

INSPECTION REPORT

CHESTERTON CE (VC) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bicester, Oxfordshire

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123101

Headteacher: Mrs M Jane Moffatt

Reporting inspector: Mr Michael Allcock
19834

Dates of inspection: 29th April – 2nd May 2002

Inspection number: 194878

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 category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	5 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Alchester Road Chesterton Bicester Oxon
Postcode:	OX26 1UN
Telephone number:	01869 252498
Fax number:	01869 244012
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr John Nichols
Date of previous inspection:	2 nd June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
19834	Michael Allcock	Registered inspector	English; science; history; music; physical education; special educational needs	What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve further? The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9147	Susan Stock	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
27568	Midge Davidson	Team inspector	Mathematics; information and communication technology; art and design; design and technology; geography; religious education; Foundation Stage; equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

Serco QAA
Herringston Barn
Herringston
Dorchester
Dorset
DT2 9PU

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Chesterton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary is a four-class school in a North Oxfordshire village, near Bicester. It has 105 pupils on roll, so is smaller than average. It serves the village and surrounding area, but pupils also travel from outside the catchment area. About one per cent of pupils come from ethnic minorities, but none has English as an additional language, which is low. About five per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals; below average. Twenty-four per cent of pupils are on the register of special educational needs, which is about average. One pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Need. Those pupils with the most significant special needs have moderate learning difficulties or physical disability. Children enter the Foundation Stage in the reception class with broadly average attainments.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Chesterton Church of England Primary is an effective school. The pupils reach above average standards in English and mathematics and standards overall are average by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6. Pupils achieve appropriately overall, due to good teaching, their positive attitudes to their learning and good behaviour. The headteacher provides very clear educational direction for the school. She receives active support from all within the school's family. The school has high running costs, as with all small schools, but still provides sound value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in English, mathematics, history and physical education are above average and pupils achieve well in these subjects.
- The quality of teaching is good or better in two out of three lessons, promoting pupils' effective learning.
- The headteacher provides very strong leadership, with active support from the governing body, ensuring that the school is well managed.
- Pupils behave well, work hard and have very constructive relationships, both with adults and their peers. This promotes good personal development and improving academic standards.
- The school fulfils its Christian aims and values and works hard to include all groups from within its community, and from its partner special school, to the benefit of all.

What could be improved

- Standards are below average by the time pupils leave the school in information and communication technology (ICT), art and design, geography and music.
- The curriculum lacks balance and the statutory requirement to teach all the Programmes of Study of the National Curriculum in art and design, geography and music is not fulfilled.
- Attendance is below the national average and needs to improve to help to maintain enhanced pupil standards.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvement since its last inspection in June 1997. It has also made significant improvement in the last year, following a steep fall in results in end of Year 6 tests in the previous two years, against the national upwards trend. The newly appointed headteacher, staff and governors have worked hard as a team to halt this decline. Increased levels of classroom monitoring, focused clearly on raising standards of teaching and learning, changes to the curriculum, including modifications to secure improved standards in English and mathematics, a more comprehensive assessment programme, with improved procedures and resultant data used more effectively to track pupils' progress and determine what they should do next to move on further, have all played an important part in this process. Standards in English and mathematics have gone up considerably since 2001, science also, but less significantly. Standards seen in lessons in the core subjects have improved since the last inspection, when they were reported to be average overall. The school is on track to meet its

targets for this year and has set very ambitious targets for next year. The quality of teaching has improved markedly since that reported in 1997. The curriculum is still in need of attention, although improvements have been made in targeted areas. There are already plans in place to address most of the issues to do with the curriculum identified during the inspection. The process has been impeded by staff change and periods of absence, which the school has managed well.

All the key issues from the previous report have been addressed. The five years since that time have seen many changes. Some of the work undertaken to address the 1997 priorities, including the national initiatives to improve standards in literacy and numeracy, is now in the review process again. The school understands that modification to its curriculum, particularly in terms of the amount of time spent on specific subjects, is central to addressing the key issues from its present inspection.

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	D	E
Mathematics	B	D	D	E
Science	A	D	D	E

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

Standards attained by pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2001 were below average compared to all schools and well below average compared to schools with similar levels of free school meals. There was a considerable level of mobility within last year's Year 6 group. Several of the group who had attained higher levels at Year 2 had left, including two who were transferred to secondary school a year early. Poor correlation between teacher assessments of pupils' attainment and eventual test results in English and science were seen. This will have had a negative effect on expectations for those individuals and this group overall. Pupils in the end of Year 2 tests in 2001 attained above average standards in reading, average standards in writing and below average standards in mathematics compared to all schools. Compared to similar schools, reading results were average, writing below average and mathematics well below average. In teacher assessments in science, the school's performance was well above the national average. The trend at Year 2 was also downwards in 2001. However, not too much can be drawn from one group's performance in a school of this size, as there is greater likelihood of fluctuation year on year, where small numbers are involved.

Children enter the reception class with average levels of attainment. The youngest children spend very little time in reception, attending full-time, before they come to the end of their Foundation Stage career. The close links the school has with its partner playgroup goes some way to alleviating this anomaly. Children make satisfactory progress and the great majority are on target to meet the Early Learning Goals in all Foundation Stage areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1. In lessons seen during the inspection, the current Year 2 pupils are attaining broadly average standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing, mathematics and science. Standards in Year 6 are above average in English, mathematics, history and physical education. They are average in science, religious education and design and technology, but below average in information and communication technology, art and design, geography and music. Achievement in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory overall. However, pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school due to the quality of support they receive.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy learning and try hard to succeed, especially when motivated by interesting and challenging lessons. Pupils like coming to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good overall. Pupils behave well in lessons. This results in a happy and busy working environment. Around the school pupils socialise together very well, which creates a pleasant, calm atmosphere.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are polite and friendly. Their personal development is very good, as are the relationships between all members of the school community. Pupils work well together, supporting each other in a mature way.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Pupils' attendance has been below the national average for several years. Unauthorised absence is below national averages, but authorised absence is above.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Very good

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

The quality of teaching is good overall. During the inspection, teaching was satisfactory or better in all the lessons. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. This shows significant improvement since the last inspection and promotes good learning by the pupils. However, staff changes and improvements to the monitoring of lessons and school documentation have not had sufficient time to impact on standards in all subjects. The school works hard to meet the needs of all its pupils. Effective provision is made for the children of travellers. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons and when withdrawn for individual or group work.

Teaching is good in the core subject areas of English and mathematics, promoting improved standards for pupils. Key basic skills of literacy and numeracy are very well taught, particularly in Years 3 to 6, ensuring that pupils achieve well in these important areas. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are well promoted by work they do in subjects across the curriculum. Teaching is also a strong feature in work in science, ICT, religious education, history and physical education promoting improving standards overall, although they are not yet high enough in ICT. There were no subjects where teaching was weak. However, in design and technology, geography and music too little evidence was seen to make overall judgements. There are no significant weaknesses in aspects of teaching and significant strengths in many. Teachers display secure subject knowledge, plan carefully and use a well-judged mix of methods in challenging and effectively managed lessons. Resources, including good deployment of the effective teaching assistants, are well used. This encourages pupils to work hard and productively, concentrate for extended periods and make good gains in their learning. The amount of voluntary research Years 3 to 6 pupils undertake indicates that they have good awareness of their own learning needs.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Unsatisfactory overall. Sound for children in the Foundation Stage. For pupils in Years 1 to 6 there is insufficient time provided to acquire skills progressively in some subjects, with some National Curriculum Programmes of Study not fully taught in art and design, geography and music.
Provision for pupils with	Good. The needs of these pupils are accurately assessed. They are well

special educational needs	supported and their progress is carefully monitored.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Good provision is made for pupils' spiritual, moral and social education. Sound provision is made for their cultural development. The inclusive ethos prepares pupils well for adult life in a diverse society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good overall. The school is an open and welcoming community that provides good support for its pupils. Very good procedures are in place for child protection and there is good monitoring of the pupils' behaviour.

There are very effective links with parents. The school fully involves them in all aspects of its work, including in the classroom and by leadership of extra-curricular activities.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall. Very strong leadership is provided by the headteacher. Good levels of delegation to the committed staff team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good overall. Governors are knowledgeable and effective. They play an active part in the life of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Data is increasingly used to set challenging targets. Strengths and weaknesses are carefully analysed to plan effective action.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Governors seek best value for the money they spend, linking this carefully to agreed priorities on the improved development plan.

There is a good number of very well qualified staff to meet the needs of the school's curriculum. The new classrooms are of high quality and provide a spacious and pleasant learning environment. However, there is disruption in Class 4 when it is used as a corridor. The school benefits from large and attractive grounds, which are very well maintained. Resources for learning are good overall and well used. ICT provision is very good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behaviour is good, which means that their children enjoy coming to school. The school is well led and managed. They appreciate the accessibility of all staff, feeling confident about the response they would get should a problem arise. They feel that their partnership with the school is strong. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information they receive about their children's standards and progress. The amount and consistency of homework their children are set. Activities provided by the school outside lessons.

Inspection findings support the positive views parents have of the school. The school provides many opportunities to find out how their children are getting on. However, actual reports lack focus and do not give a clear indication of how their children are doing against national expectations for their age. Homework is regularly set and carefully followed up in lessons. It is a strong feature of work in Years 3 to 6 and is satisfactory overall. There are satisfactory overall levels of extra-curricular activities. However, they are almost all for older pupils. The inspectors support the parents' views that it would now be appropriate to introduce more such activities for younger pupils. The school agrees with this finding in principle.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Results in national tests in English, mathematics and science, the core subjects tested at the end of Years 2 and 6, have declined since the school's last inspection. Since then there has been a change to the way schools are compared. Previously, judgements about results in national tests were based on the proportion of pupils attaining the expected Level 2 or above at the end of Year 2 and Level 4 or above at the end of Year 6. Now, points are allocated to the levels attained by pupils and individual schools' average points scores compared with all schools nationally and also those with similar levels of free school meals. The school's low proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals puts it in the category of the most socially advantaged schools in the country. By the end of Year 6, when pupils leave the school, standards were below the national average in English, mathematics and science in 2001, the last year for which results are available, compared to all schools. When compared to similar schools, standards were well below average in all three core subjects. The relatively low numbers taking the tests make comparisons less reliable than in larger schools, but there are also other reasons for these results. There are high levels of pupil mobility in the school, so comparisons against results obtained by the same group at the end of Year 2 are not justifiable as several pupils have left, including many of the highest attaining. Furthermore, in recent years some of the highest attaining pupils were transferred to secondary school at the end of Year 5. In 2001, two pupils who would have attained the higher Level 5 or above in the national tests were already at secondary school, having moved there in 2000, so reducing the average points score, which would otherwise have been about average overall.
2. The present headteacher is relatively new to her post. On appointment, she recognised that the trend in standards in tests was downwards, against the national upwards trend. Vigorous action to improve results was instigated, with the active co-operation of the cohesive staff team and supportive governing body. There was swift attention to the curriculum, with particular focus on English and mathematics. Assessment procedures were improved, with sharper focus on the data provided to enable planning to be appropriately adjusted based on evidence gained. Regular monitoring of lessons was introduced, with both governors and the local education authority inspectors involved alongside senior managers. This was aimed at bringing about improved standards as a result of improvements to teaching and learning. Teaching is now good overall, but is very good in Years 3 to 6. These changes help to explain why the findings of the inspection differ from the previous year's test results, which were, in any case, attained by a different group of pupils. Evidence obtained from lessons, talking to pupils and scrutinising their completed work closely shows that standards are now average overall, but they are above average in the key areas of English and mathematics. The school had identified as a major area for attention its failure to get a sufficiently high proportion of its pupils to the higher levels, Levels 3 and 5 and above, to gain the additional points this guaranteed and, also, to appropriately challenge its higher attaining pupils. This is now more consistently the case, so that both school predictions and inspection evidence agree that a higher proportion of Year 6 pupils will reach the higher levels in tests this year than recently at the end of Year 6.
3. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 when compared to all schools, pupils' standards were above average in reading, average in writing and below average in mathematics. When compared to similar schools, pupils' standards in reading were average, in writing below average and in mathematics well below average. The school was not successful in getting enough pupils to the higher levels in writing and mathematics to gain the points needed to reach the points scores common in previous years. In reading, not enough pupils reached the expected level to keep up the points score, even though attainment was above average at the higher Level 3 and above. In lessons seen in the present Year 2, standards were judged to be broadly average in all aspects of English and also in mathematics and science. The present Year 2 is a small group, about one in two of whom have special educational needs. Despite this and other difficulties within this group, school assessment and inspection evidence broadly

agree that the present Year 2 will attain similar standards to those seen in 2001 overall. Throughout the school, there is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.

