levels, which has resulted in much improved standards. This is a high-cost strategy that governors are monitoring closely and maintaining for as long as income will allow.

The school is extending its tracking of pupils' standards so that monitoring of attainment and achievement by year group, gender, ability differences or any other chosen focus is more effective. The accommodation is good overall and well used by staff who have a broad spread of experience. Some areas are very good such as the provision for the Reception children and for both indoor and outdoor physical education. The size of the mobile classroom does not offer good opportunities for flexibility in teaching such as having enough space to introduce and develop work for each year group separately when the class is made up of two year-groups. Learning resources have been improved significantly in recent years to a good level overall. The school is clear how well it is doing, what else needs to be done and analyses whether it is using its income effectively. Parents are used informally as a 'sounding board' for the school to work out how satisfied they are. The questionnaires that parents completed for the inspection showed a very high level of satisfaction. This points to the school doing well in applying the principles of best value.

### PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school is welcoming and supportive with any concerns or problems;</li> <li>The school expects and succeeds in pupils giving of their best;</li> <li>The high quality of leadership and management;</li> </ul>	A very small minority of parents would welcome some more homework and increased information about how well their children are getting on. However, these were not expressed as major concerns.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The good quality of teaching;</li><li>• The children's enthusiasm for school.</li></ul> |  |
|---|--|

The judgements of the inspection team agree with parents' views about the strengths of the school. Inspectors agree also with the high majority of parents who consider that the levels of homework and information provided are sufficient.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

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

1. Children's attainment on entry to the Reception Class in comparison with other schools in the Local Education Authority was, for the majority of year-groups still in the school, lower than would be expected. This was the case in both literacy and numeracy. However this has changed so that in 2001, the current pupils' overall attainment on entry to the Reception Class was around what would be expected. **Children currently in the Reception Class achieve well in all of the areas of learning. Most children are on course to exceed the expectations of the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning for the Foundation Stage.**
2. **In 2001, in comparison with similar schools, pupils' standards in most areas of the national assessments at Years 2 and 6 were well above the national average or higher.** They were well above at Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics and at Year 6, standards in English and mathematics were in the top five per cent nationally. Only in science, did pupils' achievements not compare well with other schools. However, this comparison does not make clear that around thirty-five per cent of the pupils at Year 6 in 2001, were within two or three points of gaining higher levels on their assessments. They were very close as a year-group, to achieving well in science.
3. **Overall, standards have been improving, year-on-year since 1998** when pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science was in the bottom five per cent nationally. Overall, the school's rate of increase in standards is above the national trend for improvement. **The school has received national Achievement Awards in 2001 and 2002 in celebration of this.** This improvement is the same for both boys and girls, and those of different ability and backgrounds. There are no significant differences in achievement. All pupils achieve well.
4. The statutory target set by the school for improvement in 2001 in English was appropriately based upon an analysis of their previous work. The target for the number of pupils succeeding at Level 4 was exceeded. The target set in mathematics was high and challenging and on this occasion only just missed because of pupil-illness at the time of the assessments. **During the inspection, the work seen in English, mathematics and science across the school points to high standards being maintained in English and mathematics and showed no sign of underachievement in science.**
5. Standards at Year 6 in English and mathematics are good and they are at least sound in science. Also, they are good in art and design, geography, history and design and technology. Standards in information and communications technology, religious education, music and physical education are satisfactory. Standards at Year 2 in English, mathematics and science are satisfactory. They are satisfactory in all other subjects apart from art and design and design and technology where they are good. **These judgements point to pupils who started school with attainment that was lower than that expected nationally building well on their learning as they move through the school. This shows good achievement for all pupils.** French is studied more as a 'fun activity' than a full subject. Pupils are taught for around 20 minutes a week but even in this short time, pupils are achieving well.

6. **All pupils with individual learning needs achieved well in 2001 with the majority attaining the expected Level 4 by the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics. These standards were very high in comparison with similar schools.** Those with special educational needs throughout the school make good progress towards their targets set in individual education plans, which are related mostly to literacy development. Challenging but achievable targets are set against which progress is measured. The very small minority of pupils who start at the school with little English are provided for well both by extra support and by classroom work set at the right level. The success of this is checked on and good progress is made in both speaking and listening skills in English and in the use of those skills in learning in other subjects.
7. **There is no significant difference in achievement between the boys and the girls over time although differences in attainment are evident.** The school has analysed the evidence available and is aware that generally, until 2001, boys had attained higher levels in national assessments than the girls in reading, writing and mathematics at Year 2 and in English, mathematics and science at Year 6. This trend changed in 2001. Data also points to a trend in the past that boys' attainment on entry to the school was higher than girls, which goes some way to understanding the outcomes. However, the sizes of year groups and significant changes in year groups as pupils leave the school and new ones start, makes it very difficult to track improvement as the make-up of children in the groups changes. The progress that all pupils make on their starting point in Reception is good. Evidence of achievement since September 2001, points to all pupils being given every opportunity to attain equally well in lessons. Staff know the attainments of all pupils very well and are successfully meeting them. There are a few able musicians who receive additional tuition and are given opportunities to demonstrate their learning. They are encouraged to succeed both by the school and their parents.
8. **Pupils throughout the school are very confident learners.** Most have very good attitudes to work, which helps them to make good progress in most lessons and in their personal development. At times, pupils in Years 3 and 4 need extra reminders about settling to work but generally, because of the teacher's skills, good progress is also the outcome here as well. Numeracy skills are used well in a broad range of subjects. This was very evident in geography work with Years 5 and 6 where quite detailed work had been carried out on the water cycle and seasonal variations including sunshine and rainfall graphs. Also in Years 1 and 2, where pupils used their numeracy skills well in carrying out a traffic survey outside school, the results of which were recorded on well-presented tally charts. The National Literacy Strategy is in place and serves the school well as a curriculum plan for English and also a way of improving pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As a result, pupils use language creatively, understand the spiritual and cultural value of different types of writing and extend this well in subjects such as history and religious education. Pupils are developing personal study well. They make good use of the school library and computers to further develop their research skills. **Overall, pupils' achievement over time is good. It is very good in mathematics. Standards have improved since the last inspection in 1997 with particularly rapid improvement since 1998.**

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

9. **The attitudes of the pupils to the school and their personal development are very good.** The school has improved considerably since the last inspection and in no small measure this has been made possible because the school has created a positive attitude to learning. This has been helped considerably by very good relationships between adults and pupils. One result of this is that older pupils willingly take on responsibilities in helping with the organisation and smooth running of assemblies, help with the dining hall at lunchtimes, and letting younger children mix in with their games at break times.
10. **Pupils show a high level of interest in their lessons and respond very well to the praise and encouragement they receive from adults.** Older pupils show consideration to their younger colleagues and they relish the opportunities to help them as 'reading buddies'. They welcome new pupils into their midst, and are watchful that shy pupils are not excluded from group activities or at play. Children in the Reception class settle well and quickly grow in confidence. They get off to a very good start in their learning. Pupils who have an identified special education need make much the same progress as their colleagues. On occasions in some classes, pupils find it difficult to settle immediately, and teachers have to work hard to get the expected high level of concentration when explaining the purpose of the lesson. A successful lesson is usually the outcome.
11. **Standards of behaviour are generally good and often very good.** There are clear, easy to understand rules on display in classrooms. Teachers are good at handling upsets so that they do not last for long. Parents believe that the behaviour of the pupils is well managed and inspection evidence confirms this to be true. There have been no exclusions of pupils from the school for poor behaviour.
12. **Pupils' personal development and relationships are very good,** as is the pastoral support the school provides. The school has well established arrangements to ensure that the pupils who join the school during the year are made to feel welcome. Discussion with them confirmed that they are quickly and effectively integrated into the school's routines. Letters from parents commend the school for the efforts it makes to ensure that the difficulties they have encountered elsewhere are not repeated. Opportunities to assist in the running of the school are undertaken willingly and with minimal adult supervision; for example pupils work as a team when setting out dining tables in the hall. Reading buddy arrangements are highly valued. Younger pupils show pleasure when their 'buddy' appears at the classroom door. Throughout the school there is an obvious pride and respect for the environment. Pupils are enthusiastic about the after school hours activities.
13. Opportunities to show concern and compassion are provided for the pupils. For example, they research the lives of people from other cultures and reflect on the social deprivation generated by poverty or disadvantage. Teachers create opportunities for pupils to reflect upon different lifestyles either in the present day or in bygone times. For example when one of their colleagues went to Bangladesh on holiday, he was asked to bring back photographs that were used in lessons to stimulate discussion.
14. In a history lesson information from the 1851 census was used very effectively to allow pupils to discuss what life must have been in their local village and to compare it with data gathered simultaneously in John Street Manchester where one dwelling housed many people. This included Irish immigrants crowded into the basements. The pupils used their imagination to reflect on what it must have been like to live in those conditions. Pupils were able to reflect on the fairness of the situation. They

considered the moral dilemma of how life must have been in the past. They compared the difference between workers tied to a feudal system in their village to those in a rapidly developing urban environment. The pupils were also interested to discover family names in the local census data and they were able to realise that links to an area over a number of generations gives an indefinable emotional sense of belonging. This enabled the lesson to link feelings very well with moral and cultural awareness.

15. In a geography lesson about Mexico, younger pupils had the opportunity to discuss the differences in lifestyle of the Horta family living in a village remote to their own. They understood that the food eaten in that village is linked to a pastoral lifestyle and that crop failure quickly leads to hunger.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

16. Teaching and learning was good or better in 86 per cent of lessons and very good or better in 31 per cent. **Overall, teaching and learning were good.** They were good overall in English, mathematics, science and all other subjects except history and the modern foreign language sessions were they were very good. Differences within subjects were evident only in science where teaching and learning at Years 1 and 2 were satisfactory and in mathematics with Years 5 and 6 where they were very good. Insufficient lessons were seen in art and design, design and technology, music and Religious Education to make an overall judgement. Overall, teaching and learning was particularly strong with Reception Class children and with pupils in Years 5 and 6 where examples of very good or excellent teaching were seen. Teachers plan well together and use the increasingly good resources effectively. Pupils' learning builds well step-by-step across the school.
17. **Across the school, teachers set out clearly at the beginning of lessons what is expected of pupils in their learning and check on this as the lesson progresses. Pupils have no concerns at all about asking for help if they are unclear about something.** In effective lessons, teachers start by ensuring the learning objectives are clear and set out, so that pupils can remind themselves at any time during the lesson. This is discussed and written in 'key word' fashion on the white boards in the classrooms so that they can be referred to at any point. Work is set for different abilities of pupils, groups are supported in their learning by teachers focusing on each group for short periods of time and when additional staff are available, they are used effectively, particularly with those pupils with additional learning difficulties. Examples of this very effective teaching were seen in a Years 5 and 6 in a mathematics lesson on strategies to use in solving word problems. The teacher ensured that pupils knew exactly what they had to do and how they were going to proceed. This built very well on pupils' homework in which they had worked out as many different words as they could find for the processes of subtraction and multiplication. Their examples included take away, minus, find the difference between and multiply, times, 'lots of' or 'groups' of. This was 'double checking' the pupils' understanding and was good preparation for the activity. As the lesson developed, pupils worked individually or in pairs as they chose; supported well by a classroom support assistant. The work was set in three levels of difficulty to match the pupils' understanding of the work. The teacher and support assistant chatted to pupils to make sure they had remembered the approaches previously discussed such as
  - what are the key points in the number problem?
  - start with the facts that you know
  - what is it asking me to do?

This helped the teacher to find out if there were any misunderstandings that could be corrected immediately. Once pupils had completed their work, harder extension work was available. This is an approach that staff use across the school with the majority of lessons having clear opening sessions followed by teaching activities and rounded off with a discussion to clarify pupils' learning and overcome any further misunderstandings that might have crept in.

