

INSPECTION REPORT

CARMOUNTSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Abbey Hulton
Stoke-on-Trent

LEA area: Stoke-on -Trent

Unique reference number: 123991

Headteacher: Mr R Fotheringham

Reporting inspector: Mr D Byrne
28076

Dates of inspection: 20th – 23rd May 2002

Inspection number: 195170

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs M Lilley
Date of previous inspection:	10 th June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
28076	Mr D Byrne	Registered inspector	Science Physical education Equal opportunities	The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
9981	Mr S Hussain	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 the parents?
29504	Mrs S Herring	Team Inspector	Foundation Stage Music Information and communication technology	
12997	Mrs C Cheong	Team Inspector	Mathematics History Special educational needs	How well is the school led and managed?
31807	Mr D Carpenter	Team Inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Geography Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to the pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated on the outskirts of the city of Stoke. Virtually all pupils live in municipal housing on the nearby Abbey Hulton Estate. The school has a nursery with 26 full-time children and 196 pupils are educated in the six classes from Reception to Year 6. The area is one of high social and economic disadvantage. This is indicated by the fact that the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above the national average at just under 60%. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is close to the national average (15%) and 2% of pupils have a statement of special educational needs. The attainment on entry to the school is very low. Virtually all pupils are of white ethnic origin with a very small percentage of black Caribbean heritage. There are no pupils requiring support for English as an additional language. The school is part of an Excellence in Cities initiative funded through an Education Action Zone. The school received an "Achievement Award" in 2002.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school that ensures that pupils make good progress and achieve well by the age of eleven after starting school with a low level of attainment. The quality of teaching is good overall and pupils develop good attitudes and behave well. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall with a good emphasis upon enabling pupils to achieve as well as they can. The school is giving good value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of education for children in the Foundation Stage.
- Pupils make good progress during their time in the school and by the age of 11 the majority of pupils achieve well in English, mathematics, science, art and design, design technology, geography and religious education.
- Pupils develop good attitudes and behave well throughout the school.
- The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 2 is good.
- Good provision is made for pupils' personal, social and health education and for their moral development.

What could be improved

- The standards attained in music and information and communication technology in Key Stage 2.
- The standards attained in scientific enquiry at the end of both key stages.
- Pupils' skills of working independently, using their initiative and making decisions.
- Procedures for recording information regarding child protection.
- The provision for developing pupils' cultural awareness.
- The contribution of the senior teaching staff to the management of the school.
- The accommodation.
- The level of attendance and punctuality.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been a good improvement since the last inspection in June 1997. The standards achieved by pupils by the end of Key Stage 2 have improved in English, mathematics, science and religious education and in art and design, design and technology and geography. Standards at the end of both key stages now exceed the national expectations. The way pupils' progress is assessed has improved satisfactorily and the role of subject co-ordinators is now satisfactory although some more work remains to be done. Whilst the overall quality of teaching has improved, there is still not enough time given to enabling pupils to work on their own and to take responsibility for their learning.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The results of the end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests in 2001 were outstanding. In comparison with all schools nationally, the performance of pupils at the end of Year 6 was above the national average in English and well above the national average in mathematics. Standards in science were in the highest 5% nationally. In comparison with similar schools, the pupils' performance was in the highest 5% nationally in English, mathematics and science. The percentage of pupils achieving the nationally expected standard for eleven-year-olds (level 4) has increased steadily in English, mathematics and science since the last inspection in 1997 and especially so in mathematics and science. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress between Years 3 and 6. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. The school has set targets for pupils' performance by the end of Key Stage 2 in English and mathematics but in 2001 they were exceeded which indicates that they could be more challenging.

In Key Stage 1, the percentage of Year 2 pupils reaching the standard expected for seven-year-olds has increased steeply in mathematics from a low level in 1999. There has been a gradual improvement in writing and reading, but standards overall are still low. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests the school's results were well below the national average in reading and mathematics. In writing, the pupils' performance was in line with the national average. In the teacher assessments for science, the results were very low, in the lowest 5% of schools. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' performance was well above the average in writing, average in mathematics but below the average in reading. Despite the comparatively low results, pupils in Years 1 and 2, make satisfactory progress from a low level of attainment when they start school. Pupils with special educational needs also make satisfactory progress. Girls do better than boys in mathematics but in reading, writing and science there is no discernible difference in the performance of the two gender groups.