4. The school has analysed these results carefully. It is now tracking the progress made by year groups, but also individuals and groups; for example, boys and girls, pupils with educational needs and the children of travellers, within year groups to see what modifications in provision need to be made to raise standards further. The school realises that the capacity to use electronic methods to track pupils would speed up the process considerably. The headteacher identified the decline in standards in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 as the key area of weakness. A range of measures, including well taught booster lessons, active preparation for the test situation and very strong teaching at the top of the school by the two temporary teachers sharing the leadership of Class 4, with the Years 5 and 6 pupils, has turned the decline in standards around. The current Year 5 is predicted to continue the upwards trend, as high standards were seen in lessons for this group during the inspection.
5. Children entered the reception class at different stages during the current school year. Therefore, some of the youngest had spent relatively little time in Class 1 when the inspection took place. This has limited the impact that the school's provision has made on them. Standards of attainment on entry, as measured by the local education authority's baseline assessment procedures, is broadly average, however, the full range is seen, including high attainment. Children reach standards close to those expected by the Foundation Stage curriculum in all areas of learning. This shows broadly satisfactory achievement overall, particularly as the most recent intake has only just started to attend full-time. Almost all children are on target to enter Year 1 having attained all the Early Learning Goals. Teaching is satisfactory for children in the Foundation Stage.
6. Achievement is also satisfactory for pupils in Years 1 to 6. However, teaching is satisfactory with some good features, including in key areas like subject knowledge, planning and pupil management, for pupils in Years 1 and 2, so better progress is being made in lessons than in the Foundation Stage. Achievement is now satisfactory for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Teaching is very good for these pupils, however, deficiencies in provision for too many subjects has not yet allowed this to feed through into achievement that is commensurate with the standard of teaching and learning seen during the inspection. Too little time is spent on the core subject of science, and in information and communication technology (ICT), art and design, geography and music, so that pupils have gaps in their understanding and knowledge and have not regularly reinforced their skills. Deficiencies in the provision for the increasingly important subject of ICT have been addressed, but not soon enough for pupils to attain the standards expected of them by the end of Year 6. Standards in geography are also below average by the end of Year 6, with too little evidence seen of pupils building progressively over time on their prior attainments. Appropriate strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy and very strong teaching of the basic skills have meant that achievement in these two major curriculum areas is good.
7. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6, pupils' standards are above average in all three aspects of English, speaking and listening, reading and writing. They achieve as well as they should overall. Pupils listen attentively to adults and classmates in lessons and assemblies. Active listening skills are well taught in literacy and other lessons, so pupils become used to concentrating on what is being said, showing good levels of courtesy and respect, before making an appropriate response. Speaking skills are well promoted across the curriculum and reinforced in carefully planned work, including in personal, social and health education and drama. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are taught a range of strategies to build words and read simple books with increasing confidence and understanding. Older pupils read fluently and expressively. They are encouraged to choose challenging texts to read for pleasure and so attain the more complex skills they need to achieve well. Pupils of all levels of attainment are taught good reference skills, so are confident when involved in personal research in class or in the library. By the end of Year 2, pupils are spelling well-known simple words accurately. They are encouraged to make their writing interesting by selecting words imaginatively. Much work is still printed for all but the highest attaining Year 2 pupils and presentation is inconsistent in pupils' workbooks. By the end of Year 6, pupils redraft and edit their own work, writing for a

wider range of audiences. Writing skills are well promoted in other subjects, including history and science, which enables the pupils to consider the tone when writing for different purposes, for instance, when framing a report.

8. Standards are above average in mathematics by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6. Pupils achieve well. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain average standards and achieve satisfactorily. They order numbers accurately and use subject specific vocabulary. They use number bonds and early table knowledge appropriately in their work. They know the names of common two-dimensional shapes and simple solids and recognise their properties, including which of them are symmetrical. By the end of Year 6, pupils solve complex problems, explaining their strategies, working well co-operatively on demanding tasks. They are confident with decimals and percentages. Pupils apply their skills well when solving problems with shapes, including working out their areas and perimeters. Pupils throughout the school are given regular opportunities to improve their numeracy skills in mathematics lessons and widely across the curriculum. They work hard to achieve the individual numeracy targets set for them.
9. Standards in science are about average throughout the school. Although the amount of time allocated to the subject is low, the quality of teaching and the pupils' positive attitude to the active way the subject is taught has resulted in their achievement being satisfactory. Pupils have sound experimental skills, developed through an appropriate level of practical activities. There are a good number of science graduates on the staff, so appropriate technique and the use of subject specific terminology is insisted on. The school has identified the subject as the major curricular priority on its current development plan and has the staff and resources to improve standards substantially when intended improvements are in place.
10. By the time they leave the school, pupils attain below average standards in ICT, achieving appropriately, but from a relatively low base. However, by the end of Year 2 pupils reach above average standards and achieve well. This is due to the fact that the new scheme of work for the subject has not been long enough in place for the older pupils to have gained and reinforced the necessary skills to attain appropriate standards, as teaching is good throughout the school. Younger pupils use the mouse and keyboard accurately. They save and retrieve their work without help. They use programs to support their work in many subjects, including word-processing in English and data handling in mathematics. They are confident when controlling the movements of a floor turtle. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have had useful experience of presenting information using spreadsheets and using the Internet to facilitate their research. However, they have currently insufficient experience of using e-mails and controlling events and sensing external data.
11. Pupils' standards in religious education meet the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils achieve satisfactorily. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 understand that certain occasions are important to members of faith groups and we have particular symbols or special events to help us to celebrate them. They sensitively investigate feelings both of happiness and sadness. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 show interest in and empathy with the different faiths they study. Responses are represented effectively in a wide range of media, including drama. Visits to places of worship reinforces pupils' awareness of their significance to members of that particular faith. Work in religious education effectively promotes the school's inclusive ethos.
12. Standards in the other subjects of the curriculum vary markedly, particularly by the end of Year 6. By the end of Year 2, standards in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education are average. Pupils achieve appropriately in these foundation subjects. By the end of Year 6, standards in history and physical education are above average, with pupils achieving well. However, standards in art and design, geography and music are below average. Pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Standards in design and technology are average, with pupils achieving satisfactorily.
13. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported, often by one-to-one provision for those who have Statements of Special Educational Need. They make good progress, especially in

literacy and numeracy, and achieve well overall. Pupils' progress is closely monitored by the special needs co-ordinator, who liaises appropriately with class teachers, so that their input into pupils' individual education plans is becoming a more significant feature. Targets are achievable and progress towards them is regularly reviewed. The children of travellers are very well integrated into the school's community. They are well supported when in school and when travelling by the school and the very effective local education authority support service. These pupils achieve as well as they should on the basis of their entry standards.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. The pupils' very good attitudes and values and very good relationships make a very good contribution to their learning and personal development. There are very good attitudes and relationships throughout the school, between all groups of pupils and all the adults and the pupils. These very good relationships are characteristic of the school and are one of its strengths. These findings are similar to the previous inspection. Overall, the pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Although at the time of the previous inspection behaviour was found to be excellent, during the current inspection some pupils' behaviour in lessons was judged satisfactory and this has an impact on the overall judgement.
15. Pupils enjoy coming to school and talk with enthusiasm about all that the school has to offer. This is a view shared by the parents. A group of pupils from across the age range spoke confidently and with evident pleasure of their helpful and supportive teachers and favourite lessons. They were particularly proud of the way all the different age groups mix and have fun together. In lessons, pupils are keen to get on with their work because they are motivated by the tasks they are given to do. For example, in a Years 5 and 6 science lesson, pupils worked productively together investigating the needs of plants and seeds for pollination and germination, creating a busy and excited atmosphere because the teacher made learning fun. Even when tackling less tangible subjects, such as in a Years 3 and 4 religious education lesson when pupils were considering the symbolism linked to Pentecost, through the class teacher's sensitive linking of her pupils' own experiences to the lesson's theme, a sensible and reflective discussion took place. The majority of pupils demonstrate mature attitudes to their learning; they work sensibly and with concentration rising to the challenge when lessons are interesting and well planned. They are keen to make the most of the opportunities they are given to learn.
16. Behaviour throughout the school is good. In lessons, most pupils behave well because they enjoy their work and want to succeed. They know what is expected of them and respond accordingly. Occasionally, pupils can become distracted and lose concentration, which results in the flow of the lesson being disturbed. Amongst the youngest pupils this is sometimes so because they have yet to develop a proper understanding of well established classroom routines. However, there are high expectations throughout the school of the pupils' good behaviour. This is a feature of the school and results in a happy and busy working atmosphere, which benefits all members of the school community. Pupils and parents alike do not consider bullying to be a problem in the school and no pupil has ever been excluded. At lunchtimes and playtimes the pupils get on well together. The older pupils take care of the younger ones and this contributes to the family atmosphere, which pervades the school.
17. There are very good relationships between the pupils, which are built through all the different age groups socialising together and having a responsibility for each other. For example, it was noted that fellow pupils of one pupil with behavioural difficulties willingly supported and encouraged him to do his best without intervention from an adult. Between the adults in the school and all the pupils, there is a strong ethos of mutual respect. The class teachers know their pupils well and they enjoy each other's company. For example, in a Years 5 and 6 physical education lesson the teacher built excellent relationships with her pupils through humour and enthusiasm, which led to them being fully involved and making very good progress.
18. The pupils' personal development is very good. The majority of pupils are capable of organising themselves in lessons and working without constant teacher intervention and supervision. They listen well to their class teachers and each other. They get on well together, sharing resources

as appropriate, creating a purposeful working atmosphere. A particular feature of their personal development is their keenness to learn and the way they respond to the challenges they are set. For example, in a Years 5 and 6 literacy lesson the pupils listened carefully to their class teacher, concentrated well and tried their best to develop their own learning. Another impressive aspect of the pupils' personal development is the way all the pupils, including the youngest, welcome pupils from a local special school into their lessons and work together to their mutual benefit. This was seen in a reception class music lesson, when both sets of pupils derived great pleasure from dancing and singing together. Outside lessons pupils are keen to take responsibility and show initiative; for example, by organising resources, earning points for their groups and teams and fund-raising for different charities.

19. Attendance at the school is unsatisfactory. It is below the national average. This has been the case for the last three years and this year's figures suggest that this trend is continuing. The unauthorised absence is below the national average, but authorised absence is above the national average. The pupils' attendance for the previous year at 93.7 per cent falls below what is considered to be an acceptable level for primary aged pupils. The main contributing factor to this is the numbers of pupils involved in term-time holidays. The vast majority of pupils arrive at school on time. The efficient, friendly registration sessions ensure a prompt, but welcoming, start to the school day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

20. The quality of teaching is good overall and contributes significantly to the effective learning seen and to improving standards by the time the pupils leave the school. Teaching was satisfactory or better in all the lessons seen during the inspection. It was good or better in two out of every three lessons and very good in one in three. This represents good improvement since the last inspection, when significantly less high quality teaching was reported and in about one lesson out of eight unsatisfactory teaching was seen. The school has identified the use of a common format to ensure consistency in planning, and regular monitoring of teaching and learning as priorities to drive up standards. This is having the desired effect. There were key issues for the school to address in terms of planning what pupils of different ages should be learning and to consistently challenge the higher attaining pupils. These deficiencies have been successfully remedied.
21. The teaching staff has totally changed since the time of the last inspection. It is still in a state of flux, with one teacher leaving and three being appointed in the last school year. There are currently five teachers with part-time appointments, including the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO). Of these, three are on temporary appointments. Classes 1 and 4, for the youngest children, mainly of reception age, and the Years 5 and 6 pupils, are taught by two teachers job-sharing. The deputy head teacher is, at present, absent from her post on long-term sick leave. It is to the credit of the staff team that they have gelled so quickly into an effective, cohesive unit, under the very positive leadership of a relatively newly appointed headteacher.
22. The substantial majority of high quality teaching and learning was seen in Classes 3 and 4, for pupils in Years 3 to 6. However, good or very good teaching was seen in all parts of the school. Teaching is satisfactory for children in the Foundation Stage in the reception class. One of the class teachers, recently returned from maternity leave, now working part-time, had to respond to the needs of the school, as her teaching partner was unwell during the inspection. She, therefore, taught throughout the inspection, showing the degree of commitment that is typical in the school. Assessment is well used to plan the next stage of learning for these young children, some of whom have only just entered formal education. This ensures that the children have appropriate tasks and challenges them to work hard at their activities across the curriculum. The teacher and her teaching assistant have forged an effective working partnership. Teaching is satisfactory, but with many strong features in Years 1 and 2. Lessons are planned in considerable detail; the result of good understanding of the subjects of the National Curriculum and the learning needs of pupils of this age. The teacher manages pupils well, but is less effective in her management of time, both in terms of identifying when activities are due to take place and how long lessons should last, which causes important elements of some lessons to

be rushed or missed. Pupils show interest in the activities planned for them, concentrate for extended periods and work well at both guided tasks and when challenged to be more independent in their learning.