18. In an excellent lesson with the Reception in physical education, a similar style was used. Very clear objectives built successfully on previous learning and offered pupils the opportunity to apply their knowledge, offer ideas, show just how good they could turn their ideas into action and improve their balances and movements even more through the analysis of very focussed demonstrations. The teacher's knowledge of the subject and the children's capabilities on low level and high level apparatus was obvious. The broad range of apparatus on which the children's imagination could roam freely let them test themselves to their own limits. Care was taken with the children's safety. Together, this produced a lesson that could not have been improved upon easily. As a result of the excellent teaching, standards were very good for pupils of all abilities.
19. **Overall, pupils' independent work and research skills have developed very well and are supported fully by use of a school library, good levels of subject resources and regular access to information via the Internet or CD Roms.** Teachers' own subject knowledge and their commitment to ensuring pupils' develop independent research skills, have led to pupils building-up impressive knowledge and understanding. For instance, pupils in Years 3 and 4 have begun to develop a good understanding of the wealth and life style of some of the ancient Egyptians from evidence of how they dressed, the size of their houses and what they considered important. In one good lesson observed, the teacher linked together very well, pupils' knowledge of weather, erosion and different natural materials from geography and science lessons in explaining how buildings were still standing today. In Years 5 and 6, really powerful learning took place as pupils traced families back to the Shurdington census of 1851. They discovered how to 'dig out' information from primary and secondary sources, how to tabulate it and what weight could be put on its value. Higher attaining pupils were encouraged to produce well-thought-out research and to draw comparisons with lifestyles of Irish immigrants from a similar census of a big city.
20. **On the very few occasions when teaching and learning was satisfactory,** this was in lessons in mathematics, music and religious education with Years 3 and 4 and science and literacy with Years 1 and 2. Here instances of teachers picking up on and supporting pupils' misunderstandings were not as frequent as they might have been. As such, pupils' learning was hampered. For example, in mathematics and science, some pupils were still struggling with their work, well after they had started. This was because the organisation of the lesson in the absence of effective classroom support from another adult left some groups of pupils unsupported for periods during the lesson, which affected the extent of their learning.
21. **The National Numeracy strategy has been introduced well** and teaching of skills is good throughout school; very good with Years 5 and 6. Skills are built into a broad range of subjects. **Introduction of the National Literacy strategy has been good** and serves the school well as a curriculum plan for this subject. The subject serves the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils effectively through creative use of language, the extensive use of poetry, fiction and non-fiction and links

with other subjects such as history.

22. **Since the last inspection, the school has introduced the teaching of French.** This follows a set programme and is taught as a fun activity, which broadens pupils' learning opportunities and has introduced them to a language and life-style different to their own. Appropriate emphasis is laid firstly upon listening and responding orally. Because the teacher is an excellent role-model, the pupils pronounce French with increasing accuracy. The pupils have made good progress since they started because they are taught very well and most are enthusiastic about learning French. New learning was very effectively reinforced by picture flash cards, songs and action rhymes. The teaching support pupils' development very well by making the children enthusiastic about learning a new language.
23. **All pupils with special educational needs are taught well.** Teachers are usually successful in planning their teaching and the learning materials to pupils' needs and they ensure that pupils know what they need to do to succeed. The very good relationships between staff and pupils and the effectiveness of the additional support have a very positive effect on pupils' learning. Support of pupils in classrooms and separately individually or in small groups is planned very effectively in a way that ensures pupils who receive extra support out of classrooms are frequently involved on the same focus of work as their class mates. Higher attaining pupils are recognised and encouraged to achieve well. In mathematics, this means fortnightly support for some Year 6 pupils from a teacher from the local secondary school. The constant encouragement staff give to the pupils motivates them to learn, helps to raise their self-esteem and helps to keep them focused on learning. Homework is used successfully by teachers. One particular aspect of this are the mathematics games, which children take home to play with parents. These are carefully packaged with good instructions and well liked by parents. The approach was devised in conjunction with a local 'Beacon School', which helped also with the 'set up' costs. **Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is a strength of the school and has improved significantly since the time of the last inspection.**

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

24. **The quality of the curriculum provided by the school for the pupils is good.** It is very relevant and interesting for the pupils. **In addition to classroom work, the quality and range of the additional learning experiences provided by the school for the pupils are very good.** This is because the school provides many extras, which add significantly to its scope. In all subjects, statutory requirements are met. Religious education is taught in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus.
25. **The curriculum for the children in the Reception class is very good.** The teacher plans the children's work with good regard to the Early Learning Goals. She maintains a clear emphasis on learning through play. The use of the outdoor environment is exceptional. Many opportunities are provided for the children to develop their personal responsibilities with the teacher planning for an increasing level of independence in their work. The provision for children in the Reception class shows good improvement since the last inspection. At that time, the teacher did not plan to the prescribed curriculum for young children.
26. The school has tried successfully to build up a broad curriculum, which will interest and stimulate the pupils. French is taught each week to all pupils beginning in Year 1.

This addition to the pupils' lessons helps prepare them very well for life in the European Union. Subjects such as art and design, design and technology, geography, history and physical education have all continued to be taught despite a particular focus on literacy and numeracy. The curriculum is planned to ensure the pupils have the appropriate first hand educational experiences. Visitors are encouraged to come into school to talk to the pupils. The wealth of expertise and interests they share enables the pupils to see the rich diversity of opportunities available. The pupils visit places of educational interest in the immediate and wider community. This provides very good stimulus and context for their work. For those pupils who would like to learn to play a musical instrument there are opportunities for them to have expert tuition. They are given very good support and help in school.

27. Planning is thorough and consistent throughout the school. All subjects are supported by schemes of work. These are drawn from the government recommended schemes of work. They are to be reviewed and tailored to the exact needs of the school at the end of the year. Lessons are generally well planned and structured.
28. The school has enthusiastically and successfully embraced the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The school has amended the literacy hour format and has provided a separate reading session for the pupils. This refinement alongside the considerable help the pupils receive with their reading has enabled the school to maintain a high standard. At the same time, teachers spend more time in literacy lessons focusing on the pupils' writing skills. This has been a school focus for improvement. Similarly, the adoption of the National Numeracy Strategy has produced very good results such as the standards achieved by the Year 6 pupils in 2001. The Additional and Early Literacy Strategies have been well implemented to improve the skills of a small number of pupils who have benefited from this very structured support. The school provides booster group support which helps the older pupils to improve their work.
29. **Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs.** Teachers and the teaching assistants give them good help in classrooms. Those pupils who have specialist help enjoy their sessions with the specialist support teacher where the work is linked frequently to the focus for the whole class. All statutory requirements of the curriculum are met for the pupils with special educational needs and they are well supported to learn the full range of subjects of the National Curriculum. Individual education plans are available for all pupils and these indicate the support the pupils need. This aspect of the schools' work shows their determination to help the pupils who have special educational needs, raise their self esteem and appreciate their strengths as well as their areas for development. The tasks set in class are well matched to pupils' ability. This has a particularly positive impact upon the pupils' learning.
30. Educational inclusion for all pupils is a strength of the school. **All staff make strenuous efforts to include pupils of all abilities and backgrounds into every activity.** The school organises music tuition for the pupils who wish to learn to play a musical instrument and higher attaining Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to work in mathematics with a teacher from the local secondary school.
31. **The provision that the school makes for pupils for whom English is an additional language is good.** A lot of additional support is provided for individuals who speak little or no English when they arrive in school. The school is very aware that new pupils can feel very isolated, and it goes to much trouble to arrange additional teaching and one-to-one support in classes, especially in the early months

after arrival. Good personal links are made with parents to help children's understanding, integration and participation in school life. The progress that these pupils make is good, both in learning the English language in the first place, and then in learning about the other subjects of the curriculum. They eventually become as proficient in their understanding of English as they are in their home language.

32. **The provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is very good.** Lessons include time for reflection and teachers encourage pupils to develop positive self-images. Assembly themes invite pupils to consider how people's beliefs and traditions shape their lives and how important it is to respect others regardless of their background or social standing. This is confirmed by the confidence shown by pupils in class and with visitors. In some lessons observed pupils were encouraged to consider the inequality of opportunity experienced by immigrant workers. In another lesson, quite young pupils discussed the difference in lifestyle and eating habits of a Mexican family in comparison to their own. Pupils are encouraged to look beyond immediate meanings in stories and to express emotion. The concept of empathy is promoted well.
33. The provision of moral development is promoted very well. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong. This can be seen in lessons where, with few exceptions, behaviour is very good; they are able to talk about their school with evident pride. They understand that there is a responsibility to look after each other and the inspectors were touched by a remark made by Year 6 pupils that the thing they would miss the most on leaving was the relationships they have built up with their younger school mates. The support given to charities and the entertainment provided in the community, illustrates the caring ethos of the school. Pupils conduct themselves sensibly about the school and the older pupils have well developed skills in managing their own learning, for example in a numeracy lesson Years 5 and 6 pupils worked unaided by their teachers to generate percentage webs on the white board. When the reason for the progression was not understood, explanations were offered in a helpful manner and no one was made to feel inadequate.
34. The provision for social development is very good. Pupils are polite and courteous; they work co-operatively in small group activities. Lunch times are civilised occasions, pupils assist in setting up the dining tables and at the end of the meal they clear the hall without formal supervision from staff who are near-by. They are well able to self-manage their affairs. Very little mess or litter is made at lunchtime and the pupils have pleasing relationships with the lunchtime supervisors. Good manners and caring attitudes are reinforced at every opportunity. Pupils respond well to teachers' expectations principally because they are seen to be fair and consistent in how they deal with pupils. The pupils have an awareness of socially acceptable behaviour although a few pupils need more reminding than others and on occasions their thoughtlessness spoils the harmony of the classroom for short periods.
35. The provision for cultural development is very good. The school is aware that a number of pupils have limited experience of the multicultural nature of society and the school makes every effort to remedy this by providing a wide range of visits and visitors. This is in evidence on displays, including photographs taken by a pupil when he went with his family to Bangladesh with his family. It is enriched by curriculum provision including tasting food from other countries and by visitors coming into school with traditional national dress. Pupils' own village, local and wider culture features well in geography, history and English lessons in particular. Also, maypole and country dancing and involvement in a broad range of festivals and school productions add significantly to this.

36. **The school successfully provides a caring Christian environment in which the pupils receive a high standard of education.** Individuals are accepted for their strengths and weaknesses and helped to fulfil their own potential. Pupils' personal development is very well addressed through a programme that includes personal, social and health education, drugs awareness, citizenship and sex and relationships. These opportunities help to prepare the pupils to play an active role as citizens in the school and wider community and develop their confidence to do this.
37. **The provision of extra-curricular activities in this small school is very good.** There are numerous activities that cover a wide range of interests and talents. The contribution the community makes to life of the school is outstanding. Members of the community come to the school and help the pupils with their work. A number of people come to help the pupils with their reading. Many visit the school to help to celebrate the pupils' work and learn about the new government initiatives, for example Literacy hour. The school also makes an active contribution to village and church life.
38. **Relationships with other schools and groups are excellent.** The school has many links with secondary schools, colleges and on occasions, specialist special educational needs units, which give educational support to the pupils. The pupils gain considerably from these highly productive links. A visiting member of staff gives specialist teaching in mathematics. Older pupils have many opportunities to use and develop their ICT skills in the computer suite of a local secondary school. There are good links with the playgroup in the village and children who are not of school age are able to come to school to take part in story sessions. This wealth of support makes a very positive impact on the progress the pupils make.