When children start school in the Foundation Stage, their attainment is very low in comparison to the expectations for their age. Children make good progress throughout the Nursery and Reception class. Despite the good progress, by the time the children start Year 1 they have still not reached the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy, in their mathematical development, in their knowledge and understanding of the world and in their physical and creative development. The majority of children do achieve the Early Learning Goals in their personal, social and emotional development.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good overall. Particularly good attitudes are developed in the Foundation Stage and in Years 5 and 6 where children and pupils are enthusiastic and motivated to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall. Pupils are attentive and mostly polite to others in lessons and during assemblies. They behave sensibly outdoors at playtimes.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory overall but pupils' levels of personal development could be better.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. The rates are well below the national average and the rates of authorised absence are high.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Satisfactory	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 in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2. In the Foundation Stage teachers plan and teach a good curriculum that harnesses the children's natural curiosity and interest. In Key Stage 1 satisfactory teaching makes sure that pupils all learn at a satisfactory rate. In Key Stage 2 the very good quality of teaching in Years 5 and 6 results in pupils making good progress by the time they complete Year 6. Teachers have a good subject knowledge of literacy and numeracy, especially in Key Stage 2, and both English and literacy and mathematics and numeracy are taught well. Although lesson planning is often very brief, lessons have clear objectives that are shared with pupils, which helps them to know what is expected of them. Teachers have very strong procedures for managing pupils' behaviour and this means that pupils are quiet and attentive during lessons. Teachers in Key Stage 2, especially, explain what they expect very well and demand that pupils work hard at all times. The amount of work recorded in pupils' books is impressive in Key Stage 2, although too few opportunities are given for pupils to use their initiative and to work on their own. There is a comparative weakness in the teaching of practical science and in the overuse of worksheets at times in Key Stage 1 and in music in Key Stage 2. Although resources are generally used well to make lessons more interesting, not enough use is made of computers to extend learning in all subjects. There is an effective teamwork between teachers and support staff that benefits all pupils, and especially those with special educational needs. The quality and use of marking is not as good as it could be because it rarely challenges pupils to do better or asks for work to be corrected. Additional work is often provided for pupils to do at home and this contributes to the progress made by pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is good. In Key Stages 1 and 2, there is a good emphasis on the teaching of literacy and numeracy, but not all aspects of music or information and communication technology are taught. Throughout the school, too few opportunities are provided for pupils' to learn to work on their own.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Each pupil with special educational needs has a satisfactory individual education plan that is used to guide teaching and to check that they are making progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall with a strength in the provision for developing pupils' moral development but a weakness in the provision for developing pupils' cultural awareness.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory overall. Procedures for child protection are satisfactory, although there are weaknesses in record keeping and there are good procedures for monitoring behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour. The procedures for assessing pupils' academic attainment are satisfactory.

The majority of parents have positive views about the school, but despite satisfactory levels of communication between them and the school, the involvement of parents in the life of the school and in supporting their children at home could be better.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall with good leadership by the head teacher. The head teacher ensures that teachers work together to ensure that pupils achieve well by the time they leave school. The role of subject co-ordinators is satisfactory in checking what goes on in subjects but the impact of the senior teachers on the management of the school is unsatisfactory.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The recently reformed governing body is well led by a knowledgeable and energetic chair of governors who ensures that all statutory responsibilities are met. Not enough emphasis, however, has been given to ensuring that the accommodation is as good as it could be by establishing a system for regularly maintaining and improving the state of classrooms and the buildings.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The head teacher and staff are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The end of key stage National Curriculum test results are analysed to find ways of improving the curriculum and the way pupils are prepared for their end of key stage National Curriculum tests.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. All income and specific grants are spent appropriately to ensure that staffing is appropriate and resources are sufficient. Not enough attention has been given in the past to maintaining and improving the accommodation. The school has satisfactory procedures for making sure that it gives value for money.

The accommodation is in urgent need of improvement and improvements are imminent. Outside, the buildings are in shabby state and in need of painting and the playground is in a poor condition. Internally, many classrooms are in need of redecoration and the quality of much of the furniture is poor. Resources are satisfactory overall and the levels of staffing are suitable for the number and need of the pupils.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The progress their children make in the school and the good behaviour achieved. • The quality of teaching and the information the school provides about their children • The quality of leadership and management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The way the school helps their children to become mature and responsible • The range of extra-curricular responsibilities.

