

INSPECTION REPORT

HEYCROFT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Leigh-on-Sea

LEA area: Southend

Unique reference number: 114789

Head teacher: Chris Russell

Reporting inspector: David Marshall
27681

Dates of inspection: 10th – 13th June 2002

Inspection number: 194812

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Benvenue Avenue
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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Paul Mathieson

Date of previous inspection: 2nd June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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27681	David Marshall	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology Music Foundation Stage English as an additional language	The school's results and pupils' achievements.
1112	Peter Oldfield	Lay inspector		How well does the school work in partnership with parents? Pupils' personal development and attendance
18598	Cathy Gordon Smith	Team inspector	English History Geography	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
20404	John Evans	Team inspector	Science Religious education Equal opportunities	How well are the pupils taught?
20948	John Linstead	Team inspector	Physical education Art and design Design and technology	How well is the school led and managed?
14976	Peter Dexter	Team inspector	Mathematics Special educational needs	How well does the school care for its pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Heycroft is an above average size primary school with 450 pupils on roll, organised into 16 classes. The school is usually over-subscribed with approximately 90 applications for the 60 places on intake. All year groups are usually full, with classes of up to 34 in the juniors. The school is situated on the north-western edge of Southend. The children entering the school transfer from a variety of local playgroups, and their attainment is usually at the level expected for four year olds. On leaving the school the pupils go to 16 different secondary schools. There are 12 pupils from an ethnic minority, well below the national average. The percentage of pupils eligible for free schools meals is 18, around a third of the national average. There are 93 pupils on the list of those with special educational needs – three with statements. Both figures are above the national average. Pupil mobility is low – just 21 pupils joined the school in the last school year – and five have left.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Heycroft is a very good school. It has continued to improve since the positive inspection in 1997. The quality of education provided is good overall and the school is effective in raising standards. Pupils achieve well as they are suitably challenged and make good progress whatever their previous attainment. Their personal development is very good. The school provides a broad curriculum, with a very wide range of additional activities. The quality of teaching is good; a substantial proportion of very good teaching was observed. The head teacher provides very good, clear leadership and this is backed up by an enthusiastic staff who support him well. Lesson planning is thorough and there is careful use of assessment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching is good overall and enables pupils of all abilities to make good progress and achieve good standards by the time they leave the school.
- The leadership and management provided by the head teacher and key staff are very good.
- The curriculum provided is good, with a wide variety of stimulating activities.
- Staff accurately assess pupils' achievement and use the information effectively to ensure the best progress.
- The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is very good, and children make a good start to their education.
- Overall, the provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. They enjoy coming to school and form very good relationships.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good; these pupils have access to the full curriculum and make good progress.
- The school's partnership with parents is very good.

What could be improved

- The monitoring of pupils' academic progress in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.
- The school's marking policy so that it is used consistently throughout the school.
- Target setting for individual pupils, to include pupils' self-assessment.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the last inspection in June 1997 the head and staff have worked hard to meet the requirements of the key issues and their overall progress has been good. There is now a consistent framework for planning for each subject. All planning is focused on making sure that teachers' expectations are appropriate for all pupils, and they are consistently challenged in all lessons. The school now has good systems in place for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and the information obtained is used well to guide planning. This constitutes the most significant progress since the previous inspection on which the school plans to build in all other subjects. The school development plan identifies clear priorities for development. Planning for the Foundation Stage is based on national guidelines and is effective in enabling children to make a good start to their education. Thanks to this, the good quality of teaching and the determination of the head, the school is well placed to make further significant improvements.

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	B	A	C	C
Mathematics	B	A	A	A
Science	B	A	B	C

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

In the 2001 national tests and assessments for pupils aged seven, standards in reading, writing and mathematics were above average when compared nationally. When compared with results from similar schools, reading, writing and mathematics were average. Pupils aged eleven achieved standards that were in line with the national average in English, well above average in mathematics, and above average in science in these national tests in 2001. Compared to those in similar schools, standards at the end of Key Stage 2 were average in English and science and well above average in mathematics. The trend over the last three years has been one of continued improvement, and in line with the national trend. In the last two years, pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 have reached their challenging targets in National Curriculum tests. The targets set for the 2002 are for more improvement. This continued progress is due to the teachers' careful use of assessment, the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the good variety of learning opportunities provided. As a result, pupils of all abilities achieve well, including those with special educational needs. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve at least sound standards in all areas of learning, learn well and make a good start to their education.

Current standards in English, mathematics and science for seven and eleven year olds are generally above average, as older pupils now make good progress throughout the school. In art and design, information and communication technology (ICT) and the singing and performing aspects of music, pupils achieve standards above expectations for their age by the time they leave school. They achieve at least satisfactory standards in all other subjects of the National Curriculum.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are interested, enthusiastic and enjoy all school activities. They take an increasing responsibility for their own learning as they go through the school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is very good. There is no sign of bullying or oppressive conduct. Pupils are aware of the effect of their actions on others.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils form very good relationships with their teachers, other adults and with each other. This makes a large contribution to the school's positive atmosphere.
Attendance	Very good. Attendance is well above the national average.

The personal, social and emotional development of all pupils is very good. The relationships they form are very good and the way they work together so well makes a significant contribution to their overall learning.

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.

Teaching has maintained the good position recorded at the time of the last inspection. In the Foundation Stage classes the teaching is consistently good as teachers plan work that is adapted to meet the children's very different abilities when they enter the school. As a result they make good progress. The good quality of teaching enables pupils to make good progress throughout the school. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum at Key Stages 1 and 2, and of the individual needs of pupils, are good throughout the school. This enables them to teach English and mathematics, and the essential basic skills of literacy and numeracy, effectively and pupils to learn well. Most teachers have high expectations of pupils, which result in the very good behaviour and good learning. Teachers' planning of the pupils' work is well matched to their abilities throughout the school in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science because of the good use of assessment and the amount of time available for lessons. In most lessons class discussions are lively, lessons are consistently of a good pace and pupils enjoy their learning. Questions are well focused and designed to bring all pupils into the discussions. Pupils learn to listen carefully and sustain their concentration for longer periods of time as they go through the school. Teachers relate very well to their pupils and manage classes well. The teaching and support of pupils with special educational needs, and for those with English as an additional language, are good, and these pupils achieve good standards in their work.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good. The literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented effectively.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils are well known to all staff and well supported throughout the school. Their progress is tracked very regularly.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Provision and support in this area are good when required. Pupils make good progress and achieve appropriately high standards.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Very good provision. There is a strong emphasis on developing good moral and social attitudes that permeates much of the curriculum. The cultural development of all pupils is very good. Their spiritual development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Procedures for child protection are good. There are good procedures to improve pupils' behaviour and attendance. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are also good.

The school works well in partnership with parents. The quality of information provided by the school about the pupils' progress is good. Parents are involved in fund-raising activities and extra-curricular activities and provide good support to the school in its work. The curriculum provided by the school is good. The range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school is very good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Very good. The head teacher provides strong leadership and gives a clear direction to the work of the school. The deputy head and all staff work effectively with the head to monitor teaching and provision consistently and therefore make their best contribution to developing the curriculum and improving standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The head teacher keeps the governors well informed and so they understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are very supportive but do not yet monitor provision sufficiently. They are only now beginning to play a more effective role in shaping the direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good overall. The school has addressed well the priorities and areas for development since the last inspection. Standards have improved as a result of lesson observations by the senior management team.
The strategic use of resources	Good overall. Financial planning is carefully linked to the need to raise standards. All specific grants are used very well.

The current level of staffing is good. Learning support assistants are very well deployed and sufficient in number, and their expertise is making an important contribution to raising standards. Most of the school accommodation is good, and it is very well cared for by the site manager and cleaners. The good classrooms, halls and extensive grounds enable the staff to meet the requirements of individual pupils in full. The level of learning resources is good and meets the needs of all pupils and the National Curriculum. The administrative staff carry out the day-to-day functions of the office very well. The school has good procedures to ensure that it gets best value for its expenditure.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Their children like school and are making good progress. ▪ The children behave well and are expected to work hard at all times. ▪ The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. ▪ They are encouraged to work with the school and receive good information about how their children are progressing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The amount and type of homework their children are given.

Inspection evidence confirms the overwhelmingly positive views of parents. Parents feel their children like school, are making good progress and behave well, that teaching is good and that pupils are encouraged to work hard. Inspection evidence shows that homework is not a weakness. The work pupils complete at home is well organised by teachers and makes an effective contribution to their overall progress.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. When children are first admitted to the school initial assessments show that their attainment is in line with that expected for their age. Children in the reception classes make good progress in their learning as a result of effective teaching. By the time they leave the reception classes most children achieve the planned early learning goals¹ and are ready to move on to the National Curriculum. By this time they are achieving standards in line with those expected by the end of the Foundation Stage in knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development, personal, social and emotional development and mathematical and creative work. Their standards are often above those expected in communication, language and literacy. The reception class teachers and support assistants work closely together in planning and assessing pupils' achievements. This helps to promote the good progress the children make.
2. In the 2001 national statutory tests in English for pupils aged seven the proportion attaining the levels expected in reading and writing was above the national average. The number of pupils attaining the higher levels in reading was much greater than in writing. When compared with those of pupils from similar backgrounds the reading results were above average, and the writing results were average. The final test figures for Key Stage 2 for 2002 are not yet available. Standards in English tests at the age of eleven matched those attained nationally. There was little difference between the results of boys and girls at both key stages. A similar pattern still prevails; the good standards in reading are not yet leading to significantly improved standards in writing. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress in English and are a testament to how carefully the school now assesses their individual needs in this subject and plans appropriately. Results of tests over the last three years show that the trend is upwards at the end of Key Stage 2 and in line with the national trend of improvement.
3. The 2001 national assessments in mathematics for seven year olds showed that the proportion of pupils reaching the national average was above the national average. In the 2001 tests for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2, the proportion of eleven year olds achieving the expected levels for their age was above the national average. The number achieving the higher levels was also above average. Comparisons with schools in similar social circumstances indicate that these results were average for seven year olds, but well above average for eleven year olds. Results over the four-year period to 2001 show that the school is raising levels of attainment in line with the national trend of improvement.
4. In 2001 the results of teacher assessments in science for Year 2 showed that standards were above the national average, and above average when compared with those in similar schools. At Key Stage 2 the results last year were above the national average but average when compared with similar schools. There was little difference between the results of boys and girls and the school is raising levels of attainment in line with the national trend of improvement.
5. The school's targets for pupils' achievements in English, mathematics and science in 2001 at the end of Key Stage 2 were achieved, with an increased number of pupils reaching the higher than expected levels. This is a clear indication that the school is now well placed to extend and

¹ Early learning goals - Planning in the Foundation Stage is geared towards pupils achieving standards known as the early learning goals in six areas of development - communication, language and literacy; personal, social and emotional development; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and creative development.

challenge all pupils further. In 2002 the school's targets have been raised to an appropriate level in all subjects.