23. Teaching is very good in Years 3 to 6. The permanent teacher in Class 3, teaching the Years 3 and 4 pupils, and the two temporary teachers in Class 4, working with the Years 5 and 6 pupils, all taught consistently well throughout the inspection. For these pupils, teaching was very good in six out of ten lessons and good in all the rest except one, which was satisfactory. Specialist teaching by the local education authority's peripatetic music staff and by the instructor in the local swimming pool, alongside the Years 3 and 4 teacher and her highly effective teaching assistant, was always of high quality. Homework is a strong feature of the preparation for secondary school. Pupils are given challenging work to do at home, much involving personal research, often using computers. This has given pupils good insight into their own learning needs, which prompts them to undertake voluntary personal research at home into topics they are currently studying at school. Teachers pick up on this and the virtuous circle is completed by the use of this research in class, which inspires other pupils to emulate their peers. Teachers make high demands on their pupils. They match the work appropriately to the present needs of pupils of different ages and levels of attainment within their classes. In whole-class lessons; for example, in dance in Years 5 and 6 and English in Years 3 and 4, pupils are challenged to work at a great pace, take a degree of responsibility for their learning and attain above average standards.
24. The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is good overall. It is very good in Years 3 to 6. It has a substantial impact on the progress pupils make in lessons and the way they achieve over time. High quality basic skills teaching is one of the major reasons why standards in the key subjects of English and mathematics are now rising by the end of Year 6, after a period of decline that has gone on for several years in the case of mathematics. The school has worked hard on these areas. They have figured as priorities for improvement in the last two years on the school development plan. Teachers plan effective opportunities for these skills to be reinforced in lessons widely across the curriculum. Individual targets are set for pupils in their workbooks and signed off when they are achieved and the next stage of learning can be attempted. In some classes, particularly for younger learners, too many photocopied resources are employed, restricting the range of answers they can give or the length of response they can make, so that they make less progress than they might. Most often, and always in Years 3 to 6, teachers' expectations are high for pupils of all levels of attainment. Marking is effectively used to support pupils and carefully structured to give them a clear indication of what they must do next to improve. The quality of teaching reflects the teachers' good subject knowledge and understanding seen in literacy and numeracy hours.
25. Teaching is good overall in the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Teaching is also good in the extended core subjects of information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education. In any inspection of a small school there are limitations on the amount of direct observation of teaching that can be made. However, the way the timetable was arranged made it possible to make judgements on the following foundation subjects also. The quality of teaching seen was good overall in history and physical education. Insufficient evidence was obtained to judge standards in design and technology, geography and music. However, in some of the subjects the good quality of teaching seen, often by temporary teachers, a teaching assistant or outside specialists, has not fed through into above average attainment for pupils, due to deficiencies in the curriculum. This is the case in ICT and music. It is also true in science. Despite having two science graduates on the staff at present, pupils' standards are still only average by the end of Year 6, albeit an improvement on the two previous years. This is due to the low amount of time allocated to science and delays in the introduction of intended priorities to improve provision brought about by changes in staffing.
26. In almost all lessons there are strong features, which help to create the positive ethos and effective working environment of the school. This contributes to the good behaviour and very constructive relationships seen in lessons, pupils' improved achievement and their active response to their learning. Parents expressed very positive views about the quality of teaching

their children receive. Inspection evidence fully supports their opinions. However, inspectors found that homework was appropriately set, marked and followed up and plays an increasing part in pupils' learning as they move through the school. About one in four parents was not sure that this was the case.

27. Teachers make good use of the improved level of documentation for subjects, including schemes of work, plus effective supporting policies, such as that for teaching and learning, when they plan and assess pupils' work. This enables pupils to build progressively on previous learning. Teachers identify clearly in their planning the learning intentions for the pupils. They make sure pupils are quickly aware of them during lesson introductions, reinforce them during interactions with individuals and groups while activities take place and during the final review sessions to lessons. In the best lessons, pupils are made aware of how this learning will be developed subsequently. However, if there is too little time left for a detailed review, this opportunity is often missed. Teachers plan for ICT skills to be taught and computers to be used to support work appropriately across the curriculum. This is a developing feature, so that by the end of Year 6, pupils' standards, although improving, are below those expected for pupils of their age. Further down the school standards are higher; for example, a pupil in Year 4 had used his own initiative to download helpful information on Ancient Egypt from the Internet to support the class history topic.
28. Lessons are well resourced in almost all curriculum areas. The quality of resources and the motivational way teachers use them inspires pupils. For example, in a Years 3 and 4 science lesson on the earth's orbit around the sun, the use of role play, a video clip, art and design features and ICT resulted in a very stimulating lesson of great pace, where all pupils made significant gains in their learning. Pupils respond very positively to the level of challenge seen in the best lessons. Learning is good overall, and is very good in Years 3 to 6. Lesson pace is brisk, so pupils become used to working productively. They acquire new skills and understanding readily.
29. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Well-qualified teaching assistants work closely with class teachers to promote pupils' understanding and encourage them to stay on task and persevere. Where pupils are withdrawn for individual activities, work is well matched to the targets on their individual education plans. In most lessons, teachers match work appropriately to the learning needs of all pupils. They identify pupils with special educational needs clearly on their lesson planning and, if necessary, state what support, resources or specific activities they will receive. Through effective questioning and explanations, teachers and support staff are able to evaluate pupils' progress, focusing clearly on helping them to become independent learners. The children of travellers are well supported both when they are in school and when travelling. The school provision is further enhanced by teaching time and resources allocated by the local education authority's traveller education support team. This enables these pupils to make good progress overall. The school is committed to an inclusive approach to education. The close teaching links with Bardwell Special School, and its provision for pupils with special educational needs and other groups, are positive examples of the emphasis it places on the learning of all pupils.

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

30. At present the school does not provide a sufficiently broad and balanced curriculum in all subjects of the National Curriculum. The school has focused appropriately on literacy and numeracy, and in these subjects the curriculum is broad and balanced and has made a significant contribution to the recent improvement in standards. Significant improvements have been made to the religious education curriculum, based upon the Locally Agreed Syllabus. This is now securely in place and contributes effectively to the depth of understanding exhibited by pupils and to their personal and social development. There are new schemes of work in place for all subjects. As many of these have only been introduced recently, there are gaps in knowledge and experience for the older pupils in the school. This is most significant in the areas of art and design, geography and music. For example, pupils do not yet have sufficient breadth of

experience or opportunity to use the full range of media in art and design and have had limited exposure to the Programmes of Study in the geography and music curriculums. However, for younger pupils in the school, the introduction of these new schemes of work has already had a noticeable effect on the standards attained. This is particularly apparent in information and communication technology. These improved programmes of work have not yet had sufficient time to bring standards into line with expectations in information and communication technology, art and design, music and geography. The school has yet to give consideration to the time allocated to the teaching of the non-core subjects, which contributes to the lack of balance in the curriculum. This is particularly significant in music.

31. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. It is planned clearly and contributes towards the achievement children make to attain the Early Learning Goals set nationally for the end of the reception year. Strategies for teaching both literacy and numeracy are satisfactory throughout the school. The emphasis placed on this has effectively improved standards, especially at the end of Year 6. Provision for personal, social and health education is good. There is a detailed policy and timetabled sessions, which link this area effectively with citizenship, sex education and drugs awareness education. Pupils learn to respect each other's opinions, listen attentively and feel confident to share their own feelings. This reflects effectively the ethos of the school and permeates the whole of school life.
32. This is an inclusive school. The values shared by the whole community ensure that all pupils are supported well, whatever their needs. Pupils with special educational needs, including physical disadvantage, are well supported. Those pupils from the travelling community, who regularly attend this school, have their particular needs very well met. The relationship between the school and the local traveller support unit is very good. All pupils take their place as equal members of the community. All newcomers are made to feel welcome and cared for. There are particularly close and effective links with the local playgroup and many parents and governors work in the school on a daily basis. There are secure links with the local church and the village community is loyal and supportive of the school. Pupils of all ages have very strong links with a local school for pupils with special educational needs. They have weekly reciprocal visits, when lessons are shared and pupils work together with fun and enjoyment. This aspect is a strength of the school.
33. Parents feel that there is not a sufficient range of interesting extra-curricular activities. Inspection findings indicate that there is a wide range of sporting and other activities for older pupils, although fewer opportunities for younger pupils in this area. However, within the curriculum, and during school time, pupils have access to a wide range of experiences, through residential visits, using the local environment and cultural experiences, including visits to London, the ballet and theatre. The youngest children also visit local places of interest, like the garden centre, and share weekly visits with the playgroup.
34. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good. This is an improvement from the last inspection, when this provision was judged to be satisfactory. Provision for spiritual development is good. Pupils have frequent opportunities to explore values and beliefs and how they impact upon their own lives, particularly during religious education lessons and discussions in personal, social and health education. Pupils are able to express their feelings about their own symbols for the Holy Spirit, both in discussion and through pictures of great impact. They have chances to understand feelings and emotions; for example, in assembly they looked at the 'ingredients' for a friendship cake, like a 'sprinkle of forgiveness'. The inclusive nature of the school creates an ethos within which pupils grow and flourish, especially those with particular needs or newcomers to the school. The school accommodates difference very well. Pupils exhibit insight, as well as knowledge. For example, older pupils are able to identify similarities and differences between their own form of worship and that of Hindus. Through sensitive discussion, they begin to understand the symbolism involved and relate this directly to their own experience.
35. Provision for moral and social development is also good. There is a clear moral code in the school, which provides an environment in which pupils feel safe and able to express opinions

and views. They are given strategies to resolve conflict and these are acted out for them in assembly time. There are clear class and playground rules, which reinforce the school's values. Pupils are encouraged to and do relate well to each other and adults. They frequently have opportunities to work with partners and in groups. This is effective in the drama activities seen in religious education. The older pupils have opportunities to exercise responsibility and they take their roles very seriously, preparing for assembly and acting as dinner monitors. The positive links with the wider community of the village, the playgroup and another local school support this.

36. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils are beginning to appreciate cultural diversity, through the study of great world faiths in religious education, looking at art from a historical and cultural perspective and participating in an African music workshop. They are developing an awareness of their own culture, by visits to the ballet, theatre and museums. At present there is less evidence of the contribution of music to the cultural development of pupils during curriculum time. The inclusive ethos of the school contributes towards pupils' understanding of what it will be like to take their place in adult society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. Overall, the school has maintained the good quality support and guidance for its pupils as reported at the previous inspection and has greatly improved its procedures for child protection and health and safety. The pupils benefit from being part of an open and welcoming school community the strength of which lies in its mutually supportive relationships. Parents have every confidence that the school does its best for their children and express high levels of satisfaction with the school in most areas of its work.
38. Arrangements for the pupils' day-to-day welfare are very good. The class teachers are responsible for monitoring the care of their pupils to ensure their safety and well being during the school day. The headteacher ensures that the school operates to the best advantage of the pupils by encouraging friendly, but respectful, relationships between all members of the school community. In this the school is successful given the pupils' mature and enthusiastic response seen in many lessons and their willingness to support their fellow pupils.
39. The school has very good procedures for child protection. All the adults in the school led by the knowledgeable and sensitive headteacher are made aware of relevant issues and lines of communication. Health and safety within the school is monitored very well with very good input from the governing body supported by a well-written policy. Good attention is paid to health and safety in lessons. However, arrangements for monitoring and promoting the pupils' attendance are less satisfactory. Although the school has begun to emphasise the importance of regular attendance via the prospectus and newsletters to parents, there is a lack of constant reinforcement with targets set and close scrutiny of attendance patterns of individuals and groups.
40. The school's procedures for promoting good behaviour and eliminating unacceptable behaviour are very good. The pupils are encouraged to have ownership of their class rules, which are drawn up by the pupils and their class teachers. These in turn are supported by whole-school rules, which are clear and straightforward. The school works hard to be an inclusive and welcoming community to the benefit of all its pupils. The example set by all the adults in the school has a significant impact. The success of the school's methods is reflected in the good behaviour of the pupils, which makes a positive contribution to their levels of achievement.
41. The pupils' personal development is supported well through the very good knowledge that the class teachers have of their pupils. This results in the school being aware of the needs of individuals and groups of pupils and supporting them so that they can make progress. Pupils' personal development is also enhanced through the personal, social and health education programme. For example, when pupils from Years 1 and 2 discuss, in a markedly mature and thoughtful way, how to make choices between right and wrong. Overall, the pupils benefit from

an effective pastoral system in a safe and caring environment, which makes a positive contribution to their learning and personal development.

42. There are now good procedures for analysing and collating data gained from national testing and other non-statutory assessments in English and mathematics. There is an effective assessment schedule, and the school sets aside specific weeks to carry this out. This efficient system allows predictions to be made and establishes the possibility of setting accurate personal targets for each pupil to identify the next steps in learning. Teachers are beginning to use these assessments efficiently to plan work for different attainment groups in their classes. Assessment procedures in other subjects are less well developed, although significant advances in recording the skills in information and communication technology have been made in conjunction with the introduction of a new scheme of work. The headteacher has exploited the use of local authority expertise to ensure the accuracy of moderation used within the school.
43. Regular evaluations of lessons and planning enable teachers to make suitable adaptations. For example, having assessed that pupils were having some difficulty in understanding formal methods of multiplication, the teacher was able to change a lesson plan to support learning effectively. Teachers regularly record the achievement of individuals, matched to the learning objectives of their lessons. They effectively identify individuals or groups as the focus for assessment in a lesson. There is a marking policy and satisfactory supportive comments are made. For the youngest children, clear annotation of the circumstances and level of attainment is written on the work. This gives suitable information, which can lead to appropriate teaching. There has been suitable emphasis placed on the development of assessment by the headteacher and subject managers and this marks a good improvement from the last inspection.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. Parents have very positive views of the school. They appreciate and support the school in nearly all areas of its work. In particular, they believe that their children enjoy going to school where they benefit from good teaching and that they make good progress in their personal development. They feel welcomed by the school and that the school is well led and managed. They have some reservations over the amount of homework their children receive, the opportunities they have for extra-curricular activities, in particular for the Years 1 and 2 pupils, and how well they are informed about their children's progress. The inspection concurred with the parents' positive views and found that the programme of homework was appropriate to the needs of the pupils and that the extra-curricular activities were satisfactory, although more could be done for the younger pupils. Although there are good arrangements for parents to meet their children's teachers to discuss progress, written reports lack sufficient focus and do not give a clear enough indication of pupils' levels of attainment across all subjects or involve the pupils in self-assessment.
45. The school has very good links with its parents, which are developed through the open door policy, which enables parents to consult with the school over any concerns or queries on an informal basis. These very good links are at the heart of what the school does well through its commitment to do its best for all its pupils and to act as a focal point for the local community. There are three formal meetings a year for parents to discuss their children's progress, which enable parents to see their children's current work. There are also other more informal opportunities, such as supporting class assemblies and school productions. The main thrust of the school's work with its parents is to build a secure partnership through a friendly family atmosphere, supported by an effective home-school agreement. In this it is very successful.
46. The strength of this partnership is reflected in the very good involvement that parents have with the school, supporting it in many ways. There are regularly up to 20 parents helping in the classrooms and throughout the school. Their support is appreciated and valued by the school and parents are given guidance by teachers on how best to work with the pupils, be it with reading or in practical activities. The school also receives very good support with special projects such as help in the school grounds and with extra-curricular activities. A real strength

of this support is through the school association. The association works extremely hard for the school's benefit, raising large sums of money and enabling pupils and their parents to socialise and enjoy being part of the school community.

47. Parents are keen to support their children's learning at home and do so when given the opportunity, such as listening to their children read and helping with topic related research. They receive good quality information on general school matters, through the lively and well-presented prospectus, as well as regular monthly newsletters. A recent innovation of termly curriculum information from each class is much appreciated by parents and makes a good contribution to their involvement in their children's learning. Parents believe the school is now a 'listening school', where they feel welcomed and confident that they are equal partners in their children's education.
48. Overall the school has maintained the very good partnership with its parents as reported at the time of the previous inspection. These very good links make a positive contribution to the pupils' learning and personal development.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. The headteacher provides very clear educational direction for the school. In the short period since her appointment, she has established an effective partnership with the deputy head teacher and staff of the school, the governing body and parents. As a result, they have considerable confidence in the way the school is led and managed, so give active support. The aims and values of the school are often seen in action in the classrooms. There is a strong family feeling of inclusiveness and support, promoting the very good relationships seen. For example, the strong links with Bardwell Special School, the school's good provision for pupils with special educational needs and children of travellers and the very effective way these pupils are integrated indicate the positive attitudes the school has to promoting citizenship and social cohesiveness. Subject managers, some of them newly in post, willingly accept additional responsibility, as the headteacher further develops their role, including the delegation of lesson monitoring and the management of budgets. Deficiencies in aspects of the curriculum have caused a reappraisal of what is taught and how it is assessed, as in science. Subject managers have been actively involved in the identification of priorities and the subsequent developments that have ensued. This process has regrettably been delayed by staff absence and change, due to maternity leave and illness. However, much has been achieved in a relatively short period. Overall, the leadership and management of the school are good, which is an improvement since the last report in 1997.
50. The governing body plays an active role in the management of the school, very effectively led by the Chair of Governors. Governors are linked to subjects and monitor provision by their links with subject managers and during visits to the school. When monitoring lessons, they work appropriately to a helpful common format to enable them to focus clearly and to help ensure consistency of judgements. Many are regular volunteer helpers within classes or provide extra-curricular activities. This gives them additional insights into the way the school is running and thorough first-hand experience of the school's learning environment. This is helpful when asking senior staff to account for the strengths and areas for development within the school. This process has been much improved recently, as governors are aware that academic standards have been falling and are able to actively support the headteacher in her measures to reverse the decline, now that they are fully informed. The great majority of statutory requirements are fully met, but the school at present does not fulfil National Curriculum requirements to teach all the Programmes of Study in art and design, geography and music.
51. The school now has effective systems to monitor and evaluate its performance. Classroom observations are regularly carried out by an increasing number of subject managers, as the process is extended. Areas for development identified in monitoring feed directly into the school's very effective performance management programme. Detailed analysis is made of National Curriculum test data and the results of the school's own assessments. This has helped to target individual areas of weakness, as with writing, or the specific needs of any group within

the school. Pupils' work is examined, but annotated portfolios have not yet been compiled to assist teachers to assess pupils' output more accurately. This process is just beginning, as a portfolio for English is a target for this year on the new school development plan. The school development plan is now a powerful tool for institutional improvement. It has been extended to cover three years, with the first addressed in sufficient detail and the subsequent years in outline to identify longer-term aims and priorities. For example, lower attainment in English was addressed by putting additional resources into writing, particularly to improve boys' standards in this strand of the subject. The priorities agreed are very well supported by careful financial planning.

52. Financial management and control are good. The day-to-day management is efficient, with the administrative officer working closely with the headteacher and Chair of the finance sub-committee to enable clear and effective monitoring of spending and any budget variation to be responded to quickly. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) is experienced and effective in her role. She appropriately supports both teachers and those teaching assistants working specifically with pupils with special educational needs. Provision, including specific funds intended for this purpose, is well managed, with the SENCO managing part of the budget directly. The school uses new technologies appropriately to manage its financial affairs. However, there are some areas, including the monitoring of absence patterns and the tracking of individual pupils, that it is at present unable to do electronically. There has been no recent audit of the school's finances. All the recommendations made by the auditor in 1997 were quickly addressed in full. The school has had large reserves in the past. These have been largely accumulated to carry out the excellent improvements to the accommodation, now complete. A further surplus was generously left in place by the previous headteacher, so that her successor had some pump-priming capital to spend on resources. Taking into account the high levels of income allocated to the school, in common with all small schools, the standards achieved by the pupils by the time they leave Year 6, the quality of teaching and the overall standards of education provided, the school provides satisfactory value for money.
53. The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is very good. All are appropriately trained with a good cross section of qualifications. The school benefits from having teachers whose qualifications match their subject responsibility and this leads to effective management. There are also a good number of high quality classroom assistants who are used well to support the needs of individuals and groups. However, a lack of nursery nurses in the Foundation Stage is less satisfactory.
54. Resources for learning are good overall. There has been a particular improvement in the resources for information and communication technology (ICT) since the previous inspection. The school now has the benefit of a well-resourced ICT suite, which is networked to the computers in all the classrooms. Key aspects of the school's resources are not only their quality and range for the majority of subjects, but their accessibility and organisation, which make a positive contribution to the standards attained by the pupils.
55. Accommodation in the school is very good. The school is a successful combination of traditional and contemporary buildings. There is an attractive new hall large enough to accommodate all the pupils. The new classrooms are spacious and light and provide a high quality learning environment. This is further enhanced by stimulating and colourful displays, which support literacy and numeracy in particular, as well as celebrating pupils' efforts. All the pupils benefit from the large, attractive grounds, which provide a mixture of fun activities and quiet places in which to socialise. However, the one classroom in the old part of the school, although it is large and used well, is unfortunately a thoroughfare to the library and the new classrooms and the consequent disturbance for the older pupils has a negative impact on their learning.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

56. The headteacher, governors and staff should give attention to the following matters in their continuing efforts to raise standards and the quality of work in the school:

- (1) improve the standards pupils attain in information and communication technology (ICT) by the time pupils leave the school by:
 - ensuring that pupils in Years 3 to 6 have sufficient time to acquire and reinforce the necessary skills to become confident users of ICT (see paragraphs 6, 10, 25, 30, 73, 95, 99, 108, 109, 119 and 128);
 - using appropriate software to allow ICT to make an impact on pupils' work in all subjects (see paragraph 113).
- (2) improve pupils' attainment and their overall achievement in art and design, geography and music by:
 - teaching the full Programmes of Study for the subject (see paragraphs 30, 50, 91, 100 and 119);
 - ensuring that the new schemes of work are securely implemented (see paragraphs 30, 91, 100 and 103);
 - ensuring that sufficient time is devoted to the subject to ensure a balanced curriculum (see paragraphs 6, 25, 30, 36, 95, 100 and 119);
 - improving teachers' confidence and competence when teaching music by a range of suitable training* (see paragraph 119).
- (3) improve levels of attendance to bring them up to national averages by more regular reinforcement of the school's expectations and targets and closer scrutiny of pupils' patterns of attendance (see paragraphs 3, 39 and 52).

In addition to the above the following points for development should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- review and extend the amount of time currently devoted to science to help raise standards further* (see paragraphs 6, 9, 25, 49, 88 and 90);
- manage time efficiently to ensure that all elements of lessons planned take place in practice (see paragraphs 22, 27, 71, 75, 88 and 123).