The inspection evidence supports the views that pupils make good progress and behave well. The quality of information and the quality of leadership and management are satisfactory but more could be done by the school develop the children's levels of independence. The range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Since the last inspection in June 1997, the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 have improved. This is a direct result of raising the expectations teachers have of pupils, especially in Years 5 and 6. There has been an increased emphasis placed upon demanding that pupils learn facts and information and an expectation that pupils work hard and cover each part of the National Curriculum, although more time needs to be spent on aspects of music. Better use has been made of homework and pupils are expected to present their work in a neat and ordered way. The quality of support for pupils with special educational needs has improved with daily support for pupils who have difficulties with learning English and mathematics. Good use has been made of nationally funded initiatives to boost the standard of pupils prior to end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests.
2. When children start school in the Foundation Stage, their attainment is well below the expectations for their age. They make good progress throughout the Nursery and Reception class but by the time they start Year 1, most children have still not achieved the Early Learning Goals in all but one of the areas of development. They do not achieve the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy, in their mathematical development, in their knowledge and understanding of the world or in their creative and physical development. Pupils make particularly good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and by the time they start Year 1 they achieve the Early Learning Goals for this area of their development.
3. The percentage of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 achieving the nationally expected standard of level 2 has improved since the last inspection but the rate of improvement has been much slower than in Key Stage 2 over the same time. The percentage of pupils reaching the standard expected for seven-year-olds has increased steeply in mathematics from a low level in 1999. In reading and writing there has been a gradual improvement, but standards overall are still low at the end of Key Stage 1. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests the school's results were well below the national average in reading and mathematics. In writing, the pupils' performance was in line with the national average. In the teacher assessments for science, the results were very low, in the lowest 5% of schools. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' performance was well above the average in writing, average in mathematics but below the average in reading. The inspection evidence confirms the test results.
4. Despite the comparatively low results, pupils in Years 1 and 2 are making satisfactory progress overall from a low level of attainment when they start Year 1. Girls do better than boys in mathematics but in reading, writing and science there is no discernible difference. Inspection evidence does not provide any reason for the difference in performance between boys and girls in mathematics other than their natural ability.
5. The results in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2001 were outstanding. In comparison with all schools nationally, the performance of pupils at the end of Year 6 was above the national average in English and well above the national average in mathematics. Standards in science were in the highest 5% nationally. In comparison with similar schools, the pupils' performance was in the highest 5% in each subject. The percentage of pupils achieving the nationally

expected standard for eleven-year-olds of level 4 has increased steadily in English, mathematics and science since the last inspection in 1997 and especially so in mathematics and science. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress between Years 3 and 6. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. The school has set targets for pupils' performance by the end of Key Stage 2 in English and mathematics but in 2001 they were exceeded which indicates that they could be more challenging.

6. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' listening skills are satisfactory but their skills of speaking are below the expectations for their age. Pupils often find it difficult to say what they mean because their vocabulary is narrow. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' confidence to speak in front of others has improved significantly and although many pupils still have a narrow vocabulary, the good teaching in Years 5 and 6 especially, encourages pupils to speak with confidence. Standards in reading are below the national average by the end of Key Stage 1 but pupils are achieving well given that the majority have not reached the Early Learning Goals for literacy when they start Year 1. Pupils enjoy reading and many of the classic children's stories, such as Cinderella, hold a fascination for them. Pupils benefit greatly from the way that parents are invited into school to read with them. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils read with satisfactory levels of independence and have developed a good knowledge of contemporary books and authors. Pupils have developed an appreciation of poetry and have started to develop their knowledge of play writers, such as Shakespeare. A weakness in the pupils' vocabulary reduces the quality of writing in Key Stage 1 but by the end of Year 2, most pupils are starting to write in short sentences and create short pieces of writing with a coherent structure. In Key Stage 2, pupils improve their writing at a good rate and by the end of Year 6, pupils produce pieces of extended writing that are technically very good. Because pupils in Key Stage 1 tend to be given a lot of worksheets, their competence in writing on their own is reduced. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils write very neatly with a mature linked style of handwriting but, unusually, using a pencil on most occasions rather than a pen.
7. In mathematics, improvements in teaching resulting from the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has improved the rate of progress of pupils across the school and especially in Years 5 and 6. Although pupils in Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress in mathematics, the low level of attainment when they start Year 1 means that by the end of Year 2 most pupils have still not reached the nationally expected standards for their age. In Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress, particularly in Years 5 and 6, and by the end of Key Stage 2 the majority of pupils reach standards that are in line with the national average in numeracy and mathematics. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of adding and subtracting numbers to 20, and many can recognise odd and even numbers with some starting to understand multiplication. In other areas, such as shape, their understanding is more limited, with the younger pupils finding the identification and naming of three-dimensional shapes very hard. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils have developed a good knowledge of the four rules of number and can apply their knowledge quickly to solve challenging problems. They can choose the most appropriate method for solving problems from a range of possible options.
8. The standard of pupils' scientific knowledge is very high at the end of Key Stage 2 but pupils could do much better in performing simple scientific investigations and experiments. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 especially, make very good progress in developing a very good knowledge of key scientific terms and in using technical vocabulary well to explain scientific events. Pupils develop a very good knowledge of