6. Speaking skills show good progression as pupils mature, as shown in Year 6 lessons. Standards of reading are satisfactory by the end of Year 2. By this stage, above average and average attaining pupils are acquiring a growing range of vocabulary, and sound levels of word recognition. Appropriate measures are taken to identify pupils with reading difficulties and to provide them with extra help and support. By the time they are eleven, many pupils become independent readers with their own preferences for authors and for different types of literature. Pupils in both key stages have a good range of opportunities for writing for different purposes; their response to these is good and they make sound progress. Pupils up to the age of seven have a secure understanding of simple sentence structure and by the time they are seven, average and above average attaining pupils can write paragraphs and begin stories well. As they mature, most pupils can choose an appropriate style of writing to suit a particular purpose and record their learning suitably. In Years 3 and 4, pupils can use adjectives more effectively to add colour and interest to their descriptive writing and their poetry. The handwriting skills of all pupils improve and many are writing in joined script by the time they reach the upper school. In Years 5 and 6, pupils' grammatical knowledge and understanding was evident as they concentrated on their poetry. Spelling improves consistently throughout Key Stage 2.
7. Pupils are making good progress in mathematics throughout the school and achieve good standards by the time they leave. By the end of Year 2 pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of numbers up to 100. Higher attaining pupils apply their knowledge effectively and use efficient strategies for solving word problems. They clearly explain how they solved the problem. In mental mathematics, teachers encourage pupils to explain their methods of calculation. Pupils' achievement in data handling is satisfactory. The emphasis on the development of pupils' mathematical understanding and reasoning skills is beginning to have an impact and pupils interpret the information presented to answer questions and solve problems well. Most pupils in Year 6 use standard written methods to add, subtract, multiply and divide. Higher attaining pupils confidently and accurately multiply pairs of numbers and solve division problems by using multiples of the divisors. Work in ICT and science supports older pupils' handling of data. They enter data onto a spreadsheet, and represent the results in a variety of ways.
8. In science, by the end of Year 2, pupils achieve levels above those expected for their age. They understand that materials have different properties, some of which can be recognised through use of the senses of touch and smell and they can sort materials into magnetic and non-magnetic, firstly on the basis of prediction, and then by testing with magnets. This practical approach to learning builds pupils' confidence. They become eager to ask as well as answer questions, providing the teacher with a good insight into how their learning is progressing. During Years 3 to 6 pupils build on their skills and knowledge through a range of practical investigations, and achieve levels in line with expectations for their age. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good understanding overall of how to carry out a scientific investigation. Pupils are alert to health and safety issues relating to the different tests, for example when investigating the effects of burning materials as part of their study of reversible and irreversible change. Year 6 make sensible predictions, and clearly describe their findings using the correct scientific terminology. They are becoming more secure in their ability to draw conclusions, which relate to the intentions of the investigation. Year 5 and 6 pupils make good use of ICT for recording their work. They use different formats to record the results of investigations, including tables and graphs. This and the taking of measurements, such as temperature, link well to the use and development of their numeracy skills.
9. Pupils with special educational needs are making good progress throughout the school. A great deal of attention is paid by the special educational needs co-ordinator, and all teachers assess the pupils' levels of achievement and then match instructions for written tasks to the pupils' lower reading levels. As a result, all manage to complete the work they are set. The school has strategies in place to identify pupils with higher ability and, whenever necessary,

pupils receive extension work in literacy and numeracy. Work is very well matched to the needs of all pupils, and achievement is good for all groups of pupils with special educational needs or with English as an additional language.

10. Levels of attainment in ICT are in line with expectations for their age by the time pupils are seven, but above expected levels by the time they leave the school. At Key Stage 1 pupils can use a computer mouse competently to load a program and to draw, using a number of functions from different art programs. They are also able to use different word-processing packages. These skills are still at a good level and the opportunities they have are now good, and much better than at the time of the last inspection. In Key Stage 2 pupils build on their previous knowledge well. They can access the Internet and store data in word-processing programs and databases. This progress is now consistent and older pupils achieve standards above those expected for their age.
11. Pupils in both key stages meet the expected levels of attainment in religious education as identified in the syllabus taught in the local authority's schools. Key Stage 1 pupils have a sound knowledge of Christianity and can make comparisons with aspects of other religions. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have developed their understanding of world religions further and often have the speaking, listening and writing skills to be able to make relevant comparisons.
12. Attainment is at the expected levels in design and technology and physical education at the end of both key stages. Pupils' achievements in art and design are above levels expected for their age by the time they leave school. Pupils make sound progress in history and geography and achieve levels in line with those expected for their age by the time they are eleven. In music, pupils make good progress in singing and attain standards above expectations for their age. Many have above average musical performing skills by the time they leave school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. Pupils' personal development is very good and is a strong feature of the school. This further underlines the many opportunities they are afforded as indicated in the last report. Pupils have very good attitudes to work. They listen well, fully engage in tasks and in lessons, and show high levels of concentration and effort. They enjoy coming to school. Where opportunities are available to represent the school, such as in choir concerts or athletics, they are keen to practise well, adopting the appropriate dress codes and showing maturity beyond their years.
14. Pupils' behaviour is very good. This showed when wet play meant that pupils were limited to their classrooms. They played happily with boxed games, read books or took the opportunity to draw freehand or talk with others. They generally behaved sensibly and responsibly. The school expects high standards of behaviour; in this it has succeeded. Year 6 pupils, visiting a local museum to enhance their learning of 'The Tudors', were a very good example of the high standards of behaviour the school enjoys. They had to walk to a coach, travel into the town and wait patiently for the curator to offer his welcome. They listened well and were pleased to be involved in answering questions about the period, as well as happily dressing in some costumes.
15. In lessons pupils listened well, were not disruptive, allowed others to answer questions without interruption and generally were very interested in all that school has to offer. There has been one, fixed-term, exclusion of a pupil from school this year.
16. There was no bullying seen in the week of inspection nor did the many pupils interviewed believe this was of any concern at the school. There were equally no incidents of racism or sexism. The school is an orderly community, where all pupils are valued. The very good levels of adult support allow pupils to be in the vision of an adult at all times. When pupils needed

support or comfort, teachers and assistants were seen to develop very good relationships with them.

17. The introduction into the school of the programme 'You can do it' has been a considerable success. After a trial period in two classes, the whole school programme in the past two years has made pupils very aware of the needs of others and has developed well their own self-esteem. This scheme was mentioned by parents as contributing significantly to their child's personal development. Generally, pupils are very willing to take on tasks such as monitors. Older pupils help with equipment in assemblies or clear lunch tables. There are some opportunities for paired reading, where care is taken to pair appropriate pupils, so that an element of personal development is enhanced.
18. Pupils genuinely feel 'at home' within the school; they treat the property very well and bask in the welcoming environment provided. Very young children are taught good manners: they learn to say 'please' and 'thank you', often underlined by assembly talks. Of particular note is that pupils open the door for other members of their class and for visitors. The relationships within the school are of a very high order. Teachers are helpful and friendly; all adults set very good examples and this enables all pupils to develop very well in an atmosphere of mutual trust and guidance.
19. Most pupils are very willing to take an initiative but there were sometimes opportunities missed to allow pupils to take fuller responsibility for their own learning and assessment in some lessons. The high level of opportunities for personal development and very good relationships contribute very well to pupils' responses to all that the school does offer, by way of charitable collections, community, drama and sports events.
20. Very high levels of attendance show that the school is a welcoming place; this contributes effectively to learning opportunities. Registers are marked well, according to statutory requirements.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

21. Teaching is good throughout the school. The teaching has improved since the last inspection; the proportion of unsatisfactory teaching is now very low and outweighed in infant and junior lessons by the good, very good or excellent teaching. Where unsatisfactory teaching occurs it results from specific weaknesses in subject knowledge, lesson organisation or the match of tasks to pupils' abilities.
22. Teachers plan lessons well. This again is an improvement since the last inspection when the need was identified for a sharper focus to learning. In most lessons, though not all, planning is now detailed and clear. It shows how the lesson will progress and specifies what pupils are to learn. Joint, year group, planning ensures that pupils in parallel classes have similar access and opportunity to learn. Teachers plan for identified priorities to be a focus for a series of lessons. For instance the speaking and listening element of the English curriculum was a key objective. There was an example of this in a Year 6 class when the pupils were trying to put themselves in the role of a character from literature. They were given the opportunity in turn to be interviewed as that character by the rest of the class who had prepared and written key questions. At first the interviewers accepted the answer and moved on to the next question, but as they gained confidence they abandoned the script and asked supplementary questions. So a good dialogue developed. This enhanced the experience and increased knowledge and understanding of the original text for everyone.
23. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They draw on whole-school planning that is now thorough, well informed and secure. This helps to ensure that learning progresses smoothly within lessons and from class to class.
24. The previous inspection judged that many lessons did not challenge pupils enough and that teachers' expectations of pupils were often too low. These weaknesses have largely been

dealt with but still affect occasional lessons, particularly in the juniors. Most of the weaknesses in assessment identified by the previous inspection have been remedied but some shortcomings remain. Secure procedures are now in place for assessing and recording pupils' overall progress in English, mathematics and science. Teachers and learning support assistants know their pupils well and watch the progress of their learning closely, but assessment is still too informal in some lessons in the non-core subjects.² Teachers do not use assessments systematically enough to inform and modify their lesson planning in these subjects. This results in some loss of challenge for able pupils and makes some lower ability pupils unduly dependent on support, slowing their progress towards independence. Marking in most subjects is insufficiently detailed and informative and does not do enough to show pupils what they should do to improve.

25. The teaching of pupils with special education needs is good. Teachers and learning assistants plan together each day and follow the concise targets in pupils' individual education plans. This helps to ensure that the tasks set for pupils with special educational needs are well matched to their needs and abilities. As a result, these pupils make good progress, especially in literacy and numeracy.
26. Setting arrangements in mathematics help to ensure that work is matched to pupils' abilities. This contributes to the effectiveness of the school's strategies for the teaching of numeracy. This works well.
27. In all parts of the school, teachers manage pupils very well. All teachers create a pleasant, constructive ethos for learning. As a result, pupils enjoy learning, behave well and are fully committed to their work. Teachers instil good work habits in pupils, so that most pupils are well organised and responsible. Teachers and non-teaching staff provide strong examples of personal effectiveness and teamwork. This helps to promote very good relationships among pupils. It teaches pupils to behave thoughtfully, work constructively alongside one another and co-operate well.
28. Teachers value pupils' contributions in lessons and use praise very effectively. This motivates pupils and gives them pleasure in their work. In many infant and junior lessons, for example in mathematics, teachers explore and build on pupils' answers and suggestions. This increases the immediacy and relevance of learning. This was clear in a Year 2 class in which the pupils were having difficulty in following the pattern of rhyme in a limerick. The teacher read a simple limerick. The class read another one. There was a lively class discussion about rhyming words. The pupils worked in pairs to discuss possible endings and finally each pair read out their effort to the class. By the end of the lesson all were able to tackle the task of finding their own endings because the teacher had given each pupil a specific task appropriate to his/her ability.
29. Teachers question skilfully. This consolidates and extends pupils' knowledge, challenges pupils to formulate their own answers and, at its best, promotes insight and reflection. For example, in an effective Year 6 science lesson, the teacher's varied questioning improved pupils' understanding of the dangers of smoking and encouraged them to explore its impact on peoples' lives. Teachers engage and sustain pupils' interest well. They achieve this by means of skilled, sensitive management, by giving clear explanations and providing varied, interesting activities. In some lessons, for example, in science, teachers make good use of ICT. In a successful religious education lesson, the teacher made good use of Christian artefacts to engage pupils' interest, making learning more tangible, rewarding and secure.
30. Most lessons are carefully structured to promote smooth progress. In the most effective lessons the teacher shares the outline and objectives of the lesson with pupils, linking these to previous learning. An excellent example of this was seen in a Year 1 literacy session. Pupils

² The core subjects of the primary curriculum are English, mathematics and science. The non-core (or foundation) subjects are art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology, music, physical education and religious education.

accompanied the teacher in exploring words and their meanings, sharing ideas and shaping them together to make poems. The quality of learning was high; pupils grew in confidence and responsibility. This lesson was with the youngest infant year group. In most lessons, teachers of older pupils, in particular, could do more to involve pupils as active partners in their own learning.

