

INSPECTION REPORT

HOLYWELL C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Needingworth, Huntingdon

LEA area: Cambridgeshire

Unique reference number: 110817

Headteacher: Mrs S Vickery

Reporting inspector: Mr R Brown
22229

Dates of inspection: 8 – 11 July 2002

Inspection number: 194867

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary School
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Mill Way Needingworth Huntingdon Cambridgeshire
Postcode:	PE27 4TF
Telephone number:	01480 462007
Fax number:	01480 460704
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr B Smethurst
Date of previous inspection:	1 June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22229	Roger Brown	Registered inspector	Design and technology History Information and communication technology Science	What sort of school is it? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19743	Ann Taylor	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23742	Colin Henderson	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Geography Physical education Religious education	How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are the pupils taught?
21103	Val Ives	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Foundation stage Mathematics Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to the pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates Ltd
Demeter House
Station Road
Cambridge
CB1 2RS

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Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Holywell Primary School is situated in the parish of Holywell cum Needingworth near to St Ives in Cambridgeshire. It is of the same size as a typical primary school in England. The school has changed little in character or numbers since the last inspection. However, the school has recently experienced a period of substantial changes to the teaching staff. It currently has 231 children on roll, aged four to eleven, with slightly more girls (124) than boys (107). The number of pupils who leave, or in the main join the school in the course of the year is lower than the average for similar schools. This stability is one important factor in the continuing success of the school. The attainment of children on entry is above the average established by the Cambridgeshire base-line scheme and is therefore likely to be above the average for schools nationally. Pupils mostly come from the mainly owner-occupied housing in the village or the surrounding area. Currently, five per cent of pupils are entitled to receive a free school meal; this figure is well below the national average. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. There are 30 pupils on the special needs register; at 13 per cent of the school roll this is below the national average. Five pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need, which is above the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with many very good features. It is well led by the new headteacher. The effectiveness of the governors in managing and supporting the school is a notable feature. Standards when pupils leave at the end of Year 6 are very high in the subjects of English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school. The standard of teaching is good and at times very good. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in Year 6 are well above average.
- Teaching is good throughout the school, but especially in the Foundation Stage and Year 6.
- Pupils have a good attitude to school, they behave well and relationships in the school are very good.
- Parents make a very good contribution to the work of the school and their children's education.
- The quality and range of learning opportunities are very good.
- The headteacher gives a positive direction to the work of the school and the governors' contribution to the management of the school is excellent.

What could be improved

- Standards of attainment at the end of Year 2.
- Individual target-setting, but particularly for the more able.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1997. Since then, it has made good improvements with regard to the major and minor issues from the last report and has also improved in other aspects of its work. In 2001 the school received a National Achievement Award for maintaining high standards in the national assessments. Teachers now make good use of assessment and ensure that it links securely with their planning. The school has established a very effective system of 'Excellence Files' for all subjects enabling it to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. Standards in information and communication technology are now in line with national averages at infant level and well above at junior level. Teachers are confident in their knowledge of this subject and the level of resources for this subject is now very good. The school's procedures for pupils with special educational needs are very good and these pupils now make good progress.

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	A*	A	B	C
mathematics	A*	A	B	D
science	A*	C	A	B

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

Standards are higher in English, mathematics and science in the present Year 6 than last year's results indicate. Inspection judgements are that pupils attain well above average standards by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. This is because of teachers' high expectations of the pupils, imaginative teaching styles and the encouragement of pupils to think for themselves. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average in speaking and listening and in line with the expected levels in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Standards for Year 2 do not reflect the school's results in the national tests in English and mathematics in 2001. The current Year 2 class had a very disrupted year when they were in Year 1 due to long-term teacher illness and standards are lower because of this. Teacher assessments in science for the current Year 2 are accurate in that they indicate a lower number of pupils attaining Level 3 than in previous years. The successful implementation of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy has made a good contribution to higher standards throughout the school. The overall trend in the school's results is broadly in line with the upward trend in national results. The school sets itself challenging targets which it has met in the current year.

Standards are well above average at the end of Year 6 in information and communication technology, and above average in physical education. They are in line with the standards expected at the end of Year 6 in all other subjects, including religious education. By the end of Year 2, standards are in line with the level expected of their age in all subjects. Pupils attain high standards in swimming. Children start in the Reception class with above average levels of attainment in all areas of learning. They leave the reception class having made good progress, with many children attaining above the standard expected, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout their time in school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils have good attitudes to school. They work hard and are interested and keen to be involved in a wide range of activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The majority of pupils behave well both during lessons and when they are around school. The staff set high expectations with regard to behaviour and pupils try hard to fulfil these. As a consequence, the school is an orderly and well-disciplined community.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. All pupils respond very well to the responsibilities they are given and show a great deal of initiative. They relate very well to the adults in school and are gaining a significant degree of self-confidence.

Attendance	Good; pupils' level of attendance is above the national average.
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The high standards of behaviour and pupils' enthusiastic attitude to learning are strengths of the school. Relationships between pupils and adults and between the pupils themselves are very good. These factors promote pupils' enjoyment of the school and are significant factors in the success of the pupils and the school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

During the inspection the quality of teaching was never less than satisfactory; it was mostly good, with a large proportion of very good and a few excellent lessons. Teachers have very good knowledge of the subjects of the primary curriculum and use the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy very effectively to enhance the quality of their teaching. Where teaching is best it is because teachers have high expectations of what pupils can learn and the very imaginative ways they devise to make subjects such as literacy and science lively. These lessons are packed with interesting ideas and animated, challenging discussions.

Strengths in the teaching of reception children lie in the areas of literacy and creativity. The children have ample opportunities to develop their learning through a rich diet of activities. The quality of teaching in infant classes is good, with particular strengths in the teaching of art. Classrooms are welcoming, with very good displays of pupils' work and lots of information to help pupils to learn for themselves. The quality of teaching in junior classes is good, with some excellent teaching of the older juniors. Teachers' enthusiasm and expertise make learning fun as well as effective. Particular strengths lie in the teaching of English, science, information and communication technology and physical education. The teaching of English and mathematics, including literacy and numeracy, is good throughout the school. Teachers make imaginative use of other subjects, such as art and science, to help develop pupils' skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing. The quality of pupils' learning in the junior classes is greatly enhanced by pupils' and teachers' confident and imaginative use of information and communication technology across all subjects.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The curriculum is rich and varied and offers pupils many very good opportunities to learn. There are very good links between the subjects, especially in the junior classes. The curriculum is further enhanced by a range of high quality visits out to places of interest, including residential visits for all the junior classes. Visitors to the school extend the curriculum further. The school does identify and has a policy for gifted and talented pupils, but this is not yet well-developed.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as the school identifies their difficulties quickly and ensures that they get the help they need.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The good teaching of spiritual, social and moral values helps to promote the very good relationships in the school. Pupils know right from wrong. Pupils have a good understanding of their own cultural traditions and the school works hard to introduce them to a variety of other cultural

	experiences.
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How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school maintains a high standard of care for pupils' welfare, safety and personal development. There is a good programme of personal, social and health education in place and the school has gained recognition as a 'Healthy School'. The school has good assessment procedures in place and these help to ensure that pupils progress well and do not fall behind in their achievements.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Good. Parents are very supportive of the school and keen for their children to do well. They are very effectively involved in supporting their children's learning and this is an important factor contributing to the high standards the pupils attain. The range and quality of information provided to parents is good and easily accessible.

The school has a good curriculum in place for personal, social and health education and this implemented well by the staff who have a very caring attitude to the pupils. The school has good links with parents. They are involved effectively in supporting their children's learning and make a significant contribution to pupils' standards of attainment.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The new headteacher has only been in post for a short time, but it is very clear that the school is well led. Those staff currently with management responsibilities contribute effectively to the successful management team. Parents commented very positively on the effectiveness of the teamwork during the staffing upheavals of the past year.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Excellent. The governing body plays a full and active role in managing the school and have excellent procedures in place to carry out their management role. They are very supportive and they have an excellent understanding of the school's strengths and relative weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The senior managers of the school are monitoring teaching and learning effectively. Aspects of this work are particularly strong; the governors' role and the use of subject 'Excellence Files' are particularly good.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The headteacher and the governors spend money wisely in ways that benefit pupils' learning and they are careful to ensure that their decisions are made on the basis of best value judgements.

There is an adequate number of teachers for the needs of the school, but the class sizes, particularly in the juniors, are large. There is a good number of support staff, who make an important and very effective contribution to the learning of all pupils. The accommodation is very well maintained, it is spacious and used very effectively to support the learning of the pupils. The grounds are well-developed and contain significant resources that benefit and extend the pupils' learning further. Resources are good for all subjects and particularly good for literacy, science, information and communication technology and art.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They find the school approachable. • Their children like school. • The school is led and managed well. • Their children are expected to work hard. • The school is helping their child to mature and become responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sixteen per cent of parents feel that their children have too little homework, but a few others feel that they have too much. • Eighteen per cent of parents feel that they do not receive enough information about their children's progress. • Thirteen per cent of parents are concerned at the rate of progress their child is making. This is particularly in relation to able and gifted children.

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views. An appropriate amount of homework is set in most classes, but the levels are not always consistent with the school policy. There are instances when homework could be used more effectively to support pupils' learning. Reports on pupils' progress are generally of good quality. There are suitable termly opportunities for parents to meet teachers to discuss their child. Overall, pupils make good progress with their work, but the policy for the gifted and talented pupils is not implemented consistently and target-setting for this group lacks rigour.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children enter the Reception class with levels of attainment above average overall. Staff have excellent expectations of children's work and behaviour. Children respond very enthusiastically. Very good teaching enables most children to exceed the Early Learning Goals in all the six areas of learning¹ by the time they start Year 1.
2. Pupils attain average standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2. Standards have been maintained in mathematics at the level reported in the last inspection. They are lower in English and science than those reported previously. The results of the recent 2002 Year 2 national tests show that 90 per cent of pupils attained the nationally expected Level 2 or above in reading. This is lower than the 2001 test results, although above the 2001 national average. The proportion of pupils achieving higher than expected levels in reading was significantly lower than last year. The 2002 test results show that 90 per cent of pupils attained Level 2 in writing. This is similar to last year and is above the national average. The proportion of pupils attaining higher than expected levels is similar to last year and is in line with the 2001 national average. The results of the 2002 national tests for Year 2 in mathematics show that 93 per cent of pupils attained Level 2 or above. This is similar to last year and is above the 2001 national average. The proportion of pupils achieving above expected standards dropped from 44 per cent in 2001 to 27 per cent in 2002. The trend in test results over the last five years show that standards have been consistently above the national average and the average of similar schools, particularly in reading. Teachers' assessments in science in 2001 show that pupils attained above average standards.
3. Inspection evidence reflects the most recent test results. Pupils attain average standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science. They are lower than in previous years. The progress of the current Year 2 pupils was disrupted by frequent staff changes during last school year. This has limited standards of attainment. Too few pupils are attaining above average standards. Teachers' expectations are not always high enough to challenge pupils to apply and extend their skills and knowledge, particularly in reading. Pupils' writing skills are taught well: for example, the key skills of punctuation, grammar, spelling and handwriting. However, they are not consistently expected to apply them accurately in more extended written work.
4. Pupils attain well above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. They reflect the very good results of the 2002 Year 6 national tests. Test results over the last five years show that, although there has been some variation due to the range of ability in different groups of pupils, most pupils attain above average standards in English, mathematics and science. In 2001 they attained above average standards in English and mathematics and standards in science were well above the national average. Compared with similar schools last year, standards were above average in science, average in English and below average in mathematics. The 2002 test results have improved on last year, particularly in the proportion of pupils who achieved above the nationally expected Level 4. Almost half of the pupils achieved Level 5 in English and mathematics and over 60 per cent achieved Level 5 in science. The school achieved its challenging targets of 89 per cent of pupils to achieve Level 4 in English and mathematics and 100 per cent in science. It exceeded its target in all three subjects for the number of pupils achieving Level 5. Boys and girls achieve equally well. Inspection evidence confirms these well above average standards. The key factors in achieving these levels are:
 - consistently high quality teaching, especially in Year 6;