scientific ideas about plants and animals, materials and aspects of physical science, such as forces and their effects, the way light and sound are transmitted and the way electricity is conducted. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are not doing as well as they could because their skills of working on their own are not good as they could be. Expectations for pupils to take responsibility for their learning are low and not enough opportunities are provided for them to develop their practical skills or to record what they find out. There is an over-reliance on the use of worksheets. Pupils in Year 2 are not sure of the meaning of a fair test and have not managed to develop the skills of measuring and recording independently using tables and charts.

9. Throughout Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress against their prior attainment and against the targets set in their individual education plans for literacy and numeracy. They make satisfactory progress with their class work and they make good progress when they are withdrawn for specific help with the special needs teacher or learning support assistant.
10. Pupils are achieving well and making good progress in art and design, design and technology, geography and history. In these subjects, standards have improved since the last inspection and are now above those expected nationally at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2. In physical education, standards have been maintained since the last inspection and pupils are making satisfactory progress and achieving as well as expected for their age by the end of both key stages. Standards in music have been maintained since the last at the end of Key Stage 1 and are in line with the national expectations but at end of Key Stage 2 standards have declined and are well below national expectations. The decline is due to a lack of sufficient time given to music in Key Stage 2 and some pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 have not been taught music for a considerable time. Standards in information and communication technology at the end of Key Stage 1 have also been maintained since the last inspection and are in line with national expectations. At the end of Key Stage 2, however, standards have declined and are now below the national expectations. The decline can be attributed to a delay in acquiring up-to-date equipment and in the provision of suitable training for staff, resulting in gaps in pupils' overall knowledge and understanding. In religious education, standards have improved since the last inspection. Pupils are reaching the goals set by the Locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the end of Key Stage 2 the goals are being exceeded.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils enjoy school and this is reflected in their good attitudes and behaviour. This is a similar picture to that of the last inspection. Pupils show high levels of interest and involvement in lessons and other school activities. For example, in a Year 1 literacy lesson, all pupils were keen to take part in the question and answer session to identify vowels in everyday words. In a Year 6 art lesson about perspective in drawings, pupils on every table were enthusiastic in their good attempts to sketch objects disappearing into the distance. The youngest pupils are developing positive habits in their learning. For example, in a nursery 'free-play' session, pupils concentrated well in their role-plays in the 'farm animals and house' area. They form good relationships with others and their personal development is good.
12. Behaviour is good. Pupils of all ages behave sensibly in classrooms, at break-times and when moving around the school. Their behaviour in lessons makes a significant contribution to their achievements. Pupils say there is hardly any bullying, but when it occurs there are good procedures to deal with it, and those concerned are helped to make friends again. Staff are very strict in disciplinary matters, and behaviour

management across the school is good. This contributes to pupils' good understanding of the impact of their actions on others. There were two temporary exclusions and one permanent one in the last school year.