31. The school has made good progress with the teaching of ICT. Lessons in the computer suite include work that gives useful support to other subjects such as English and mathematics.

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

32. In the previous report the curriculum for the under-fives, lesson planning, which included challenge for all pupils, and the need to develop whole-school assessment procedures were all issues for improvement. All of these have been resolved systematically in successive school development plans, apart from further refinements still needed in the use of assessment information. Consequently, progress since the last inspection has been good in these key issues.
33. Children in the Foundation Stage classes now experience a rich, varied and well-planned curriculum; it meets the needs of all children effectively. Pupils in other classes in the school are taught all National Curriculum subjects, and religious education meets the requirements of the syllabus taught in the local authority's schools. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented well and the organisation chosen for mathematics is particularly strong. The lesson plans follow a similar pattern throughout the school with work prepared for pupils of different abilities in each class. For example, pupils in the infant classes are organised into three ability groups in each class; this continues in the juniors apart from mathematics where two year groups are combined into classes of similar ability for their daily lessons. As a result pupils make good progress in the majority of subjects in both key stages.
34. Pupils with special educational needs are provided for very well; they too make good progress. They have individual education plans and are taught well in small groups at different times during the week by the special educational needs co-ordinator. They always have very good extra support in the classrooms from teaching assistants. These support staff are a valuable part of the teaching team and are most effective in all the work they do. A small group of more able pupils from each year are chosen for extra activities to challenge their thinking and understanding further.
35. The photographs, notice boards and trophies confirm the school's full involvement in activities that enrich pupils' learning experiences. There is a programme from the local theatre celebrating the Jubilee. This event included the Heycroft Junior Singers led by the enthusiastic teaching staff. The rich writing, produced in the ICT suite, about the thrill of abseiling during an adventure week in Devon illustrate the impact this had on Year 6 pupils. The disappointment pupils felt when the running club was cancelled one lunchtime because of rain shows their enthusiasm for the wide range of sporting activities on offer throughout the year. The school takes part fully in festivals and competitive events organised for local schools.
36. Personal, social and health education is covered well, not only when pupils sit together in a circle to explore such ideas as 'Consequences', but also in the other subjects of the curriculum, particularly science. Sex education and the awareness of drugs misuse are part of this programme. There is further good support from the community policeman, nurse and a visiting theatre group when these issues are covered.
37. The school has good links with the immediate community and beyond. The local supermarket welcomes pupils when they visit the bakery, or survey shoppers' views and buying habits. Grandparents are invited to the Harvest Festival and the produce is sent to a local homeless

unit. Pupils have a strong link with a children's hospice for which they raise substantial funds by organising their own events such as cake stalls or collecting foreign coins.

38. The school plays a full part in the wider educational community too. The reception class teachers visit all local playgroups and they in turn spend some time at the school. As a result children enter the school confidently. The playgroup within the school grounds is charged a 'peppercorn' rent to help to make sure it continues successfully. The links with a local special school are beneficial to both schools in maintaining up-to-date knowledge about educational developments. Transfer to the secondary stage is extremely well organised so that the 16 secondary schools, to which the Year 6 pupils transfer, have full access to each pupil's educational details well before transfer. Consequently the transfer between the primary and secondary phase progresses smoothly.
39. Relationships throughout the school are very good. There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere. As was reported in the previous inspection, the school has a positive ethos and provision for spiritual, social, moral and cultural education is a strength of the school.
40. Provision for spiritual development is good. Spiritual development is promoted effectively through the daily act of worship, which includes a short time of prayer and reflection. There is a planned programme of themes for assembly, which takes special events into account from time to time. There are opportunities in several parts of the curriculum, especially in personal, social and health education for pupils to learn to consider the feelings of others. This was seen in a Year 6 literacy lesson where they were reflecting on aspects of character and behaviour. In an infant class lesson, pupils explored the characteristics and actions of a good friend. Year 1 pupils expressed wonder at the way God was able to part the Red Sea. Older pupils study some of the major world religions in religious education lessons. They understand the use of artefacts and symbols to promote worship but the programme of study misses opportunities to explore and compare the various tenets of belief that would help pupils to form their own philosophy.
41. Provision for the pupils' moral development is very good. The school has a good behaviour policy with a positive approach. All are aware of the high expectations of honesty, truthfulness and consideration for others. Pupils also know that there will be consequences if they misbehave or break the code of conduct. They respond well and there are far more instances when helpful or considerate behaviour is rewarded than there are of punishments. The 'Golden Rules' are widely displayed and consistently applied. In lessons teachers grasp opportunities to reinforce the principles of good conduct. An example of this happened when pupils were discussing the behaviour of fictional characters in a literacy lesson. They considered the possible consequences and tried to decide what they thought should have happened. In some lessons, especially in personal, social and health education, moral principles are the focus of the lesson, for instance, when a Year 3 class was discussing the meaning of 'peer pressure'.
42. The school provides very well for the social development of the pupils. There are many opportunities for them to learn and to practise social skills throughout the school. In lesson time the periods for circle time and for parachute games enhance pupils' skills in co-operation very effectively. Adults provide very good examples of appropriate manners. Relationships throughout the school are very good. All members of staff have a friendly manner and approach the pupils courteously. In many lessons pupils work in pairs or small groups. They share resources and co-operate in getting them out or putting them away. Pupils are always willing to help each other. They are given small tasks in the classroom at first. As they grow older they are given more responsibility and in Year 6 many become prefects. They help to organise some activities in school and may also take on duties in outside events such as the Borough Sports Day.
43. The school arranges many social events that enhance the pupils' social development. They often welcome visiting speakers to the school. The school choir and orchestra take part in the Annual Music Festival and also give occasional performances in the locality. There are outside visits most terms for every class and in Years 5 and 6 there are opportunities for residential

visits to the Isle of Wight and to Devon. The older pupils also take part in team games and matches against other schools.

44. The previous inspection reported that some aspects of cultural education were lacking. The school has made considerable improvements since then and this provision is now very good. An effective and enthusiastic co-ordinator for multi-cultural education is now in post and she has drawn up a good whole-school policy. She organises special events such as the very successful 'Far East Week' held recently. Most of the subject policies and schemes of work now include references to pupils' multi-cultural development. Topical themes are also explored, as in the study of the changes in life-style that have taken place during the 50 years of the Queen's reign. In history lessons pupils study how attitudes to education or to crime and punishment have changed.
45. There are many displays in school of artwork inspired by themes from other cultures and activities in many areas of the curriculum, such as Chinese cooking in food technology. Studies of world religions in religious education include their customs, artefacts, special buildings and costumes. In geography, pupils study the different ways of life of people in contrasting places such as St Lucia and Brazil. The co-ordinator regularly reviews the books in school to make sure that various cultures are well represented and that there is a good selection of material that celebrates our own culture. Provision for multi-cultural education is now very good.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

46. The provision for support, welfare and guidance described in the last report has become further developed and is now very good.
47. The school gives a very high level of attention to all matters of health and safety. Appropriate checking of electrical and fire-fighting equipment has been done and regular risk assessments are carried out. The governors' health and safety committee carries out these tasks well and reports directly to the governing body, through its buildings committee. There is a very high standard of daily maintenance to create a very good learning environment. Designated first aiders deal with minor accidents very well.
48. Procedures for child protection are good. The high levels of care are reviewed well by teachers each school year through records or pupils' profiles. These records are held so that appropriate support can be offered. The head teacher is the designated person for child protection. He is appropriately qualified, and has a good knowledge of the requirements. He has briefed all staff well.
49. Very good procedures are in place to monitor and improve attendance. All pupils are accounted for daily each early morning; homes are telephoned should sickness mean absence. Parents generally respond well and keep the school informed at most times.
50. The high expectations of good behaviour and the comprehensive behaviour policy underlined by 'Golden Rules' are well understood by all pupils and play a very good part in making the school such a pleasant community. These requirements extend into the playground where rules are on good display, and pupils play well together, share equipment and await a turn upon the adventure playground. There is self-discipline happily accepted by all pupils. No signs were seen of any oppressive behaviour. Lunchtimes are a very pleasant social occasion much enjoyed by all pupils and are very well supervised.
51. Whole-school assessment procedures were identified as a key issue for improvement at the time of the last inspection together with their use to monitor pupils' progress. Since then the school has made good progress in the development of successful procedures for collecting information about the progress of individual pupils and year groups. However, there are still

some improvements needed in the use of these in monitoring the progress of pupils individually across the wider curriculum, as well as in English, mathematics and science.

52. Assessment begins with the early analysis of each pupil's abilities on entry, which is used well to monitor their progress during the Foundation Stage, and into the infants. At the end of Year 2 the national test results are analysed to measure improvements since entry and to see where strengths and weaknesses lie in pupils' knowledge and skills in English and mathematics. This information is then used well to plan appropriately for each pupil. During Key Stage 2 further tests are taken and analysed to monitor pupils' progress in both subjects. The local education authority provides extra detailed analysis of the school's performance in English, mathematics and science, showing how the school performs not only over time, but also in comparison to other schools in the district.
53. In other curriculum subjects, teachers give a level of attainment in each year based on pupils' work during the term. These procedures are not as detailed or as accurate as those in English, mathematics and science. This is because there is insufficient work collected together by subject co-ordinators so far to make accurate judgements about standards. However, the school recognises this needs improvement and has begun to address it, but only very recently and not in all subjects.
54. The school now has considerable detail at its disposal, not only from its good assessment procedures, but also from everyday activities such as homework diaries, lessons and the marking of pupils' work. It uses some of this detail well. For example, pupils' individual attainments in mathematics, judged by these processes, are used very effectively in numeracy lessons in Key Stage 1 and in the ability groups in mathematics in Key Stage 2. Strengths and weaknesses from test analysis are used as a focus for the next term's teaching. Targets are set for improvement over a longer period of time in English, mathematics and science for each pupil. Individual reading records are maintained so progress is monitored as pupils move through the school. Pupils with special needs are identified quickly and extra teaching, or teaching assistance, is targeted to them in groups when appropriate.
55. There is much good work happening in assessment in the school, which is used to monitor pupils' progress, but some of it needs further development. There are a number of areas where the school could build on its present good procedures, all of which the school has begun to identify, for instance, in collecting pupils' work for monitoring purposes, extending the use of marking consistently across the school, and improving pupils' involvement in their own target setting. Although these are areas of development remaining from the last inspection, the school has made good progress in its development of assessment procedures. There is now satisfactory use of these procedures on which the school can build to ensure pupils make good progress in all subjects.
56. The procedures for monitoring pupils' personal and academic development are very good. A personal profile is held for each pupil that can be added to as they progress through the school. As a result, teachers know the pupils very well and respond to all matters of personal need; problems can be shared. This develops the very strong relationships within the school.
57. Pupils with special educational needs are given very good support from teachers and classroom assistants. There is a high proportion of well-trained classroom assistants who are on hand to give very good additional support to pupils at all times.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

58. The part the school plays in the community, adjudged to be a strength in the last report, has been well maintained. The school values the very strong link with parents and sees that

partnership as paramount to the development of the child. Parents view the school as a good place to send their children; it is over-subscribed and accepts some children from outside the catchment area. Parents fully support the school in all of its work.