¹ Early Learning Goals are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They refer to achievements children make in the following six areas of learning; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

- pupils' enthusiastic attitudes to their work;
 - good use of assessment information to group pupils by ability and to inform planning;
 - targeting additional support teaching to enable more pupils to attain above average levels.
5. Pupils attain nationally expected standards by the end of Year 2 in all subjects. Pupils make sound progress, overall. It is good in many lessons, although in a few lessons teachers' expectations are not consistently high enough to ensure that pupils, particularly the more able, achieve the standards of which they are capable. Standards at the end of Year 6 are well above average in information and communication technology. They have improved significantly since the last inspection, due mainly to improvements in teachers' subject knowledge and resources. Year 6 pupils attain above expected standards in physical education. These have improved since the last inspection, due mainly to good teaching and the good range of sporting clubs and competitions. Pupils continue to attain above expected standards in swimming. Standards have been maintained at the expected levels in other subjects since the last inspection. Junior pupils make good progress, overall, especially in Year 4 and Year 6. Teachers' high expectations and lively teaching styles capture pupils' interest and stimulate an enthusiasm to learn and succeed.
 6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards targets in their Individual Education Plans. Teaching and support staff work together very effectively to provide very good help and guidance. They know their pupils very well and plan activities in detail to meet the wide range of differing needs. The school identifies able and talented pupils and teachers have begun to use specific individual pupil targets to ensure that these pupils are challenged effectively. They make good progress, overall. However, teachers do not always focus on these targets in lessons to enable able and gifted pupils to make consistently good progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. There are very good relationships in the school and pupil's attitudes to learning and behaviour are good. These are all strengths of the school that are helping pupils to make significant progress in their learning. The positive picture relating to pupils' attitudes and behaviour seen during the previous inspection is still in existence. Attitudes and behaviour are described as good in this inspection rather than the very good judgement given last time, as there are isolated incidents of uncooperative behaviour from a few boys.
8. Pupils enjoy coming to school and parents agree this is the case. This is reflected by the good attendance figures, which are above the national average. Pupils are very interested in their lessons and are happy to be involved in class activities. They willingly take part in class discussions and there is no shortage of hands shooting up when the teacher asks questions. The large majority respond well to teachers and motivation is good. Pupils enjoy meeting challenges and use their own initiative well, especially when it comes to fund-raising for those in need. Year 6 pupils have very good and sometimes excellent attitudes to their work. This is because of high quality teaching, which inspires and motivates them to want to learn. The high quality of homework completed by Year 6 pupils, especially research topics chosen from the topic wheel, shows how interested and motivated pupils are in learning.
9. Positive attitudes to learning and good behaviour were typified in a Year 3 lesson using the computers, where pupils were answering a questionnaire by sorting and selecting information from a database. The freedom they were given to find information out using different methods, their willingness to work together productively in pairs, their interest in what they were doing and complete concentration combined with good teaching and support from the classroom assistant, meant that pupils made good progress in their task.
10. The quality of pupils' attitudes to learning closely mirrors the quality of teaching they are receiving. In a small number of lessons where the activities do not proceed at a fast enough pace and where the teacher's expectations of work and the standard of behaviour are not high enough, then a minority of boys find it difficult to concentrate and lose interest; pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards targets in their Individual Education Plans. Teaching and support staff work very effectively together to provide very good help and guidance.

They know their pupils very well and plan activities in detail to meet the wide range of differing needs.

11. The behaviour of pupils throughout the school is good. Outdoor play equipment and numerous classroom displays with inviting artefacts are treated with respect. Pupils understand that their actions affect others and accept responsibility for them. They respond well to school rules and have a good understanding of right and wrong. Instances of oppressive behaviour are very rare. In conversation with inspectors, who asked them about different aspects of school life, pupils explained that, in common with all schools, there is some bullying, most of it name calling, which adults help them to cope with and overcome. There have been no exclusions over the last year and this is the usual pattern for the school.
12. Relationships between pupils and staff are very good and the school is a happy, friendly place in which to learn. Those pupils who need extra adult support to help them with their learning are fully involved and accepted. They work very productively together in groups or pairs, as the example of the computer lesson above, shows. Pupils contribute enthusiastically to the life of the community and many of them belong to clubs and groups outside school. For example, the choir sang at the village Jubilee celebrations. Older pupils took part in the Village of the Year competition and read their essays on 'Why Our Village is Special' to a panel of judges.
13. There is a strong tradition of fund-raising to help others. Pupils become very involved in a good number of activities, raising considerable amounts of money, often through selling cakes at break time, for charities such as Christian Aid and UNICEF. They readily accept responsibility for routine classroom jobs, which they carry out with care and pride. This is especially true for the oldest pupils who undertake office duties and look after the youngest children at lunch-time. They also hold positions of responsibility on the school council. The school has identified expanding the council to involve pupils from other year groups as a priority. This is quite appropriate, as pupils show themselves to be very adept at expressing their views and will rise to this challenge well.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. Teaching is good, overall. It is very good in the Foundation Stage and in Year 6. Teaching has improved since the last inspection, especially in the juniors. There was no unsatisfactory teaching during the inspection. The good quality of teaching is raising standards, especially in Year 6. The teaching of English and mathematics reflects the overall range of teaching in the school. It is good, and frequently very good, especially in the juniors. Teachers have used the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies effectively to give a good focus to pupils' learning and to help them extend their skills. The good teaching for junior pupils in science, information communication technology and physical education enables them to achieve above average standards. Teachers plan their lessons in detail. They identify clear lesson objectives and share them with pupils so that they know what they are trying to achieve. Teachers manage their classes well to ensure that pupils remain focused on their learning activity. This encourages pupils to adopt a positive and enthusiastic approach to their work. On occasions, teachers, especially in the infants, do not maintain consistently high enough expectations of what pupils should achieve in the lesson. This restricts the amount of work pupils achieve.
15. Teaching and learning for children in the Foundation Stage are very good. The teacher and support assistant work very well together. They provide very good support for children and encourage them to take part fully in the good range of learning activities. They are often helped effectively by parent helpers. Staff have excellent expectations of children to which they respond very well. For example, the teacher expected children to retell nursery rhymes in their own words to others in the group. They did so confidently and clearly. Adults make very good use of praise and encouragement. They make very good use of day-to-day assessment to ensure that children experience a good range of activities. The teacher and support assistant maintain a very good pace to lessons to help children sustain their interest and involvement.

16. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils. They know and control their classes successfully, especially in the juniors. They use encouragement and individual guidance very effectively to help pupils maintain their concentration and try to improve the quality of their work. For example, in an excellent Year 6 literacy lesson, the teacher constantly moved between the different working groups and challenged individual pupils to improve their writing. The very good use of such questions as "How would you feel if that had happened to you?" prompted pupils to think carefully about the range of words used in their stories. In another literacy lesson, the teacher's very effective 'CHIPS' reminder enabled pupils to focus consistently on the standard of their work through 'content; handwriting; indents; punctuation and spelling'. Pupils responded to the teacher's good expectations and achieved well.
17. Teachers plan their lessons carefully and use good assessment procedures to inform their planning. They organise a good range of activities to meet the different needs of pupils within the class. Teachers use a good range of questions to encourage pupils' participation in class discussions; for example, in a Year 5 science lesson, the teacher promoted very good levels of pupil discussion with a series of open-ended questions about fruit and seeds. These questions prompted pupils to use their existing knowledge and observational skills to make new discoveries. Most teachers use challenging follow-up questions to extend pupils' initial answers, for example, a Year 4 pupil was asked to explain his use of the word 'tinted' in describing old photographs. This led to others contributing their ideas, for example, 'adding some other colours'. This improved pupils' knowledge and use of words. However, teachers do not always require more able pupils to extend their knowledge and attain high standards. For example, in an English lesson, pupils enthusiastically worked out the missing words from a set of sentences they were given. The answers were appropriate, but the teacher did not require more able pupils to suggest other possible answers to the single one given.
18. Many teachers use lively teaching methods to capture pupils' interest and attention. For example, in a very good Year 1 art and design lesson, the teacher's enthusiastic approach inspired pupils to want to succeed. Her very good subject knowledge of the work of Matisse and her use of specific terms such as 'shape' and 'pattern' promoted above average standards. Most teachers maintain a good pace to lessons. They regularly remind pupils how long they have left and what they expect them to have achieved. This helps pupils to stay focused throughout the lesson and to be ready to contribute, where required, in the end of lesson feedback activity. However, this is not consistently done in all classes. Where teachers do not maintain a brisk enough pace, or tell pupils clearly how much they are expected to achieve in the lesson, pupils do not always attain the standards of which they are capable. For example, in a geography lesson, pupils were very interested in their learning resources. They were very keen to discuss them with each other. The teacher did not remind them of how much time they had left to complete their task. Although all achieved some work, few achieved as much as they should have in the lesson.
19. Most teachers use homework competently, in line with the school policy. They make good use of regular homework activities to promote pupils' literacy skills, for example, in spelling. Teachers use homework topics to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding in some other subjects, for example, in history and geography. However, the effectiveness of this is diminished as they do not always ensure that pupils receive feedback on the quality of their work. Many teachers mark pupils' work constructively. They assess what has been done well and clearly identify ways in which pupils can improve the standard. Examples of very effective marking were seen in junior pupils' English drafting books where teachers had highlighted areas for improvement. Pupils had used these to improve the standard of their completed piece of writing. Teachers encourage junior pupils to use information communication technology very effectively to support their work across all subjects. This is particularly good in Year 6.
20. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good, and often very good. Teachers work very successfully in close partnership with high quality support staff. They are fully aware of the wide range of needs within each class and the specific needs of individual pupils. Teachers plan carefully to meet these needs. The effective teaching partnership ensures that all pupils, including those with multiple needs, are included fully and supported well in all activities. For example,

teaching and support staff provide excellent individual support to enable pupils with significant physical disabilities to be taught swimming.

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

21. The school provides a well-planned curriculum, which includes all the relevant subjects of the National Curriculum. All legal requirements are met. The curriculum for information and communication technology has improved since the time of the last inspection. One element in this improvement has been the investment in more high quality computers and equipment in the classrooms and libraries. The second element is a new computer suite, in which pupils gain a wider better range of experiences. The third, and most important element is the training of staff. This has made teachers and support staff more confident in using information and communication technology. The subject is now systematically timetabled across the curriculum and this is an improvement since the last inspection.
22. The school offers children in the Reception class a very stimulating programme of learning experiences, which provide a good balance between play and more structured work. The curriculum in the Reception class considers the needs of children in the Foundation Stage of learning. It is based on the recommended six areas of learning and gives the children a very secure start, developing positive attitudes to learning and good preparation for work in Year 1.
23. The school has implemented the strategies for the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies effectively. These initiatives are very successful in developing pupils' basic skills and they have had a positive impact on maintaining the high standards in English and mathematics achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6. All subjects have clear policies, and suitable documentation is used as a basis for planning the subject areas. Planning and implementation of the curriculum is monitored by the headteacher and all the subject co-ordinators and detailed action plans are produced by the co-ordinators to identify further areas for improvement across the curriculum. The curriculum resources for PSHE are very good. The school has been recognised as a 'Health Promoting' school. A comprehensive framework has been produced to ensure that staff understand where PSHE fits into the wider curriculum across the school. The governors have adopted an appropriate policy for sex education, in that it forms part of the PSHE curriculum.
24. The curriculum prepares pupils very effectively for the next stage of education. Due respect is given to the pupils' cultural heritage through curriculum visits to art galleries, museums, the zoo, a garden centre and wild life park, as well as finding out about other culture's food, traditions and music. For example, during the 'Cultural Awareness' week the pupils welcomed a Sikh to the school who introduced them to the technique of Indian drumming, while Year 4 pupils entertained some Japanese visitors who shared their language and culture with them. These activities extend the pupils' knowledge and make a positive contribution to the curriculum. All pupils have very good access to the curriculum and extensive opportunities to learn and make good progress. The curriculum inculcates tolerance, respect and good behaviour, provides appropriate opportunities for pupils to listen courteously to each other and promotes their understanding of right and wrong. There is a very positive ethos, securing a warm, encouraging and caring environment for learning.
25. The Code of Practice² for pupils who have special educational needs is firmly in place. These pupils receive work that is relevant to their needs and based on good assessment of their knowledge, skills and understanding. They have Individual Education Plans that highlight their needs and specific learning programmes that set targets for improvement and are shared with both pupils and their parents. These plans are thoroughly reviewed termly. The school aims to provide an appropriate programme for all its pupils, whatever their needs or abilities. It identifies able and gifted pupils and has begun to use learning targets to enable teachers to focus on meeting their learning needs. However, these are not consistently used in all classes. The school is currently thinking about other ways in which they can ensure that the curriculum meets fully the needs of able and gifted pupils.