*Items already identified for improvement by the school.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	37
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	19

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	13	12	12	0	0	0
Percentage	0	35.2	32.4	32.4	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)	105
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	25

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	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.9

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4

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	8	5	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	11	12	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (93)	92 (93)	92 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	12	13	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (93)	100 (86)	100 (86)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	12	5	17

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	13	12	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (86)	71 (64)	94 (86)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	10	12	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	59 (64)	71 (64)	71 (93)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

In small schools, reporting requirements on test data are different. Where the number of boys or girls in the year group is ten or fewer, no gender comparisons are given.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	91
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5.15
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.4:1
Average class size	26.25

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	88

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.8
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3.1
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0.0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.4
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0.0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

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.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
	£
Total income	246,976
Total expenditure	227,230
Expenditure per pupil	2,143
Balance brought forward from previous year	37,426
Balance carried forward to next year	57,172

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	105
Number of questionnaires returned	55

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	78	18	2	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	45	51	4	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	49	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	24	49	27	0	0
The teaching is good.	49	44	5	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	47	11	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	69	26	5	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	29	9	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	53	36	11	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	62	29	5	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	62	34	4	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	16	53	13	9	9

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

57. The Foundation Stage of the school comprises one reception class. Children start school at the beginning of each term, depending on their birth date. At the time of the inspection, three pupils had been in school for only three weeks. However, there are very close links with the local playgroup and the older children from this group spend one morning each week in the reception class for the term before they start school. The leaders at the playgroup and the reception teachers work closely together, linking their planning and visiting each other frequently. Practitioners from the playgroup work regularly in the reception class, supporting learning by carrying out guided reading and assisting with other activities.
58. Relationships with parents are good. Parents of new children attend an induction evening and receive a comprehensive package of information about the school. These contacts are maintained throughout the year, with many informal opportunities to speak with the teacher at the beginning and end of the day. These good relationships ensure that children make a happy and peaceful start to their school life. Similarly, they move easily to the next stage of education. Some of them share with Year 1 children for reading and all take a full part in the daily events of the school, like assemblies. They use the hall for physical activities and the use of the computer suite contributes well to their sense of belonging. Transfer to the next class is flexible and teachers make informed decisions about academic and social development to ensure that this happens at the best time for each child. Very good relationships with the local special school consolidate aspects of personal, social and emotional development and contribute towards the inclusiveness of the class.
59. Children enter school with average attainment overall. Currently, there is a significantly large range of scores from the local authority baseline assessment carried out in the first four weeks of school. Children achieve satisfactorily during their time in the reception class, and by the end of the year most will have attained the Early Learning Goals in the six areas of learning. All children are supported well. There have been considerable changes to the way the Foundation Stage is organised and reported since the school's last inspection, making improvement difficult to assess. However, it is satisfactory overall.
60. Teaching in the reception class is satisfactory. In the best lessons, when children work with the class teacher, they learn particularly well. For example, while looking for minibeasts in the habitat garden children learn how to use magnifying glasses and find out about slugs and snails. Materials and resources are well prepared and the classroom is colourful and inviting, with much children's work displayed effectively. The well designed outside area is used particularly well as a learning area. During a mathematical development session, children filled containers with spoonfuls of sand and drew around themselves to compare heights, as well as using the environment to paint, draw, climb and ride. However, not all lessons demonstrate the effective use of imaginative activities that children select for themselves. Often the activities offered are dominated by adult-focused work. There are fewer opportunities for the adults to engage in role play or construction activities alongside children to extend their conversation and imagination.
61. The curriculum offered is planned satisfactorily in the six areas of learning and makes suitable adaptations at this time of the year to provide, where necessary, work to link to the early stages of the National Curriculum. For example, children experience most elements of the literacy hour and numeracy lesson. The balance between teacher-focused and child-selected activities is not always well maintained, so that although children make progress when working with an adult, they are not learning as effectively when playing alone or in a group. The classroom assistant is well deployed and contributes significantly to the learning taking place in the classroom. She takes an appropriate responsibility for the children. Both teacher and classroom assistant contribute to curriculum planning and keep good records of the progress made by the children.

Personal, social and emotional development

62. The teaching of personal, social and emotional development is satisfactory. Children achieve satisfactorily and are on course to reach the Early Learning Goals at the end of the year. They learn how to dress and undress themselves for physical education and take care of their own possessions. They are able to tidy up and carry out instructions from adults. Almost all children are keen to answer in class lessons and are beginning to take turns. They are very accepting and tolerant of others. By listening to stories, they are beginning to understand how others feel. Their confidence is promoted by taking an appropriate part in the school sharing assembly, telling the rest of the school about their Teddy Bears' Picnic and the invitations they have written. They develop very good relationships with pupils from the local school for children with special educational needs, as they share regular weekly music lessons. Usually the children are well behaved. Where they are restless and boisterous, it is the result of a lack of established routines.

Communication, language and literacy

63. By the end of the reception class, most children will have attained the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy. The teaching is satisfactory and children make satisfactory progress overall. However, children achieve better in reading and most are confident with books, acquiring a sight vocabulary and using picture clues to help them to read. The teacher and other helpers employ a structured reading scheme and progress is carefully monitored in class. Most children share books at home and a special record is kept of this. The structure of the literacy hour ensures that every child has an opportunity to 'write' and the most competent are using their knowledge of phonics and small words to write on their own. Children also have good opportunities to extend their knowledge of the sounds of letters in a 'code-breakers' session where they practise their spelling. For example, a group of children worked well with the classroom assistant, practising 'magic e' words using individual whiteboards. There is less evidence of adults extending speaking and listening skills by being actively involved in structured play activities. Children have good access to the listening centre.

Mathematical development

64. Children achieve satisfactorily towards attaining the Early Learning Goals in mathematical development. Children are able to count beyond 20 and the higher attainers are able to use a 100 square correctly to help them with their work. Most are able to count backwards from numbers up to 20 and can say how many there are all together in two groups. They have good experiences of discovery when finding out about capacity, using well designed activities with water and sand, to fill and empty containers. They are able to make comparisons of height by cutting out silhouettes of themselves and are beginning to learn about balance and weighing. They know days of the week and talk about months of the year. They use the words 'more' and 'less' correctly and can use a number line to count on to add. Occasionally, opportunities are missed to extend an understanding of numbers into everyday life, such as counting to find the date, finding out how many children are present, or numbers for dinner. Teaching is satisfactory.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

65. Children achieve satisfactorily in this area and most will attain the Early Learning Goals at the end of the year. Teaching is satisfactory overall in this area, although there are strengths in exploration and investigation and also in designing and making. Children are fascinated and learn well as they visit the habitat garden, armed with magnifying glasses, to look for minibeasts. They hazarded guesses as to where the creatures might be and were delighted to find slugs and snails underneath the logs. They examined them carefully and answered well-phrased questions. Children also enjoyed working with the class teacher, making sock puppets to act out the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. They decorated them colourfully with a variety of materials and experimented with sticking. Children have appropriate access to the computer suite and are becoming competent users of the mouse to select and position pictures on screens depicting scenes from 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. They also practise drawing

characters from the story using a paint program. Regular religious education lessons take place and children are given suitable opportunities to listen to Bible stories. Having heard the story of the 'Feeding of the Five Thousand', some of the children made up an informal play during which they demonstrated that they knew the story and later shared bread from the 'little boy's' basket. Two of the children were able to explain well what they thought a miracle was.

Physical development

66. Most children will meet or exceed the Early Learning Goals in this area of the curriculum, where teaching is satisfactory. They have opportunities to run, climb and balance, both in specific physical education lessons and also in the outside learning area. Here, they use wheeled toys as well as climbing, jumping and balancing apparatus. Children practise movement to music, using appropriate audiotape sessions. They demonstrate their skills to the class. Many of them are beginning to use space carefully in the hall and are becoming aware of other children. They have satisfactorily planned opportunities to improve their skills with bats and balls.

Creative development

67. In the area of creative development teaching is satisfactory. Most children will attain the Early Learning Goals by the end of this term. Children have a chance each term to experiment with colour mixing and use a particular method to produce delicate butterflies, using laminate sheet to hang on their animal habitat tree. They use ready-mix paint to paint zoo animals and are learning how to use colour blocks. They use paper collage extensively to make shining fish and to illustrate stories like 'The Three Little Pigs'. Children also keep drawings and rubbings in a sketchbook, so that their teachers are able to assess how well their skills are developing over time. However, there are fewer opportunities for children to experiment with printing techniques or to paint imaginatively on a large scale. Children use puppets and there is a well designed 'Bears' House' for role play. However, there were fewer examples observed when adults were able to model good role play or engage with children in these activities. In musical activities, they join with their friends from a local school and enjoy singing and music-making. These sessions are led effectively by a classroom assistant who is a musician.

ENGLISH

68. Standards of attainment in English at the end of Year 2 are about average in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Pupils achieve overall as well as they should. By the end of Year 6, standards in all three strands of English are above average. This shows improvement by the time pupils leave the school compared with the last inspection, when standards in lessons were found to be broadly average. Pupils achieve well in English in Years 3 to 6 and overall, which is also an improvement on the last report. However, then, as now, brisker progress was seen in lessons for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported throughout the school. They make good progress in lessons and towards targets on their individual education plans.
69. Standards in national tests of reading and writing at the end of Year 2 and English at the end of Year 6 declined in 2001. In most recent years they had been well above average. In 1998 the school's result in Year 6 tests in English placed it in the top five per cent of all schools. The small number of pupils taking the tests and the level and complexity of special educational needs seen in the school make variation likely year on year. For example, two pupils who were disapplied from national tests at the end of Year 2, one of whom has a Statement of Special Educational Need, will take the Year 6 test later this term, which will have a downward pressure on the school's average points score. However, the school has worked hard to restore standards in lessons and prepare pupils appropriately for tests and this is having the intended effect. Results from the 2002 Year 2 group, with significant levels of special educational need, are predicted to be similar to last year's in writing. Results in reading are likely to be slightly below, as there are insufficient pupils working at the higher levels compared to last year's group, which had an above average proportion of pupils attaining the higher points scores.

70. Pupils at the end of Year 6 are predicted by the school's own assessment regime to reach above average standards in English. Inspection evidence confirms the school's own findings. Significantly, the school has been successful in improving the proportion of pupils working at the higher Level 5 or above in lessons and its own testing programme. It is about 40 per cent of the year group. In the 2001 tests, although an average proportion of the pupils attained Level 4 and above, a below average proportion attained the higher Level 5 or above; less than 20 per cent. The result was a below average overall points score, well below those schools with similar levels of free school meals. Over time, English has been consistently the best of the three core subjects in terms of Year 6 results. Girls and boys have shared the ascendancy. There is significant gender imbalance in some years also, so not too much should be read into this. The school has worked hard to improve its assessment procedures, so more confidence can be placed in current predictions. However, in the 2001 end of Year 6 teacher assessments of English, three pupils not expected to reach Level 4 or above out of a group of 17, did so. Target setting has improved along with assessment. Challenging targets for the present Year 6 are likely to be met. Very ambitious targets for the following year, both in terms of the overall proportion of pupils attaining the expected and the higher levels, supported by inspection evidence, confirm that standards are now back on an upwards trend.
71. Children enter the reception class with broadly average speaking and listening skills. Teachers take every opportunity to promote these skills further in subjects across the curriculum through question and answer sessions, discussions, personal, social and health education lessons and a well-thought out emphasis on role play and drama. This takes various forms; for example, in Years 3 and 4, pupils answered questions in role, examining issues around gender and stereotyping, based on their Big Book 'Bill's New Frock.' Years 5 and 6 pupils in group reading, used up-to-date play texts based on stories from Chaucer and Shakespeare. Some Years 1 and 2 pupils grow restive if the introduction to literacy hours is prolonged and listening can be less careful. The probing questions asked in all the better lessons puts pupils on the spot, makes them think carefully and frame their answers appropriately before answering. A strong feature of the work in Years 3 to 6 is the emphasis placed on pupils themselves structuring their questions thoughtfully. In Years 3 and 4, the teacher insisted on open questions being put to the pupil in the hot-seat as 'Bill', requiring careful thought, not just an 'off the shelf' answer.
72. Well developed pre-reading skills when children enter school and sound teaching of communication, language and literacy in the reception class, result in reading standards just above average when children enter Year 1. Phonic skills and other word attack strategies are well taught in Years 1 and 2. The teacher also teaches reference skills effectively, so pupils recognise features such as the importance of bold print in information books and are already used to scanning the page for key words. Pupils enjoy reading to adults, which the school is quick to encourage. A large number of volunteers, including a substantial proportion of the governing body, work with individuals and groups of pupils at a wide range of reading tasks. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 build on this sound beginning. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 develop accurate reading alongside an increased awareness of technical terms such as 'glossary' and 'bibliography', which one pupil defines as helpful to him when researching, explaining why it is included. Pupils' reference skills and capacity for independent study are appropriately applied both at school, in the library and on computers, and when researching a topic at home, either as part of a homework exercise or voluntarily. By the time they leave the school, pupils' reading standards are above average. Higher attaining Year 6 pupils discuss favourite authors and preferences about genre, identifying major themes and characters and unravelling complex plots in class texts like 'The Pardoner's Tale' and in the hugely popular JK Rowling stories and other books they read for pleasure, referring to the text to support their views. Lower attaining pupils have difficulties with complex words in unknown texts, but apply appropriate word building skills competently and read with growing confidence. The monitoring of reading is thorough. Pupil records kept by teachers, both when class based and when undertaking additional literacy support, and the home-school reading diary are evaluative and useful.
73. Children undertake an appropriate range of writing experiences in their reception year. They are given regular opportunities to write for a variety of purposes in both narrative and non-narrative forms in work across the curriculum in Years 1 and 2; for example, when writing a report in