13. Personal development is satisfactory overall but, because pupils are very strongly managed, there are very few opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their learning. Pupils develop mature attitudes and are capable of using satisfactory skills of discussion and debate but the school has only a limited range of planned opportunities to develop pupils' initiative and sense of responsibility. Pupils do, however, respond positively when given responsibility. For example, Year 6 pupils carry out their Prefect duties effectively at break-times. Inspectors found very few examples of pupils using their own initiative in learning and there could be many more classroom-based opportunities to develop fact-finding and research skills. The last inspection report suggested that more time could be given to personal development and research skills and this remains the case. Having achieved such good behaviour, the school is well placed to now move pupils on in their personal development.
14. Pupils have a strong moral code reflected in their views about fairness and justice. Relationships between staff and pupils, and between pupils and their peers, are sound. Pupils show appropriate levels of respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. When required, they work effectively with each other, for example, in games during physical education. Older pupils are keen to help younger ones in the reading club that operates. However, cultural development is unsatisfactory and pupils have little knowledge about their own culture and that of others in Britain.
15. Although attendance levels have improved in recent years, the rate of attendance is below the national average. This adversely affects learning for many pupils. Punctuality is unsatisfactory and this too disrupts learning. Attendance and punctuality have deteriorated from the satisfactory levels of the last inspection.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 2, being particularly good in Years 5 and 6. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. By the time pupils leave school at the age of 11 they have made good progress overall. All the lessons observed during the inspection were satisfactory or better, with a high percentage being good or very good. Half of all lessons were judged to be good and just under a fifth were very good, with three lessons judged to be excellent. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 2, with particularly good teaching in Years 5 and 6.
17. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is good overall and at times excellent. Both teachers and support staff plan and teach a broad and balanced curriculum that harnesses the children's natural curiosity and interest and introduces them to religious education. Thorough use is made of assessment in order to identify the children's needs. In the Nursery class very well planned and implemented induction procedures gently ease the children into their educational life. Good provision is made for developing the children's personal, social and emotional development and this has a positive impact upon the good progress that children make throughout the Foundation Stage. Children benefit from being provided with a wide range of exciting and well-planned activities that stimulate and excite them so that they work well with others and enjoy pursuing their curiosity for learning.

18. Good classroom routines are established from an early age. For example, children take their name card each morning to register their arrival. Confidence and self-esteem are promoted by the judicious use of stickers and certificates rewarding desirable behaviour and attitudes to work. Children are expected to treat each other with respect and share classroom duties, for example, by passing around the fruit during snack-time in the Nursery.
19. In communication, language and literacy teachers successfully develop good listening skills by the time children leave the Reception class. Children's speaking skills are improved through good use of group discussions. The connection between the spoken and written word is made from the earliest age as the children learn to recognise their name as it is written on their picture card. Good use is made of games to develop the children's knowledge and understanding of sounds of the alphabet. Children are encouraged to make marks, holding a pencil correctly, to encourage early writing skills, and handwriting patterns are practised regularly throughout the Foundation Stage. Good use is made of literature to link with writing, for example, when children made a list of food eaten by the, 'Hungry Caterpillar'.
20. Mathematical development is successfully promoted by incorporating elements of the National Numeracy Strategy with the recommended curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage. Children are encouraged to use mathematical language as part of their everyday speech and good use of props, for example, 'Charlie Puppet' captures the children's imaginations so that they learn number rhymes. Good links are made between creative activities, such as baking cheese straws, to familiarise children with ideas about length, using the terms 'longer than' and 'shorter than'. Children in the Nursery class learn about shapes through making a pattern of squares on 'Elmer's' back. More opportunities could be provided for children to solve simple problems practically.
21. A good range of hands on activities in both the Nursery and Reception classes inspires children improve their knowledge and understanding of the world around them. By exploring the school garden, children learn basic ideas about plants and animals and by growing seeds indoors, children understand the need to care for living things. Parents are involved in developing children's knowledge and understanding of the past through contributions made to a memory box. The local area is used well by teachers to develop children's awareness of the local area and features within it. An autumn walk, looking at buildings and using photographs of the locality, developed children's knowledge and understanding of where they live. Children use a good range of construction toys but make very little use of the computer. Children know how to use a tape recorder. Children's physical and creative development is good. The outdoor secure area enables children to play safely and good use is made of the indoor facilities to develop satisfactory levels of co-ordination and balance. Some children in the Reception class, however, get overexcited by the freedom of the space in the hall and find it hard to follow teachers' directions. A good range of construction materials and activities involving the use of scissors and paintbrushes develop children's skills of precise movements. Creative development is taught satisfactorily with a good range of paintings, sketches and prints practised by children but much of the art work is very directed by adults and children do not have enough opportunities to develop individual creativity. Children are given opportunities to sing and perform music and, although imaginative role-play is encouraged by teachers, the facilities lack visual impact and excitement and therefore reduce children's motivation.