² Code of Practice gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities, duties and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Act.

26. The curriculum is enriched by the provision of a good range of learning opportunities that take place after school. These include a good number of sports clubs, drama, choir and gardening clubs. They are all keenly attended. An annual residential visit for all pupils from Year 3 to Year 6 gives older pupils access to outdoor adventure activities and develops their self-awareness and ability to respond to the needs of others. Visitors to school enhance the curriculum; these include theatre groups, local ministers, an astronomer, artists, musicians and grandparents who talk about their past experiences during history lessons. Pupils are made aware of the abuse of drugs through the sensitive handling of the topic in a range of lessons.
27. The overall provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all its pupils is good. Observations throughout the school indicate that all teachers and ancillary staff support the aims of the school that help pupils to develop physically, intellectually, spiritually and emotionally. A comprehensive framework has been developed to ensure that these elements fit in all the curriculum subjects and that they permeate all aspects of school life. Overall, this provision has been maintained as a strength of the school since the last inspection.
28. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good and is extended appropriately beyond religious education lessons and corporate worship within assemblies to circle-time and other subjects in the curriculum. Collective worship is used fittingly to promote a sense of wonder and it is a good time for reflection. Assembly themes are well planned. Themes such as co-operation and competition help the pupils effectively to consider their actions; for example, '...being successful brings with it the responsibility of behaving well to others who are not successful.' Time to reflect on pupils' own beliefs, values and experiences is regularly provided in the majority of classrooms and in other subjects of the curriculum. It focuses the minds of the pupils on how their attitudes and actions can influence other people. For example, pupils in Year 4 reflect upon developing good qualities through making a "Fruits of the Spirit" tree and selecting such words as 'kindness, joy, faithfulness and love' as examples, while in Year 3, the pupils have good opportunities to interpret pictures through music. Pupils in Year 6 reflect on the differences in the works of some famous artists and the influences that affected them.
29. Provision for the pupils' moral development is good. It is reinforced by the very good personal example provided by the staff. A strong moral code is the basis for acceptable behaviour and this is consistently emphasised throughout the day-to-day life of the school. Pupils are held individually responsible for their behaviour and are encouraged to solve their own problems and arguments during open class discussions. There is a solid framework of values that encourages pupils to distinguish right from wrong. Pupils are commended for their achievements in assembly and appropriate emphasis is placed on celebrating positive behaviour.
30. Good provision is made to develop the pupils socially. There is a positive emphasis on consideration, tolerance and understanding that promotes socially acceptable attitudes. Care is taken to ensure that those pupils who have special educational needs are fully integrated into the life of the school. Boys and girls are equally provided for in all aspects of the curriculum. Teachers are both professional and caring and there is clear evidence of positive and successful relationships between pupils and staff. Annual residential visits enhance older pupils' social development appropriately. During these visits they are required to co-operate in planning tasks, share resources and work amicably together in challenging settings. Pupils are given every encouragement to participate positively in the community; for example, in their support of local charities and in collecting Christmas boxes to send to children in other countries. Visits from people who help in the community, such as a fire-fighter and dentist further enhance the pupils' social development.
31. Good provision is made for pupils' cultural development. Pupils are given effective opportunities to learn more about their own cultural traditions and heritage: for example, through local studies, visits to places of interest, through Christmas productions and the school's active involvement with the successful 'Village of the Year' award in 2001. They successfully broaden their knowledge and understanding of all cultures through literature, art, music, history, geography, dance and the effective study of world faiths in religious education. In addition, there have been

visits from local musicians and artists who have given workshops. A number of visits to museums further enhances the pupils' learning and cultural development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32. The school has successfully maintained its friendly family atmosphere, commented upon favourably in the previous inspection report. It carefully balances good levels of pastoral care with a focus on high academic achievement. Procedures for child protection, safety and welfare are well established. In particular, the school takes good advantage of a high level of governor expertise in relation to child protection procedures. There are currently three teachers trained to deal with any concerns. There is very good practice throughout the school, although this is not reflected by the child protection policy, which needs revising. The school is well aware of this. Teachers are sensitive to the personal and home circumstances of individual pupils.
33. Procedures for health and safety are satisfactory. The policy is well established and has been revised to reflect current circumstances. Governors ensure that regular checks are made of the premises and that all necessary routines and procedures are in place. A governors' committee regularly discusses health and safety issues and there is an appropriate level of awareness in the school.
34. The school has gained the accolade as a 'Healthy School' since the previous inspection. It has placed emphasis on improving the quality of exercise for pupils, upgrading its physical education equipment and revising the sex, relationships and drug education programmes. This commitment is having a beneficial effect on pupils' health and well-being.
35. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory and all requirements for recording and reporting attendance are met. Attendance monitoring procedures are well established. Parents firmly believe that their child's regular attendance at school is very important and are conscientious about letting the school know reasons for absence. This is the main reason why there is no unauthorised absence.
36. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are good and parents are pleased with the standard of behaviour in the school. The positive behaviour policy helps to guide staff in praising and rewarding good behaviour rather than focusing on any poor behaviour. School and class codes of conduct have been discussed and agreed by pupils (some of which are also signed by them) and they clearly set out the high standard to aim for. Staff help to create a happy atmosphere which promotes good behaviour and self-discipline.
37. The procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are good. A parent's leaflet explaining how the school deals with behaviour makes it clear that this is a 'telling' school. Records of any instances of bullying are carefully kept and the school takes any reports seriously. Incidents are investigated fully and staff keep a close eye on individuals where necessary.
38. The school's procedures for monitoring its pupils' academic performance are good. There has been good progress on improving assessment, which was a key issue for development from the previous inspection. The senior management team analyses assessment information carefully to highlight any potential areas of weakness. For example, at the beginning of this academic year when assessments highlighted under-achievement in Year 2 the school employed an extra teacher to boost levels of attainment of pupils in Year 2. Teachers make good use of assessment information to guide their lesson planning in English and mathematics, although this is less secure in other subjects at present.
39. Good use is made of assessment information to support pupils' learning and to help plan work matched closely to their differing abilities. Writing targets are generally used well to monitor and support pupils' academic progress, although there is some inconsistency in practice between classes. The school has made a positive start in developing targets in mathematics, but this is

not implemented in all year groups. The school makes good use of assessment procedures to identify pupils with special educational needs. They look carefully at test results, other assessment information and concerns expressed by the class teachers to record 'children to note'. Teaching and support staff monitor these pupils closely and use further assessments to decide if they need to develop an Individual Education Plan with specific learning targets.

40. Assessment, recording and monitoring of attainment and progress are an integral part of teaching procedures. Teachers are beginning to encourage pupils to assess progress in their own learning, for example, by looking carefully at how much they know at the start and end of each unit of work. This is not yet in place for all subjects. Annual reports do not consistently identify clear targets to help pupils improve their work and this is an issue for the school to work on.
41. The school has good, well-established procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. Pupils make significant progress because of this provision. The principle of acknowledging achievement is evident on many occasions, especially in assemblies, where pupils are praised for their individual successes. Most teachers keep detailed personal records of pupils showing how their characters and personalities are developing. The quality of care and concern for individuals was shown by a small incident at the end of a school day during the inspection. A pupil returning from hospital was welcomed as a visitor to the class, made a fuss of and the teacher said how much they were all looking forward to having him back.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. Parents have a positive view of the school, and their views are realistic. Just under half of all parents returned their questionnaires, indicating very good level of interest and support for the school. Nearly all the strong features regarding the schools' relationship with parents, described in the previous inspection report, have been maintained successfully.
43. The results of the parents' questionnaire were nearly all positive, apart from those concerning homework and the level of information about pupil's progress. Parents are pleased with the standard of behaviour, they find the school approachable and friendly, they are happy with its values and agree that the school expects their children to work hard and achieve well. They also believe that the school is well led and managed and that it works well with parents. Inspectors fully agree with all of these views.
44. The quality of information provided for parents is good. The Governors' Annual Report is a high quality document which provides a clear view of their part in school management and how the school is developing. In contrast, the prospectus lacks detail, but is currently in the process of being updated. There is a good number of opportunities for parents to talk to teachers about their child's progress, including an opportunity to see and celebrate all the children's work in the summer term. The headteacher aims to create an atmosphere where parents feel comfortable in seeing either her or the class teacher if they need any more detail about how their child is getting on.
45. Inspectors agree in part with the minority of parents who expressed concerns about the quality of information on progress. This is because pupil's annual reports, whilst being satisfactory, do have areas that can be improved upon. Reports are nicely personalised by the pupils. The quality of reports differs between year groups. Whilst information about progress is adequate, often little is mentioned about areas pupils need to improve upon. The use of targets is also inconsistent. In one year group, they are very specific, for example 'he needs to think about which pieces of information would be best combined to make paragraphs flow on into the most readable sequence'. By contrast, in a different year group it is only, for example, 'she should try hard to answer the task to the best of her ability'. This is an issue for the school to improve. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well-informed. They are involved as early as possible once the needs are identified, and most attend the review process. The school encourages parents to work closely with the school in enabling their children to make good progress towards their learning targets. Most parents are appreciative of the school's provision for

pupils in this area, particularly the use of Home-School books to enable them to communicate with the learning support assistant and the class teacher.

46. The school consults effectively with parents over pertinent curriculum matters, such as the recent meeting held to discuss the new Sex and Relationships policy. Parents were also involved in a Healthy Schools' working group. They were consulted through the 'Parents as Partners' group, (who meet as necessary to discuss pertinent school issues) in writing the homework policy. This was in response to comments in the previous inspection report, where parents said they would like more regular and structured homework. It eventually resulted in the topic wheel approach, where a good range of activities is available as options over the term; this is in addition to regular homework to support mathematics and English.
47. Homework was the other area where a minority of parents who replied to the parent's questionnaire had concerns. In contrast, parents at the pre-inspection meeting were very happy about homework arrangements and did not reflect this view. Inspectors judge the quality of homework to be satisfactory, overall. The topic wheel approach is unusual and is designed to give parents and pupils a greater freedom of choice. The school acknowledges that it is some time since arrangements for homework have been reviewed and they feel the time is right to review the policy, in full consultation with parents.
48. Parental involvement makes a very significant contribution to the life and work of the school. They are invited to share their experiences and expertise with the children and respond willingly. Parents regularly support their children's learning through the help they provide at school and at home. Many provide good support for sporting events and help with extra-curricular activities, such as the netball and tennis clubs. Parents provide very good support for learning at home, especially with homework topics chosen from the topic wheel. Considerable time and effort are often spent on research and preparation resulting in high quality work.
49. The Holywell School Association consists of a well-organised group of parents who work hard to arrange a number of fund-raising activities throughout the year. They have recently paid off the final instalment for the computers and have made a substantial donation towards new large physical education apparatus for the hall. The Landscape Committee provides a forum for those parents who wish for hands-on practical work in the school grounds. The 'Trim Trail' around the field is one result of their efforts. This kind of parental involvement is providing many very good learning opportunities for pupils and is a strength of the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50. The leadership of the new headteacher is good and there is a clear direction to the work of the school. Although only recently permanently appointed to the post, the headteacher has run the school for the past year, during which time the school has experienced significant levels of staff change. Parents commented very favourably on the fact that the school has continued to function successfully despite the upheavals and they praised the teamwork of those involved. The aims of the school to encourage children to reach their full potential within the context of a happy, attractive and welcoming atmosphere capture the essence of the ethos that permeates all aspects of school life. Pupils are expected to achieve high standards and they do so in all aspects of the curriculum. This ranges from representing the school in sporting activities, to performing to different audiences and achieving consistently very high standards in National Curriculum tests at Year 6. The staffing changes have meant that much responsibility has fallen on a few people and the number of positions and levels of responsibility these leaders carry is considerable. The imbalance of responsibility makes it difficult to manage the workload effectively. That the school has continued to have success in the Foundation Stage, in Years 3 to 6, and in the development of the new Code of Practice is because of the commitment of those with leadership responsibilities.
51. The headteacher and staff have welcomed the introduction of performance management. The policy is well established and widely understood. Staff are well briefed on the requirements of

continued professional development and the linked performance objectives which have been based on an analysis of school priorities and the training needs of the staff. Team spirit is a strong feature of the work of the school and is promoted effectively by the headteacher. Much of the monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance is still being developed and refined because of the changes in staffing. The monitoring of teaching carried out by the headteacher has been effective. However, subject co-ordinators have difficulties gaining a good understanding of the standards in their subjects across the whole school. The recent changes to the teaching staff have meant that all the subject responsibilities are concentrated on a small number of staff. The workload of this group is onerous and they are unable to complete all the tasks expected of them. There are examples of very good monitoring practice, such as the subject 'Excellence Files', but the responsibility for developing teaching and learning needs to be broadened to include all teachers.