science or considering how people behaved differently in past times in history. Literacy targets are pasted in the front of pupils' books to remind all pupils what they must do to improve. However, in Years 1 and 2, books are not all well kept, pages are missed out and a secure cursive handwriting style not generally used. Too much evidence is seen of photocopied material and writing frames restricting pupils' written responses and not enough evidence of the teacher closely matching the task to pupils' differing attainments. Years 3 to 6 pupils write in a wide range of different contexts, including plays. There is still some non-cursive handwriting into Year 4, but the challenge is greater. For instance, pupils have to describe everyday objects and activities like a pencil sharpener or how to walk, in such detail that a visitor from another planet would understand. In Years 5 and 6, the teachers' expectations of pupils are also high and tasks well matched to pupils' attainment and need. Homework exercises indicate clearly the high value placed on grammar and spelling. Extended writing is well used to support pupils' work in other subjects, alongside their literacy skills. For example, in science pupils are expected to write in paragraphs when reporting their findings, following a series of experiments on air. Not enough evidence is seen at present of pupils using computers to redraft or present their work at the top of the school.

74. The pupils display good attitudes to their lessons. They are particularly positive in Years 3 to 6, where pupils show maturity towards their studies; for example, willingly volunteering for additional research tasks, work at home and responsibilities in the classroom. Pupils behave well overall, but behaviour is very good in Years 3 to 6. This enables challenging tasks in a variety of organisational forms, including unsupervised independent tasks in the school library, to be confidently planned by teachers. Very good relationships are conducive to brisk lesson pace, as teachers trust their pupils to interact appropriately, relating well to each other and adults and work hard in all parts of the literacy hour or in guided reading sessions.
75. The quality of teaching is good overall. This has helped to move standards up significantly in just one year at the end of Year 6. The previous inspection identified teaching as satisfactory in English, so good progress has been made in this key subject. The unsatisfactory teaching seen in Years 1 and 2 has been eliminated. The strongest features of teaching in Years 1 and 2 are the detailed planning, both for the medium term and for each lesson, and the effective teaching of the basic literacy skills to these young learners, so that they acquire new skills at a good pace and reinforce them regularly to ensure that they are thoroughly learnt. Teaching is particularly strong in Years 3 to 6. Teachers display very well developed subject knowledge and manage their pupils very effectively, so that very exciting lessons can be undertaken without pupils losing concentration and drifting off task. Teachers are also well aware of the imminence of this year's tests, so are equally adept in structuring a literacy hour lesson to include a judicious measure of test technique, while still fulfilling all the criteria of the National Literacy Strategy and promoting pupils' skills in critically appraising a piece of poetry to analyse how well the poet has explored themes and developed language. Plenary review sessions are well used to reinforce learning objectives, but when lesson pace is not well judged, this can be rushed or spill over into the following lessons, with repercussions there.
76. The headteacher has taken over the management of English, during the absence of her deputy head teacher, through ill health. She is a linguist and has been subject manager of English in the past. She has good understanding of the subject and its strengths and needs, based upon an accurate assessment of standards and the curriculum. The successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has helped to address one of the criticisms raised during the last inspection, as now there is clear planning in place to ensure that pupils acquire and refine skills and understanding progressively, as they move through the school, taking due account of the mixed ages within all classes. Teaching and learning have been regularly monitored. A helpful common format is used to identify strengths and areas for development, so that the quality of teaching can be further improved. The literacy governor is actively involved in this process, monitoring to the standard governing body format regularly each half term. The school has appropriately identified the early completion of a portfolio of annotated, assessed pupils' work as the next stage in the improvement of teachers' assessments of pupils' writing based on agreement on the characteristics of the different levels of the National Curriculum. This will also enable a sharper focus to be made in the planning for lessons in mixed age classes.

77. The school is now very well resourced for the effective delivery of the curriculum. The library is well used and well stocked, including a well organised, clearly labelled non-fiction collection, supporting those stored in classes and within topic boxes. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

MATHEMATICS

78. By the end of Year 2, pupils achieve satisfactorily and most will attain the standards that are expected for their age. However, there are few higher attainers. During Years 3 to 6 pupils work hard and achieve well. By the end of Year 6, they attain standards that are above average. The number of pupils who reach the expected Level 4 is above average and a significant number of pupils will attain higher levels. This marks an improvement due to the careful analysis of assessments and good teaching. The school identified a need to focus on the numbers of pupils attaining higher levels at the end of Years 2 and 6, and this is beginning to have an effect on improving standards, particularly for the older pupils
79. At the end of Year 2 pupils are extending their understanding of multiplication, by considering the factors of 24. Good use of apparatus helps to illustrate a difficult concept. Pupils are able to order numbers and are beginning to understand place value. They have opportunities to measure length and capacity and to recognise lines of symmetry in two-dimensional shapes. An investigative approach to work ensures that pupils have suitable experiences in finding out for themselves. Each child has a numeracy target, towards which they are working. This is regularly assessed and reviewed.
80. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrate to their peers their own methods of solving number problems. They move effectively to learn more formal methods of multiplication. They share ideas and investigative skills well. Pupils deal with decimals and understand equivalent fractions and percentages appropriately. They calculate the areas of triangles and rectangles and work out the perimeters of a variety of two-dimensional shapes. They measure angles accurately and deal with very large numbers when considering distances. Teachers provide particularly good opportunities for pupils to extend their skills in the understanding of number, particularly higher attaining pupils, who are able to work out rules for sequential patterns and use them to calculate further.
81. The use of the National Numeracy Strategy is appropriately established in the school. This ensures that all areas of the mathematics curriculum are taught to and experienced by all pupils. Teachers are particularly confident in this subject and this is reflected in the quality of teaching and range of experiences offered to the pupils. Aspects of numeracy appear significantly in other areas of the curriculum; for example, bar graphs are used effectively in history to illustrate the number of deaths by age when researching the local graveyard. Line graphs are used in geography to illustrate temperature and snowline changes. Particular programs in information and communication technology are beginning to be used to support the National Numeracy Strategy. Pupils have extensive opportunities to use data-handling packages and they use spreadsheets to collate data.
82. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good, although examples of very good teaching were seen during the inspection. The best lessons are characterised by careful planning. All teachers plan successfully for different ability groups within their classes. The pace of work is brisk and sustained with a good balance of teacher presentation and pupil participation. A commercial scheme of work is used appropriately to provide examples. All teachers manage their classes well, so that pupils know what to do and no time is wasted between activities. Learning support assistants are deployed particularly well. Pupils with special educational needs take a suitable part in whole-class sessions, especially during mental and oral games, when they are skilfully supported by an adult. Work set for them matches their attainments and targets set on individual education plans. They make good progress in lessons due also to the high quality of relationships established between adults and pupils. Teachers really know their pupils well and plan for assessments in lessons. As a result

of this, they are able to make effective adaptations to plans to ensure that a topic is understood. The marking of work contains annotated and diagnostic comments and this helps pupils to move to the next steps in their learning. Good practice allows pupils to assess how well they have learned during a lesson. They are sufficiently confident to indicate when they find an aspect difficult and make suitable judgements about how well they have progressed through a lesson. Younger as well as older pupils are able to do this. This confidence is a result of the caring and inclusive ethos established in the school.

83. Pupils enjoy the activity and challenge of mathematics lessons. They answer promptly and are eager to explain and demonstrate their own methods. They record their work neatly and take pride in the presentation of their books. They understand the objectives of each lesson and can make sensible judgements about how well they have understood and worked.
84. The senior management team and subject manager have identified the need to improve levels of attainment, as a result of the careful analysis of assessments. A focus on this analysis, coupled with good teaching, is having a significant effect on the standards attained at the end of Year 6. Springboard and booster classes have also contributed effectively to this improvement in attainment. In a small school like this, there is always variation in the potential attainment of groups of pupils, but the actions being taken now in mathematics are having a significant effect on learning. Analysis of results, concentration upon the content of the curriculum and the quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 have improved since the last report.

SCIENCE

85. Attainment in science in lessons observed and seen in work inspected is average for pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6. Achievement is broadly satisfactory across the school. This is similar to the standards reported following the school's last inspection. The results of the 2001 teacher assessments for science at the end of Year 2 indicated that the school was in the top five per cent of all schools at the expected Level 2 and above, with all pupils attaining that level. Almost one half that year's group attained the higher Level 3 or above, which was well above the national average. There is no indication of underachievement in science by the end of Year 2. There are fluctuations in most schools when groups have differing numbers of pupils taking the tests, with more or less pupils with special educational needs. This is more likely to critically affect small schools.
86. In the national tests for pupils at the end of Year 6, the school attained an average points score below the national average compared to all schools and schools with a similar level of free school meals. Teacher assessment results significantly underrated even this modest performance, as four pupils not predicted to attain Level 4 or above did so. The school has subsequently worked hard on its assessment procedures. This year's predictions are broadly in line with inspection findings, so, in the case of Year 6 pupils, standards have risen in the short term. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls.
87. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are beginning to make hypotheses and test them by gathering evidence. In the lesson seen, pupils predicted that the tallest pupil would have the biggest hand span. They then carefully grouped classmates by a range of criteria, including height, size of hand and foot and hair colouring to assess the accuracy of their predictions. They were going on to enter the data gained onto a computer to appropriately use information and communication technology to support their work as scientists and produce a range of printouts. They are beginning to understand the notion of fair testing and use appropriate scientific terminology in class discussions and written reports. Pupils understand that when electricity is used a range of outcomes occur, so that care has to be taken, as sources of light and sound can also produce heat and movement, promoting good awareness of safe practice. This is appropriately further developed in work on circuits. Years 3 and 4 pupils describe the motion of the moon around the earth accurately. They know that the simultaneous motion of the earth around the sun, while spinning on its axis, makes the stationary sun appear to move. They raise hypotheses based closely on this knowledge, including on the nature of an eclipse. They use simple apparatus, including balls and lamps, to test their ideas and write detailed reports and produce accurate

chalk drawings and computer generated graphics to reinforce their learning. Pupils are increasingly aware of scientific issues and use more scientific vocabulary as they move through the school. Years 5 and 6 pupils use a control group in their experimental model and are aware that they must only change one variable for the test to be conclusive in their work on the germination of seeds. They name the parts and functions of a flower, defining pollination and fertilisation processes in their reports.