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

39. **The procedures to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the pupils are sound.** Staff were well-aware of the safety requirements for all activities during the inspection although a written record of these is not yet fully kept. The school promotes pupils' personal development well, particularly by the wide range of external activities it provides. This ensures that pupils are being well prepared to face the challenges of everyday life.
40. **The code of conduct and behaviour policy helps staff to be consistent in how positive behaviour is promoted.** The parents who talked to inspectors during the inspection, including those who help in the school, confirm that their children are well behaved and that this creates a good atmosphere for learning. Infrequent incidents of poor behaviour are also handled well. There are good arrangements for the induction of pupils new to the school and this includes an excellent leaflet explaining how young children can be guided and prepared, so that their first few days in school are as stress free as possible.
41. **The school is alert to the need to protect children from harm** and the head teacher, in her role of child protection co-ordinator, has developed strong and effective links with the external support agencies. Adults are aware of the latest code of practice and how to react should they have any concerns. However not all adults have undergone formal training in how to recognise signs of emotional and physical abuse, although this was 'touched upon' recently when staff received first-aid training. The governors carry out health and safety checks but the school's safety policy does not require their findings to be recorded. Fire drills are conducted at intervals.

Arrangements to deal with unusual medical conditions are well managed but they too are not clearly defined in policy documents.

42. **Procedures for promoting attendance are good.** When the reason for absence is not known, staff telephone home promptly to enquire into the circumstances. On the rare occasions that a cause for concern arises, the advice of the education welfare officer is sought. The information contained in the registers is analysed at intervals and the information contained conforms to the regulations.
43. **The school has good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and makes satisfactory use of this information to guide and direct its work.** In the last inspection the school was asked to ensure that assessment was used to guide the teacher's lesson planning and their teaching. Although the school has worked on this area for development there is still more work to be done.
44. In the Reception Class the children are assessed on entry to the school. This enables the teacher to identify the particular areas of strength of each group. It also identifies the areas of learning which need greater development. The teacher then keeps a careful check on the progress the children make. Clear records of their work are kept and how they approach their tasks. The children are then reassessed at the end of the Reception year. This allows good information to accompany them into Years 1 and 2. The school has now implemented a common format for gathering information in English, mathematics and science. The results of assessments will help the teachers to keep an ongoing check on all of the pupils' progress. The class teacher in Years 5 and 6 has already begun to do this in mathematics and this enables her to keep a careful check on the pupils' mathematical development. The information the school gathers is less useful in other subject areas. The teachers keep samples of the pupils work and records of how the pupils do in a range of subjects but there is no consistent way of recording and managing this information. The school has begun to look at ways of recording this data. At the moment, this is in its early stages of development. The end of Year 6 test results are analysed and amendments made to the curriculum. This ensures that the curriculum is tailored to the specific needs of the pupils. Monitoring of boys and girls levels is done informally in the school. The teachers know the pupils very well. This high level of understanding enables the teachers to recognise when pupils need extra help. In English and mathematics the pupils have individual targets to work towards. They are quite clear about what it is they need to do to improve their work further.
45. **Pupils' personal development is well promoted.** The teachers know the pupils very well and they are given good encouragement in their activities. All the pupils' many achievements are celebrated within the school.

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

46. **Parents have very good views of the school and have confidence in the teachers.** They speak with some affection about the school and the improvements it has made since the last inspection. Parents are appreciative of the support they and their families receive in their everyday lives and of the efforts made by the teachers to make lessons interesting. The school generates very well a sense of community because it attaches high importance to the creation of a school where every child is valued.
47. **The reports parents receive at the end of the summer term are good.** They contain specific information about the achievements reached and the areas for

improvement that teachers have identified. There are two occasions in the year when parents have the opportunity for formal discussions. Day to day matters are handled easily because parents and teachers meet each other at either the beginning or end of the school day. Consequently there is good dialogue between home and school. A monthly newsletter is sent home to ensure that all families are informed about school routines.

48. Other information, such as the school prospectus and the governor's annual report to parents provides most of the information required. The governors annual meeting with parents is well attended. A local sponsor is currently arranging for the prospectus to be redesigned and printed. It will have an attractive cover and illustrations, which will promote the school very well.
49. The parent, teachers and friends association does valuable work in the promotion of social friendships and in raising funds to support the work of the school. The monies raised are used wisely to improve the learning environment and the recent donation of a tricycle to the reception class has enhanced still further the very good provision of larger toys. These enrich the lives of the youngest pupils by encouraging them to play and collaborate together in a stimulating environment. It is a strong contributory factor to the good progress made by these children.
50. **The school ensures that parents of children who require additional support are both consulted and informed.** These arrangements are good. The school makes effective use of support agencies to ensure that good links are made with families who are new to the area. Parents are involved in the periodical reviews of their children who have a statement of special need. Prospective parents are encouraged to come to the school and to visit classrooms in a welcoming and warm manner. The written information the school provides for the parents of children who are entering school for the first time is informative and helpful.

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

51. **Overall, the quality of the leadership and management of the head teacher and staff is very good. They have improved the school very well since the last inspection.**
52. At the previous inspection in 1997, pupils' standards by the end of Year 6 were judged to be below expectations in a number of subjects. The following year in 1998, the standards at Year 6 were very low in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. **However, since then, the school has improved out of all recognition.** It has gained awards for the improvement in its standards, particularly in English and mathematics. However, improvement has not been confined to the core subjects. Subject areas such as the arts and humanities, design and technology and information and communications technology have all improved well. Over and above this, the school's aims to provide an atmosphere in which children's self confidence flourishes, where they are co-operative and independent and have a broad understanding and involvement in their community have all been a high priority. As a result, these are now very positive areas of school life. A very broad and successful range of learning opportunities has been developed and overall, pupils achieve well in all of these.
53. **Owing to the small size of the school and the staff's very good knowledge of all of the pupils, much of the analysis of what is or is not working well and planning for improvement is carried out informally. More formal monitoring of**

**teaching and learning has started, is currently incorporated soundly in the school's performance management process and is well set for developing further.**

54. Throughout this period, the head teacher has maintained a weighty teaching commitment. She has led by example, has taken responsibility for curriculum areas and has influenced staff to develop the school in line with the shared ideas for improvement. The staff and the governing body, with help and training from the Local Education Authority, worked hard towards successfully implementing the national initiatives of Literacy, numeracy and the Foundation Stage as well as working towards resolving the key issues from the last inspection. The issues are highlighted and were

- **raising standards in English, science, design and technology, history and geography;**

This has been met for all pupils; boys and girls, higher attainers and lower attainers and those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Extra support was provided well for pupils who were close to achieving either Level 4 or Level 5 in the national assessments in English and mathematics at Year 6. Assessment and informal knowledge of pupils' levels in science and subsequent extra support was not as high a priority and as such, was not fully successful in doing justice to the hard work put in by pupils and teachers. Assessment data has been gathered more and the school judges that monitoring and support for this year's Year 6 pupils in science will result in more improvement.

- **producing schemes of work to ensure that children's learning builds step-by-step across the school; ensuring that the schemes of work developed the skills pupils needed; and making sure that the agreed schemes of work were being used successfully.**

This has been successful and the school has plans to review and improve upon the subject curriculum as part of their two-year review about to take place at the end of this school year.

- **using assessment to check that the pupils were learning and to what extent;**

This has been introduced most fully in mathematics where staff are very clear at what levels pupils are working, how quickly they are progressing and what else needs to be taught or revised so that they can succeed even more in their work. Targets for learning are set and assessed and parents are made aware of the targets termly. Appropriately, this is being used as a model for other subjects.

- **ensuring the governing body fulfilled all of their statutory duties; and long term planning set realistic priorities with carefully identified ways of knowing how success would be judged and achieved in the most cost-effective way.**

This has happened. In addition, the governing body now takes a far more effective role in supporting the staff and pupils. They gain first hand knowledge of what is happening in the school such as from visits to classrooms, regular meetings, clear monitoring of

the school's finances and making best use of governors' individual skills and the time they have available. Those governors who do not have the time to be in school regularly during the school day, have expertise, such as in finances that is valuable in monitoring the budget or in pastoral support and advice. This is an effective use of skills. The governors have gained for themselves a very good working knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses, which has been part of the success in how the school has developed. The school improvement plan has provided a sound framework within which the school has progressed. There is a good perspective on raising standards, addressing the issues from the last inspection and the needs of the school. There is appropriate involvement and monitoring of progress by the governors and the staff. The review of subjects, schemes of work and procedures for assessment are recognised for further development. However, the governors rely heavily on the head teacher's report to each of their meetings, for the more formal evaluation of progress. They recognise also, that more detailed information will become available to them on the success of priorities, once the school is collecting and analysing more assessment data from broader areas of school life such as the foundation subjects. The school improvement plan does not yet contain sufficiently this type of information, which can be used as one important measure of success.

55. **Beyond the issues from the last inspection, the staff, governors, parents and members of the local community work well together to take the school forward.**

Everyone shares a strong commitment for improvement. Their Christian values and attitudes are reflected not only in the aims of the school but in practice. This results in a caring school community, which has developed excellent links with the church, the local community and partner schools and playgroups. The staff are suitably qualified and there is an appropriate range of teaching experience. The new arrangements for performance management are in place. The training needs of the staff are taken into account according to the priorities set on the school improvement plan and their personal needs. There are good arrangements made for teachers to share expertise and work together to improve the quality of their work. The benefits of recent training for literacy and numeracy are evident in the quality of teaching and learning. Training for information and communication technology is still in process but has positively influenced standards already. The school is well served by the teaching assistants who work effectively with the teachers to support small groups of pupils in their work. This makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning especially those with special educational needs who benefit from constant encouragement and support. Consequently they make good progress towards their targets. Some parents and members of the local community support pupils well in their work such as hearing them read and helping in design and technology or art and design lessons. Additional help for pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language is supported very well by visiting staff whose work is linked to classroom planning so that the pupils are supported as effectively as possible. The visiting music specialists support pupils well in additional instrumental tuition, which is one way of the school extending the skills of those who have a particular talent. The lunchtime and administrative staff make a positive impact on the smooth running of the school. The governors value highly the skills of the secretary in day-to-day financial control. The last audit of the school's budget reflected this well in that it contained no significant requirements for improvement in the school's procedures.

56. **The school has good accommodation and learning resources overall.**

The accommodation has been improved in recent years to make a more effective learning environment, which is used well by the staff and pupils and maintained to high standards of cleanliness. The provision for pupils starting their school life in the

Foundation Stage is outstanding, and is matched by the use that the reception teacher makes of the accommodation and the school grounds. The grounds are maintained well and provide very good hard and grassed areas where pupils can play safely. A very attractive playground has been developed recently from monies donated to the school and the school garden is used very well in support of investigations into 'green issues' such as in science or in the separate 'Green Club'. The school library is used well by the pupils who often come to find out information or borrow books. There are many good quality new books easily accessible which the pupils enjoy reading. The level of subject learning resources is mostly good and results in lessons being all the more interesting and effective such as a physical education lesson with Reception Class children where the teacher ensured that the very good range of apparatus was used to its fullest. Also in history with Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6 where primary and secondary artefacts brought the lessons alive in such diverse topics as life in Ancient Egypt and in times gone by in Shurdington.

**57. There is good strategic management of the school budget and good use of other monies in support of raising standards in the school.**

The governing body with the head teacher effectively exercises their responsibilities for oversight of the budget. The financial, staffing and curriculum implications of spending are carefully considered when large expenditure is required. Day-to-day expenditure is correctly delegated to the head teacher. Expenditure is linked appropriately to the priorities identified in the school improvement plan. The current surplus of around ten per cent of the school's income is being used to maintain four classes for pupils, for as long as possible. This has been a high-cost strategy in staffing costs but has paid off in the improvements that the school has made since the last inspection, particularly in the pupils' standards of work. The governors and the school seek to find best value for money before committing to expenditure. They are also clear how well the school is doing in comparison with other schools, what else needs to be done and have 'their ears to the ground' in knowing just how importantly the parents view all of the additional opportunities for learning over and above the statutory curriculum. Much of this is funded from a good level of donations and gifts received by the school. In addition, the school has used a special government grant for study support to enhance pupils' opportunities in areas such as dance and art, which have had a tremendously positive effect on the quality of activities outside of the school day. Also, the school has linked into funding from a neighbouring 'Beacon School', which has supported effectively the development of mathematical games for parents to use at home with their children. This project is progressing through the school year by year with the youngest children first. The opportunities have been recently introduced for families of children in Years 3 and 4. The parents' response to the questionnaires issued for this inspection was overwhelmingly supportive of the school's provision and standards. In view of the very good educational provision, the standards that the pupils currently attain, the very high quality of the leadership and management and the good resources available, the school gives good value for money and is an effective school. The school is aware of the next important steps to take to maintain and build upon the current strong position.