52. The governors are very effective. The previous inspection highlighted the need for governors to be more involved in the curriculum. They have now established model procedures and practices and use these rigorously in holding the headteacher and staff to account. Every governor has an area of responsibility that they monitor. Subject governors visit every class in school during the course of a year to see their subject being taught. They report back formally to both staff and the governing body on what they have seen and this feeds into the school improvement planning process. Performance management governors have been appointed and are aware of the future needs of the school. Recently appointed governors have attended training on their roles and responsibilities and other aspects of their work. Governors have a very good understanding of all their statutory duties and ensure that these are carried out effectively. Their recent documents, such as their current annual report to parents, are models of exemplary practice.
53. The current school improvement plan is based on a systematic evaluation of progress against previous objectives and self-evaluation informed by discussion with staff and governors. The plan provides a strategic overview of the future direction of the school. All curricular policies will have been updated before the end of the school year. The actions identified are up-to-date and several targets have been met. Current priorities include the raising of attainment in mathematics and making information and communication technology an integral part of all curriculum areas. These tasks are almost completed, and the effectiveness of this work is clear. A high priority has been given to making the new Foundation curriculum effective and this has been achieved very effectively. Other priorities listed at three different levels of importance add up to a very demanding list which, although laudable, will be very demanding to achieve.
54. The school manages its budget very effectively. The support staff who manage the budget have clear roles and responsibilities, which they carry out very efficiently. In addition to monitoring and support from the local authority the school employs an independent financial adviser who provides clear and effective monthly support and guidance. Governors' monitoring of the budget is comprehensive and strict. The finance committee does not have delegated powers, but is able to recommend decisions to the full governing body, ensuring maximum participation in important decisions. The school improvement plan links developments effectively to the budget. Standards fund money and specific grants are monitored and managed effectively. The recent audit report had no significant areas for improvement. Day-to-day running of the school is smooth and efficient. There is a small budget surplus each year, but this is always within acceptable limits (in 2001 this was 1.6 per cent of the budget). The governors and staff at the school apply best value principles to all financial decision-making and make sure that there is a clear rationale to all decisions requiring significant expenditure. Unit costs for the school are high, but given the improvements of the last five years and the current level of success, the school continues to provide good value for money.
55. There are sufficient teaching staff with a sound range of experience and expertise to ensure that all pupils are taught effectively. At the parents' meeting before the inspection and during the course of the inspection a number of parents expressed concern about the large size of the junior classes. Registration groups are indeed large, up to 40 pupils, but the school makes very effective use of non-class-based teachers and support staff to keep the adult to pupil ratio in teaching groups very low. The school has made the deliberate decision to keep pupils in discrete year

groups in order to manage the curriculum more effectively. This decision is successful; the timetabling of teaching groups works well. It also allows the school to carry out other functions in an effective manner. For instance, the school has good processes in place to support and develop newly qualified teachers. The successful implementation of the new Code of Practice (paragraph 25) is in no small part due to the co-ordinator being given effective levels of release time from the classroom to carry out her duties. A further element in the school's management strategy is the employment of a higher than average number of non-teaching staff. This works well, pupils' learning benefits from the improved adult to pupil ratio this brings.

56. The accommodation is adequate for the needs of the school. It is a well-maintained environment that is made attractive and welcoming by displays of pupils' artwork. The classrooms are a good size for most activities, but those in the junior section have an awkward layout and the open plan nature of the building makes it difficult at times to carry out quiet activities. The spaces adapted to make libraries for the infants and the juniors are attractively set out and satisfactorily resourced. The new computer suite is used very effectively and enhances the learning of junior pupils well. The school grounds have been greatly enhanced for both play and learning by money from the parents' association as well as substantial levels of volunteer time. They are a noteworthy resource for the school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

57. In order to raise standards of attainment and improve the school's effectiveness, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
- (1) Raise the standard of attainment at the end of Year 2 by:
 - continuing to develop the expectations of all pupils at the infant stage;
 - identifying higher-attaining pupils and giving them support to achieve their potential; *
 - developing the use of information and communication technology to support all curriculum areas at this stage. *

(paragraphs 3, 5, 6, 72, 83, 89)
 - (2) Re-organise the allocation of management responsibilities within the school to ensure a more equitable allocation of roles allowing: *
 - subject co-ordinators to gain an understanding of the standards attained throughout the school;
 - all staff with management responsibilities to support developments and initiatives relating to their roles.

(paragraphs 50, 51, 80)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- (3) Extend individual pupil target-setting for all pupils, but particularly for the more able by:
 - using more effectively the information from the pupil tracking system;
 - implementing and developing the information and communication technology curriculum assessment systems newly in place. *

(paragraphs 6, 10, 25, 40, 45)

** Indicates areas already identified by the school for development.*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	48
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	10	27	8	0	0	0
Percentage	6	21	56	17	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	231
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	10

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	30

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.3

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	26	8	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	34	31	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (97)	91 (89)	94 (95)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	32	33	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (86)	97 (89)	97 (86)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

The figures for boys and girls are omitted because there are 10 or less of one gender group. This is to ensure that individual pupils cannot be identified.

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	17	19	36

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	15	17
	Girls	16	16	19
	Total	32	31	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	89 (85)	86 (91)	100 (91)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	15	16
	Girls	16	15	17
	Total	31	30	33
Percentage of pupils	School	86 (82)	83 (76)	92 (76)

at NC level 4 or above	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)
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Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	197
Any other minority ethnic group	5

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)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27:1
Average class size	33:1

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	294

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-02
	£
Total income	509,704
Total expenditure	501,544
Expenditure per pupil	2,190
Balance brought forward from previous year	7,942

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)	1
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	231
Number of questionnaires returned	102

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	37	3	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	47	38	9	4	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	53	43	2	1	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	40	17	4	3
The teaching is good.	56	30	7	3	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	49	16	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61	36	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	36	5	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	45	45	7	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	65	26	5	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	55	36	5	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	47	12	0	7

Other issues raised by parents

Parents expressed concern about:

- large class sizes (*paragraph 55*)
- effective target-setting for able and gifted pupils (*paragraphs 10, 25, 42, 58*)

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

58. Children's attainment on entry to the Reception class covers a wide range and when measured by assessment is above average, overall. They make very good progress, because they have very effective opportunities to broaden and consolidate their knowledge in all the six areas of learning. This is an improvement since the last inspection when progress was judged to be good. Very good use is made of assessment. Continual observations and assessments are made of each child's progress to ensure that work continues to match their needs and builds on their previous learning. Appropriately targets are set with parents in the autumn term and reviewed at the following parents' meeting in the spring term. All the staff, including teaching assistants and voluntary adult helpers, work extremely well together and collaborate very effectively to plan activities and to assess children's needs.
59. There are good induction procedures for settling the children thoughtfully and sensitively into the school. For example, there is a good opportunity for the children to come and familiarise themselves with the classroom and the environment for three mornings and for an hour in an afternoon in the summer term prior to admission and they have a useful opportunity to try a school meal.
60. The quality of teaching is very good in all the six areas of learning and this reflects the very good progress that the children make in their learning and understanding. This is an improvement since the last inspection when teaching was judged to be good. This very effective teaching provides a secure, purposeful and stimulating learning environment in which the children thrive, are well-motivated and gain in confidence. All the staff provide very good role models, valuing each other and the children's input.

Personal, social and emotional development

61. By the end of the Reception, the majority of children exceed the expected standards of the Early Learning Goals in their personal and social development and they make good progress. This reflects the skilful teaching. They are taught the difference between right and wrong and learn to co-operate appropriately, share and take turns. Some simple classroom rules such as, 'Be helpful and kind' and 'We will listen and be polite' are clearly displayed and shared with all. Children are beginning to form positive relationships and to communicate suitably with one another and with adults. Relationships are very good and the staff are very effective in creating a warm, caring and stimulating learning environment in which the children develop very good attitudes to learning and become self-confident. By working very well together, the staff give the children good role models. Clear routines have been established. For example, the children are expected to form a circle in readiness for their numeracy lesson, which they do immediately and without any fuss. The children move sensibly to their table activities and share resources well. They have many very useful opportunities to select from a wide variety of activities. The teacher plans very worthwhile occasions for the children to learn and to concentrate on a given task, particularly when working with an adult. For example, children concentrated well on an individual activity as each shared out some practical equipment equally in two parts. The very good teaching in this area has a most beneficial impact on children's learning. The classroom is well managed and the children are secure and confident. Praise and encouragement are used very effectively to raise the children's self-esteem and give them confidence.

Communication, language and literacy

62. By the end of the Reception year, the majority of children exceed the expected standards of the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy. They make very good progress from entry into the school and develop their English skills well. There are good opportunities for

the children to listen and respond to stories, songs and rhymes. The introduction of the literacy strategy is having a significant impact on the children's learning. Skilful questioning is used to encourage the children to express their ideas and to increase their vocabulary. They develop new vocabulary as they discuss pictures in the storybooks. For example, they recognise such similes as 'as tall as a giraffe' and 'as small as an ant'. The children start to link sounds with letters through language games. They learn systematically to consolidate new sounds through daily practice. Staff continually interact with the children to encourage them to increase their vocabulary by providing a wide variety of situations and experiences. For example, in the outside area, the children are encouraged to create their imaginary garden and discuss what they are doing with an adult.

63. Children are developing skills in writing, which are above expectations for their age group. For example, by the end of the Reception year, most children write their own names and copy letters in recognisable script. Many of them are writing independently and are beginning to use capital letters and full stops. All the children understand how books are written and know that pictures tell a story and that words have meanings. They use a number of methods to work out unfamiliar words in a story, such as using the sounds of individual letters, together with looking at the context and the pictures. For example, the children recognised that a word was 'bunny' and not 'rabbit' because the word began with 'b'. Children enjoy reading stories together, listen attentively and join in the repetitive phrases with enjoyment. Lessons are well organised and good cross-curricular links are made with all the other five areas of learning. The use of computers supports the steady improvement of children's language skills effectively through, for example, reading the instructions for programs.