22. In Key Stage 1 satisfactory teaching ensures that all pupils learn at a satisfactory rate. Lessons are generally well planned with clear learning objectives, although in Year 1 in particular, not enough attention is given to challenging those who are higher attainers. Teachers manage the behaviour of pupils well and this helps to create a quiet and industrious atmosphere in most lessons so that pupils can work without interference from others. Pupils in Year 2 are particularly hardworking and respond well to the high expectations and carefully prepared lessons. Although resources are generally used well to add interest to lessons in Key Stage 1, for example, the good use of a projected Internet linked image of a growing plant in Year 1, there are too few opportunities for pupils to work on their own. An overuse of worksheets reduces opportunities for children to develop their own skills of writing and recording and this reduces the attainment reached in English. Although the National Literacy Strategy has been successfully implemented in Key Stage 1 and the teaching of English is good in Year 2, opportunities for pupils to write on their own are not given enough attention across all subjects and this reduces the progress made by pupils in writing. The teaching and learning in mathematics are satisfactory overall. The National Numeracy Strategy has been effectively implemented and teachers in Years 1 and 2 make good use of the three part mathematics lessons with a good emphasis on the mental arithmetic activities. The teaching of science in Key Stage 1 does not give enough attention to enabling pupils to work on their own in solving practical investigations and experiments. There is an overuse of worksheets to guide pupils' recording and this reduces the range of recording skills used by pupils and provides very few opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy or numeracy skills.
23. The quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 1 in art and design, design and technology and geography. Teachers have a secure subject knowledge that contributes to well-planned and organised lessons with activities that inspire and motivate pupils to learn and want to do well. In history, information communication technology, music, physical education and religious education, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall although there are limited opportunities for pupils to work on their own and to take responsibility for their own learning. There are also too few planned opportunities for pupils to improve their speech and this means that the pupils' vocabulary and ability to talk confidently is not developed as much as it could be.
24. The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 is good overall, particularly in Years 5 and 6, and pupils make good progress by the time they complete Year 6. Teachers have a good subject knowledge of literacy and numeracy especially and both English and mathematics are taught well. Although lesson planning is often very brief, lessons have clear objectives that are shared with pupils thereby helping them to know what is expected of them. Teachers have very strong procedures for managing pupils' behaviour and this means that pupils are quiet and attentive during lessons. There is a very industrious atmosphere in Key Stage 2 lessons. Pupils work extremely hard and produce a lot of well-presented work in their books. The teaching style adopted by the teachers in Key Stage 2 of emphasising the teaching of knowledge has, however, reduced the development of pupils' independent skills and these are lower than they should be. This is especially apparent in science where pupils have a very good knowledge and understanding of the subject but struggle in applying this to low level independent activities. Teachers give very good explanations of complicated and abstract ideas. For example, during a Year 5 and 6 lesson about the way the eye works, teachers very skilfully described and explained the main components of the eye. Good use of the overhead projector added interest to the lesson and was used to involve pupils in sharing their own ideas.

25. The quality of teaching and learning in art and design and design and technology is in Key Stage 2 is good overall. High expectations are made of pupils to create detailed and well thought through designs and to use good art and graphical skills to record them. In an excellent Year 5 art and design lesson, the teacher stressed that there is no right and wrong in individual creations and this enabled pupils to very skilfully transfer sketches representing sounds into patterns. The teaching of religious education is good in Key Stage 2 and by the end of Year 6 pupils have a knowledge and understanding of Christianity, Islam and Judaism that is better than normally found amongst pupils of their age. Similarly, good teaching in geography results in pupils having a good knowledge and understanding of their local environment in particular.
26. Although resources are generally used well to make lessons more interesting, not enough use is made of computers to extend learning in all subjects. Teachers teach aspects of information communication technology well, for example, word processing, but the computer is too rarely used to assist teaching in all subjects. In some subjects, the lack of information and communication technology resources affects the quality of teaching, for example, in science.
27. The quality and use of marking is not as good as it could be because it rarely challenges pupils to do better or asks for work to be corrected. Opportunities for teachers to link marking with setting individual targets are not consistently taken. Teachers make good use of homework and additional work is often provided for pupils and this contributes to the progress pupils make.
28. There is an effective teamwork between teachers and support staff that benefits all pupils, and especially those with special educational needs. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs by the specialist support teachers and support assistants is good. The teachers provide suitably adapted work to meet the needs of these pupils. Sometimes, increased adult support helps them to complete the same or similar work to other pupils. Good support is given when pupils are withdrawn for sessions to provide work to meet their specific needs by the special needs teacher. All support staff work well with the teaching staff and contribute well to the quality and extent of the pupils' learning.
29. The poor state of the accommodation and the lack of space and suitable furniture make it difficult for teachers to display pupils' work or to teach practical activities.