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

To build on its strengths in teaching and learning and the very high standards achieved in English and mathematics, the school should

- (1) Ensure that self-evaluation is more fully introduced in a formal way. To do this,

the head teacher and governors need to set out an action plan with a realistic timescale, to

- Extend the assessment and tracking of pupils' standards so that monitoring of attainment and achievement by class, year group, gender, ability differences or any other chosen focus is effective in all subjects;\*  
(Paragraphs 44, 54, 97, 103, 107, 110, 114, 119, 128, 134 and 139)
- Ensure that the school's improvement plan makes greater use of the information that is being collected on pupils' attainment so that the school is clearer that its development planning is resulting in increased standards;  
(Paragraph 54)\*
- Schedule the monitoring of teaching across all subjects.  
(Paragraphs 53, 107, 110, 114 and 134)\*
- Ensure that through formal self-evaluation, governors gain more 'first hand' knowledge of the school's standards and provision.  
(Paragraph 54)\*

In addition to the Key issue above, the following less important issue should be considered for inclusion in the school action plan:

- Ensure written risk assessments are put in place.  
(Paragraphs 39 and 134)

\* Indicates issues already noted in the school's self-evaluation and improvement planning.

## **PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS**

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

Number of lessons observed

36
----

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection**

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	9	20	5			
Percentage	6	25	56	14			

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 around three percentage points.

**Information about the school's pupils**

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	70
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	14
<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	16
<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3
<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

**Attendance****Authorised absence**

	%
School data	8.1
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)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	4	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	12	14	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80(100)	93(90)	87(100)
	National	84(83)	86(84)	91(90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	14	13	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (100)	87(100)	87(80)
	National	85(84)	89(88)	89(88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	5	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	14	13	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88(86)	81(86)	88(79)
	National	75(75)	71(72)	87(85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	14	13	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88(79)	81(71)	75(86)
	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	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	
White	50
Any other minority ethnic group	

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	14.3
Average class size	18.25

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

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	43.5

--	--

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

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

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

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

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000-2001
	£
Total income	204247
Total expenditure	204747
Expenditure per pupil	2694
Balance brought forward from previous year	31668
Balance carried forward to next year	31168

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	73
Number of questionnaires returned	28

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	71	29			
My child is making good progress in school.	68	32			
Behaviour in the school is good.	57	43			
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	54	32	14		
The teaching is good.	71	29			
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	71	18	11		
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	82	18			
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	79	21			
The school works closely with parents.	64	32	4		
The school is well led and managed.	75	25			
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	61	39			
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	68	28	4		

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

58. ***NB. It is important to note that the judgements on standards in the Foundation Stage have been made against attainment on entry for children to the Reception Class in 2001, being at the expected level. In the subject paragraphs attainment on entry to the Reception Class in the past, for pupils now in Years 1 to 6, was lower than that expected nationally. Achievement must be measured against this.***

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

59. This section of the report focuses on the children who are in the reception class. In the present reception class the majority of the children's attainments on entry to the class in all areas of learning was at the levels expected. The children make good progress as the result of good teaching, an emphasis on the development of independence and an exciting and stimulating curriculum. As a result most children exceed the Early Learning Goals expected of them by the time they reach the end of the reception year. The children start school in September in the year in which they become five. Most of the children have had some pre-school experience before they start school. At present there are 16 reception children.
60. The programme of work has been reviewed in the light of the Foundation Stage for children aged under six and the recommended Early Learning Goals. The provision covers a range of suitable topics highly relevant for the children. Daily planning is thorough and clearly defines what the learning objectives of the lessons are. The emphasis in the class is on developing the children's learning through play with the very effective use of the exceptional outdoor environment. The children are encouraged to plan their own work and to see through the tasks they have chosen. This prepares the children very well for their work in other classes because the children develop responsible attitudes to their work. Because the class is small in size the children have good individual support, so that all children including those who find learning difficult and the child whose first language is not English make consistently good progress in all areas of learning and achieve well. Planning and provision for the children in the reception class has improved since the last inspection.
61. The quality of teaching and learning for the children in the Foundation Stage are good overall. However some of the teaching in this class is outstanding. The teacher and the support assistant are both committed and skilful and work hard to move the children's learning on. Relationships are very positive with the children becoming more and more independent in their work.

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

62. In personal, social and emotional development, by the time they reach the end of the reception year most children are likely to exceed the nationally agreed standards. Children make good progress in this area of their work because they receive patient, caring and supportive teaching. Children try hard to learn the class routines. They sit

on the carpet and listen carefully to each other and the class teacher. In class discussions where they share their thoughts and feelings, the children show exceptional qualities of consideration. In one lesson, they talked about why they were friends with the person who was sitting next to them and recognised that good friends played together and were kind to each other. At the end of teaching sessions the children tidy away resources replacing equipment sensibly. They talk to each other and form friendships. They develop good friendships with the older pupils in Years 5 and 6 who regularly come to class to hear them read. The older pupils look after the younger children very well when they visit places together. Indeed the Year 6 pupils state that they are going to miss the younger children when they leave the school at the end of the year. Good routines set up in the reception class are extended and developed in the Year 1 and 2 class.

63. The teaching of personal and social education is particularly good. The staff are patient and consistent with the children and this enables the children to learn and develop their social awareness. They show a great deal of care and concern for the children. The class teacher provides exceptional opportunities for the children to talk about their friends and their qualities. The children who find it particularly difficult to join in class discussions are given very good support and are encouraged and supported as they make their contributions. This ensures they make good gains in a secure environment. The children are encouraged to play and work in sociable groups and to listen and help one another. Staff promote clear ideas of what is expected of the children including the difference between right and wrong. The children rapidly learn to become independent and focused in their work. The patience that the teacher and learning support staff show results in a calm working environment where the children feel happy and confident and make good gains in their lessons.

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

64. In communication, language and literacy by the time they complete the reception year most of the children will attain standards that exceed the recommended goals. The children make good progress as a result of good teaching. As a consequence of the emphasis on learning letter sounds and names, good development of reading and a focus on developing speaking skills, the children make particularly good gains in these areas of their work. The children enjoyed re-enacting the story of the Three Little Pigs. They took on the roles of the characters and spoke their parts well. The other children enjoyed watching the story unfold and singing their song as the little pigs trotted along the road. They like reading books and are keen to talk about what is happening in the illustrations. They enjoy reading to the older pupils and showing how they are improving. The children's learning at school is extended and reinforced by work done at home as they share books with their parents and carers. The children develop their writing skills well. The higher attaining children write simple sentences whilst those that find this skill difficult, try hard to form their letters correctly and write over the teachers' writing. Writing is displayed in all areas of the classroom and the children's writing is also displayed well. The children have many opportunities to use the writing table and to write for a wide range of reasons.
65. The teaching of language and literacy is good. The teacher and support staff work hard to improve the fluency of all the children by constant discussions and conversations. This has a high priority. The staff have very high expectations of the children and provide a wide range of opportunities for the children to develop their skills. Good speaking habits are encouraged and children are actively supported in their need to listen carefully. Reading is promoted by the careful choice of big books, which are stimulating and interesting for the children. This ensures that their learning

is exciting and fun. A clear emphasis on the learning of letter sounds and the building of words, alongside the many opportunities the children have to practise, means that the pupils make particularly good gains in their reading.

### **Mathematical development**

66. In mathematical development most children are on line to attain the standards that exceed the levels expected for this area of learning by the time they enter Year 1. The children are helped to make good progress through the good practically based teaching they receive. The children learn to count and recognise numbers to ten. Some of the children can count in twos to ten. They recognise numbers greater or smaller than that shown by the teacher as they guess whether their number card is likely to be greater or smaller. The majority order their sets of numbers correctly and are clear about the value of zero. The children sort solid shapes into sets of cylinders, spheres and cuboids. They talk knowledgeably about the wooden logs they use for stepping stones outside, being cylinders and that cylinders roll. The children work in the sand tray and find all the different kinds of shapes hidden beneath the sand. They look at patterns and sustain pattern-making using two and sometimes three different colours. The children use the mathematical language of comparative sizes, shapes and number effectively in their work.
67. The teaching of mathematical understanding is good. The teacher makes their learning fun and exciting and so the children's understanding of number, shapes and size is developed effectively through practical activities and play. The teacher, to promote learning in this area, uses the outdoor environment very effectively. This practical approach to teaching number and measurements ensures that all the children are fully engaged in their learning and excited about the outcomes. The children's learning is built securely lesson after lesson

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

68. In knowledge and understanding of the world, most children will exceed the levels expected for this area of learning by the time they finish the reception year. Good teaching and a wide range of exciting activities ensure that the children make consistently good progress. The provision for the children both indoors and outdoors extends early concepts in science, design and technology, history, geography and information and communication technology. The children have three goldfish as well as two teddy bears, which they look after. They use the Smartboard to track the pathway the three little pigs take as they hurry quickly away from one house to another. This very powerful piece of equipment enables the children to develop skills in manipulating the pen to mark a pathway and to select their own colour from the icons. The children then have the opportunity to practise this skill on the computer in the classroom. The children sort materials into different groups and are beginning to understand the different properties of different materials. For example, that metal things make a good deal of noise and that they are cold to the touch. The children have the chance to use a wide range of construction kits and they are used well to create a wide variety of models. They experiment with a range of materials to cut, glue and stick.
69. The teaching of knowledge and understanding of the world is particularly good. The teacher plans an extensive number of activities so that the children are fully engaged in their learning. For example, the children really enjoyed their lesson using the Smartboard. This active involvement by the children reinforces good teaching points. The teaching of literacy and numeracy links effectively with the good use of information and communication technology. For example, in the use of correct

scientific language by the teacher when sorting materials and in a program to re-inforce the children's knowledge of shapes.

### **Physical development**

70. In physical development most children exceed the standards expected by the end of the reception year. Good teaching, with some outstanding teaching in this area of learning enables the children to make good progress. The children use a range of equipment and materials in their work. Their skills develop well. For example, the children are shown how to hold their hammers safely as they knock nails into wooden blocks. They use different equipment as they draw and write. They manipulate jigsaws and construction toys with good levels of dexterity. In physical education lessons the children demonstrated exceptional skills in balancing. They worked hard to improve their balances as they explored the different pieces of apparatus in the school hall. Exceptional teaching gave the children confidence to use the equipment very well and so they achieved outstandingly well. Opportunities outdoors enable the children to create their own pathways using large discs of wood and logs. As they use the stepping stones and logs they improve their balance and stepping skills. The large wooden climbing frame provides very good scope for climbing both up and down the netting. Tricycles help the children to work together to transport each other around the playground. The children enjoy their tasks with the outdoor equipment, working together and collaborating as they play.
71. The teaching of physical development is good. The teacher provides an outstanding range of activities and very good levels of individual support to help the children to extend and develop their fine and gross motor skills. The children work hard during their physical education lessons and try hard to improve and develop their work as a result of excellent teaching.