Mathematical development

64. In this area of learning, the majority of children enter the school with a wide range of number skills. The combination of a broad range of opportunities, together with the very good teaching, ensures that children make very good progress and exceed the expectations of the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year. The children recognise number symbols and handle higher numbers from 1 to 50 competently. They work competently with a hundred number square and soon recognise the pattern that is made, for example, by counting in fives. The children compare, sort and match objects according to their size and colour and are introduced to mathematical language such as *share*, *half*, *heavier* and *lighter* and positional language such as *beside*, *in front of*, *under*, *over* and *through*. Their understanding is further supported by the use of every day objects to promote the children's understanding of sharing equally between two with such items as cakes, sweets and cheeses; a number of children know how to halve a number by working it out in their head before showing it practically by dividing the objects between two hoops. The majority of children recognise two- and three-dimensional shapes, such as square, circle, triangle, hexagon and rectangle.
65. The teacher uses every opportunity to reinforce children's knowledge and understanding of number through the consistent repetition of numbers in the correct order and by the singing of various number rhymes. This subject makes a good contribution to the children's personal and social development. For example, the children are interested and motivated, becoming more confident in speaking, and settle quickly to group activities. Adult involvement in children's activities is very good. Effective assessments are made to establish individual children's progress and these are used appropriately to plan suitable activities. Learning is effective because the children have many opportunities to learn from and with one another and at different rates; the clear and precise exposition and instructions ensure that they know what is expected of them.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

66. By the end of the Reception year, the majority of children exceed the required standard in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They make good progress from entry into the school. The children are given worthwhile opportunities to develop an awareness of the passage of time through, for example, looking at the life cycle of a butterfly by closely watching the changes from

a caterpillar to a butterfly. Daily opportunities are provided for the children to use tools skilfully with play-dough and when making junk models. Lessons are well planned for them to improve their cutting and joining skills, for example, when making a shaker. These experiences enhance the children's speaking and listening skills effectively as they begin to explain what they are doing.

67. Children's computer skills are improving well. The children know how to change colours, tools and fonts when using a 'Paint' program on the computer. They select colours and shapes confidently to produce recognisable pictures with clear details and refinements to create, for example, jungle trees with gorillas, with ... "their eyes glowing in the dark, dark jungle." Children have many very good opportunities to tell the class what they have done and why they chose to do that, also explaining what did or did not work. The very good teaching in this area of learning has a good impact on the children's learning. Staff plan activities that increase and develop, for example, the children's manipulation and observational skills. The activities are well-matched to the needs of all the children and they are precisely explained and demonstrated. Resources are carefully selected and thoroughly prepared prior to the lesson.

Creative development

68. By the end of the Reception year, the children exceed the required standard of the Early Learning Goals in their creative development and they make good progress. Scrutiny of the children's past work on display shows that they have effective daily opportunities to express themselves by drawing, painting, engaging in imaginative play and handling malleable materials, such as clay and play-dough. They produce pictures using a suitable range of techniques, such as collage, weaving, self-portraits and printing. The children learn to look very closely at the work of famous artists, such as Rousseau and try to copy the styles to further develop their collage techniques. They look at Aboriginal art and repeat patterns in the same style.
69. The role-play area gives the children worthwhile opportunities to play co-operatively and develop their imaginations by enabling them to take on the various roles and jobs, for example, in a 'Gift Shop'. The staff talk skilfully to the children in the 'garden' area and ask relevant questions to enlarge their vocabulary and support their efforts. In music, the children learn that music can tell a story and that percussion instruments can enhance it when they accompany the story to create an effect, for example, in the nursery rhyme of 'Humpty Dumpty'. The overall good teaching in this area makes a positive contribution to the children's learning. Lessons are well organised and resources that stimulate the children's interest are thoughtfully prepared. Opportunities for assessing the children's progress are an integral part of the planning.

Physical development

70. By the end of the Reception year, the majority of children make good progress and exceed the expected standards of the Early Learning Goals in their physical development. There are many planned experiences for them to control small tools so that, by the time they are five, the majority of children are confident in their use of different tools such as pencils, glue spreaders, paint-brushes, construction apparatus, modelling tools and scissors. The good teaching in this area of learning has a positive impact on the children's learning. Lessons are well planned and structured to include a clear development of skills, as in the weekly swimming and physical education lessons. The children are clearly taught to listen to different instructions and begin to work well in a group, for example, by sharing and taking turns on the outside apparatus. They usefully learn to undress and dress independently for indoor apparatus lessons. The children are keen and enthusiastic and respond positively to the teacher's high expectations of their behaviour and response. The safely organised outdoors provision provides a good range of equipment to develop the children's ability to climb, travel along, control and co-ordinate their bodies.

ENGLISH

71. Pupils attain standards that are well above the national average at the end of Year 6. Standards have improved since the last inspection. Year 6 pupils attain standards that are higher than the above average levels attained in the 2001 national tests. They reflect the very high standards attained in the most recent national tests for eleven-year-olds when almost half of the pupils achieved above average levels. The key factors promoting this significant improvement are:
- good teaching, especially in Year 6;
 - the effective implementation of the school's literacy strategy;
 - the good use assessment information to identify pupils who, with some support, were capable of achieving higher levels than initially predicted;
 - good additional literacy support strategies and ability group teaching enabled the identified pupils to achieve average and above average levels;
 - the school's priority on improving pupils' writing skills;
 - pupils' positive attitudes to work.
72. Pupils attain average standards at the end of Year 2 in reading and writing. Standards are lower than those reported previously. They are lower than those achieved in the 2001 national tests for seven-year-olds. They reflect those attained in the recent national tests. The proportion of pupils attaining the nationally expected Level 2 is above average but too few pupils attain Level 3, particularly in reading. Teachers' expectations are not consistently high enough to challenge more able Year 2 pupils to attain above average levels in reading. The progress of the current Year 2 was significantly disrupted by frequent staffing changes during the previous school year. This has affected the standards attained. Pupils have good and often very good speaking and listening skills throughout the school. Boys and girls reach comparable standards. Most infant pupils make sound progress, overall, in their learning. Junior pupils make good progress, overall. It is very good in Years 4 and 6. Pupils with special educational needs in both infant and junior classes benefit from high quality, individual and group support. Learning support staff work very effectively to ensure that pupils with special educational needs listen to lesson introductions and are fully included in all learning activities. They make good progress. Those with specific literacy needs often make very good progress.
73. By the end of Year 2 most pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to each other. Pupils are confident in answering questions and contribute readily to discussions. More able infant pupils are confident and articulate speakers and use a good range of questioning and answering styles. In a Year 1 poetry lesson, pupils responded very enthusiastically to the teacher's questions about the rhythm of a 'tongue-twister' poem. They recited key lines to show how the repeated use of words beginning with 'b' gave a good rhythm. These skills develop very well throughout the juniors and by the end of Year 6 pupils attain very good standards. They concentrate for long periods and take an active role in sharing their thoughts and ideas. Pupils take part in drama and role-play activities. Many were involved, earlier in the year, in a school production of *Sandon's Silent Revolution*. These opportunities improve pupils' confidence and their understanding of the skills required for public speaking and acting. They contribute well to the high standards of oral communication that pupils display.
74. Most infant pupils make sound progress overall in their reading and almost all attain the nationally expected level by the end of Year 2. They read accurately in group sessions and also when reading individually. They are confident using letter sounds, pictures and clues from the context to help them read new and unfamiliar words. Less able readers still have a secure knowledge of the sounds letters make by themselves and when combined with others. This helps them correct their own mistakes. More able readers read fluently and with good expression. They enjoy reading, although few talk with interest and enthusiasm about books they have read or their favourite characters. They enjoy reading with other pupils in the reading groups. Year 2 pupils, particularly the more able, do not get enough opportunities to share ideas and views with other pupils about books they have read. Teachers do not always encourage more able pupils to tackle increasingly demanding books and extend their reading skills, knowledge and understanding. Most Year 2 pupils know the terms 'author' and 'illustrator'. They know how to find a particular book in the library. Most know how to use the 'contents' and 'index' sections to find information.

75. Year 6 read a wide range of books with confidence and enjoyment. They talk enthusiastically about books they have read and their favourite authors, for example, those by J. K. Rowling and Tolkien. Many describe their favourite characters and refer to parts of the text to explain what they like and dislike. They read accurately and fluently. They use very good expression to bring the text alive. Many predict possible developments in the story based on what they have read so far and explain why they think these could happen. Year 6 pupils have good library and research skills. They know how to track down information from texts and other sources, including the Internet. They are given good opportunities to undertake their own research in a variety of subjects, including science and history. More able readers are encouraged to extend their reading skills through more challenging texts and other information sources. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection and is contributing well to raising standards. The school provides a good range of class and library reading resources to promote pupils' skills and knowledge.
76. Infant pupils make sound progress in their writing, overall, and standards at the end of Year 2 are in line with national averages. In lessons, pupils are taught the key skills of punctuation, grammar, spelling and handwriting skills, although these are not applied consistently in more extended written work. For example, pupils do not always use capital letters accurately and misspell words that they have previously learned to spell correctly. Year 2 pupils practise their handwriting skills regularly and many produce neat, joined script. However, in other writing they do not use it consistently. Pupils write for a sound range of purposes, such as formal letters, book reviews, stories, and a report about their trip to Hunstanton. They develop their stories well, establishing a clear structure of beginning, middle and end. Some are beginning to use imaginative and descriptive vocabulary, such as 'gigantic', although there is considerable variation in the amount of work achieved and the accuracy of its presentation.
77. Pupils attain very high standards in their writing by the end of Year 6. Junior pupils make good progress in developing their writing skills, which are promoted by good teaching, particularly in Years 4 and 6. Pupils write for a very good range of purposes and adapt their styles very successfully to meet the differing needs. Year 4 pupils use their note-taking skills successfully to identify key words then add brief points to each one, which they develop more fully in their written accounts. They use good phrases to highlight the different styles, for example, using 'on the other hand' when comparing the points for and against smoking. Year 4 pupils use alliteration effectively to give eye-catching headlines and some excellent similes in poems, for example, 'as wrinkled as a bulldog's face'. Year 6 pupils attain very high standards in a very good range of different styles. For example, they write effectively in the style of Shakespeare to describe a scene from *Macbeth*. They use very good phrases when describing an imaginary interview with an actress – "Actually I was originally auditioning ...as I thought that I would fare better in that part". The quality of imaginative and descriptive writing is very high in Year 6. Pupils use a very good range of interesting and perceptive words and phrases to capture the reader's interest and attention. For example, one pupil introduced the main character in the story as 'a quiet and sensitive girl who was always aware of how other people thought about her'. Another pupil described 'when the early white sun licked the hills and fluffy white clouds drifted lazily through a sapphire sky'.
78. The quality of teaching is good. It is very good and often excellent in Year 6 where teachers have consistently high expectations. They use lively and enthusiastic teaching styles to capture pupils' interest and attention. They know their pupils very well and manage them successfully to ensure that they focus on what they are trying to achieve. Teachers, particularly in Years 4 and 6, encourage pupils to use their drafting books very effectively to develop then extend their initial ideas. They use very good marking and individual support and guidance to identify ways in which pupils of all abilities can improve their work. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, the teacher used questions such as "How did she react to that?" and "Can you think of something a little less obvious?" to challenge pupils to improve their 'suspense' stories. Teachers use their National Literacy Framework well to plan in detail. They provide a clear purpose for each lesson and organise a good range of activities to meet the different learning needs. They share the learning objective consistently with pupils so that they know what they are trying to achieve. Some teachers do not have consistently high enough expectations and do not maintain a brisk enough pace in some lessons. For example, in an infant lesson on biographies, the teacher did not make

it clear to the pupils what she expected them to achieve. She did not tell them how much time they had for the activity. The teacher did not remind pupils during the lesson how much time they had left. This resulted in too few achieving as much as they should have done in the lesson.

79. Most teachers make sound use of homework, for example, in spelling and punctuation, to support pupils' literacy skills. They work very closely with support staff to use pupils' skills in information and communication technology effectively to extend their literacy skills. For example, Year 3 pupils make good use of a language skills program to extend their knowledge and use of grammatical terms, for example, singular and plural nouns. Teachers have identified writing targets for pupils as part of the school's priority for improving writing skills. Pupils know their individual targets, although there was no evidence during the inspection of teachers reminding pupils consistently what they needed to focus on in their writing activities.
80. The subject is managed effectively for the infant and junior phases. Literacy co-ordinators have a good knowledge and understanding of the development of pupils' literacy skills within their own phase. They have had some opportunities to observe teaching and learning and to identify strengths and areas for development. However, co-ordinators do not have a good understanding of the standards being attained throughout the school. The senior management team analyses literacy assessment information to identify improvement priorities, for example, in writing. They have used it well to share with staff and to raise standards. However, the subject co-ordinators are not involved enough in these procedures. This fails to ensure that they target resources confidently and monitor and evaluate literacy development priorities rigorously.