59. Teachers are freely available, generally at the end of the school day, but there are good opportunities to adjudge pupils' progress, at the termly parents' evenings. A very good supply of newsletters and contacts for the many sporting and extra-curricular events, allows parents to feel involved and supportive. This provides a very good link with parents and is very effective. Parents feel very well informed.
60. A high number of parents regularly help in classes; this is enhanced with parents who help at the swimming pool at the school or upon visits to events of extra-curricular or sporting interest. Parents feel proud of the school, a view shared by pupils.
61. Generally parents are heavily involved through the many activities organised by the school. However, although the independent Parents' Association gives financially effective and generous support to the school, very few parents regularly help it. The support is generated by a small and dedicated band of adults, who have clear objectives. Although they give very good financial support to the school, their current arrangements do not encourage most parents to join in. In fact some parents interviewed during the inspection commented that they felt they were not welcome to join the Parents' Association. They felt inhibited and apprehensive about volunteering and would rather involve themselves directly with the head teacher or class teachers. Despite its success in providing for the school, the Parents' Association is in contrast to all the other very open and supportive ways the parents are involved with the school.
62. The school works hard to develop parental contacts; it has produced an attractive booklet for parents new to the school, and the school brochure and governing body's annual report provide a comprehensive guide to the life and work of the school. The link with parents is very effective.
63. Parents feel confident that the school enables their children to attain good standards; the high level of extra-curricular events is seen as a very good addition to school life and parents are very happy with the school and its offerings. Home-school agreements further underpin the very good support given by parents who regard homework as being adequately developed. The school always strives to take the views of parents into account; a parental audit conducted in 1999 did allow some minor adjustments to practices.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

64. The leadership and management of the school are very good. The head teacher is an experienced and knowledgeable professional who has a very clear vision of how the school is to develop. He values the views of staff, pupils and parents and believes all should have their say in how things can be improved. His leadership is very good and he is well supported by the deputy head and senior managers who are effective in shaping and carrying out the strategies for making improvements. The head teacher and senior teachers have been successful in motivating the staff so that there is a spirit in the school of co-operation and a shared commitment to improve. This is reflected in the whole ethos of the school in which pupils are valued and relationships are very good. In this atmosphere the school carries out its aims very well. This means that pupils are confident, well behaved and well motivated to do their best.
65. The monitoring of the curriculum and teaching has improved well since the last inspection when this was found to be mostly informal. Subject co-ordinators and senior managers regularly observe lessons in English, mathematics, science and ICT. This is providing the school with a lot of useful information and teachers receive good reports on what was seen.

The head teacher has taken full advantage of this for staff development purposes. Co-ordinators also study teachers' planning and look at the quality of pupils' work.

66. The general improvement in monitoring has played a part in helping the school to strengthen the areas of weakness identified in the last inspection. For example, the school has increased the amount of equipment and resources available in the teaching of ICT and improved the assessment of pupils' work. In addition, the confidence and expertise of staff have improved through training, which has raised the quality of teaching and learning well.
67. The school's development plan provides a clear overview of how improvements are to be carried out. It is supported by comprehensive plans drawn up by subject co-ordinators following their analysis of resources and staff training needs. The views of all school staff are sought and used by senior managers to identify priorities and produce draft plans for further discussion. Part of these plans is the provision for staff training. All teachers are 'appraised' and set targets within a good system of 'performance management', which also identifies what training teachers need for their own development and the needs of the school.
68. The governing body is fully supportive of the school through its various committees and the interest and involvement of its members. Governors scrutinise and comment on the plans made by staff to develop the school. As yet they do not play a significant part in the identification of priorities on these plans or of how they are to be carried out. Although governors occasionally come to school in an informal way, they do not carry out regular visits with specific aims in mind. This would improve the information they have about the work of the school and in the identification of strengths and areas for development. Governors are too reliant on reports from senior managers and national comparative data. Their role at present is to follow events rather than help shape them. The governors' own strategic plans for the longer term are appropriate. They ensure, for example, that renewals and refurbishment keep the school premises in a good state of repair. They were recently fully involved in deciding which company should be awarded the contract for installing double-glazing throughout the school. Considerable time and care was devoted to this, which also involved school staff and the local education authority. Governors' financial planning is good and they make careful considerations of how the school's budget can best be used to support what the school wants to do. However, as yet they do not adequately measure how well the school is doing compared with similar schools or examine what difference an initiative they approved made. For example, governors sanctioned the purchase of mathematics resources but have not carried out any subsequent review of how these have affected pupils' learning.
69. The school has good systems in place for ensuring the suitability of its financial transactions. Administrative staff are knowledgeable, well trained and efficient in maintaining pupil records and carrying out financial transactions. Spending is well monitored through regular financial reports and meetings. The school takes appropriate measures to obtain the best value in the purchase of resources and equipment by comparing prices and obtaining quotes when necessary.
70. There is a sufficient number of suitably qualified and experienced teachers to meet the needs of the school in teaching the curriculum. There is a good mix of longer serving teachers and newer staff and of male and female teachers. The head teacher has built up a good, professional attitude in the staff so that any changes in responsibility are accepted and seen as in the interest of raising standards. Most subject co-ordinators have 'shadows' with whom they work closely and section managers represent different parts of the school. All new teachers receive appropriate 'formal' assistance from their mentors with the chance to be observed while teaching and to observe other lessons. In addition they receive a lot of help and support from the whole staff. Teachers are well supported by a large number of well-qualified learning support assistants who help the learning of all pupils throughout the school. The school is fortunate to have the services of a highly skilled and dedicated site manager whose endeavours have much enhanced the whole learning environment and saved the school a lot

of money, for example in the installation of the computer suite, pool renovations, many minor repairs as well as wall building and road strengthening.

71. The school's accommodation is good. It is situated on a widespread but attractive site with large playgrounds and fields. All pupils benefit from the outdoor, heated swimming pool and adventure playground. Picnic benches are arranged around the school and playground markings add to pupils' enjoyment of the school site. Pupils in the Foundation Stage have an outdoor play area with a safe surface around climbing equipment. The computer suite has added an extra dimension to the teaching of ICT and is used well. As a result pupils are now making good progress. The school's library is part of the attractive entrance to the school but is not ideally situated for pupils to use and is rather small for the number on roll.
72. The school's learning resources are sufficient for the needs of pupils in each subject and in many they are good. For example, in design and technology, ICT, mathematics, music and geography, they are making a significant contribution to pupils' learning experiences. In English the number and range of books available are improving. Although there is no lending library, pupils have access to an adequate range of fiction and non-fiction books, all in good condition. In addition all classes have a good stock of dictionaries and thesauri.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

73. In order to continue the developments made and further raise the overall standards of pupils' attainment in all subjects, the governors, head teacher and all staff should jointly:

- a) Build on the improvements already made in English, mathematics and science and continue to raise pupils' standards of achievement in all subjects further by the time they leave school. This should be accomplished by –
 - developing the collection of examples of pupils' work in subjects other than English, mathematics and science to improve the wider monitoring of pupils' academic progress. This to enable teachers to be aware of the next stage of each pupils' progress and plan accordingly.
 - extending the school's marking policy so that it is used consistently to identify areas for improvement.
 - using the information from everyday lessons and marking to develop target setting for individual pupils, which would also include more occasions for pupils' self-assessment as part of personal development.

Paragraphs 25, 27, 31, 56, 90, 105, 119, 137, 160, 165, 166

Other minor issues which should be considered by the school:

- a) Further develop the role of the governing body so that they consistently monitor, appraise and evaluate the work of all staff so that they help to shape the direction of the school.

Paragraph 69

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	72
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	22

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	20	28	21	1	1	0
Percentage	1	28	39	29	1	1	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	440
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	18

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	93

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	11

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	21
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.5
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.1
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	32	33	65

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	29	29	31
	Girls	31	31	32
	Total	60	60	63
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (84)	92 (86)	97 (94)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	29	30	31
	Girls	31	32	32
	Total	60	62	63
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (87)	95 (95)	97 (95)
	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	42	22	64

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	35	36	41
	Girls	19	18	21
	Total	54	54	62
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (84)	84 (86)	97 (94)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	34	35	35
	Girls	21	17	20
	Total	55	52	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (82)	81 (87)	86 (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	2
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	1
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	5
White	378
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	19.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	18
Total aggregate hours worked per week	336

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	938403
Total expenditure	924593
Expenditure per pupil	2175
Balance brought forward from previous year	72126
Balance carried forward to next year	85936

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	430
Number of questionnaires returned	204

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	51	44	4	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	37	7	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	53	2	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	56	15	1	1
The teaching is good.	56	39	2	1	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	50	10	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	37	4	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	34	2	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	37	52	9	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	51	44	3	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	51	2	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	55	40	3	0	2

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

74. All children start school in September either full or part-time depending on their date of birth. All children have at least one term full-time in the reception classes. There are 60 children in the Foundation Stage. Reception children follow the Foundation Stage curriculum, which is a step in education prior to starting the National Curriculum in Year 1. Good induction procedures ensure that children quickly settle into the routines of school. Children and their parents are invited to visit the class before their child starts and there are several meetings involving parents. A meeting is held for parents at the beginning of the year to explain the early 'baseline' assessment procedures and the teacher meets with parents individually to complete the child's entry profile. Further consultation meetings are held during the year so that the parents can find out about their child's progress. This ensures that good links have been established and they are well prepared to start school.
75. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good. A very stimulating learning environment has been created for the children in all the reception classes. There is a good outdoor area leading directly from the classrooms, which is used to extend children's development in all areas of learning. Opportunities for physical development are planned to make best use of outdoor play so children can use not only equipment such as bikes and cars but also mathematical and building apparatus.
76. Assessment procedures are very good for children in the reception classes. The teachers use very effectively the early assessment procedures recommended by the local authority. Very detailed information is kept following these assessments and is used to set individual targets for the children. These are shared with the parents during the consultation meetings throughout the year. The teachers and support assistants also keep their own ongoing assessment records and very comprehensive observation notes. All this information is used very well to ensure that the needs of all children are met, and to track the attainment and progress of each child. Provision for children with special educational needs is very good. Each child has an individual education plan with measurable targets. They also have a file of planned activities to meet their specific individual needs and to enable them to make good progress in their learning.
77. Many children enter the reception class with skills in communication, language and literacy that are appropriate for their age and this is confirmed by the baseline assessments conducted with these children. Children's skills in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development are also in line with what could be expected for their age. Children's mathematical and physical development is satisfactory on entry into school. Children make good progress in all areas of learning because of good teaching and learning in the reception classes. The classroom assistants support the teachers very well and they work effectively as teams. This has a positive impact on children's learning. Tasks are well planned with a clear focus on individual children's learning needs. All teachers give clear instructions for tasks and encourage children to listen carefully. Behaviour management is good. Praise is used effectively to motivate the children, to engage them in learning and to promote their self-esteem.