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

30. The quality of the curriculum provision is broadly the same as it was at the time of the previous inspection. Overall it is satisfactory and some improvements have been made in the provision for information and communication technology and design and technology. There is still too little emphasis on the promotion of pupils' personal development and research skills. The good work being done in geography and history could be further improved by the greater use of fieldwork activities and skills. In design and technology, pupils still do not have sufficient opportunity for the practise of food technology, although in all other respects the subject is secure. There are gaps in aspects of the music curriculum and the provision does not currently meet statutory requirements. The recently equipped computer suite has added greatly to the resources available to the pupils and is starting to have a positive impact on the curriculum of each subject area.

31. The school provides a good curriculum at the Foundation Stage and pupils are achieving well even though standards are still below those expected for children of this age group. A strength of the curriculum for the Foundation Stage is the good attention paid to planning activities that take account of the needs of individual children. Very good use is made of first hand experience to improve children's knowledge. More could be done to improve their skills in speaking and listening before they enter Year 1 and some of the imaginative play areas lack impact and excitement.
32. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum for the pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2. It is broad and an appropriate amount of time is allocated to the teaching of each subject, with the exception of music where insufficient time is allocated in Key Stage 2. An imbalance also exists in the use of information and communication technology in all subjects of the curriculum and pupils do not have a sufficiently broad experience of the use of spreadsheets, for example, for the gathering and display of data. The school meets statutory requirements in respect of religious education, and follows the Locally Agreed Syllabus. A small amount of curriculum enrichment occurs through visits to places of educational interest and from visits to the school by speakers, such as the local vicar. The school's link with the Education Action Zone project has also been fruitful and during the current school year it has provided funds for visitors to the school. The current weaknesses in the provision for music and information and communication technology suggest that a whole school curriculum overview or curriculum map would allow the school to identify such problems at an early stage.
33. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall and the quality of teaching for these pupils is good. Pupils with special educational needs have equality of access to the curriculum and have equal opportunities to make progress. Pupils are withdrawn from lessons to do the same subject their class is doing, so they are able to take a full part in the whole curriculum.
34. The school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities for pupils in both key stages. The provision includes breakfast and homework clubs, sports clubs, music and singing, and a recently formed computer club. Pupils have the opportunity of competing in local leagues and the school has a good record in cross-country running. These additional opportunities make a useful contribution to pupils' personal and social development. Pupils have no opportunity for taking part in residential trips and this reduces the opportunities for them to broaden their knowledge and understanding of the world around them and of cultures outside their immediate experience. Some classes do have the opportunity to participate in visits to places of educational interest, such as the park at Cellarhead.
35. As at the last inspection, the school makes good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. The school has recently modified its personal, social and health education and citizenship policy to better match pupils' needs. This includes appropriate policies to guide sex and drugs education. Good use is made of a number of strategies to promote pupils' awareness of personal issues, for example, circle time, assemblies and in personal, social and health education lessons. Lessons are carefully planned across the school and include topics such as bullying, racism, justice and citizenship. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of being a good citizen is promoted well, for example, in a lesson about the dangers of drug abuse led by a community police officer.
36. The school's provision for spiritual, moral, and social development is satisfactory overall although provision for developing pupils' cultural development is

unsatisfactory. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their spiritual and social development and good progress in their moral development but more needs to be done to improve pupils' knowledge and understanding of other cultures. During the inspection, a few instances were observed of pupils showing awe, wonder and amazement in their learning. For example, in a Year 4 science lesson about plant growth, many pupils gasped with appreciation as they looked at the structure of a buttercup as they dissected it for labelling.