### **Creative development**

72. In creative development most children exceed the standard expected in this area of learning by the time they enter Year 1. The children make good progress as they are taught well. They use paint expressively. They paint pictures of scarves using colours carefully in stripes so that they do not run into each other. They use chalks to draw snowdrops and after studying the work of different artists, draw reflecting their style of work. The children have used the computer to draw pictures and enjoyed this activity. In imaginative role-play the children develop their skills of co-operation and communication as they act out familiar stories.
73. The teaching of creative development is good. Staff provide ample opportunities for the children to develop their creative ideas through painting, drawing, drama and music. They stimulate the children's interests with lively lessons that generate a high level of excitement and interest. The children are encouraged to express their feelings and the class teacher provides a wide range of opportunities both indoors and outdoors for the children to develop in this area of their learning. The staff value the children's work by effectively displaying it for all the children to see.

### **ENGLISH**

74. Pupil's attainment in English in the national assessments in 2001 at Year 6 was well above average in comparison with all schools nationally and in the top five per cent of similar schools. Currently, standards are in line with the national average at the end of Year 2 and above the national average at the end of Year 6. Overall there has been a

significant improvement in the standards achieved at the end of Year 6 since the last inspection and the standards at the end of Year 2 have been maintained. Good gains have been made in the pupils' writing skills as the teachers have sought to improve their teaching of writing and to provide more opportunities for the pupils to use their writing skills in other subjects. Although improvements have been made the school is by no means complacent and is working hard to ensure that further improvements are made and there is a closer match between the pupils' writing and reading skills. The pupils throughout the school achieve consistently better results in their reading. This is because of the strength in the teaching of reading: the contribution members of the community make to the pupils' reading development, the help the older pupils give to the younger pupils in their reading and the important part the parents play in supporting reading at home. The school has worked hard to improve the pupils' standards in English. Good help is made available to those pupils who find reading and writing difficult and they are helped to achieve well. They have specific work planned for them, which includes detailed targets set out in individual education plans. The pupils in the school who do not speak English as their first language are given good help by specialist agencies provided by the Local Education Authority and as a consequence, they achieve well. The school keeps an informal but careful watch on the learning in the classes where the boys outnumber the girls and also those where the girls outnumber the boys. Initiatives to improve writing and to give greater emphasis on spelling have been introduced by the school and the teachers feel that they are beginning to impact upon standards. At the same time they recognise that there is still more to do to improve still further.

75. Good speaking skills are developed through effective teaching and the many opportunities available for the pupils to develop their speaking skills. The children enter the school with average speaking and listening skills. The younger pupils listen carefully to stories and are at present particularly engaged by the stories of Beatrix Potter. The teachers encourage the pupils to listen carefully to the other members of the class. They consider their responses to questions posed by the teacher. The Year 1 pupils talked quite clearly about Jemima Puddle-Duck not being a very clever little duck. The Year 6 pupils speaking skills are well developed and they talk about their learning in school, about their likes and dislikes and their regrets about leaving the school at the end of the year and what they are looking forward to in their next school.
76. Pupils read fluently and accurately, as a consequence of reading being well promoted throughout the school. It is clear from the pupils' attitudes to their books that they enjoy reading. Pupils in Year 6 talk knowledgeably about the books they read, with 'Harry Potter' books and 'Lord of the Rings' being particular favourites with some of the pupils. The teachers are effective in promoting reading from the child's earliest times in school. In the reception class the children are provided with books as soon as they have learnt initial letter sounds and this gives them a valuable tool to aid their reading. The pupils all talk about reading at home and it is clear that parents support their children by hearing them read. In Year 2, the pupils talk about the stories they are reading and use a range of strategies to tackle difficult words. The older pupils show very good fluency and expression in their reading with a clear understanding of the text and the underlying themes of the books. They discuss their preferences and explain the reasoning behind their choices. All of the pupils talk about their enjoyment of reading at school and at home. There are many structured reading books in school for the pupils to read and also storybooks in the classrooms. The school library is used well by the pupils to research and find out information. The pupils use the computers in the classrooms to find information from CD-ROM's and the Internet.
77. Standards in writing are improving and at the end of Year 2 are average and above

average at the end of Year 6. This is because the teachers have focused on helping the pupils to improve their writing skills. Improving writing has become the key feature for all classes in the school. In Year 2 the pupils write for a wide range of purposes. The pupils' writing is neat and a print style. The teachers help the pupils to develop their writing skills by giving them a clear structure to write in and this gives them a good help. The pupils show that they write labels, lists, factual pieces and stories in response to a wide range of interesting ideas. Pupils are beginning to use capital letters and full stops accurately, however they do not write in a cursive style of writing. They are beginning to use interesting words and use words such as 'fantastic', 'greedy' and 'creepy' to aid their writing.

78. In Years 5 and 6 the pupils' writing skills are developing well. This is because of the many opportunities the pupils have to develop and improve their work and the effective way the teacher encourages this. It is the result of good teaching, which challenges the pupils' thinking. The teachers' marking of the pupils work is effective and helps the pupils to think clearly about their work and what they must do to improve further. The choice of subjects chosen by the teacher interests and captivates the pupils. For example, the pupils at present are working on persuasive writing and the teacher has chosen the subject of Fair Trade to explore with the pupils. The pupils know that the key to effective and persuasive writing is built upon clear evidence, proof and powerful language. Punctuation and the use of paragraphs are generally correct. However spellings are variable and the pupils do not always seek to improve their spellings with the use of the dictionaries, which are available. A few pupils have extra support to improve their spelling and writing. Information and communication technology is used well to support the English curriculum as the pupils word process their work. The pupils' writing is generally neat and well presented. They show pride in the presentation of their work. Handwriting is neat and letters well formed.
79. The pupils' achievement is good throughout the school this is because the teachers have high expectations of the pupils, relationships within the school are very good and the pupils want to learn and are prepared to work hard. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good overall and is effective in promoting good learning and good levels of achievement.
80. The teachers have good subject knowledge and this is demonstrated in the way they lead discussions with the pupils about their work. The school has fully adopted the National Literacy Strategy and it is consistently used across the school. The teachers make sure the pupils are clear about their learning and so they are clear about what they are learning and why. The class teachers have high expectations of the pupils and improvement and encouragement are actively sought. For example, in the Year 3 and 4 class, the pupils worked hard to compare the similarities and the differences between the African Folk Tale of *The Blue Fish* with the English story of *Cinderella*. The pupils were encouraged in this challenging lesson to think carefully about the particular elements of the stories that were the same and those different. With good support from the class teacher and a visiting governor the pupils achieved well and developed some good ideas. In this class the teacher has to work hard to ensure that all remain on task and engaged. In this lesson she succeeded well. This story also helped prepare the pupils for life in a multi-cultural society as it emphasised the great similarities between the two folk stories.
81. In lessons tasks are well matched for all the pupils' levels of attainment. Pupils with special educational needs and those who do not speak English as their first language are well included within the work of the class; their individual written or reading tasks

are carefully matched to their individual specific needs. In the Year 3 and 4 the learning support assistant gave good help to the pupils who found their learning hard. She gave additional support in building up spellings of given words and this gave the pupils good levels of help and encouragement. In a Year 1 and 2 lesson the class teacher was able to focus on the needs of the Year 1 pupils as the Year 2 pupils were taught by another teacher who was supporting one of the pupils. Because of the individual support they received, they all achieved well.

82. The teachers know the pupils well and this helps them to guide and help the pupils to achieve well. The school is setting up a comprehensive tracking and assessments programme, which they will use to keep a careful watch on the pupils' progress throughout the school. The teachers regularly mark the pupils' work and they make supportive comments. Most indicate how pupils could improve their work and this gives the pupils good guidance and a clear picture of their own strengths and areas for development. Homework is used well to help improve the pupils' spelling and reading skills. The teachers regularly use literacy skills in the support of other subjects for example in history, geography and religious education. In this way the pupils have many opportunities to develop and extend their writing skills.
83. The enthusiastic English co-ordinators give good support and management of this important subject throughout the school. They recognise that although standards are generally good there is still room for improvement in the pupils' spelling and writing skills.

## **MATHEMATICS**

84. The attainment of pupils was very high in comparison with the national average at Year 6 in 2001. This was much improved from the results of 2000, which were broadly in line with the national average and vastly improved from the results of 1998 when the results were in the bottom five per cent nationally. Trends in improvement from 1997 to 2001 show very good year-on-year improvement. In 2001, pupils' results were in the top five per cent nationally. Boys and girls achieved equally well as did pupils with special educational needs. The number of higher attaining pupils who achieved Level 5 in the national assessments was very high.
85. Rightly, mathematics has been a priority for development over this period. The standards of work seen during the inspection were overall, good and above what would be expected and achievement is generally consistent throughout the school. Improvement has been achieved because of a particular emphasis put into the consistency of planning for lessons and, at Years 5 and 6 in particular, an improvement in the use of information from assessment to target areas of learning in which pupils were unsure. This works equally as well for higher and lower attaining pupils, those with special educational needs or English as an additional language. As a consequence, there has been improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. The subject leader, the head teacher and numeracy consultant from the Local Education Authority have all supported this development and have evaluated the rise in standards achieved.
86. Teaching was good for Years 1 and 2 so that by the age of seven, pupils showed an increasing knowledge and understanding of basic number facts. They had a sound understanding of place value of tens and units, how to add and subtract up to at least ten, with some beyond that. They are beginning to use their knowledge well in solving day-to-day 'problems'. In a well-planned opening to a lesson using the National Numeracy Strategy, Year 1 and 2 pupils sat together in the 'numeracy corner' of the

classroom. During registration, which was carried without a moment of time lost, the pupils knew the day's date, how to write it, what the date was on the previous day and what it would be the day after. They were clear also about the year and how to write this both fully and in a shortened version. This was good use of time by the teacher and was an example of how the school encourages pupils to use their knowledge in day-to-day situations. All lessons start with a set of mental sums for the pupils to work out individually in their books. They settle to this good routine easily and are keen to succeed. The work is pitched at different levels to match the pupils' abilities to succeed when given 'a bit of thought'. The small numbers in the class allows the teacher to give a short amount of time to each pupil so that questions posed can be pitched at exactly the right level, to help pupils understand more the ways of working out the problems but without giving the answers. All pupils were keen to try their best and many explained clearly how they were working out their answers. This helped them to understand even more what they were doing and how their chosen strategies could be used in different situations.

87. From September 2001, the work of Year 2 pupils shows that they have learned to work with number bonds to at least 20, sorted simple shapes by two properties such as the number of sides and corners, have developed this with three-dimensional shapes and totalled coins up to £1.25. All pupils have worked on measurements of small distances using centimetres. Higher attaining pupils have worked well on understanding division as 'equal groupings' and are clear about days of the week, months of the year and the seasons. Lower attaining pupils recognise numbers easily and can work out successfully and quickly simple addition or subtraction sums with up to four digits. However, some still need adult support with simple algebra such as  $? + ? = 2$ . Pupils generally have a sound understanding of value of numbers. Standards are around what would be expected for pupils of this age. This shows good progress from when they started school in the Reception Class.
88. Overall, teaching and learning is good with pupils in Years 3 to 6 and within this, very good with Years 5 and 6 pupils so that by the age of 11 years, pupils take great pride in their abilities to think mathematically and apply their knowledge. Higher attaining pupils understand clearly that multiplication is the inverse of division, they order fractions and convert a range of these to the lowest common denominator, calculate the area and perimeter of shapes and work out long division sums using numbers in thousands. Lower attaining pupils are still working on long division by units, simple angles and are not yet sure how to work out the area within a simple shape. However, they do measure accurately in centimetres and use the knowledge they have well in problem sums and day-to-day situations. The work with Years 5 and 6 is planned very well using good information from assessments, which adds to the teacher's day-to-day knowledge of the pupils. Discussion is pitched by the teacher at the right levels for the different abilities of pupils in the class and in written work, pupils have the opportunity to move on to harder work than that originally set so that they can test themselves further. This adds to the teacher's knowledge of their strengths and weaknesses. Good use of a classroom support worker adds to how pupils' weaknesses can be targeted for improvement. On occasions, an extra teacher allows Years 5 and 6 to be taught separately. Also, fortnightly, higher attaining Year 6 pupils are 'stretched' even further in their thinking by a teacher from the local secondary school. The flexibility of these options is managed effectively by the school.
89. At Years 3 and 4, teaching and learning are generally good. This is currently the class with the largest number of pupils and the broadest spread of pupils' abilities. The teacher plans very well for this and in discussion or in 'quick-fire' mental work, different work is set at the right levels to ensure that higher and lower attaining pupils,

and pupils in Years 3 and 4 separately have work that is appropriate. This is a lively class. The routines that have been put in place are well known by the pupils and generally work well. This helps to keep the pace of learning going well for all pupils especially when the teacher is concentrating on a particular group. This works well most of the time. However, the class does not have the flexibility of staffing support found in Years 5 and 6. On one occasion, when the pupils had to use their mathematical knowledge in solving 'problems', some pupils were unsure of what to do and had to wait for the teacher to support them.