Personal, social and emotional development

78. All children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in personal, social and emotional development. Most achieve expectations for their age. They share equipment well and learn to wait for their turn. For example, they all know how many children are allowed in each area at any one time and, during a session with a classroom assistant, children were learning to take turns playing a memory game. Children respond well to the stimulating environment and are developing well their ability to concentrate for a suitable length of time. Very good support from classroom assistants enables the children to understand the need to sit quietly when the teacher is talking to them. There was very little calling out or interrupting the teacher. Good teaching enables children to know the difference between right and wrong and they are beginning to acquire good attitudes to learning. They also begin to develop the very good relationships seen later in the school.

Communication, language and literacy

79. All children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in communication, language and literacy during the time they spend in the Foundation Stage. The teaching is good and ensures that most children reach above the expected levels by the time they move into Year 1. They all quickly learn to form phrases correctly and often speak in complex sentences, particularly to each other. Almost all of the reception classes can use pictures and words to retell a story and almost all can recognise rhyming words in the text. Average attaining children can begin to find matching rhyming words such as 'van' and 'fan', playing a memory game. They all learn to enjoy sharing books. Higher attaining children can talk about the pictures. One child in the youngest class confidently indicated that the small words were for an adult to read and she would read the big words. She was able to read the repeated phrases in the book with confidence. Children of average ability can talk about the pictures in the book and read keywords in their reading books. Lower attaining children talk about the pictures using single words and some very short phrases. They point to 'words' but say that they cannot read them. However, all are able to recognise some keywords such as 'look' and 'here' when supported.
80. Teaching is good and the reception teachers have a clear view of the needs of the children and plan a good range of interesting activities, to meet their individual needs. Most children can confidently write their name and draw pictures of words that rhyme with one, two and three; the youngest manage this with adult support. They are beginning to use some recognisable keywords in their writing and to use initial letter sounds, usually written correctly, to convey meaning. Average attaining children are using a series of letters to explain their meaning and can tell the adult what they have written. Lower attaining children use a mixture of lower and upper case letters in their emergent writing.

Mathematical development

81. By the time they start Year 1 of the National Curriculum most children achieve the expected early learning goals in this area of learning. All children can join in singing number rhymes such as 'Ten in the Bed'. Many of the younger children, who now attend full-time, understand that each toy in the bed has to be taken away and this is the first step in their understanding of subtraction. Most children are beginning to count beyond 10 and to relate addition to combining two groups of objects. They can match simple three-dimensional shapes and are able to use language such as 'heavier' and 'lighter' when comparing the weight of two objects. Higher and average attaining children can put objects in order of size from longest to shortest and lower attaining children know which of two objects is the longer and shorter. Most are beginning to recognise the values of some coins. All children, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress in their learning because of the good teaching they receive. Activities are suitably planned to meet the needs of the children and learning is fun. The appropriate parts of the numeracy strategy have been introduced to the children and the

teachers have a good awareness of when the children need to be given practical activities. Praise is used effectively to promote expected behaviour and as a result behaviour in lessons is good.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

82. All children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Most children reach expected levels by the start of Year 1. The teaching in this aspect is good. Teachers create enjoyable discussions with the children. They know when and how to intervene to make sure all children are involved and rewarded for their responses. Most children can name a person who is special to them. These include their mum, dad or brothers and sisters. They are able to draw a picture of the special person and some higher attaining children can explain why the person is special to them. They understand that forces such as pulling and pushing can change the shape of materials. For example, they take part in making cheese straws and know when the ingredients are being pushed together to form a crumble mixture. Most children know that trees provide food and shelter for animals and are beginning to recognise traditional stories from the Bible. They talk confidently about machines such as diggers and also about machines used at home such as washing machines and microwaves. They are beginning to appreciate the past by illustrating the types of vehicles they rode when they were younger, the vehicles they can ride now and the ones they will ride or drive when they are older. Children think about going on an imaginary holiday for a day and act as pilots and airhostesses on the aeroplane, eat sandwiches on the 'beach' and hunt for wild animals. This good provision for the development of the children's knowledge and understanding of the world has a positive impact on children's learning. Children's progress in ICT skills is good because the teaching of this aspect is good. One group of children was able to use the mouse well to draw pictures on the computer. They can use the 'infill paint can' to produce a black background for their picture and select the appropriate paintbrush and colours for their picture. Most children can use the mouse to build up a picture of an underwater scene and to put teddy's clothes on correctly.

Physical development

83. By the time the children start the National Curriculum in Year 1 most are achieving the early learning goals for physical development. All children are making good progress in their learning because teaching is good. Planning is good and objectives are clear. Most children use space well and are aware of the need to work safely and respect the space of others. They can confidently run and skip around the playground flying their kites behind them. They are beginning to move backwards and sideways as well as forwards. They can stop and start to command. In dance most children move confidently to music, individually, in pairs or in small groups. They use tools, materials and equipment safely and accurately, for example a group of children were using plastic tools to pretend to repair the climbing frame. They show good manipulative skills as they mould materials into various shapes by pushing, squeezing and rolling.

Creative development

84. All children are making good progress in their learning and most will meet the early learning goals by the time they start Year 1. They use pencils, felt tips, crayons and paints confidently and many are able to paint pictures using a range of appropriate colours. Some children use paint effectively to copy pictures and others make accurate observational drawings of vehicles, in wax crayons. They are able to use different types of materials to present texture and to select suitable materials for their models. For example, some children make models of household machines and use sequins and streamers to decorate their rockets. The children learn an appropriate range of songs and action rhymes suitable for their age. They enjoy singing. For example, children sang 'Ten in the Bed' and 'five little Ducks'. They are beginning to use their imagination in the role-play areas. For example, one child was busy folding the

washing in the home corner and several children explained what they were doing in their office.

ENGLISH

85. Overall standards of attainment are above both national and local education authority figures at the end of both key stages. This shows an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were reported to be in line with national averages. The majority of pupils make satisfactory progress and those with special educational needs make good progress because of the good provision the school makes for them. Standards in reading at both key stages are better than in writing.
86. Standards of attainment in speaking and listening are higher than average at the end of both key stages. Most pupils are already able to speak clearly when they start school. They become articulate from an early age. In the infants the majority of pupils use language well in relation to their age and stage of development. They are able to express themselves clearly using simple sentences and a good range of vocabulary. This was evident in the way pupils could explain the important events in the stories they were reading and could discuss the likely consequences of the characters' actions. At the junior stage most of pupils use a good range of vocabulary in well-constructed sentences. In lessons across the curriculum teachers make sure there are opportunities for pupils to ask and answer questions and to explore the topics verbally. This aspect of the curriculum has improved since the previous inspection. Pupils listen well in lessons and the majority are eager to contribute to class discussions.
87. Standards of reading are good at both key stages and reflect the good provision. All pupils read regularly to an adult and their progress is recorded in a reading diary. In addition pupils take books home each day to read with parents. At Key Stage 1 pupils start by learning letter shapes and the associated sounds. Gradually they move on to more complex sounds and word patterns as was seen in a poetry lesson about rhyming couplets where pupils made good progress as they found words with similar sounds and used them to write two or four line poems. By the end of the key stage most pupils have developed a satisfactory range of words they recognise by sight. The more able pupils read a variety of texts fluently at sight and have the skill to attack unfamiliar words and names. Less able pupils have a good knowledge of phonics and most are able to read more simple texts effectively. Almost all are confident enough to read extracts from their own work to the class.
88. Pupils at Key Stage 2 read books with text well matched to their ability and interests. During class lessons they were helped to explore some more challenging texts such as 'Macavity' by T.S. Eliot. By the end of the key stage most pupils enjoy reading. They read confidently both independently and to an audience. They have developed skills that enable them to tackle long and difficult words and know how to use a dictionary and a thesaurus. They can also use reference books and a variety of written materials to research topics across the curriculum. They understand the importance of the index, the contents page and the glossary in accessing information. Many of the pupils can explain library classification, but they do not yet have sufficient opportunity to use the library.
89. Standards in writing have improved since the previous inspection. They are now above the levels expected for pupils aged seven and eleven. The school has identified the need to improve standards in writing and it is a focus across the curriculum. A new whole-school marking scheme has been drawn up. Work is marked regularly and the pupils have their own targets for improvement. Practice is not yet consistent in all classes but there are several examples of annotations that show how the pupil can improve. Unfortunately these are not always followed up.
90. At Key Stage 1 most pupils form letters correctly. The range of writing includes stories, accounts, poems, lists, captions and exercises in grammar and spelling. Most pupils are aware of sentence structure. They use capital letters and full stops correctly. The more able

pupils are beginning to use speech marks, question marks and exclamation marks and to write more extensively. Most pupils can spell simple commonly used words correctly. They know alphabetical order and can use basic dictionaries appropriate to their age and stage of development especially when this is the focus of the lesson.

91. At Key Stage 2 the pupils use ink and write in joined script. The majority write legibly and some take great pride in presenting work which is well set out. The more able pupils can use complex sentences and know how to use speech marks, question marks, commas, pronouns, and adverbs. Many pupils have an extensive vocabulary and some use very good descriptive language. They are also beginning to use paragraphs to organise their writing. There is clear evidence of progress from year to year both in presentation and in content. By the end of the key stage, pupils write in a variety of styles. They write imaginative stories, accounts of events, letters, advertising copy, play scripts, instructions and poetry. Some of the work is written for topics in other parts of the curriculum.
92. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection when a significant proportion was less than satisfactory. All the teaching is characterised by good planning and preparation. The teachers have good subject knowledge and they understand the capabilities of the pupils well. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good. There is very good support from learning support assistants who are included in the training and the planning. They understand and focus on the learning objectives well. This was clear in a guided reading group in Year 2. In response to well-directed questions the pupils were able to explain the importance of the changes in the style of printing. They used precise vocabulary to explain that changes in the 'font' and use of 'italics' meant that you 'read those word louder' so you have 'good expression'. The teachers have begun to evaluate the success of their lessons. Where the practice is good it leads to clearer targets for groups and for individual pupils.
93. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 varies, but is never less than good and sometimes outstanding. The lessons are interesting and at the right level to challenge the pupils. Teachers set high standards. They use very well chosen words to widen the children's vocabulary and make sure that every activity focuses on the learning intentions. At Key Stage 2 all the teaching was at least satisfactory and the majority was good or very good. In the best lessons there is a calm productive atmosphere for learning. Teachers have high expectations of the pupils and they make sure the aims for their lessons and targets for improvement are clear. They choose the best parts of the pupils' work to encourage them and motivate them to further efforts. They make sure the tasks set are well matched to the pupils' interest and abilities so that they are given a good challenge. This was well demonstrated in a Year 4 lesson in which more able pupils were working on alliteration and simile while another group focused on sentence construction and punctuation. Where lessons are less good the teacher loses sight of the objectives and fails to reinforce the main points. Sometimes learning intentions are not clear enough, time is wasted and pupils make less progress as a result.
94. Most pupils are very well motivated as a result of the teachers' careful planning and encouraging approach. They respond very well to lessons. Most pupils work hard, concentrate well and sustain effort. They work together in pairs and small groups and share resources well. They enjoy their lessons and usually join in class discussions enthusiastically.
95. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy well. The time allowed for the subject is generous. However, the extra time is mainly used to extend the literacy hour. Some lessons are taken in conjunction with ICT in the computer suite but drama and debate are not regular features of lessons. There are two newly appointed subject co-ordinators, one for each key stage. They are enthusiastic and together have carried out an audit and have drawn up an action plan; they manage the subject well. The previous inspection reported that the policy was in draft form only. There is now a good English policy and scheme of work. The co-ordinators have arranged in-service training on guided reading and writing and have led whole-staff evaluation. The impact of the training is beginning to be seen in the improvement in

guided sessions. There are also booster classes for some pupils that help them to meet their targets. Classroom monitoring has improved since the previous inspection.