88. The quality of teaching is good overall. This compensates for the low time allocation for science. In the two lessons seen in Years 3 to 6 very good teaching, based on very secure subject knowledge, effective teaching of the investigative process and very good management skills allowed challenging lessons in very busy classrooms to be conducted calmly and efficiently. Pupils respond very positively to the tasks they are set. They learn new ideas at pace and concentrate as well when working independently, even out of the classroom, as when in a guided group with a member of staff. An otherwise effective lesson in Years 1 and 2, the only opportunity to judge teaching and learning for that group, was largely missed due to a timetabling error made by the teacher. There is a strict emphasis on appropriate technical terminology and methodology in Years 5 and 6. Probing questions and insistent supplementary questions challenge pupils' thinking, putting them in the hot seat and demanding careful answers framed in an appropriate fashion.
89. Pupils throughout the school have positive views about the subject. They behave well in lessons and quickly become engrossed in the activities. They enjoy the 'hands on' approach the teachers use and the practical tasks in which they can take part. Older pupils reporting back findings made by their group talk fluently. Their classmates listen attentively. This gives even the most shy or unscientific pupil confidence to have a go, knowing that they will get a sensitive reception.
90. The subject manager is new to the post, but is a science graduate, so relishes the challenge. There is much to do. Delays in addressing identified priorities for improvement have coincided with below average results in Year 6 tests over the last two years. There is scarcely enough time devoted to science in Years 1 and 2. The school admits that there is not enough time spent in Years 3 to 6. This has resulted in gaps in knowledge, when concepts have not been reinforced sufficiently frequently at a deeper level of understanding. However, all strands of the subject are taught so there is no non-compliance with National Curriculum requirements. The new subject manager hopes to raise the profile of the subject. She has appropriately targeted an adaptation to the nationally recommended scheme of work, to fit it more closely to the school's needs and new assessment procedures, including a portfolio of pupils' work as priorities. She knows that an audit of time devoted to the subject and monitoring of teaching and learning and the curriculum in classes are also urgent needs if standards are to fully recover to those seen in the past. There is very good inside and outdoor accommodation for science. The classrooms are roomy and so allow enough space for challenging investigative work. The extensive grounds contain a well-designed habitats area, which the subject manager plans to develop further.

ART AND DESIGN

91. A new scheme of work has only recently been introduced to the school. This means that younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a sufficiently broad and balanced curriculum. They achieve satisfactorily and attain the standards that are expected nationally. However, at this time the older pupils' experience of the curriculum has not been sufficiently broad and balanced and there are gaps in their knowledge and skills. Their attainment at the end of Year 6 is below average. They do not achieve as well as they should. Through better teaching, pupils in Years 3 and 4 are now beginning to build up a repertoire of skills and experience. There are significant gaps in learning for older pupils in the use of paint, working in three dimensions with clay and other media and also with printing techniques. A great deal of emphasis is placed on discussion and preparation, but with restricted media and outcomes.
92. By the end of Year 2, pupils can use natural materials effectively to enhance paintings, which imaginatively illustrate a 'special place' where the earth meets the sea. They show that they can

use a variety of sketching pencils to create shade, line and form, observing closely the texture and shadows made by stones and bones in observational drawing. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 use pastels effectively on dark paper to illustrate fruits from observation. They learn the skills of portrait drawings and learn to work on a large scale, effectively linking art from Ancient Egypt. Years 5 and 6 pupils discuss the symbolism of Native American art and set to work to make their own totems. There is displayed evidence of careful observational drawings of musical instruments and the effective use of shade and line to draw mountains, linked to a geography project.

93. Teaching overall is satisfactory, although examples of better teaching were seen during the inspection and in those lessons pupils made good progress. Teachers prepare resources well and manage groups effectively in their classes. In the best lessons, suitable skills are modelled and pupils become increasingly confident and uninhibited in their interpretation of ideas. Where teachers are less confident with art and design skills the outcome of pupils' work is restricted to 'safe' and controlled media – small pictures with pencils and pens.
94. Pupils do enjoy art and design, particularly when given scope to experiment and use appropriate media. Then they are very satisfied with the outcome of their work. For example, making portraits Egyptian-style or learning the skills to make textured and shaded observational drawings. The pupils are well behaved and enjoy the activity.
95. The subject manager acknowledges that the current scheme of work is not yet fully embedded and that pupils are only just beginning to use sketchbooks effectively. All pupils have opportunities to use computer programs to gain skills in drawing and colouring, but no specific projects have been undertaken to link these directly to art and design units. There are strong cross-curricular links made with history and religious education, but at present there is little evidence of a real celebration of art and design projects. As a result, there is a decline in standards since the last report for pupils at the end of Year 6.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

96. During the inspection there were no lessons observed, but judgements about standards are made by consulting teachers' planning and the evidence of pupils' work. Pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6 attain standards that meet national expectations. They achieve satisfactorily in meeting those standards. The school has adopted a scheme of work based upon national guidance for the design and technology curriculum. This ensures that pupils learn skills in an ordered fashion and deal with the complete design process.
97. At the end of Year 2, pupils are able to make a colourful coat. They plan, design and make the coat, drawing patterns and experimenting with ways of joining and decorating fabric. They are able to evaluate how well their product has been made and how successfully they have met the specification for the task. The whole process is celebrated effectively with a colourful display of coats and photographs, which illustrate and remind pupils of what they were doing during the process of making. They also experiment with paper and card to make moving pictures, using flaps, levers and revolving discs. These are neatly presented and form part of effective illustrations. Work in Years 1 and 2 builds effectively on the making skills learned in the reception class.
98. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are able to make a 'metal man', linked to their literacy shared text, 'The Iron Man'. They plan and make a model with moving parts and evaluate how effective their work has been. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 experiment and practise sewing skills and discuss the purpose for making slippers. They make thoughtful assessments of the importance of utility and decoration and produce carefully sewn fabric shoes. Once again, the whole process is displayed for pupils to recall and internalise the work they have done.
99. Satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection. There is good evidence that pupils understand the whole of the design, make and evaluate process and are improving their

skills suitably. At present there is no use of information and communication technology skills to support learning in this subject.

GEOGRAPHY

100. Pupils achieve satisfactorily during Years 1 and 2, and attain the standards expected for their age. At the end of Year 6, pupils do not have sufficient knowledge and understanding and their attainment is below average. The recent introduction of a new scheme of work is providing a sufficiently broad and balanced curriculum for younger pupils. However, for those older ones the balance of time spent on studies in geography and the scope of their content is limited. These pupils have not received a sufficiently broad and balanced curriculum and there are gaps in their learning. Pupils do not achieve as well as they should during Years 3 to 6.
101. By the end of Year 2, pupils have good opportunities to discuss why they would choose a seaside holiday. They make effective posters, paintings and brochures to encourage people to visit seaside resorts and can explain clearly what they have done. This unit was taught well. Pupils are beginning to learn how to use specific geographical questions of 'Why?', 'How?' and 'Where?'. Planning indicates a sufficient range of units to be studied and pupils are beginning to identify countries on a world map linked to photographs, postcards and following the journeys of 'Barnaby Bear'.
102. No lessons were observed in Years 3 to 6. Geography and history are planned together, and evidence is taken from pupils' work and discussion with older pupils. They have a good recall of facts learned in this school year about mountains. Their work indicates good use of graphical techniques for demonstrating temperature and snowline changes. Pupils also have skills, which enable them to carry out research using the Internet. During residential visits, they have chances to describe local geographical features and can identify these on maps by using basic coordinate references. Years 3 and 4 pupils learn about the geographical features of Egypt, when learning about the Ancient Egyptian civilisation.
103. In this subject there has been an apparent decline in standards for older pupils and, recently, a more restricted curriculum. The new scheme of work is becoming more secure and sufficient time is now spent on the subject for the younger pupils where standards are improving. Older pupils are beginning to use the Internet in their work during geography lessons.

HISTORY

104. Standards in history remain above average, as reported following the school's last inspection. Then, as now, attainment is broadly average by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils achieve well overall. Due to the way the school blocks work in humanities, it was not possible to see direct teaching of history in Years 1 and 2, so judgements have been made on the evidence of the work scrutiny, documentation for the subject and discussions with pupils and teachers. Years 1 and 2 pupils acquire skills in the subject appropriately, as they sequence the events of the Great Fire of London and compare differences and similarities between then and now. They realise that buildings and the materials used to make them are different and identify the modern fire and rescue service as a great improvement over the simple water pumps used to combat the Fire of London. Major events, including Remembrance Day, are used to build up an appropriate understanding of our past.
105. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 develop further the idea that history is divided up into discrete periods. They know that in their work on Ancient Egypt they are considering a great civilisation, which flourished long ago in Africa. They understand that much evidence from the period remains and identify appropriately the built environment as unique evidence of the past realising that pyramids and other remains are artefacts. They show good understanding that other artefacts have not survived, but have been preserved in other ways, including wall paintings, showing hieroglyphs written on papyrus. They show appropriate care when writing their own names, using hieroglyphs. They recognise that although this was an ancient civilisation, it survives today as a modern country and that the lives of its people then and now, and their own, have

many similarities, as well as many differences. In their work on Ancient Rome, they have acquired sound understanding of the heritage bequeathed to us by citizens of that great empire. They identify clearly the cultural and domestic innovations the Romans brought to Britain, including baths and central heating. Years 5 and 6 pupils completing the tour of the ancient world in their current work, also consider the cultural aspects of a civilised people. They show above average awareness of the role of the theatre in the Greek way of life. They identify and define several features and names common to our own modern theatres, including 'orchestra' and 'chorus'. Pupils have completed several pieces of independent research in preparation for this topic, showing good knowledge of their own learning needs. In mixed ability groups, pupils created and performed a five-act play based on Theseus and the Minotaur, paying strict attention to the conventions of the form, so that much of the narrative was delivered by the chorus, while the central characters delivered some of the dialogue and all the action, in a larger-than-life fashion. The subject is well used to promote literacy and numeracy skills. In previous work on the Victorians, Years 5 and 6 pupils have written extended pieces of work, showing above average factual knowledge of British history. Their work also contains well labelled bar graphs, poignantly showing the mortality rates at different ages, using information from a Victorian graveyard.

106. Pupils clearly enjoy history. Relationships are excellent and pupils behave very well in lessons. They display considerable independence in work they complete voluntarily at home and the way they go about their activities in class. They respond well to the range of topics they study. For example, Years 5 and 6 pupils prior to their current work on the Ancient Greeks looked at the life and times of John Lennon. Apart from its obvious contemporary feel, it also gave significant levels of secondary source material to enable the teachers to introduce good levels of work identifying key features of the 1950s and 1960s, so that pupils could compare and confront that recent period of British history with today.
107. Teaching is good overall. Teachers in the lessons seen showed very good understanding of the subject, which gave them the confidence to embark on stimulating, even risky, activities. The oldest pupils, working in five groups creating separate acts of a Greek play involving a notable hero and a fearsome monster he had to despatch, were very well managed, but were willing partners in the process. The excellent relationships seen in the lesson and the very high level of respect they have for each other and their teacher were evidence of this. High quality learning resulted. Planning is effective, which facilitates the range and complexity of activities seen in the well-organised lessons. The level of challenge is high, so pupils of all levels of attainment are set suitable tasks, well matched to their learning needs. Homework is a notable feature of the provision for history. In Years 5 and 6, apart from the work they had undertaken voluntarily, challenging homework was set requiring pupils to research Athens and Sparta, the two most powerful Greek city-states, looking at the characteristics that distinguished them.
108. Resources are good for history. They are well arranged in topic collections, accessibly stored in the designated resource area. They include a small collection of artefacts for most topics. History is also appropriately represented in the non-fiction collection in the school library. Resources make a positive contribution to pupils' learning and the progress they make. The school uses visits and visitors well to promote pupils' interest in the subject. There is little evidence that information and communication technology has been used to support work in history. There are relatively few links seen in topics studied between history and geography, even though the school regards them as paired as 'humanities'. For example, no maps in pupils' books showed the extent of the Victorian British Empire. No writing on 'Mountains' referred to Everest being first climbed in 1952, even though we are currently celebrating the anniversary of the Queen's accession.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