90. Lessons build clearly on homework set. Overall, teachers are very clear what they want the children to learn and go through a step-by-step process using discussion, demonstration and question and answer sessions so that the pupils understand what is expected of them. The style of approach of the National Numeracy Strategy is used effectively including the plenary session. Teachers 'pull together' the learning that has taken place in the different groups and by different abilities of pupil. They mostly assess how well pupils have understood their work, giving pointers where some misunderstandings have crept in. They decide how to proceed with the next lesson if more reinforcement of learning is necessary. Pupils are learning a lot of different strategies for working out a broad range of sums. Information and communications technology is beginning to be used well to support pupils' work and preparation for assessments. Staffs' confidence in extending pupils' skills continues to be developed well through demonstrations and courses.
91. Overall, development in mathematics since the last inspection is very good. Standards have improved greatly as a result of better teaching and learning. For much of this time, pupils attainment on entry has been lower than that found nationally and the difficulties of teaching numbers of pupils who start and leave the school in-year because their families are in short term rented accommodation, makes pupils' achievements even more impressive. The subject co-ordinator has developed the subject very well, often through informal ways in discussion with staff but also through planned visits to classrooms to see how well the subject is being taught. Teachers' planning and work in pupils' books have been checked from time-to-time. Detailed assessment of pupils' strengths and weaknesses is beginning to pay off. This includes termly targets for pupils to achieve, which are shared with parents. An exciting and worthwhile project with parents, supported with ideas, advice and funding from a local Beacon School, has introduced mathematics games into school life. These are produced in packs with clear advice for parents to use at home with their children. The project started with the youngest children and is being introduced progressively each year with other classes in school. This is just part of a broad set of initiatives that have made parents and governors clearer about what is happening in school and how well the subject is developing. An excellent community spirit prevails between teachers, governors, parents and the wider community.

## **SCIENCE**

92. In the National Curriculum tests for 2001, the attainment in science for Year 6 pupils was well below the national average and below average for schools in similar contexts. However, within a year-group of 16 pupils, where each pupil's results accounted for six per cent of the overall total, just over half of the group were extremely close to achieving the next level of assessment. This was either at Level 4, which is the expected level or at Level 5. The school was very close to achieving a set of results that would have been above the national average. Teachers' assessments for Year 2 pupils in 2001 show their attainments also, to be below the national average particularly in the areas of science linked to materials and their properties and to

knowing about physical processes connected with simple work on electricity, how objects move and light and sound. Scrutiny of pupils' work in this school year indicates that standards are now higher and match national expectations at Year 2. Pupils' achievement is sound. Improvement has been made on results in recent years, where in 1998, the results at Year 6 were in the bottom five per cent nationally. Inspection evidence indicates that with even more focussed support, standards this year are expected to be at least at national levels.

93. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 know the basic parts of the body. They know how humans grow and need food to stay alive. Pupils know that they need to stay fit and healthy and have investigated healthy and non-healthy foods. They have used their mathematical skills to record their work in flow-charts and tables. The class works on a two-year cycle to ensure learning opportunities for both Year 1 and Year 2 pupils are not repeated at the same level of work. This is working appropriately. Also, the pupils have done much work this year on sorting materials by their properties, understanding the dangers of electricity and making simple electrical circuits. This has been a good focus this year and based on a clear analysis of what was needed to improve pupils' knowledge and understanding. Pupils' development in all of this work was sound.
94. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have made good use of the school grounds. They have studied various 'habitats' and at different times of the year. This work has gone well in relation to snails in particular. By Year 6, pupils have built on this well. They know the effects of changing environmental conditions on the growth of plants such as with the reduction in either water or sunlight. They know the characteristics that make groups of living things different such as bacteria, fungi, invertebrates, birds and mammals and what happens when water from a solution evaporates. They are aware that stirring and filtering can separate solids, which do not dissolve in water and have drawn graphs to show comparisons between dissolving times of different types of sugar. This was measured accurately to two decimal points in seconds. Pupils are achieving appropriately by Year 6. This work shows a good coverage of the different areas of learning in the National Curriculum. Pupils are investigating currently a range of concepts connected with light, such as how it travels, reflection and comparisons between different surfaces and the formation of shadows. Pupils put to good use their knowledge of a fair test and learn new facts about the difference between concave and convex mirrors. Much discussion and investigation is involved and carried out well as to the day-to-day use of the properties of such materials now and their development in the past. Pupils are clear about why a security mirror near to the front door of the school is convex and not concave and learn about the development of periscopes using an 'investigative' CD ROM on the computer.
95. In the lessons observed, the quality of teaching and learning were satisfactory with Years 1 and 2 and good with Years 5 and 6. Teaching was not seen in Years 3 and 4. Good teaching was characterised by questions used effectively to prompt pupils' thinking and to probe their understanding. The teacher knew her subject well and had good technical competence and vocabulary. Pupils picked-up on this consistently and used the terminology themselves. Some pupils understood both the scientific and mathematical concepts and angle of inclination of mirrors to make a periscope work properly. During the lesson, the teacher re-focused learning from time to time to maintain pupils' concentration and to pick up on the strengths and weaknesses of their understanding. This worked well. Pupils were supported well including by a classroom support worker who targeted individual pupils in need of some clarification. Pupils behaved well and had good attitudes to the subject and as a result, all pupils learnt effectively, including boys and girls of differing attainment, pupils with statements of special educational needs and with English as an additional language.

All were given equal access to the computers and support when necessary.

96. In the lesson with Years 1 and 2, many of the same strengths were apparent in the teaching. These included a good introduction to the lesson, which, through careful questioning, assessed the pupils' recollections of previous work. Sufficient resources were prepared well for the lesson, which allowed pupils to be fully involved in investigative work. However, the pupils' ability in group-work to investigate and draw comparisons between a range of materials was hampered by their inability to concentrate fully when the teacher was not working directly with their group. During the plenary, this reduced the information some pupils had gained from the practical work and thus the accurateness of their contributions. To some extent, this restricted the extent of their learning.
97. Teachers currently work to the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) guidelines. Following a two-year trial period, appropriately the school is going to review the success of their work at the end of this school year. Introduction of a curriculum for the subject was a priority after the last inspection. This has been developed well. The subject's 'Annual health check' or evaluation has targeted the improvement in the number of pupils gaining higher levels of attainment at Years 2 and 6. This shows good analysis of the data available to the school to raise standards further. Whilst assessment is improving, its use has not yet been fully effective. However, the school recognises what else needs to be done and the co-ordinator is clear on the steps for development. Improvements since the last inspection include the better use of information and communications technology for independent research and much improved resources, which allow lessons to be interesting and fun and 'grab' pupils' imagination. Pupils want to learn. Work in science is used in a number of ways to promote well literacy such as through discussion, independent investigation and recording their fair tests and also numeracy skills in particular through drawing graphs and making calculations related to experimental work. Work is marked consistently and for the older pupils, annotated with comments to help their learning.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

98. Pupils' standards are above what would be expected at the end of Years 2 and 6. This is an improved position to that at the time of the last inspection. Standards were then at the level expected and there was no scheme of work for art and design. There is now a scheme of work, which ensures that the pupils' skills build upon what they have learnt before. Art and design has a secure place in the work and life of the school as it is a medium in which all the pupils regardless of their abilities can achieve well. The staff work hard to make sure that the pupils' working environment is bright and stimulating. The art co-ordinator and staff display the pupils' work in such a way that it captures their imagination and encourages them to try hard with their own work.
99. The scheme of work for art and design is a thorough document and ensures that art and design is taught not only in its own right but also used to support other curriculum areas. For example, the pupils have made designs from the environment, as did William Morris when he designed wallpaper in Victorian times. All the pupils have had an opportunity to work with a mosaic artist and along with parents and members of the community have created some very effective mosaic panels for the school hall. The theme of these panels has been of butterflies, ladybirds, dragonflies, caterpillars and fish. This expert input gives the pupils opportunities to work with people who are recognised as being gifted in the particular media in which they work. Judgements have been based upon interviews with the pupils, observations of the pupils' work and

photographic evidence, as only one lesson in Years 5 and 6 was observed during the inspection. As such, no overall judgement on teaching and learning can be made.

100. By the end of Year 2, pupils use a range of media to record their observations. In Year 1 and 2 the pupils carefully put a range of materials together to create their own natural or non-natural sculptures. They have visited the local town and observed the sculptures there. They have looked at their very distinctive appearance. They are to visit another location where a very different experience will be gained as they observe sculptures created from the natural world. The pupils are shown how to use a wide range of techniques. They used these effectively to create a variety of themed fish pictures. They produced their Rainbow fish using collage, paint and wax resist methods and in so doing produce a very effective end result. All pupils make good progress in their work and build upon the skills learnt before. The pupils also have the opportunity to decorate leaves made from fabric with different kinds of stitching and embellishment .
101. By the end of Year 6, pupils build upon the skills and techniques acquired when they were younger and develop a critical awareness of their own and others work. They speak knowledgeably about their own work and a range of artists. They look at different cultures and the patterns and techniques used by different peoples. They study artefacts from ancient cultures and talk knowledgeably about the colours they use and why these colours are particularly represented in their work. For example, in Years 5 and 6 the pupils spoke about the Aboriginal people and how they used the earth colours of red, yellow and orange in their patterns and designs. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 created a wall hanging in response to symbols and objects from Mexico and the ancient Aztec civilisation.
102. During the art and design club sessions the pupils have created some very effective Batik panels and paintings in the style of Paul Klee. Pupils have the opportunity to create work using different sizes, materials and techniques and this gives the pupils a wide range and variety of opportunities.
103. The enthusiastic co-ordinator gives good support to her colleagues. There has been a very positive improvement in art and design throughout the school and this has made a positive impact upon the standards the pupils achieve. Assessment procedures are an area identified for improvement as this will enable the school to build even more effectively on what has gone before. Pupils visit places of interest and an artist has been to the school to work with the pupils. Resources in the school are good and they are used effectively by the staff.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

104. Pupils' standards are above the levels expected at the end of Years 2 and 6. This is a very good improvement since the last inspection when the pupils' standards were below the levels expected and they made unsatisfactory progress. The school has made great improvements in design and technology this is because the pupils now have many opportunities to generate ideas, handle a wide range of tools, have sufficient resources to work with and a clear scheme of work to enable the teachers to plan their work effectively. Overall there has been a significant and profound improvement in all areas of design and technology. The pupils say that they enjoy the units of work that they cover in their lessons and they have good opportunities to develop and refine their skills. All pupils including those with special educational needs and whose first language is not English make good progress in their work. Judgements have been based upon interviews with the pupils and observations of the

pupils' work, as only two lessons were observed during the inspection. As such, no overall judgement has been made about teaching and learning.