96. The assessment of work has also improved in that there is a new marking scheme that is understood by the pupils. Pupils are also encouraged to review and evaluate their own work. Targets are set in all classes and there are some good examples where teachers draw the pupils' attention to both class and individual targets when they start a set task.
97. Resources have improved since the previous inspection and are now good. They are well cared for and carefully used. The school uses the public library for additional topic materials. Each class has a collection of good quality dictionaries and thesauri suitable for the age of the pupils. There is a range of good quality reading books in each classroom and there is a pleasant, small reference library. The books are classified according to the Dewey system and clear labelling makes it easy for pupils to find the book they need. The books are all in good condition.

MATHEMATICS

98. Standards in school now are above those expected for pupils aged seven and eleven. Those with special educational needs make good progress in small classes or groups, with the effective support of teaching assistants. The extra lessons for those who are close to average ability make sure that they have every opportunity to succeed. The overall standards have risen for both infant and junior pupils since the last report when they were judged to be average.
99. Attainments have risen due to a number of improvements since the last inspection. The National Numeracy Strategy has been effectively planned and implemented. Assessment procedures, which were inadequate at the time of the last inspection, are now in place and most of them are used well to make sure pupils progress. As a result, lesson plans now match work to pupils' abilities so that all are better challenged both by the content of the work and by the improved quality of teaching. The introduction of teaching pupils in ability groups has helped more pupils learn at the right level and with increased confidence. The subject is well led and managed, not only by the subject co-ordinator, but also because of the strategic input by the senior management team in successive school development plans. Consequently, the school has made good progress in this subject since the last report and there are no major outstanding issues remaining.
100. Mathematics teaching is well organised in both key stages. In all classes, pupils are placed into ability groups based on a computer analysis of each pupil's knowledge and skills and further teacher assessments, or the available national test results. Work is then planned at three different levels in each numeracy lesson with different resources to match the tasks. Pupils with special educational needs, and other pupils who work at a slower pace, are given further support from well-trained assistants. As a result, pupils make good progress. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows the needs of pupils from a wide range of ability are met successfully by this organisation.
101. By the age of seven all pupils have completed a substantial volume of work whatever their ability. Higher attaining pupils work confidently with numbers to 1000, know their 2, 5 and 10 times tables, collect information and represent this in graph form, draw symmetrical shapes and use their mathematical knowledge and skills in everyday situations. Average ability pupils cover much the same ground at a slower pace and with smaller numbers. They are confident with numbers to 100 by the end of the year, but at the beginning of Year 2 they are still working with numbers to 10. They learn their 2, 5 and 10 times tables too, but later than the higher attainers; their recall of these is not as confident. Shape and graph work is very similar but less is completed. Lower attaining pupils work with smaller numbers and easier tasks matched to their ability; they need extra number apparatus and the support of learning assistants to help them complete the work. In a very successful lesson in Year 2 three ability

groups worked on three different tasks. The higher attaining pupils solved an investigation discussing solutions with enthusiasm; the average ability pupils counted sums of money and recorded their answers; the lower attaining pupils worked well with a learning assistant to practise counting in even numbers to 20 in combinations of twos and fours.

102. In Key Stage 2 pupils are divided into classes by ability, sometimes with two year groups in one class, although the highest attaining groups are usually of the same age. The range of ability is reflected in the size of the numbers they explore in their final year. The highest attaining pupils work with numbers to a million and beyond, the average attaining pupils are more secure with hundred thousands whilst the lower ability pupils work with numbers to 1000. The calculations they all tackle subsequently, their work on fractions and decimals, their representation of collected data, both in graph form and by the use of information and communication technology, reflect a similar range of work. For example, in two very good lessons seen at the end of Key Stage 2, the highest attaining pupils worked out an algebraic formula to solve a number puzzle and debated the best way to calculate 0.09×0.4 ; the lower attaining pupils practised their seven times table and constructed equilateral and isosceles triangles with geo-strips, both with the help of a teaching assistant. In another lesson average ability pupils tackled the equivalence of fractions in decimal and fraction form of such fractions as $\frac{37}{4}$ successfully. All pupils benefit from these ability classes, including pupils with special educational needs, who have further good support from the special educational needs co-ordinator.
103. The good quality teaching in both key stages shares similar strengths. Lessons are planned well to meet the needs and abilities of all pupils so they learn at a lively pace and at the right level. Pupils' enthusiasm and confidence are high because they are successful. Teachers guide them skilfully by the use of sharply directed questions, clear explanations and the very good use of praise and encouragement. The learning atmosphere is calm and purposeful not only because the pupils are well behaved, but also because the teachers are confident and knowledgeable about the National Numeracy Strategy and the best way to organise lessons. Relationships in all classrooms are very good. This is reflected in the way the skilled learning assistants work successfully with pupils, sometimes in the classrooms, at other times in the library, as valued members of the teaching team. Homework is set regularly to add to what has been learned in lessons.
104. Within this good teaching there are common areas for development. For example, marking and its consistent purposeful use is one such area. Although books are marked, praise given and presentation is neat as a result, areas on which pupils should focus, or additional work that needs to be completed, is often not mentioned. Also in some lessons teachers are very keen to maintain a lively pace, but in so doing they miss opportunities to use everyday resources such as number lines or number squares to make sure all pupils understand fully what is being taught.
105. The National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced successfully, more pupils reach a higher standard than at the time of the last report and good assessment procedures are in place. Teaching is monitored well now whereas it was not previously. The co-ordinator, with the support of a colleague in Key Stage 1, is leading and managing the subject effectively.

SCIENCE

106. Pupils' attainment in science is above the levels expected by Year 2 and matches that expected for pupils by the end of Year 6. This is an improvement over the findings of the previous inspection when standards in both infants and juniors were broadly average. The attainment of infant and junior pupils is in line with that found in similar schools.
107. Many more pupils in the present Year 6 attain the higher levels in science, and most achieve the expected level for their age. In the current Year 2, a greater proportion of pupils attain the

higher levels, though there is some variation in attainment between the different aspects of science.

108. At the time of the previous inspection, very few infant pupils attained the higher levels. The incidence of higher attainment among the Year 2 pupils has significantly improved. This development is partly explained by improvements in teachers' knowledge and use of assessment. At the time of the previous inspection, assessment lacked accuracy and was not sufficiently systematic. Teachers' subject knowledge has improved alongside assessment systems. As a result, teachers in all parts of the school are much clearer about what should be taught and are more accurate in their assessments of what pupils have learned.
109. Though teachers in all parts of the school now have much better subject knowledge, some weaknesses in teachers' expectations remain. Teachers in the junior classes plan challenging work in investigative science and most pupils understand the importance of working methodically. They follow investigations guided by the teacher, for example, to separate mixtures by using a sieve and evaporation.
110. By the end of Year 2, pupils have good factual knowledge and understanding of plant and animal life. Most know, for example, that the availability of light and water affects the growth of plants. They observe the growth of plants given different amounts of water and accurately record their observations in graphs and writing. Pupils understand the idea of 'fairness' in testing. They know that, in this investigation, the plants' supply of water can be varied but that it is important to keep exposure to light, and other variables, unchanged. Pupils understand the association between plants and animals and their preferred habitats. Most have a satisfactory understanding of different materials and their usefulness for different purposes. They know about some features of light and sound and some forces, for example magnetism.
111. Teachers in the infant classes provide satisfactory opportunities for pupils to practise investigation skills, for example, in observing changes in materials as they are heated or cooled, or in predicting which materials will be attracted by a magnet. As a result, most pupils reach the expected level in investigative science. However, few pupils exceed it because teachers give too little emphasis to developing pupils' ability to think for themselves and express their own ideas.
112. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the living world. For example, they understand the feeding relationships between plants and animals and begin to classify living creatures. They have a fuller understanding of the ways in which plants and animals are adapted to their environment. Most pupils have a secure knowledge of materials. They understand, for example, the essential differences between gases, liquids and solids and begin to explain them. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of sound, the action of forces such as gravity and the apparent movement of the sun and moon in the sky.
113. Pupils' grasp of scientific vocabulary is satisfactory but has some weaknesses. For example, average and above average pupils knew the term 'evaporation' and could explain what it meant but did not recall 'condensation', though they had studied the processes and could discuss the relationship between them. Year 6 pupils showed a satisfactory understanding of investigation. They understood that scientific ideas depend on evidence, and knew about prediction and the importance of working systematically and keeping tests 'fair'. They discussed different ways of interpreting results and the pros and cons of presenting their findings as block, pie or line graphs.
114. Although few lessons were seen, the results pupils achieve, analysis of pupils' recent work and discussions with pupils show that the quality of teaching is at least satisfactory. Teachers manage pupils well. They build good-humoured, constructive relationships and a positive ethos for learning. These features help to ensure that pupils are well organised, behave well and enjoy lessons. They promote the good attitudes to learning seen in lessons and reflected

in pupils' work. Pupils of all abilities show interest and work hard. They co-operate well and, in conversation, are thoughtful and supportive.