MATHEMATICS

81. Standards in mathematics have risen since the last inspection, the quality of teaching has improved and progress across the school is good. Results in the 2001 Year 6 tests were above the national average, but there were relatively few pupils achieving at Level 5. Standards are much higher in the current Year 6 and indications are that, with over 40 per cent of pupils working at the Level 5, standards are now well above the national average by the end of Year 6. Among the reason for this significant improvement are:
- the effective use of assessment to target pupils needing support;
 - the good use of the techniques and systems advocated in the numeracy strategy;
 - good, and at times very good teaching;
 - pupils' positive attitude to the subject.
82. In the 2001 Year 2 National Curriculum tests, results were above the national average, but inspection evidence indicates that this standard has not been maintained. This is partly due to the disruption experienced by the Year 2 class when they were in Year 1. However, analysis of ongoing assessments at the start of this academic year alerted the school to the drop and immediate action was taken to address the situation. The unpublished test results for 2002 indicate that by the end of Year 2 standards are in line with the national average.
83. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain expected standards in using and applying mathematics, shape, space and measures and in number and algebra. The majority of pupils identify the differences between two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes accurately. They have a good understanding of addition and subtraction and double numbers accurately to 100. Pupils enter Year 1 with above average attainment of basic number skills. These are steadily built on as they move through the year. The good teaching has a positive impact on pupils' learning. For example, they make good progress in their understanding as they make totals from words by using the Scrabble scoring system and then find words that will make the greatest scores. By the end of Year 2, pupils make satisfactory progress in consolidating their previous learning and understanding of number and in using, for example, mental recall of multiples of 2, 5 and 10. They begin to see and understand the difference in notation between analogue and digital clocks. The sound teaching ensures that the pupils develop an appropriate understanding of mathematical vocabulary. For example, the pupils are encouraged to use such words as estimating, when working out the different clock times. By the end of Year 2 most pupils have a satisfactory grasp

of basic number facts, use a range of metric measures, identify three-dimensional shapes correctly and solve simple problems involving money and time.

84. By the end of Year 6, pupils have very good mental mathematics skills and progress is very good in all areas of mathematics. Overall, progress is good throughout the school. There is appropriate emphasis on mental work and number work at both key stages and the pupils develop a good range of strategies for solving problems. Work is modified to match pupils' knowledge and understanding and resources are well prepared, accessible, and support the planned activities. This is closely linked to the good teaching and thorough planning of the subject. Teachers plan well to provide work that challenges pupils' thinking and that is matched to their capabilities. In Year 6, higher-attaining pupils know their tables and use number effectively when solving problems. Analysis of pupils' past work shows that pupils understand the vocabulary related to circles, such as radius, quadrant and diameter, and have a good understanding of fractions, decimals and percentages and their equivalents. They solve problems accurately, estimate answers and check if they are correct. They are given very useful opportunities to explain the strategies they use to arrive at their answers. The very good teaching improves the pupils' learning; work is clearly evaluated and processes are learned effectively.
85. All pupils are learning important problem-solving and investigational skills which they use well. In Year 5, pupils understand the process of measuring and recording accurately in millilitres, while in Year 4, the good intervention by the teacher and the challenging activities ensure that pupils see the link to multiplication when they create 3D shapes with cubes. In Year 3, pupils identify accurately equivalent fractions and consolidate their understanding with well-chosen activities. This learning is consolidated well in a good plenary session. Pupils who have special educational needs are given work closely matched to their abilities and at times receive extra support. They make progress that is good when taking account of their previous learning. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils have a secure knowledge of the properties of regular shapes, including symmetry and the measurement of angles. They have some understanding of probability and can present data in a variety of ways. Progress seen in lessons and in the pupils' books is very good. There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls.
86. Teaching is good, overall, across the school, with some very good aspects in Year 6. It is never less than satisfactory. This is an improvement since the last inspection. In very effective teaching, the introductory mental activity moves at a brisk pace and there are high expectations in terms of achievement and behaviour so that the pupils are interested and motivated. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, the pupils remained focused throughout the lesson as they investigated the speed of a remote control car in k.p.h. Very good links were made with information and communication technology in the use of a spreadsheet to calculate the problems established. The majority of teachers increase the challenge gradually so that all pupils are involved and the more able are stretched by the end of the session. This was not the case in a Year 2 lesson on time, where the extension group lost interest in the activity, as it did not sufficiently challenge them. Following some very clear whole-class teaching the written tasks are usually well-matched to the needs of different groups and learning is good. Most teachers' explanations are clear and precise and, by the time they reach Year 6, the average and higher-attaining pupils solve problems confidently using formal written methods of calculation and work accurately with whole numbers, fractions and decimals.
87. Teachers' planning is thorough and detailed, including clear learning intentions supported by well-prepared resources. Effectively focused questioning is a significant feature of a good lesson. For example, Year 3 pupils were encouraged to give clear explanations of their working out of equivalent fractions. The teacher's regular checking of pupils' understanding, the emphasis on correct vocabulary, combined with very clear step-by-step explanations ensured that pupils of all abilities made good progress. At the end of the lesson learning was clearly summarised. Marking throughout the school is regular and thorough and generally includes pointers for improvement.
88. The management of the subject and the improvement in mathematics since the last inspection has been good. All issues reported in the last inspection have been dealt with very effectively and careful monitoring has indicated further areas for development. There is a good understanding of

the strengths and weaknesses in mathematics across the school. The National Numeracy Strategy has raised teachers' confidence. They have good knowledge of the subject and mathematics is used well across the curriculum. This, together with the programme of monitoring by the co-ordinator and good links between assessment and teaching, has been instrumental in maintaining standards. Information and communication technology is used well to support mathematics across the school. Assessment is used successfully to monitor progress, to group pupils and to set targets. The detailed analysis of pupils' performance in tests is being used well to identify strengths and weaknesses in provision.

SCIENCE

89. Pupils attain standards that are well above the national average at the end of Year 6. Standards have improved significantly since the last inspection. Year 6 pupils attain standards that are higher than the above average levels attained in the 2001 national tests. They reflect the very high standards attained in the unpublished 2002 national tests for eleven-year-olds, when over half of the pupils achieved above average levels. The key factors promoting this significant improvement are:
- very good use of information and communication technology to support the development of the subject;
 - good teaching, especially in Year 6 where it is at times excellent;
 - consistent and effective planning and preparation which builds upon good assessment information;
 - high expectations of the pupils from all teachers arising from good, and at times very good teacher knowledge and understanding of the subject and the processes which support it;
 - pupils' positive attitudes to work.
90. Pupils attain standards that are at least average at the end of Year 2 and in some aspects of the subject above average. Standards are lower than those achieved in the 2001 teacher assessments for seven-year-olds. The current standards reflect the levels attained in the 2002 teacher assessments. The proportion of pupils attaining the nationally expected Level 2 is above average, but relatively few pupils attain Level 3. Pupils' knowledge of science facts and information is good, but their investigative skills are not well-developed. They do not readily think to question the information they are given, or to ask what will happen if...? There is no significant difference in the standards attained by boys and girls. Most infant pupils make sound progress, overall, in their learning. Junior pupils make good progress, overall. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior levels of achievement, benefiting from high quality, individual and group support.
91. An analysis of pupils' work shows that infant pupils cover a wide range of topics that are integrated together well to cover all aspects of the science curriculum. For instance, pupils in Year 1 show a good knowledge and understanding of life processes in their topic on 'Ourselves' and this is extended in Year 2 in a topic on 'Health and Growth'. Pupils record information carefully in their books, but there is little evidence of them being encouraged to use computers to support the recording of evidence and the presentation of results. Pupils in Year 2 have above average levels of knowledge about the factors necessary for plants to grow. They know and can readily name the different parts of a plant and compare different fruits thoughtfully, but they have too few opportunities to undertake experiments or to carry out their own investigations which would further extend their understanding.
92. Junior pupils enjoy science. They talk enthusiastically about the subject, ask thoughtful questions of staff and each other. Most show genuine pride in their work and a commitment to complete tasks successfully. Pupils in Year 5 examining seeds name accurately the different parts of a flower, 'stigma, stamen, petal and sepal' and explain their role in the life cycle of a flowering plant, including pollination and seed formation. They collaborate with each other well, sharing resources whilst discussing and developing ideas to discern patterns of seed dispersal. Year 6 pupils make very good use of their competence with information and communication technology to research and develop their scientific understanding. Working on a topic of 'Bubbles' they look up websites to discover information to supplement the practical activities with bubbles they have already undertaken. Using their investigative skills successfully they find answers to open-ended questions developing their knowledge and understanding of materials and the behaviour of particles to new levels. A few are clearly beginning to work at Level 6, four years beyond the average level expected of them. They understand and use terms such as 'reflection, refraction and affinity' in an accurate context and in explaining their findings at the end of the lesson are able to assess the value of the information they have gleaned and summarise it to the whole group.

93. There are a number of common strengths that account for pupils' good progress. Teachers' planning is consistently good, it builds upon good quality assessment information that provides a clear framework for the development of the subject. All teachers, but particularly those teaching the junior pupils, have high expectations of the standards they expect pupils to achieve. Teachers' knowledge of the subject is good, they are willing to ask open-ended questions of the pupils, encouraging them to think of reasons why processes and events happen rather than just giving learned facts. The relationship between all staff and the pupils is good and often very good. These factors encourage pupils to have a positive attitude towards science and as a consequence the standards are usually above the level expected. Teachers make sound use of homework, encouraging pupils to find out information for themselves and then to use their discoveries in their work at school. Support staff are used very effectively ensuring that pupils with special educational needs have good access to the science curriculum and make good progress in the subject. Resources used to teach the subject throughout the school are of good quality and hold pupils' interest well.
94. The subject is managed effectively throughout the school. The co-ordinator, working with all staff has created a subject 'Excellence File'. This document analyses the effectiveness of the subject in the school and what the school needs to do to improve further. It gives good examples of work for each year group and is a very useful analytical tool. There has been a particular emphasis on the development of the junior curriculum and this has been very successful. In the past three years the results in the end of Year 6 assessments have risen markedly. In 1999, less than one fifth of the pupils attained the higher Level 5 in assessments. This year, every pupil achieved Level 4, the expected level, and almost two thirds achieved Level 5. The introduction of complementary commercial schemes has broadened the approach to the subject and developed pupil and staff confidence.

ART AND DESIGN

95. Attainment in art for pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is in line with that expected nationally. Teaching is good and enables pupils to demonstrate good achievement and progress as they move through the school. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls. Teaching and pupils' progress have improved since the last inspection, when both were judged to be satisfactory.
96. Photographic evidence of pupils' work across the school shows clear progress in the basic skills of art. Pupils in Year 1 are taught effectively to look very closely at paintings and natural objects, to produce, for example, a pattern of a snail in the style of Matisse, paying particular attention to the shape, colour and texture, while pupils in Year 2 know how to make tints and shades. Appropriate opportunities are provided for them to experiment with techniques for painting and drawing. For example, they mix colours successfully to get a wide range of blues and they complete a picture competently after being given a small part of it with which to begin.
97. Pupils in Years 3 learn to evaluate effectively the best technique to make animal sculptures, after using clay, and then see if they can improve their models by using papier-mâché, while pupils in Year 4 are developing the ability to use tools skilfully when creating a card printing block, taking into consideration colour, tone and texture. Pupils in Year 5, increase their control when making clay thumb pots. In Year 6, pupils develop a critical eye; they are provided with effective opportunities to evaluate their own work with pointers to improve it when drawing a portrait of a partner in the style of Picasso. Scrutiny of displays of the pupils' past work in Year 6 shows that they effectively learn the techniques involved in creating perspective in a landscape scene, taking account of the work of L. S. Lowry. Art supports effectively other areas of the curriculum. For example, in history and geography, all classes research information about different countries and kings and queens and make good observational drawings of the artefacts found there.
98. Overall, the quality of teaching is good and, as a direct consequence, pupils make good progress. This shows a significant improvement since the last inspection when teaching was identified as satisfactory, overall. The very good teaching observed was characterised by clear expertise and

the lucid demonstration of techniques, for example, the desired result in building on patterns, shapes and colour. Pupils respond well and are very often inspired by their teacher's interest and enthusiasm in art. Pupils are always ready to apply intellectual and creative effort in class, as a result of their own positive attitudes, the clear learning ethos in the school and the good relationships that teachers maintain and foster in class. The majority show interest and sustain concentration well. They understand what they are doing and know how to improve their work because of the clear explanations and instructions that their teachers give them. They are given an appropriate amount of individual support, but at the same time the teachers encourage the pupils to be independent and to use their skill; for example, in making card block prints in Year 4.