105. By the end of Year 2, pupils have opportunities to investigate a range of materials and construction kits as they design, plan and make their models and artefacts. They make models to a good standard and this shows they have learnt to use tools sensibly and cut and stick with care and consideration. In making their model vehicles the standard of finish achieved by the pupils was commendable. The pupils plan their work effectively and use their design briefs to guide their work. For example, in making their glove puppets the pupils were careful to decorate their gloves in exactly the way they had planned. They investigate different methods of joining materials and in this way they learn which is the best method to use for different purposes. As a result of their considered use of tools and materials, the end products are well constructed. The teachers produce a good range of artefacts and toys to demonstrate different techniques. For example, the teacher gave a good explanation of the mechanical principles of a spindle and pulley as the pupils decided how they were to make a spider move up and down. They were considering the problem of making a model to show the spiders actions in the rhyme of Incey Wincey Spider. They also came up with ideas of how they were going to show whether it was raining or sunshine. In this way the pupils look at problems and decide the best way to tackle them.
106. By the end of Year 6, pupils develop their designing and making skills and their evaluation skills become more considered. The pupils in Years 3 and 4 talk about the different mechanisms they have observed in books with moving parts. They investigate exactly how to make parts of their work pop-up, hinge and slide before they plan the books they are to make. In this way the pupils know how to construct a number of different effects before they plan how they are to use them. In the lesson observed in this class the pupils worked hard to learn the techniques shown by the class teacher but also to amend these techniques and develop their own ideas. They talked about the great care needed when cutting the card to make sure that it was exactly correct. In Years 3 and 4 the pupils have made a variety of objects, for example, purses and photograph frames. Their planning and designing ideas reflect the care and consideration the pupils have given to thinking about how to make their objects, which materials were suitable and effective ways to decorate the end product. Not only do the pupils consider the materials, methods and tools they need to use, but also in the case of the photograph frame how well the finished product displayed the photograph. The older pupils in Years 5 and 6 have designed and made shelters. They considered the problem that the parents have in the school playground in bad weather as there is nowhere for them to shelter. They then looked at shelters and considered the essential features and then designed and made their own. Again planning, making and evaluation were to a high order and demonstrated good skills' development. The pupils talked about a step by step approach to planning their projects and the need to evaluate what worked well and what did not.
107. The subject co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and has good ideas for the further development of the subject throughout the school. At the end of the school year the new scheme of work is to be evaluated. A whole school assessment procedure for design and technology is an area for further development. At present the teachers assess the pupils' work in an individual way and there is no consistent way of tracking pupils' abilities. The co-ordinator has not yet monitored teaching in class, but monitors pupils' work and ensures that a progression of skills is taught throughout the school.

## GEOGRAPHY

108. Due to timetabling, only one lesson with Years 1 and 2 was observed during the inspection. Staff are about to review their use of units of work using guidance from the government recommended scheme of work, which they have been following as the basis of their curriculum for the last two years. The school is only just beginning to build on this and put in place ways to assess how well pupils are doing and what else needs to be built into the next unit of teaching. Consequently, pupils' records are not yet available showing pupils' progress. As such, the judgements on this inspection were made from discussion with staff, an arranged interview with a group of Year 6 children, scrutiny of work displayed around the school and some evidence of work in pupils' books. From all of this, pupils' standards by the end of Year 2 are judged to be around what would be expected for pupils of this age and by the end of Year 6, above what would be expected. All pupils are supported well in their work including in the use of literacy and numeracy skills important to this subject. This means that higher and lower attaining pupils and others with additional learning needs achieve well and make good progress.
109. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are confident in finding their way around the school. They have carried out simple investigations and map-work that have added to their sound understanding of their immediate surroundings. Some work has been done on the geography of the local area through trips, such as visits to the church. Also, they have used their numeracy skills well in carrying out a traffic survey outside school, the results of which were recorded on well-presented tally charts. They come to recognise the basic differences, such as in housing and employment between town life and that in the countryside and at the 'seaside'. Visits further afield to experience this 'in real life' have enhanced the learning opportunities such as to Cheltenham and Weston Super Mare. All of this is currently being extended and pupils are building up a sound understanding of how life-styles differ between their own and those of people in a Mexican village. The only lesson observed was with Years 1 and 2. This was well-prepared by the teacher who ensured through the good use of questioning, that all pupils joined in with the discussion and improved their understanding of how food choices can be similar even in different cultures. Many pupils recognised and named foods such as tortilla chips, avocado pears, sweet corn and a variety of 'dips'. Whilst, at this age, pupils are only just building their understanding of place and distance, their grasp of how different people live is developing well. This shows good achievement. By Years 5 and 6, pupils have become far more able to understand and use information to draw conclusions about their day-to-day environment and further afield. They have investigated through map work, how local features change over time. This fits in well with their local history topic. Quite detailed work has been carried out on the water cycle, seasonal variations including sunshine and rainfall graphs, how water it is treated for everyday use, its use by industry and more precisely, microclimates around the school. Pupils' ability to talk about this and explain their understanding points to their good achievement by this age.
110. At the same time as improving standards impressively in the core subjects of English and mathematics, geography has not been ignored. Improvement since the last inspection in this subject has been good. Standards have improved from being below national expectations, a strong curriculum framework is in place and about to be reviewed, resources are good now and more detailed assessment is about to be introduced. Given the timescales and the school priorities for development since the last inspection, the subject co-ordination has been good although time for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' standards has not yet been a priority for this subject. The potential for improvement and the capacity to raise standards

higher are clear.

## HISTORY

111. The school's previous inspection judged standards to be in line with national expectations at Year 2 and below at Year 6. In this inspection, standards are similar to what are expected by Year 2 but higher by Year 6. Pupils achieve well from their early days in school where historically, attainment on entry has been lower than expected nationally. As with geography, whilst the school is clear about introducing assessment and recording procedures, these have not been in place long enough to provide evidence of pupils' achievement. The judgements on this inspection were made from two lessons observed at Key Stage 2, discussion with staff and Year 6 pupils in particular, and evidence in books and displays around the school. It is clear that pupils throughout the school are given a series of worthwhile experiences. They develop their understanding well of differences between their own lives and those of people in the past. Pupils' knowledge, understanding and perception in thinking through scenarios were impressive and also their willingness to 'think aloud'. In discussion, one Year 3 pupil came to understand why we have photographs today of ancient Egyptian buildings when the camera had not been invented so long ago. This was helped by another pupil explaining that she knew that many of the buildings were still standing because she had photographs at home taken by her grandparents during a recent holiday.
112. Teaching of the subject is very much 'brought alive' in a range of ways. Across school, visits to museums, visiting speakers at the school, use of CD Roms and the Internet and the school's own resource packs have helped enliven the study of topics. For example, how our childhood differs now from the past, with Years 1 and 2. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 learning about the ancient Egyptians and Years 5 and 6 investigating social conditions in Victorian times and how life and development in ancient Greece still affect our architecture and political systems today. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have built up a sound knowledge in a short time about the Great Fire of London. They have tried to predict, with some success, what would happen as the fire spread. They have begun to work as 'history detectives' and are becoming clearer about the value of information such as from 'an eye witness' or from photographs as distinct from stories. Pupils have a sound knowledge about life in general in the seventeenth century. Older pupils in Years 3 and 4 have begun to develop a good understanding of the wealth and life style of some of the ancient Egyptians from evidence of how they dressed, the size of their houses and what they considered important. In one good lesson observed, the teacher linked together very well, pupils' knowledge of weather, erosion and different natural materials from geography and science lessons in explaining how buildings were still standing today. By Year 6, independent research has rightly become important. Really powerful learning takes place here as pupils discover how to 'dig out' information from primary and secondary sources, how to tabulate it and what weight can be put on its value. Work on the local area is very relevant to some pupils whose families can be traced back to the Shurdington census of 1851. Higher attaining pupils produce well-thought-out research and draw comparisons with lifestyles of Irish immigrants from a similar census of a big city. Lower attaining pupils achieve much success on the same work although with independent research, their literacy skills are less well developed and at times, presentation suffers a little because of this.
113. Teaching and learning ranged from good to very good at Key Stage 2. Overall, it was very good. Teachers planned their lessons from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority documents, which is a good start to establishing a school curriculum. The

themes covered in planning are appropriate to the demands of the National Curriculum and provide pupils with a good range of interesting topics to stimulate their enthusiasm. At Years 3 and 4, pupils were enthused by the teachers' own knowledge and the resources made available to them. This focussed them well and triggered much discussion about the life and times in ancient Egypt. Some pupils expressed themselves clearly but others who struggled a little to put their thoughts into words were encouraged gently and given time and encouragement by the teacher. Also, recording of work was used sensitively so that those who find written work difficult used a more pictorial approach. This worked well for them. In a very good lesson with Years 5 and 6, pupils were so at ease with their teacher and classmates that they were confident enough to offer ideas without fear of 'failure'. Everyone's ideas were accepted. The teacher's knowledge of the subject and of each pupils' own knowledge meant that individual pupils were stretched well in their thinking although at different levels of difficulty. The plenary session at the end of the lesson was a real strength. Through 'open questions' that lead pupils to review their work, but without giving them even a hint of the answer, the whole class analysed clearly the differences they had found between their own local census and that of a big city.

114. The school is at the early stages of making plans to ensure that the subject leader has the time to become far more involved in developing the assessment of pupils' attainment and achievement and in checking on the quality of teaching and learning. To date, this has not been possible because of time restraints. Despite this, improvement from the last inspection is very good. Standards have improved, teaching and learning, particularly with Years 5 and 6 are much higher, resources bring the subject alive and independent research by pupils is now high priority and successful. The potential for improvement and the capacity to raise standards even higher are clear.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

115. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are similar now to those at the time of the last inspection. By the end of Year 2 and 6 the pupils reach standards that are expected of pupils of their age. They achieve well. Provision in the school has however improved from the time of the last inspection. There are generally more computer-programs for the pupils to use and a Smartboard has been located in the staff room. The pupils have access to research tools on the Internet and they use CD-ROM's to gain information to support their tasks. The school also has effective links with the local secondary school where the pupils have regular opportunities to use their facilities and so improve their skills. The teachers have received their national training and use the equipment in school with confidence. ICT is used by the teachers to support the whole curriculum and the pupils regularly use the computers to aid their work. ICT is seen within the school as an important and effective tool, which is important for the pupils to use and access.
116. By the end of Year 2, the pupils attain at the expected level as the result of the good teaching that they receive and the good opportunities they have to learn new skills and also consolidate their understanding. The teachers help to ensure that the pupils are as independent as possible in their use of the computers. Throughout Year 1 and 2 the pupils learn keyboard skills. They pupils learn that icons store information and that the television and the microwave also store information. Together with the teacher the pupils have used the Smartboard to find out information about Mexico. They found a range of information including the countries flag and a map showing its' location. The pupils use the computer in their Literacy work and are able to print off their work independently. They move text around the screen and put sentences into the correct

sequence. There are opportunities for the pupils to develop and practise their skills in other subject areas of the curriculum. For example, the pupils use a program to help them plan and write a story.