115. In most lessons, planning is sufficiently detailed and learning objectives are clear. In an effective Year 5 lesson, the teacher shared the learning objectives fully with pupils. As a result, pupils of all abilities were fully involved, concentrated well and took increased responsibility for their own learning. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all activities and make good progress. This is due to the sensitive, flexible support that teachers and learning assistants provide.
116. In some lessons, ICT is used very effectively to enhance learning. For example, in a successful Year 6 lesson, very good use was made of the Intel microscope to show residue left on a filter after smoking a cigarette. This extended pupils' factual knowledge and increased their understanding of the value of ICT in making scientific observations. The lesson made a deep impression on many pupils and made a valuable contribution to pupils' personal, social and health education.
117. Teachers know pupils well and keep accurate records of their attainment. They question skilfully to verify learning. However, too little use is made of ongoing assessments to inform the planning of future lessons. Marking is often insufficiently informative and needs to do more to show pupils how to improve. As a result, lessons do not consistently challenge all pupils at the right level. This impacts most on junior pupils, particularly the most able, by slowing their progress towards the higher levels of attainment.
118. The management of the subject is good. The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and well informed. She has a clear idea of what is going well in the subject and what needs to be improved. There are good plans for developing the subject. Arrangements for monitoring teaching and learning are systematic and informative. The information they produce is usefully shared with teachers. Monitoring does not yet evaluate the impact of the features identified in teaching to be able to effect the planning of investigative science and so enhance pupils' learning.

ART AND DESIGN

119. Pupils aged seven are reaching standards that are above those expected for their age. Although no lessons were observed in the infants, an analysis of the work completed indicates that infant pupils make good progress. This is partly because pupils' observational drawing skills are especially well developed. They make careful drawings of faces and everyday things such as apples and motorcycles. Pupils employ good shading techniques to enhance their drawings, for example when drawing seashells. They have good colour mixing skills and use finer brushes well. This is illustrated well in the pictures of daffodils pupils in Year 1 made. Paint was skilfully mixed creating a real feel for a field of these flowers. Pupils combine many different materials, paint and stitching to create a range of carefully assembled collage pictures, of, for example faces and conch shells.
120. By the time they are eleven pupils are reaching levels of attainment expected of pupils of this age. Pupils in Year 6 for example can show emotions on faces through the more advanced use of line and shading. Masks made in design and technology lessons were finished in a way that brought to life the expressions desired. Pupils can use watercolours, pastels and crayons, knowing when it is appropriate to use them. Pupils also understand more advanced techniques such as smudging, creating perspective and overlaying colours. However, their knowledge of the work of famous artists is not developed sufficiently and they do not routinely evaluate their own work in order to see how to improve.
121. Although few lessons were seen it is clear from other evidence that teachers plan activities well, engaging and sustaining the interest of pupils throughout the lessons. In Year 6 the teacher used his own paintings as an inspiration to the class. His clear demonstration of the

techniques involved and demonstration enabled pupils to produce their own pictures on a similar theme. In Year 4 the teacher made good use of music as an inspiration as well as the use of a digital camera to capture pupils' expressions when investigating 'emotions'. Once again clear explanations of what to do enabled pupils to create designs representative of how they were feeling. Teachers throughout the school are beginning to make good use of sketchbooks in which pupils can practise different techniques and explore their own ideas. This was initiated through the good use made of teachers' own sketchbooks as illustrations of how artists work and thus as examples of what pupils could do themselves.

122. In the lessons seen pupils enjoyed the work and responded well to their teachers' instructions and questions. It is clear from the careful way in which work has been produced that pupils work hard to do their best. When making observational drawings they take pains to include the small details, which has lifted their quality.
123. The schemes of work in preparation at the time of the last inspection have now been fully implemented. A review of the subject by the co-ordinator, however, revealed some weaknesses in the curriculum, which are currently being resolved. For instance, there are limited opportunities for pupils to study the work of different artists and craft persons, and assessment remains undeveloped and largely subjective. Good use is made of the expertise of teachers at the local secondary school, which has aided the progress of pupils in the school. The high level of interest pupils show in art is evident in the number who attend the after-school clubs.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

124. By the time pupils are seven their attainment is in line with that expected of pupils of this age. Pupils can use simple tools such as scissors, hole punches, staplers and saws to construct their models and designs. They are beginning to understand how different materials lend themselves to different purposes and how they may be joined by different means. This was illustrated, for example, in the construction of different 'shelters' when pupils combined fabric, card and wood to make tents and houses. Pupils are also developing their ability to criticise their own work. For example, pupils in Year 2 made glove puppets and included on their making instructions what they found difficult and how they would improve things the next time.
125. By the time they are eleven pupils have made satisfactory progress and reach levels of attainment in line with those expected of pupils this age. Their use of tools has developed appropriately and they can safely use knives, snips, glue guns and wire strippers. They understand the use of levers and gears, which was evident in the fairground rides pupils in Year 6 constructed. In Year 4 pupils made some ingenious models involving levers. These were well finished and showed dolphins leaping above the waves and boxers and camel drivers moving. All work is carefully designed with labelled drawings, parts lists and construction methods. Pupils have a good understanding of the strong features and weaknesses of their models. They analyse the reasons for these well, and give thoughtful consideration to how they could improve them in the future.
126. The quality of teaching is good. In the lessons seen teachers had a good understanding of the subject matter and were able to give clear instructions and demonstrations. For example, pupils in Year 3 learned about pneumatics by using syringes to push air down a tube and create pressure. In Year 5 pupils looked at the properties of different biscuits in preparation for designing their own in later lessons. In both lessons the teachers understood well what was involved and were able to turn the discussions and investigations into good learning experiences. This was a feature too of a lesson in Year 1 when pupils described fruits according to different categories. Pupils were encouraged to give in-depth reasons for what they thought rather than just voicing a preference. Teachers make good use of focused practical tasks to make sure pupils have the appropriate skills before a new project or piece of

work is started. These include, for example, practising different stitches to ensure pupils can make them before designing and making 'money containers'.

127. In the lessons seen pupils were thoroughly engaged by the activities given to them. They concentrate well and work hard to carry out their assignments. In discussions they are keen to answer, speak confidently and listen well to each other's ideas.
128. The last inspection found weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge, resources and assessment. Since then the co-ordinator, who manages the subject well, has made considerable progress towards improving these. The resources for the subject are good now and teacher confidence and expertise much improved through training and help from the co-ordinator. The school has its own scheme of work, based on national guidance, which is ensuring there is continuity and progression through the school. The assessment of pupils' work is also much improved with good guidance given to teachers so they are able to match pupils work against national standards. The standard of teaching and learning is monitored well by the co-ordinator through questionnaires, scrutinising pupils' work and assistance with planning. The profile of, and interest in the subject have been considerably raised through its contribution to the 'Jubilee' exhibition and the involvement of teachers from the local secondary school. Pupils are taking part in a local competition shortly, with the hope that increased participation in future events will take place.

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

129. The subjects of geography and history are closely interlinked in many topics and are taught in blocks of time to allow a greater depth of research. Standards of achievement are at least satisfactory in both subjects and pupils make steady progress.
130. At Key Stage 1 the work is largely topic based and links geography and history with other areas of the curriculum such as science and religious education. Planning is good and so pupils learn well. The lessons begin with the knowledge and experience the children already have. They explore aspects of their own community, for example homes, toys, clothes and 'people who help us'. Pupils learn the different types of buildings and services in the area. They compare their own homes and artefacts with those of the past. They study current features of the area close to the school and learn about why some of the changes have been made. Whenever possible the pupils are given first hand experience, so they are taken out locally. They begin to learn to make and interpret simple maps and plans.
131. Pupils learn to use an appropriate vocabulary linked to these subjects. They can compare and contrast various kinds of homes and landscapes. They show understanding of simple maps and by the end of the key stage are beginning to use symbols. The ongoing feature 'where in the world' gives a good introduction to the globe, the atlas and world maps. Lessons about famous people past and present introduce the pupils to time lines, which start to give them a sense of chronology.
132. At Key Stage 2 the subjects are separated although often still linked. There are good links with the work in Key Stage 1 as teachers build on the knowledge already gained. Judgements about geography have been made from discussions, from scrutiny of work, and from planning documents. Standards of achievement and progress are satisfactory. Pupils use good geographical vocabulary. They can interpret the symbols on maps in order to describe the type of landscape that might be expected. By the time they are eleven pupils have learned about weather and climate and have begun to understand how these factors can influence the way of life and standard of living of an area. Work is well presented in a variety of forms, such as accounts, diagrams, bullet points and annotated maps or illustrations.
133. Standards of achievement in history are good. Pupils often use precise vocabulary, for example to describe the purpose of a moat. They use time lines to help them to understand chronology. By the time they leave the school most pupils know that historical evidence has

many forms and that there is a difference between primary and secondary evidence. They know that even some primary evidence might be unreliable because of the point of view of the writer, as in the discrepancy between English and Spanish accounts of the failure of the Armada. They have learned to use a variety of sources of evidence in their research.

134. The quality of teaching is good. The teachers have very good knowledge and understanding of the subject and of the needs of the pupils. Work is built on previous learning so that steady progression is ensured. Tasks are carefully matched to the ages and stages of development of the pupils. This was clearly shown in a Year 4 class when one group worked with a learning support assistant on a very well devised activity linking sentence construction with the lesson aim to evaluate the likely reliability of historical evidence. Whenever possible the lessons are based on first hand experience. As a result pupils are well motivated. They enjoy the lessons and work hard as was seen in a Year 5 lesson where pupils worked in small groups studying newspaper articles about the Queen written at various times during her lifetime. The room was a hive of activity and there was a buzz of animated conversation.
135. Assessment is carried out at the end of each topic against the requirements of the National Curriculum and is used well to plan appropriate tasks and challenges for all pupils. Marking is rather limited, usually ticks and words of praise or encouragement. There are too few annotations giving the pupils information about how they can improve their work.
136. Although the two subjects are linked, there are separate co-ordinators and separate policies that give clear guidance about the cross-curricular themes. These areas of the whole-school curriculum are well managed. The schemes of work are well founded on the national guidelines. There is good coverage of the programmes of study. However, through evaluation of the present provision, the history co-ordinator has realised that the actual content for each year group is not precise enough and can sometimes lead to repetition. She has, therefore, drawn up a new two-year cycle of topics ready for implementation in the next academic year.
137. There is a progressive and well-planned programme of outside visits for each year group to support the work in geography and history and to implement the policy of providing as much first hand experience as possible. Key Stage 1 pupils explore the neighbourhood around the school. Visits further afield are made as they move up the school. By the time they reach Years 5 and 6 pupils have the opportunity to go on residential visits to Devon and Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight where they study history by visiting HMS Victory and Carisbrooke Castle, and the physical geography of the areas. The programme of study also includes important local or environmental issues. At the time of the inspection the matter under discussion was the proposed extension of Southend Airport. This resulted in a wide-ranging study and some very good displays of work including maps, photographs, reports and letters. The current curriculum, especially in view of the rich variety of first hand experience, is a considerable improvement on that reported in the previous inspection.
138. The co-ordinators have worked hard to review and update the resources for teaching geography and history and these have improved since the previous inspection. Resources are now well organised and well managed. There is a good range of maps, photographs and books. There are collections of leaflets with information about places to be visited. There are topic collections of appropriate artefacts and more are being sought. The school also uses loans from the local library service.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

139. Standards in ICT are in line with expectations by the end of Year 2 and above expectations by the end of Year 6. Pupils throughout the school now make good progress and often exceed the expected levels for pupils of their age. The good standards and achievement reflect consistently good teaching. The school has made good progress in this subject since the last inspection in 1997, when the lack of provision meant ICT was a significant weakness.