99. The subject is well managed. The curriculum guidance helpfully supports teachers' planning and builds on pupils' skills and techniques from year to year. The co-ordinator monitors teaching and learning through scrutiny of pupils' work on display, examination of teachers' planning and feeding back to teachers, but this area is capable of further development. The display of pupils' work has a positive impact on the school environment and it is clear that they take pride in their work. Art makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through working with visiting local artists and visiting art and sculpture galleries. Resources to support the subject are good, accessible and of good quality. Currently, assessment takes place termly on a given day. The assessment process is sound. Computer-aided art and design is developing satisfactorily throughout the school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

100. Only one junior lesson was observed during the course of the inspection. However, inspectors looked at a range of evidence around the school, including classroom displays, photographs of past work, folders and books of work. In addition, there were discussions with staff and pupils and a selection of pupils work across all year groups was looked at in detail. Standards at the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6 are in line with those expected nationally and this maintains the standard that existed at the time of the last inspection.
101. By Year 2, pupils work competently with a range of tools and materials to produce recognisable products. In each year group the pupils are encouraged to follow a design process of planning, making and evaluating. This was evident in a range of displays, including work by Year 1 on homes. Pupils have made model houses successfully as a part of their topic on homes. Pupils in Year 2 have made vehicles to carry a soft toy. The vehicles meet the criteria they are given, in that they move, carry the toy and are strong enough to survive being played with. Year 2 pupils have used computers successfully to create examples of simple textile designs; pupils assess and evaluate the design critically to decide whether or not it meets the criteria they have been given.
102. By Year 6, pupils have established effective techniques for developing their work. In a lesson where they are asked to design a poster to help to sell a specially designed candle they use a logical step-by-step approach to their work successfully. Firstly, they draft out ideas and then they assess what they have done, carefully evaluating their work against the criteria given. They label sketches and details of their design and discuss their reasons with each other before starting on the end product. Pupils bring a range of skills from different disciplines, including knowledge of font styles and sizes from information and communication technology and measuring skills from mathematics.
103. On the basis of limited evidence the quality of teaching appears to be at least satisfactory, with some good features. Teachers' planning is very effective, with all elements of the curriculum covered. It is clear that the resources provided are of good quality, although there is little evidence that pupils, especially the older juniors, have the opportunity to work in a range of resistant materials such as wood or plastic with good quality tools. It is apparent that teachers give equal weight to all aspects of the design process, with pupils given good opportunities to plan, make and evaluate their products.

104. From discussions with a range of pupils it is clear that pupils enjoy the subject. They are able to explain clearly the choices they have made and the reasoning behind them. From limited evidence it is clear that they work sensibly and co-operatively, sharing equipment well. The development of the subject does not form part of the current school improvement plan priorities, but the co-ordinator has assembled an 'Excellence File' evaluating the quality of what the school does at present and where development and training is needed.

GEOGRAPHY

105. Only one infant lesson and one junior lesson were observed during the inspection. Further evidence was gained from an analysis of pupils' work in books, folders and on display around the school and by talking to staff and pupils. Pupils attain standards that are in line with those expected nationally at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. They have been maintained at the level reported previously. Infant and junior pupils make sound progress, overall. They make good progress in their mapping skills. Teachers work closely with support staff to enable all pupils to be fully included in the good range of activities, especially the school's very good use of day and residential trips.
106. Year 1 pupils use their drawing and painting skills successfully to make a sketch map of Needingworth village. They begin to use symbols to show where some of the main facilities are, for example, the village shop. They extend their mapping skills and knowledge by using a sketch map to follow a trail around the school's grounds and premises. Most know the main points of the compass and know how to find north, for example, by using a compass or looking at direction indicator on top of the school clock. They use a simple happy or sad face symbol to indicate which parts of the school they like or dislike. Most Year 2 pupils have sound knowledge and understanding of contrasting places in this country and in other parts of the world. They talk enthusiastically about their recent visit to Hunstanton. They know that they are both in the area of East Anglia and that Hunstanton is by the sea and has lots of big houses overlooking the beach and the cliffs. Many pupils know some of the differences between living in their village and living in the village of Tocuaro in Mexico. They use geographical terms accurately, for example, 'mountains' when describing the area in Mexico. More able pupils use their writing skills well to describe how the 'adobe' houses are different from their own homes, explaining how they are cool inside even when the weather is hot.
107. Junior pupils extend their mapping skills effectively, particularly during fieldwork activities. Year 3 visit Burwell House and during their stay, pupils complete a detailed sketch-map of the local village. Pupils apply these skills effectively when studying the River Stour at Flatford Mill, their study of the Norfolk coast at Sheringham and in orienteering activities during their visit to the Mepal Activity Centre. Year 4 pupils use old and modern maps and photographs of Brighton to identify how the seaside town has changed. For example, many show a good awareness of how the environment has suffered from the greatly increased number of houses and extending roads and railways. They describe how woodland surrounding the town has been greatly reduced, although few try to give reasons for the changes. Year 4 pupils have a sound understanding of similarities between Brighton and their local area near Cambridge - for example, many tourists and expensive houses - but few explain the main differences in enough detail. Most Year 5 and Year 6 pupils have a good knowledge of the journey of a river from its sources to the estuary. They use terms such as 'meander' and 'flood plain' accurately to describe some of the river's main features. Some of the more able know and locate some of the world's largest rivers such as the Nile and the Amazon. Some show a good understanding of the importance of water in such countries as Ghana and the valuable contribution made by aid agencies in bringing clean water to remote villages.
108. Pupils have a positive attitude to geography. Many are keen to learn more about the world in which they live and to improve their knowledge and understanding of major world events. Teachers use pupils' interest well to encourage them to find out more about different places in the world. For example, Year 3 pupils worked well in groups to produce a booklet on different countries in the Commonwealth. They use their research skills effectively, for example, by getting information

from the Internet. Pupils use maps, drawings and photographs to illustrate their work, although some copy the information directly into their booklets rather than improving their understanding by putting it into their own words.

109. Teaching in the two lessons observed was never less than sound. Teachers plan their lessons in detail and include a good range of activities to meet different learning needs. They are well organised and use resources very effectively to gain pupils' interest and attention. For example, in a Year 4 lesson, the teacher used photographs and maps of Brighton very effectively to focus pupils' attention on how the town had changed and developed. She used questions well to extend pupils' answers, for example, in explaining why the map only showed part of one of the piers. Teachers do not always let pupils know exactly what is expected of them in the lesson. They do not maintain a brisk lesson pace with frequent reminders of what they expect pupils to achieve. This does not consistently ensure that all pupils achieve as much as they should in the time. Teachers assess what pupils know at the start and at the end of a unit of work. They use this information to guide their planning. They do not always identify how key skills and knowledge link closely to prior learning, for example, in describing how geographical processes change people's lives.

HISTORY

110. Only one infant and one junior lesson were observed during the course of the inspection. However, inspectors looked at a range of evidence around the school, including classroom displays, folders and books of work. In addition, there were discussions with staff and pupils and a selection of pupils' work across all year groups was looked at in detail. Standards at the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6 are in line with those expected nationally and this maintains the average standards that existed at the time of the last inspection.
111. By Year 2, the pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of the past from a range of sources. In a lesson, Year 2 pupils listen attentively to a former member of staff talk about her childhood holidays. They ask sensible questions that allow them to compare their experience with the different experiences of the adult. At year 6, pupils have a sound understanding of some of the key dates and events in British history. This arises from the well-planned history curriculum, which covers a sensible range of topics and skills. Year 5 pupils have developed good levels of research skills and these allow them to interpret arguments about the Tudor explorers attitudes to the native peoples they met. The pupils are interested in the documents the teacher provides for them and, although some find the task difficult, all identify some of the key features and characteristics of the attitudes the explorers exhibited.
112. The teaching in the two lessons seen was good. Detailed planning arising from the scheme of work matches pupils' needs well in most respects. However, although teachers assess what pupils know at the start and at the end of a unit of work, they do not always identify how key skills and knowledge link closely to prior learning. Pupils have a tendency to see historical events as being discrete and separate and do not see clearly how events from the past relate to their own lives. Teachers do make good use of support staff to help to develop the historical understanding of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Teachers are confident in the subject matter and by their enthusiasm foster interest by the pupils in the subject. The subject is well led. The 'Excellence File' for the subject, maintained by the co-ordinator and developed with the help of all the teachers, has analysed what the school does well in the subject and what staff need to do to improve teaching and learning further. The file contains good examples of work from all year groups and also proposals for future developments.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

113. Standards in information and communication technology are above average, overall. There has been a particular emphasis on the development of this subject since the last inspection when

standards were considered to be unsatisfactory. This is no longer the case and there have been significant developments and improvements at all levels, but particularly at junior level. Older pupils are achieving high levels of success in this subject. Most are well aware of their ability and capitalise on their skills in this discipline across the full range of subjects. Older pupils' confidence in using all forms of technology is now a notable feature of the school.

114. Infant pupils attain standards in line with those expected for the pupils' age. They bring good levels of knowledge from their time in the Foundation class and are confident working with computers. They get good levels of support from teachers and particularly from support staff, who encourage the pupils to try and overcome problems and difficulties themselves. In Year 2, the more able pupils are very confident and happily word-process a piece of work at a reasonable speed. Pupils in Year 1 use a paint program to produce recognisable pictures working with a range of commands. They are self-critical of their work and readily modify the initial results to get the outcome they desire. All pupils know and use the basic commands for starting programs, saving work, printing it and closing down the system.
115. The attainment of junior pupils is above that expected for their age and in Year 6 well above. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are competent across a range of skills. Year 3 word-process material competently, redrafting their work and modifying what they have done to get better results. Year 4 pupils work very effectively when creating a database tree. They show that they clearly understand the need for care in framing questions to allow the sorting and interrogation of data. They are able to add to their basic tree, amend it and combine new data with their existing materials. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 show confidence in a greater range of skills. They readily use computers to seek, organise and manipulate information and data. Year 6 pupils show very good research skills when looking up information on the Internet for their science activity. They are selective in choosing the relevant information from a wealth of material. They know to cross-check the accuracy of the facts and that some sources are more reliable than others. In addition, they are very competent in handling and manipulating data and figures. They move confidently between spreadsheets to sort information and make calculations and word processing to record ideas and the processes they use.
116. The quality of teaching is good in the juniors and at times very good. Less teaching was seen in the infants and usually it was the role of the classroom assistants to support the pupils. Teaching was always satisfactory, but in a number of lessons where the teacher had planned to use information technology the pupils never actually used it. In the junior department the teachers are confident in their use of the equipment and their subject knowledge is good. They make good use of the digital projector, demonstrating tasks at the start of lessons and summarising work at the end of the lessons. The pupils respond well to the high expectations of the teachers and share their confidence in the subject. The pace of lessons is always good and teachers do not allow pupils to be distracted from the task in hand. They expect and get good levels of co-operation between the pupils to overcome difficulties they meet. Planning and preparation is very good. Teachers know many of the pitfalls of technology and prepare sensible contingencies to cope with difficulties such as the Internet slowing or crashing. In a Year 6 science lesson that relied on the pupils' access to a variety of websites the teacher had not only researched a number of potential sites to assess their appropriateness but had downloaded a number of pages into a file in case there was a problem. Teachers consistently emphasise the safe and secure use of the Internet in line with the school policy.
117. At the time of the last inspection the subject was judged to be unsatisfactory throughout the school and teacher knowledge was said to be weak. This is no longer the case; there have been clear improvements since that time. The subject is now making a significant contribution to raising standards in other subjects, such as science and mathematics. The parents have made a significant financial contribution to the development of the computer suite through the Home-School association. The number of computers in the school is now good and the level of related equipment, such as digital cameras and projectors, is improving well. Teachers have all received training and support and their competence and confidence is high because of this. Support staff are also being trained and the importance of their work is recognised in the shared co-ordinator role of one teacher and one support assistant.