117. By the end of Year 6 the pupils' reach the levels expected, although there are areas in which the pupils knowledge and understanding is particularly strong. The pupils demonstrate good research skills and good presentation skills. In Years 3 and 4 the pupils access 'Word' documents and change the size, style, colour and font of their work. The pupils have sent and received e-mails. They have accessed the Internet to find out information in support of their design and technology lessons and have printed off different chair designs. At present they are working on a problem-solving program which causes considerable enthusiasm and excitement. In Year 5 and 6, the pupils import clip art into word documents and resize and relocate their illustrations. They use bullet points, headers and footers and create well-presented pages of information. Discussions with Year 6 pupils show that the pupils regularly access the Internet to find out about specific subjects and are familiar with this skill. The pupils use the computer in their mathematics lessons drawing different shapes such as hexagons and octagons using Logo.
118. The teaching of information and communication technology is good. The teachers make good use of the Smartboard and ensure that all the National Curriculum requirements are met and that the subject is used in other subject areas. There are many displays reflecting the pupils' work throughout the school.
119. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and has provided good help and support for staff in school. She has completed an action plan for the subject, which clearly indicates the way forward for the subject. One of the areas for improvement is in the systematic keeping of records to keep a check on the progress that pupils make. She has developed very good links with the technology specialist secondary school and enables the pupils to access the equipment and expertise at this facility. A technician regularly visits the school to maintain the equipment and this gives effective support to the staff. The subject manager has a clear perception of standards throughout the school and is working effectively for further improvement. Resources for information and communication technology throughout the school are satisfactory.

### **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES (French)**

120. Since the last inspection, the school has introduced the teaching of French. This follows a set programme and is taught as a fun activity, which broadens pupils' learning opportunities and has introduced them to a language and life-style different to their own. Appropriate emphasis is laid firstly upon listening and responding orally. Pupils take away from each lesson, some reading and writing connected with the topic in question. Scrutiny of this points to pupils who are learning and achieving well. Rightly, the teacher is about to ensure that the set programme complies with national guidance for the subject.
121. Year 1 and 2 pupils have started to learn French in the same way as their older school- mates. Each group has about 20 minutes of very well focussed work. It is taught effectively by a native speaker with training in the scheme that is used by the school. The pupils are achieving the aims and objectives of the course, very well. Because the teacher is an excellent role-model, the pupils pronounce French with increasing accuracy. Year 6 pupils do not yet comprehend French spoken at a natural speed or take part yet in short conversations conducted in French. However, their knowledge of pronunciation and their following of instructions correctly is impressive.

They also recollect well previous learning for example, how to point out in French about an illness such as a stomach ache or a head ache.

122. The pupils have achieved well since they started because they are taught very well and most are enthusiastic about learning French. The vast majority of the lessons observed, were conducted in French. This created a French-language climate. Straight away, there was good learning and a fast pace to the teaching that kept all the pupils alert and responsive. New learning was very effectively reinforced by picture flash cards, songs and action rhymes. The pupils were animated and keen to self-correct and to correct one another's vocabulary and pronunciation. The lessons were characterised by a happy atmosphere, particularly with Year 5.
123. The subject makes a very valuable contribution to the pupils' multi-cultural development. The pupils learn about daily life in France from a teacher who has first-hand knowledge of living there. The lessons support pupils' development very well by making the children enthusiastic about learning a new language.

## **MUSIC**

124. Music plays an essential part in the life of the school and makes a major contribution to the spiritual development of the pupils. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. They are in line with the expectations of the National Curriculum throughout the school. During recent years the school has worked hard to improve the provision of music. There are a number of pupils who have taken advantage of the specialist music teaching available and are now learning to play a musical instrument. There are lessons taken by visiting specialists for brass and woodwind. The music co-ordinator also organises a number of extra curricular activities, which enable the pupils to further develop their musical expertise. During the inspection it was only possible to observe one music lesson and judgements have been formed on the discussions held with teachers and pupils. As such, no overall judgement has been made on the quality of teaching and learning.
125. Singing is encouraged by the teachers and is well promoted throughout the school, with pupils singing a variety of religious and secular songs. The pupils sing well during assemblies and lessons. They sing tunefully, with ample volume, enthusiasm and communicate a sense of enjoyment. The older pupils provide good role models for the younger pupils as they sing with great enthusiasm. The pupils often sing French folk songs during their French lessons.
126. By the end of Year 2 pupils sing well. They sing tunefully, with ample volume, enthusiasm and communicate a sense of enjoyment. By the end of Year 6 the pupils have composed their own words to a popular song and sung these with obvious humour and enjoyment. They have looked at music representing different eras and talk knowledgeably about how the music of the 1930's was very different to the music of The Beatles and Phil Collins. They appraise sensibly showing a good vocabulary and a satisfactory general musical knowledge, for example of instruments, artists, forms, styles and composers. Recently the pupils have been thinking where composers get their ideas for songs and larger pieces of work. They have watched a modern ballet 'The Penguin Café'. Here the pupils understood that the composer's inspiration was drawn originally from an illness he developed as a result of eating some contaminated food in a café. He then developed this theme to look at how people are polluting the earth. In this way the pupils gain an understanding that inspirations can have a wide range of sources. So that they are well prepared to develop their own ideas and sources of inspiration for their own compositions.

127. In a Years 3 and 4 lesson the pupils were encouraged by the class teacher to think about movements and the steadiness of the beat produced by bouncing a ball and skipping with a rope. In this way the pupils could see the regular nature of the beat. The pupils have an appropriate knowledge of technical musical language and use terms such as pulse, beat and rhythm appropriately. They appraise sensibly showing a good vocabulary and a satisfactory general musical knowledge, for example of musical instruments. The teachers encourage good listening and performing skills. They are enthusiastic and encourage the pupils to participate fully in lessons which encourages the pupils to co-operate well with each other, persevere and enjoy their work.
128. The music co-ordinator is enthusiastic about the development of music throughout the school. She has worked hard to encourage staff and to promote the scheme of work which gives good guidance and support to all members of staff. Resources are good. Whilst all pupils are assessed for their musical aptitude as an indicator for instrumental tuition, as yet there is no assessment of pupils' standards and the progress they make in their music lessons in class. The co-ordinator feels that this is the next stage of development for the subject, which will enable the school to extend and further develop the learning of the pupils.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

129. There is good provision for physical education. The pupils have opportunities to learn a wide range of skills; they develop skills in gymnastics, games dance and swimming. The pupils' standards in physical education are at the levels expected of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils. The generally good teaching and clear development of skills alongside the enthusiasm of the pupils ensures that the pupils make good improvements in their work and achieve well. The subject leader gives support and guidance in this subject.
130. The planned curriculum ensures that the pupils have access to a wide range of physical experiences. In Key Stage 2 the pupils have opportunities to learn to swim. There are also occasional opportunities for the older boys and girls to take part in competitive sports with local cluster-group schools. A strength of the subject is the tremendous range of opportunities offered to pupils outside of lessons, which include soccer and cricket coaching, participation in rugby festivals, country dancing, maypole dancing and dance courses that lead to involvement in dance festivals. Pupils' enthusiasm for sport and their ability to get on very well together regardless of age, often leads pupils to organise their own team games at break-times and lunch times where pupils of all ages can join in.
131. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 enjoy their physical education lessons and are enthusiastic learners. They 'warm up' by marching in time both quickly and slowly to 'the Grand Old Duke of York'. They are beginning to understand the value of warming up by checking to see if they can feel their hearts beating faster. In the main part of the lesson, pupils bounce balls and throw and catch bean bags using alternate hands. Pupils work both individually and in pairs and show sufficient co-ordination to carry these skills forward into a game relay, where they show sound teamwork. The teachers' careful insistence that the pupils follow the instructions they were given ensured that the pupils made appropriate gains in their level of skills.
132. At Years 5 and 6, pupils are also enthusiastic and try hard in their physical education lessons. Mostly, they listen carefully to the instructions given and try hard to succeed. Good teaching and a wide curriculum enables the pupils to learn and develop a wide

range of skills. They develop and refine their ball throwing and hitting skills, and knowledge of the rules of rounders, in preparation for a team game at the end of the lesson. In pairs first of all and then in small groups, the pupils came to terms with the best way of standing to have the best chance of bowling and hitting successfully. To achieve this, they had to concentrate and change some 'habits of a lifetime'. Some succeeded quickly; others needed constant reminders. From time to time, the class teacher intervened and showed them how to refine and improve their work. They worked enthusiastically and enjoyed the lesson. The pupils worked hard and increasingly showed good levels of co-operation and personal development. The pupils in Key Stage 2 have swimming lessons at the local swimming baths, and here the pupils achieve well. Many swim more than 25 metres with ease and others go on to gain survival awards.

133. The teaching of physical education is good. Teachers have high expectations of the pupils' behaviour and learning. They ensure that pupils understand what is required and check on this constantly through 'critical' observation and supportive comment. Demonstration is used effectively to 'iron out' misunderstandings. At times with Years 5 and 6, the teacher joins in as a good role model, which the pupils really enjoy.
134. The subject co-ordinator gives support and guidance to other staff in this subject. She does not at present monitor teaching in the school. There are at present no whole school assessment systems in place to monitor the pupils' skills development. Resources for physical education are good, suitable for all the age ranges of pupils in the school, organised appropriately and are readily accessible. Whilst staff are very careful to ensure that pupils use the resources sensibly and that this is geared to the age and ability of the pupils, written risk assessments of these activities are not yet in place.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

135. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. All pupils including those pupils with special educational needs and English as a second language make good progress and achieve well. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection, as a result of an interesting and relevant syllabus which uses the pupils and their interests as its' starting point. The school has adopted the newly reviewed locally agreed syllabus. The new syllabus does not quite match the school's planning and so at the end of the year the school is to review its planning and resources in the light of its requirements. Judgements in religious education have been made by looking at pupils' work and teachers' planning as only two lessons were observed during the inspection. No overall judgement has been made about teaching and learning.
136. Teaching is successful because the teachers use the pupils' own experiences and feelings as a starting point for lessons. For example, in a lesson in the reception class, the teacher asked the children to talk about the qualities of the people sitting next to them and why they were their friends. The children talked about being kind to each other and playing with each other. In this way the children were given opportunities to think about each other's qualities and reflect upon the special qualities of different people. The children clearly enjoyed the lesson; they listened carefully to each other and in turn spoke well.
137. By the end of Year 2 the pupils have developed and extended these ideas. They consider the many qualities of their friends and reflect upon their fairness, helpfulness and whether their friends are happy, friendly and nice. They visit the local church and

talk about the different parts of the church and why they are important. They develop a clear understanding that the Bible is the special book of the Christians and it has many stories of Jesus. They learn about stories from the Bible and know all about Joseph and his famous coat. In this way they understand that the Bible contains wonderful stories and the church is a special place for Christians.

138. By the end of Year 6 the pupils extend their knowledge and consider radical and different ideas. In Years 5 and 6 the pupils have been thinking about 'The Creation' and the many different explanations as to why and how this came about. They have studied the Bible's explanation of how the Earth was made and how God created people in his image. They have also considered the scientist's explanation of a huge upset in the universe and the creation of a world with life, which evolved over time. The pupils thought about these huge ideas and put forwards their own ideas. One pupil wrote, " I think God made the world because otherwise we would not have all the wonderful things we have now" whilst another wrote " I think that what God made was an incredible gift and there is order in creation because God could not make everything at once." The teachers have good subject knowledge. They plan their work well. Teaching is particularly successful because the teachers encourage the pupils' to give their own ideas and thoughts. For example, the Years 5 and 6 pupils considered the similarities between the beliefs of the Aboriginal people to those of the Christian of how the world began. They talked about the importance the sun would have had to the people in Australia and why they considered humankind was created last. The pupils talk about the Earth being a gift and one that people are responsible for and that it should be treasured and not misused. In this way the pupils develop an awareness of their own responsibilities and the common elements of different faiths. The pupils in Years 3 and 4 have been studying stories from the Bible and reflect that baptism and dedication are continuing elements of the Christian beliefs. For example, understanding that the tradition of water being used as a way of symbolising the washing away of sins, dates back to Biblical times. In this way the pupils gain an understanding of the relevance of baptism in today's world. The pupils have the opportunity to study some aspects of world religions, and in this way, they begin to develop an understanding and knowledge of other religions and peoples.
139. The curriculum co-ordinator has given good support to her colleagues throughout the school. She has identified areas for improvement, which include the further use of information and communication technology in religious education lessons and improved assessment procedures. The school has access to a wide range of artefacts and resources.