Teachers now take carefully planned opportunities to involve pupils in this subject, particularly in the computer suite, and this has resulted in a much improved level of ICT skills across the school. By Year 2, pupils understand that computers respond to commands and know the importance of giving precise instructions and sequencing them correctly. Most use the mouse and keyboard fluently and are beginning to make confident choices to achieve intended outcomes. Older pupils are now achieving well and in Year 6 they are aware of their own skills and feel very confident in their abilities.

140. In discussion, infant pupils explained what they were trying to achieve and showed, for example, how to select colour and incorporate simple text. They talked about their use of ICT at home and mentioned some applications in the wider world, for example, to control machines in factories. Pupils' recent work focuses on the use of a painting program to create pictures of machines that they knew could be controlled by switches, buttons or dials. These pupils show satisfactory improvement in technique from year to year. The way that all pupils in a Year 2 class were able to minimise a screen and add text they had researched from a CD-ROM to a table was impressive. Teachers' planning and conversations with pupils show that infant pupils cover a wide range of interesting and relevant work that is well matched to their needs and abilities.
141. By Year 6, pupils are fluent in the use of computers, knowledgeable about the uses and applications of ICT and show a good understanding of its value, impact and limitations. Most pupils are adept in the use of word-processing to improve and present their work. They combine text and images to make, for example, comments about visits and how places persuade you to visit. This was a good link with their literacy lesson that enhanced their understanding of persuasive writing well. Pupils access the Internet and use CD-ROMs to research topics, for example in history, and use spreadsheets to manage, present and interrogate data.
142. Almost all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have good ICT skills and wide experience. This consistency of good achievement is a particular strength. It results from teachers' effective use of the school's new, well-equipped ICT suite to build pupils' skills systematically. It also reflects teachers' often good, and improving, subject knowledge. This gives them the confidence to take pupils forward by means of challenging work and imaginative projects. A good example of this is Year 5 pupils' current work on angles and estimation. The way all pupils grasped acute, obtuse and reflex angles through their use of a specially selected program was very good. With the teacher's guidance, pupils of all abilities could see, estimate and check angles of all sizes in a way that would have been impractical on paper.
143. This example also illustrates the way in which teachers skilfully link ICT with other subjects, in this case, mathematics and design and technology. Further examples link ICT with English, history, music and art. These connections extend pupils' learning in each of the subjects and broaden their understanding of the ways in which ICT skills can be applied.
144. Pupils have a good grasp of the uses of ICT and can consider ways in which it has added to, and sometimes detracted from, the quality of their lives. They point out, for example, its value in exchanging information, for example, by e-mail, as a research tool and as a means of organising and presenting data. They appreciate its usefulness in improving the accuracy and presentation of their work. On the other hand, they comment that technology can be frustrating when it goes wrong. They realise, however, that its apparent shortcomings may result from inadequate information or incorrect commands. Pupils showed very good facility with computers and understanding of the task. They were perceptive in applying their developing knowledge of monitoring and control to solving the practical problem.
145. The quality of teaching is good and very good in some lessons. Progress through the school is good. This results from the teachers' good subject knowledge, skilled management and ability to engage and motivate pupils. Teachers make lessons interesting, pace them well and set

consistently high standards of work and behaviour. They question thoughtfully, checking pupils' understanding and encouraging them to think for themselves. They give clear explanations and use technology imaginatively to demonstrate and share ideas.

146. These features promote good progress and encourage very good attitudes to learning in all parts of the school. Pupils are enthusiastic about their ICT work and enjoy discussing it. They handle equipment sensibly and are very responsible. When working together, pupils support each other very well. Pupils' well-developed skills and the flexible, informed support that teachers provide, enable pupils of all abilities to work independently at a suitable level.
147. The subject co-ordinator, and his 'shadow', are effective, enthusiastic and knowledgeable and manage the subject well. He has a very clear idea of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and good plans for its future development. Several teachers have good subject knowledge, which they valuably share, and recent training is helping to build a secure base of expertise in all parts of the school.
148. The present planning systems ensure very good coverage and are supported by systematic assessment procedures. These are important because, although teachers have brought most pupils to a good level of skill and knowledge by the time they leave the school, some differences in attainment remain. These result mainly from differences in pupils' experience of computers in their earlier years. Concise assessment procedures are enabling these differences to be accurately described. This is enabling higher ability pupils, in particular, to be even more strongly challenged.

MUSIC

149. Standards in music are generally in line with the levels expected for seven and eleven year old pupils, although their singing and performing achievements are above expected levels. This is because very good teaching and organisation by the co-ordinator enhance the satisfactory teaching of class teachers. Pupils sing enthusiastically throughout the school. At Key Stage 1 they sing well in pitch and the tone is good. At Key Stage 2 the sound is always full and attractive. Pupils here pitch accurately. The oldest pupils were keen to sing and they joined in all the songs in the two Year 6 lessons observed. The choir is an impressive feature of the school's overall provision.
150. In the Year 6 classes pupils demonstrated a good sense of pulse and rhythm. They can think through parts of the song silently and restart in time. Year 6 pupils had good ideas about the piece of music they listened to, and understood its nature well. They realised that they would need noisy instruments to make music in the same style. In Key Stage 1 pupils can read simple rhythms from traditional notation. They had good ideas on how to add instruments to a song they already knew.
151. Teaching is good, with some very good teaching where high level music skills combined with very good basic teaching skills to produce first-rate sessions. Pupils were motivated and enjoyed their music making due to the lively pace and interesting activities. In the singing sessions observed all pupils became involved and worked hard. Singing skills advanced perceptibly within the sessions.
152. Accommodation for music is good, although the halls do not flatter musical sound. Music is very well managed. The co-ordinator ensures that the specialist input of visiting instrument teachers and the allocation of time to year groups are fair, and provide consistent experiences throughout the school. There is also a good in-service element where class teachers attend all the sessions and carry on the class-based music in between the lessons led by the part-time teacher. The use of ICT to extend provision in music and to enhance pupils' opportunities is well planned.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

153. By the time pupils are seven their attainment in swimming is in line with that expected of pupils this age. No games, dance or gymnastic lessons were observed during the inspection but other evidence suggests attainment in these areas is also in line with expectations. Pupils can swim at least ten metres with a significant number able to go beyond this distance. Pupils are confident in the water and swim on both their front and back.
154. By the time pupils are eleven their attainment in swimming is above that expected of pupils this age. In games, standards are in line with that expected and although no gymnastic or dance lessons were observed other evidence suggests attainment is also in line. In games lessons pupils can throw accurately and catch competently when practising ball skills. They know the reasons why 'warming up' and 'cooling down' are important and older pupils are aware of which muscles are being stretched and used in different movements.
155. The standard of teaching was satisfactory and in swimming it is good. Specialist teachers employed by the school take swimming lessons. They have a high level of expertise, which they use to good effect in providing activities and tuition, which enables all pupils to make good progress. Pupils are motivated well and taught in small groups, which enables their teachers to give them good, individual guidance.
156. In games lessons teachers plan their lessons well and provide activities appropriate to the pupils' levels of ability and the skills to be learned. They encourage pupils well and give individuals hints on how to improve. For example, in both Year 3 and Year 6, pupils were learning ball skills needed to play rounders. Pupils practised bowling, catching and throwing in a variety of ways that built a little on the preceding one. This enabled them to make appropriate progress. However, teachers do not make the best of these opportunities, which would result in good progress being made. For example, too little was made of pupils demonstrating what they could do and thus provide them with examples of good and weaker practice. Pupils are not asked to look at and comment on each other's performance, which would also help with the teachers' assessment. Teachers' own skills are good but they make too little use of this to show pupils good techniques for catching, fielding and throwing.
157. Pupils' attitudes to physical education are good. They take part with obvious enjoyment but at the same time try hard to improve their performance. They co-operate well in games and in sharing equipment. They listen attentively to instructions and do their best to respond in the ways required.
158. The school makes good use of its swimming pool in the relatively short time during the year when it can be used. Since the last inspection improvements have been made to the scheme of work which is a commercial scheme closely linked to national guidance. All staff are about to undergo training in a new games module to enhance the quality of pupils' learning. Pupils' interest in physical education is high at the school and many after-school clubs thrive on this enthusiasm. For example, there are three gymnastic clubs and football clubs for different ages involving boys and girls. The school consistently enables many pupils to perform well in swimming competitions.
159. Although the developments of the scheme of work begun during the last inspection have largely been carried out, the assessment of pupils' learning is still undeveloped in most aspects of the physical education curriculum. The approach to assessing what pupils can do in swimming leads to the planning of work at the appropriate level. This approach is now being planned for in all other aspects of physical education.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

160. Pupils' attainment in religious education meets the standards identified in the syllabus taught in the local authority's schools. This judgement is in line with that of the previous inspection. Infant and junior pupils continue to make satisfactory progress. The analysis of pupils' recent work and discussions with pupils, along with the three lessons seen, show that teaching is satisfactory.
161. By Year 2, pupils have a sufficient knowledge of Christianity and of some major Christian festivals including Christmas and Easter. Most pupils know, for example, some features of the Easter story and appreciate that these and other events in the Christian calendar have a special meaning to believers. They understand that the teachings of Jesus are central to Christian belief, that the Bible has particular significance and that churches are places of worship. Pupils are beginning to learn about faiths other than Christianity, including Hinduism and Judaism. They understand that these beliefs are as important to their followers as Christianity is to Christians and that they have sacred texts and places of worship of their own. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their work and show good attitudes to learning.
162. By Year 6, pupils have a greater factual knowledge of Christianity. For example, they know about the Bible and its origins. They re-tell some Old Testament stories such as that of Samson and parables from the New Testament, such as that of the Prodigal Son. They begin to understand the significance of Christian rituals, such as the Holy Communion, and to understand the wider meaning for Christians of Jesus' life, death and resurrection.
163. Pupils' factual knowledge of faiths other than Christianity, for example, Hinduism and Judaism, is barely satisfactory. It lacks depth and is insecure. However, pupils show a good appreciation of the diversity of belief. They explain that different faiths are born of different cultures and recognise that each faith has a validity of its own. More able pupils are strikingly open-minded and tolerant. They are clear that different faiths are to be valued equally. They enjoy talking about aspects of belief and show a well-developed capacity for reflection and insight. One Year 6 pupil remarked, for example, that 'religion helps us to explain the unexplained'. Pupils mention the value of religion as a support and guide, in helping people cope with emotions such as grief and loneliness and in giving people the confidence to face major events in their lives.
164. Teachers manage pupils well and establish good relationships. As a result, pupils show good attitudes to learning and enjoy their work. In a successful Year 6 lesson, the teacher used her very good subject knowledge and a range of artefacts to secure pupils' interest and promote high quality learning. Pupils' recent work reflects sound coverage of Christianity but relatively brief and selective references to other faiths. The amount of work, generally, is small and few topics are pursued in sufficient depth and detail. Marking is not sufficiently informative and does not do enough to show pupils how to improve.
165. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. Although planning is sound, there is no monitoring of teaching and learning. This results in some lack of balance in the way the curriculum is taught. In particular, most topics studied in the juniors are not covered in great thoroughness. The school does not yet give sufficient emphasis to improving pupils' factual knowledge of faiths other than Christianity.