118. The school is on the brink of further significant developments in the subject. It is a member of a local cluster of schools focused on the high school. These schools are ready to move to broadband technology allowing faster access to the Internet and greater curriculum development. To support this, the school has created a mathematics curriculum package which is being used as the model for the cluster in other subjects. It has recently acquired and is trying out software which can be used to assess and develop pupils' skills in the subject. This will enhance the good assessment systems already in place.

MUSIC

119. No lessons were observed in Year 6, due to timetable arrangements during the inspection, so it is not possible to make a judgement on the standards attained by the end of Year 6. However, by the end of Year 2 and in Years 3, 4 and 5, pupils' attainment in music is in line with national expectations. Pupils take part in a comprehensive programme of music that is built around a useful policy, a well-balanced scheme of work and medium-term plans. This gives effective guidance for the teaching of skills throughout the school.
120. Overall, pupils make good progress in the lessons seen. The pupils are taught to handle the instruments with proper care and thought. They keep a steady beat accurately in time to the music. Effective teaching ensures that the pupils make sound progress and that their understanding is well-developed through the successful introduction of subject terminology, such as 'ostinato' and 'pentatonic'. In Year 2, pupils make good use of untuned percussion instruments to accompany an imaginary weather story. This makes a good link with geography and English by reinforcing effectively their understanding of the different kinds of weather and using words to describe it. In Year 3, useful opportunities are provided for the pupils to record and evaluate their performance, while in Year 4, pupils use their well-developed English skills to compose a song and then set music to it by using notes from the pentatonic scale. Pupils in Year 5, work well in pairs to create a rhythm against a regular pulse and refine their compositions successfully using notation.
121. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection when teaching was satisfactory, overall. Stimulating teaching ensures that pupils listen attentively, are well-behaved and persevere at the tasks set. For example, pupils in Year 5 work effectively in groups to create a rhythm pattern. They all concentrate and eagerly perform and talk about how they can improve their compositions. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and make good use of time and resources. For example, the "Thunder and Lightning Polka" was selected effectively to reinforce the pupils' imaginations about the weather in Year 2. In all lessons the pace is suitable and this challenges pupils of all abilities and keeps them focused. Planning is effective and teachers, teaching assistants and learning support staff collaborate very well together.
122. The music curriculum is good. There is a choir, which sings at a number of concerts both in school and in the local community. For example, they sang at the recent Jubilee street party in the village. Pupils are given various opportunities to perform publicly through concerts and celebrations of religious festivals. Visiting specialists further enhance the curriculum by providing tuition for the cornet and clarinet. The music that is played in assembly reinforces effectively the themes that the pupils have been learning about. Information and communication technology is not yet used sufficiently to support pupils' learning.
123. The subject is currently without a co-ordinator, but it is overseen by the headteacher. The teachers' planning is well-supported through the use of a developmental programme of work. The previous co-ordinator linked two schemes together appropriately to meet the needs of the school. There are no formal assessment procedures in place to measure the pupils' progress. Visiting specialist musicians, such as peripatetic music teachers and local professional musicians, enhance the music curriculum positively through their performance and their useful involvement of the pupils in workshops. A cultural awareness day provided very good opportunities for the pupils to experience music and dance from India. The resources for music are stored centrally and are good in quantity and quality. Instruments reflect other than western traditions and are used regularly to create mood and atmosphere.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

124. During the inspection, the focus was on games, dance and swimming, although poor weather limited the opportunities for pupils to develop and apply their skills. Inspectors only observed a

small number of lessons. Further evidence was gained from observing extra-curricular activities, looking at the physical education news board and talking to staff and pupils. Pupils attain standards at the end of Year 6 that are above those expected nationally, especially in games, athletics and swimming. Pupils attain standards at the end of Year 2 that are in line with expectations in most activities. They are above expected levels in swimming. Standards have improved in the juniors since the last inspection. They have been maintained at a similar level to that reported previously in the infants. Pupils continue to attain high standards in swimming.

125. Pupils clearly enjoy physical activities and participate enthusiastically. They benefit from opportunities to apply their skills in a good range of extra-curricular clubs, including football, rugby, netball and summer games club. Some of these are organised and run by parent helpers. The school also benefits from the use of facilities at the local tennis club and sports field. Pupils participate in competitive fixtures with other local schools, for example, in football, cricket, athletics and cross-country running. The school has been especially successful in local schools' football, cross-country, athletics and cricket competitions. It recently was joint-winner of the Cambridgeshire Primary Schools athletics championships. The cricket team was placed third in the East Anglian zone of a national competition, having won the Cambridgeshire county part of the tournament. Year 6 pupils enjoy outdoor and adventurous activities when they attend a course at the water sports centre at Mepal. Pupils sustain high standards in swimming through good use of the school's own swimming pool. Junior pupils also benefit from regular opportunities to use the pool at the nearby feeder secondary school in St. Ives. The school is an accredited 'Health Promoting School' and pupils are made more aware of the need to keep fit and healthy, for example, by taking part in 'Walk To School Week' and sporting sponsored events. The school's positive approach to the subject is clearly reflected in the pupils' enthusiastic attitudes and enjoyment in the school's success. All pupils take part enthusiastically, including those with special educational needs. For example, the learning support assistant supports a pupil with significant physical handicaps very effectively. She works alongside him in the pool providing very good physical support and improving his technique.
126. Year 2 pupils know and remember the movements of a traditional dance sequence. They perform it well in pairs, keeping in time to the musical beat. They sustain their interest soundly as they practise it prior to a public performance later in the week. Pupils' games skills are developed soundly in the infants. They are built on very effectively in the juniors. Most Year 3 pupils hit the ball consistently well and accurately when using a cricket bat. Most throw accurately under-arm and catch the ball consistently in two hands. Some throw over-arm well although few do this with consistent accuracy. They evaluate their own performance as well as that of others, identifying effectively ways in which they can improve, for example, by keeping their arm straighter when throwing under-arm. Year 6 pupils extend these skills successfully when applying them to tennis. Most show good racket skills, hitting the ball consistently on the forehand, although their technique does not always ensure that the hit is accurate.
127. Pupils attain good standards in swimming. Pupils from the Reception class onwards are given a weekly lesson in small groups in the school's outdoor pool. Most pupils are swimming with confidence and many show improving stroke technique, for example, in breaststroke and back crawl. The least confident pupils push off from the side and use a float to practise their front crawl leg-kick effectively. Further opportunities for junior pupils to be taught by trained instructors at St. Ivo Pool enhance their skills. Their swimming ability also encourages Year 6 pupils to participate fully in water-based activities, for example, sailing, when attending the Mepal Water Sports Centre.
128. Teaching in the small number of lessons observed was good overall. It was never less than sound and contained some excellent practice. Teachers, support staff and parents work closely together to give provide individual support and help for pupils. This encourages them to practise and improve their skills. For example, in a Year 3 games lesson, the teacher and the two support staff moved around the various activity groups. They intervened effectively, for example, to demonstrate the correct technique when using a cricket bat. They then encouraged pupils to practise this in their groups. This resulted in more pupils successfully hitting the ball and gaining more enjoyment from their success. Teachers use good subject knowledge and very good demonstrations to

ensure that pupils know exactly what they have to do and how to improve their performance. In a Year 5 swimming lesson, the teacher clearly demonstrates how to push off effectively from the side of the pool before going into a glide. The teacher then challenged the pupils to show that they are getting better "Forget widths, we are now going for lengths!" The pupils responded enthusiastically and achieved well.

129. The subject co-ordinator took on the management of the subject at the start of the school year. Her enthusiastic and positive approach ensures that the subject has maintained a high profile. She has worked closely with staff and parents to enable pupils to take part in a good range of activities. The co-ordinator, together with the governor with responsibility for the subject, has monitored and evaluated lessons. This has led to areas for development being identified and targets set. The co-ordinator has used questionnaires to find out what pupils think of the subject. The school has recently purchased new fixed gymnastics equipment for the hall. The co-ordinator has arranged for the subject adviser from the local education authority to train staff in its use. The school has very good facilities and resources and makes very good use of them to offer an interesting and challenging programme.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

130. Pupils attain standards that are in line with those expected nationally at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards have been maintained at the level reported in the last inspection. Inspectors only observed one lesson during the inspection. Further evidence was gained from an analysis of pupils' work in books, folders and on display around the school and by talking to staff and pupils. Pupils make good progress in their learning throughout the school. Junior pupils gain a good understanding of how religious beliefs and traditions influence their lives and those of others. Those with special educational needs receive good individual support from teaching and support staff. This enables them to be included fully and to make valuable contributions in the full range of learning activities.
131. Most infant pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of Christian beliefs and traditions. Many Year 2 pupils knew that Jesus was a good storyteller and talked about Bible stories they had read and discussed, for example, 'The Prodigal Son'. They used their writing skills effectively to explain what the story was about. For example, one pupil explained that 'you should forgive' and another thought that 'you should not be jealous'. Year 2 pupils soundly extended their knowledge of Christianity by visiting the local Anglican Church. They enjoyed their visit, particularly the colourful stained glass windows. Most Year 2 pupils have a sound knowledge of the events of the first Christmas and Easter. Many describe how Jesus rode on a donkey as palm leaves were thrown on to the road in front of him. They know that the Bible is the holy book for Christians and that other religions have their own holy books, for example, the Qu'rân. More able Year 2 pupils know that holy books are about God and that some of them are in a rolled-up scroll rather than in a book with different pages.
132. Junior pupils extend their knowledge of Christianity through a more detailed study of the main Christian events, for example, festivals, weddings and baptism. They build successfully on earlier learning, for example, using their literacy skills well to describe in detail the events at Easter. One pupil wrote ' He was on a donkey, not a chariot. But I didn't care. I clapped and cheered with the rest!' Many pupils have a good understanding of the beliefs and practices of other religions. Year 3 and Year 4 pupils know some of the special meals eaten by Jews. They know and draw accurately some different religious symbols such as the Star of David and the Sikh's 5 K's. They know some of the different places of worship, for example, a Sikh Gurdwara and that Guru Granth Sahib is a holy book. The school has planned a visit to the Gurdwara in St. Ives to extend pupils' knowledge. Years 5 and 6 have a sound understanding of how the Christian creation story differs from that of the Hindus. Pupils recalled some of religious beliefs and practices and the interesting events of the cultural awareness week held in the previous year, for example, those of the Krishna Society. They clearly enjoyed talking to people and hearing their different views.

133. There was insufficient evidence to give an overall judgement on teaching. It was good in the one lesson observed. The teacher used good resources effectively to focus pupils' attention. She used a small version of the Qu'rân to stimulate their interest and asked questions well to extend their knowledge and understanding of why this book was 'special'. She worked very well with learning support staff to ensure that all pupils were fully involved and to support the 'scribes'. These pupils had been nominated by others in the class and they were required to note down 'what they had learnt'. The teacher used their notes successfully in the end of the lesson feedback activity to remind pupils of some of the key facts learnt during the lesson. For example, many Year 2 pupils remembered that the Qu'rân was written in Arabic and that it is read from right to left, the opposite way to the way we read the Bible.
134. The subject is soundly managed. The two co-ordinators have used national subject guidance and units of work from the Cambridgeshire Agreed Syllabus to improve the range of learning opportunities. They encourage teachers to use pre- and post-unit assessments to check on pupils' progress and to inform their teaching plans. The school is looking to increase the use of the local church to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of its traditions and events, for example, the Christian calendar, and pupils' biblical knowledge. The school uses visitors effectively to promote pupils' knowledge and understanding of religious, social and moral issues. For example, during the inspection, a local Christian group presented a short play to encourage pupils to think of God and allow him to put any worries or fears into perspective. Teachers also use opportunities in literacy activities successfully to further promote pupils' awareness of how to deal with conflicting emotions and feelings.