109. Standards at the end of Year 2 are above average. Pupils achieve well due to good teaching, based on the recent introduction of a comprehensive scheme of work. Standards at the end of Year 6 are below average. The new scheme of work has not been in place long enough for pupils in Years 3 to 6 to have gained the necessary skills required to meet national expectations. There are gaps in pupils' knowledge and experience. Nevertheless, younger pupils are beginning to attain necessary levels, and good teaching ensures that even the older pupils achieve satisfactorily from a low skills base.
110. In Years 1 and 2, pupils use a data-handling programme to create block graphs and pie charts, illustrating their preferences for particular foods. They experiment with sizes, colours and styles of print when writing using the word processor. Pupils use these skills effectively to support their learning in literacy. They work enthusiastically with the floor turtle, giving it programmed instructions for movement, which can later be transferred to the screen.
111. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are learning how to manage the cells of a spreadsheet to record information and print related graphs. They make sensible decisions about what is the most useful presentation. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 use the Internet to search for information related to their history topic on the Ancient Greeks and are learning how to use word-processing techniques to cut, copy and paste selected work into their own files. However, they currently have insufficient experience of using e-mails, controlling events and sensing external data.
112. Teaching throughout the school is good. Planning is now firmly based upon a local scheme of work, which effectively ensures that all Programmes of Study will be covered. Very good use is made of the computer suite, where small groups of pupils, from the youngest to the oldest, receive intensive support for their work from the class teacher or learning support assistants. As classroom computers are linked to the suite and carry the same software, skills learned in lessons can be consolidated effectively in the classroom. Lessons are well planned and groups are well organised. Continuous assessment related to the scheme of work is carried out, which effectively indicates progress made by pupils and where there is a need to re-teach or support skills.
113. Teachers are successfully linking the teaching of skills to the knowledge content of other subjects. For example, word processors are used to support work in literacy. Research skills using search engines and the Internet are linked to history and geography. Data-handling programs link effectively to mathematics. In addition, the school has subject-linked CD-ROMs for research. Children in the reception class also practise their skills on programs linked to work they are doing; for example, 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' and drawing characters. At present, however, there is less evidence of suitable programs being used to support music and art and design.
114. Pupils really enjoy work in information and communication technology and recognise its importance in their lives. They work very hard at the projects they are set and support and help each other. They are usually very satisfied with the outcomes of their endeavours and are able to revisit and discuss their work, which is stored carefully.
115. The subject manager has a clear idea of the development of the subject and the school has taken effective steps towards ensuring safe access to the Internet through the appropriate networking and home-school agreements. The quality and sufficiency of hardware and software is good and is used efficiently. This marks significant improvement since the last inspection in terms of the quality of teaching and the structure of the curriculum.

MUSIC

116. Only one full class lesson took place during the inspection. Judgements are made on evidence gained from that lesson, plus instrumental lessons for flute and violin given by visiting local education authority staff and singing in assembly. This sparse evidence has been supplemented

by a discussion with pupils to help to establish what experiences they have had in music and with the joint subject managers to explore issues about coverage of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. No judgement about pupils' standards or achievement has been possible by the end of Year 2. However, pupils' attainment is below average by the end of Year 6. They do not achieve as well as they should. This represents a decline in standards seen since the last inspection, although then also little direct evidence was gained, none from Years 5 and 6.

117. Pupils display good attitudes to music. Pupils from all parts of the school enjoy coming together to sing. It is a good feature of work in assemblies, especially the whole-school singing assembly, where standards are above average. Pupils from the school have previously sung at the Royal Albert Hall in the Schools' Prom. In the singing assembly, Classes 3 and 4 tunefully performed James Taylor's 'You've got a friend', helpfully supporting the week's theme on friendship, after just one practice in their previous music lesson. Their singing was improved by being performed standing, whereas during the rest of the assembly the hymns were practised sitting, muffling the sound. The Years 5 and 6 music lesson was taught by a teaching assistant, supported by the class teacher. Pupils showed appropriate awareness of the 'rest' in music and maintained a steady pulse through the silences, some extended, in work they performed from written symbols on a score, marked on a whiteboard. When practising songs for an impending performance, they sang clearly and in unison. They quickly picked up a new piece, due to their positive attitudes to the subject and sense of rhythm, as it had a compelling tango beat. Pupils in Years 3 to 6, who have weekly instrumental lessons from visiting specialist teachers, attain above average standards due to the very good teaching they receive. These pupils behave well in their lessons and show by their performances that they have tried hard to complete homework exercises they have been set.
118. Teaching in the one lesson seen, taught by a member of the school staff, was good. The flute and violin teachers showed very effective teaching skills in the two lessons observed delivered by them. Good features in the Years 5 and 6 lesson were the detailed planning, leading to good teaching of rhythm, effective management and very good relationships between adults and pupils. The specialist teachers displayed excellent understanding and knowledge of the subject and very high quality personal skills. Time was well used and pupils sensitively managed to get the very best out of them, so that they made clear gains in understanding and skills, concentrating well for an intense half an hour. The practise tasks they were set for homework effectively reinforced those rehearsed during the lesson.
119. The school acknowledges that the time it devotes to music is inadequate. In its curriculum plan it allocates about one hour per week to the subject. Class lessons account for half an hour per week. There are activities, including listening to music and hearing about composers and styles in assemblies, that account for some of the rest. Occasional blocking of time; for example, a music foundation course run in the autumn term by the violin teacher for Years 3 and 4 pupils, makes up the total further. There is no evidence that pupils in other years have had similar provision. The teaching is at present undertaken by a very able teaching assistant, who is just completing her teaching degree and is about to leave the school. The school development plan states clearly that class teachers will now need substantial training to undertake their own teaching of the subject. A substantial budget allocation has been identified for this purpose, including new resources. These are sound overall, but lacking in instruments from non-European cultures and in larger pitched instruments. None of this has yet commenced. There are no extra-curricular activities promoting pupils' attainment or interest in music. No evidence was available to show that pupils have had sufficient experience in creating and developing musical ideas or in all elements of listening and applying knowledge and understanding, particularly in terms of the influence of time and place on the way music is created and performed. Information and communication technology has not been employed to support work in the subject. The school does not at present fulfil its statutory obligation to provide pupils with full access to all the Programmes of Study of the National Curriculum.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

120. Only three lessons were seen during the inspection, one each for Classes 2, 3 and 4. As the lesson for Class 2 was the only one seen for Years 1 and 2, no firm judgements can be made on the standards that these pupils attain or how well they achieve. Pupils by the end of Year 6 attain above average standards in physical education (PE). They achieve well. This shows an improvement to the attainment reported at the time of the last inspection. In a rained off games lesson held indoors, Years 1 and 2 pupils showed unsatisfactory awareness of space and the needs of others to have enough room for their activities. When travelling with a ball bouncing in with a bat or controlling a larger ball by dribbling with the feet, their level of control was below average.
121. Years 3 and 4 pupils alternate half-termly with the Years 5 and 6 class at the local swimming pool. At the start of the new term the Year 3 pupils, in particular, do not have a substantial body of pool experience upon which to build. The Year 3 pupils make up the bulk of the beginner group with the pool instructor. The class teacher works with the improvers and the teaching assistant, a confident swimming teacher, in the deep end with the highest attaining pupils. Each group comprises about one in three of the pupils, with a slight imbalance in terms of beginners, all of whom are already starting to swim without aids. The middle group swim confidently for at least ten metres on their front and back, working hard to improve poise and position in the water and stroke technique. About one third of them swim underwater through a submerged hoop. The top group swim strongly for at least 20 metres on front and back, many much further. About one half of them co-ordinate stroke and breathing successfully. All are confident in survival and lifesaving exercises they practise. Half the group swim in deep water through two submerged hoops before retrieving a brick. Standards for pupils of this age are above average. Years 5 and 6 pupils, in a hugely enjoyable dance lesson, displayed above average attainment in responding creatively to music and in performing a traditional Scottish dance, 'The Dashing White Sergeant', learning steps that they would later improvise into dances of their own.
122. Pupils show positive attitudes to PE. They enjoy the physical challenges and vigorous activities with which they are presented. There are very few 'couch potatoes'. All turn out appropriately dressed for the lessons, working barefoot indoors for extra sensitivity, except in dance. The oldest pupils behaved very well in their energetic dance session. Relationships with staff and classmates are excellent. Pupils appreciated the way the adults joined in, and were, frankly envious of the obvious fitness of their teacher in the excellent warm-up session, which had them groaning. At the pool, the all female staff has some difficulty in monitoring the behaviour of boys in a changing room also used by the general public. However, the boys, although excited, self-regulate, keenly aware that to behave inappropriately would let the school down.
123. Teaching standards are good overall, but vary from very good, with excellent features, to satisfactory, with some weak features. Teaching for pupils in Years 3 to 6 was very good overall. This is an improvement on the quality of teaching reported in 1997. Classes are well managed and teachers have good overall understanding of the requirements of the strands of the subject and the health-related aspects of the work. Thorough warm-ups are the norm, but where time is not well used, too little time remains for the review session and an adequate cooling down sequence. Most teachers dress appropriately for vigorous lesson leadership and to present positive role models to the pupils. Lessons are generally well organised. However, in the indoor games lesson in Years 1 and 2 the class was regularly asked to collect equipment from a single place causing an ebb and flow of 25 excited pupils. This was compounded when not enough equipment had been provided for that number. Resources are generally very well used. The Kylie Minogue hit, 'Spinning Around', was a popular choice with the older pupils as they tried, unsuccessfully, to emulate their teacher in disco technique. Excellent demonstration and skills teaching was also seen in the more traditional dance. This was a tester also, with the intricate 'pas de bas' step and the figure of eight skip taxing for all, including the link governor for PE, who gamely joined in too. Pupil demonstration is used to help model skills and aid assessment. However, too little self or peer-assessment is encouraged to develop pupils' capacity to evaluate and improve their own standards.

124. The school has good indoor and very good outdoor accommodation for PE, helping to promote above average standards. All strands of the National Curriculum are taught. In Years 3 to 6, pupils get a full swimming programme and access to outdoor and adventurous activities, including during the two residential courses undertaken at the local education authority's popular out of county centres. Teaching time is now appropriate. In 1997, the amount of time devoted to PE was reported as being high. The overall curriculum balance has been helped by this adjustment. There is good extra-curricular provision to support the subject and promote further the need for exercise, as part of a healthy lifestyle. Friendly fixtures and tournaments against local schools promote appropriately ideas of team spirit and sporting behaviour, as well as an element of competitive edge.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

125. Pupils attain standards that are in line with those expected for their age, as stated in the Locally Agreed Syllabus by the end of Years 2 and 6. They achieve satisfactorily overall. However, there is a particular emphasis in this school in relating knowledge and understanding of the subject to personal experience and feelings, and in this area pupils of all ages achieve well. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are able to investigate feelings of sadness and happiness. They have a satisfactory introduction to the important aspects of the Jewish faith and can describe the Torah scroll and Shabbat meal. They discuss baptism and the important objects linked to worship in a Christian church.
126. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are beginning to be able to empathise with those of different faiths. They have some understanding of the significance of places of worship from their visits to local Anglican and Roman Catholic churches and watching videos of a Hindu temple. They are able to discuss with sensitivity the similarities and differences of those places. They relate sympathetically to feelings and emotions linked to festivals, stories, texts and buildings. They demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the facts they have learned, by expressing their learning in drama. Groups enacted the events of Ascensiontide, showing that they had some understandings of the feelings of the disciples. They showed particular insight and sensitivity when discussing Pentecost and the coming of the Holy Spirit, by using skilful art techniques to illustrate their own symbols. For example, a key as the Holy Spirit unlocks your feelings, a hot air balloon using the flames and wind as symbols. The results of this particularly impressive lesson were shared effectively with the whole school.
127. Teaching observed during the inspection was good, leading pupils towards these particularly insightful understandings. Good management of pupils and imaginative planning ensures that religious education lessons are exciting and varied times. There was good use of videos, research, drama and art to reinforce learning. As a result of this, pupils really enjoy the subject. They are eager to learn about other people's beliefs and listen attentively to each other. The quality of relationships established in the classroom ensures that pupils can talk freely about their deepest feelings in a supportive atmosphere.
128. The headteacher, as subject manager, has established a strong and inventive scheme of work, upon which teaching is securely based. The religious education curriculum contributes significantly to the spiritual and cultural development of pupils and echoes and supports the inclusive, caring and supportive ethos of the school. The quality of provision in this subject demonstrates a significant improvement since the last inspection, although there is little evidence yet of pupils' information and communication technology skills being used in recording or research.