37. Satisfactory provision for promoting pupils' spirituality has been maintained since the last inspection. The provision for spirituality is made in a variety of ways, for example, through acts of collective worship, opportunities for pupils to share their feelings and beliefs through events, such as 'circle' time, and promoting teaching styles that connect different subjects. During the inspection, an assembly led by the local vicar made a positive contribution to spiritual development through discussion about kindness in biblical stories and prayers. In subjects such as science, geography and art pupils are introduced to the beauty of the world around them, and are invited to think about and reflect on many important issues. They consider the achievements of others and issues such as poverty and suffering.
38. The provision for moral development is good and the school has maintained this area of its work since the last inspection. Pupils are given a clear moral code as a basis for behaviour that is consistently promoted throughout the school. Pupils develop a sense of right and wrong and the importance of sticking to agreements and promises. Many teachers involve pupils in devising rules for their class. Pupils are expected to treat others with respects and to listen to and value the views and opinions of others. Assembly themes touch on a number of appropriate issues. Personal, social and health education and citizenship topics often include a moral dimension, for example, bullying.
39. The provision for social development is satisfactory and was good at the last inspection. Staff provide appropriate role-models for pupils to base their own behaviour and relationships, and this is contributing significantly to their social development. They promote good manners, co-operation and helpful attitudes towards others. Contacts with the wider community allow pupils to interact with other sections of society. For example, visitors from charitable groups show pupils how important it is to care for others. There is a weakness, however, in the way that pupils are given limited opportunities to use their own initiative and to learn to work with others during practical aspects of the curriculum, for example, in science. Within all aspects of school life, pupils are encouraged to respect the rights of others and by participating in inter-school sports events, pupils develop a good team spirit and the ability to work with others. The comparatively few opportunities for pupils to participate in residential activities prevents pupils from developing their social skills through being part of a team for an extended period of time away from school.
40. The provision for cultural development is unsatisfactory. There are very few opportunities for pupils to find out about their own culture and others in the world. The 'artists in residence week' taken by the school last year demonstrated some good practice in extending pupils' knowledge and understanding of other cultures but these opportunities are few and far between. Opportunities for pupils to use the computer to establish links with schools elsewhere in the UK and also abroad in order to broaden pupils' awareness of other cultures are not yet established. Much more work is necessary to give pupils a satisfactory level of awareness of their culture and that of others in our multicultural society. The school's provision has declined from satisfactory since the last inspection.

41. The quality of the links with the community has been maintained since the last inspection and is satisfactory. The links make a sound contribution to pupils' learning. The vicar from St John's church leads assemblies each school term. This makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development. There is also a positive link with the British Legion Club, with members leading a remembrance service each year and supporting the school in other ways too. Other visitors to the school include artists, storytellers, the road safety department and school nurse. The latter makes a good contribution to promoting health and safety through talks on topics, such as hygiene and healthy eating. The link with Port Vale FC means that many pupils are coached regularly to improve their football skills. There are a few school trips in the wider community to venues, such as the Stanley Head Outdoor Centre that give pupils experiences in many outdoor pursuits. However, visits to art galleries, museums and cultural centres are lacking.
42. The school has satisfactory links with other schools. Most pupils transfer to Birches High School for the next stage of their education and good links with the High School offers initiatives such as the provision of a 'summer school' for literacy and numeracy. Appropriate arrangements are in place to transfer records and information about pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

43. The school cares for its pupils and ensures satisfactory levels of welfare and safety. Staff show a caring attitude towards pupils but there are a few weaknesses in the school's provision and this indicates a decline from the overall good provision found at the last inspection. The designated officer for child protection is appropriately trained and staff have high levels of care and vigilance at all times, but the quality of record keeping is weak and has the potential to cause communication problems if the designated officer is ever absent.
44. The school has appropriate arrangements to identify potential hazards to health and safety. The head-teacher and deputy carry out risk assessments regularly. Arrangements are made to ensure that all equipment and appliances are regularly tested. Fire drills are carried out regularly but a record is not kept. All teaching staff recently completed a basic first aid course and two staff are extensively trained.
45. Procedures to monitor and support pupils' personal development are satisfactory. Pupils' files and records of achievement include reference to many aspects of pupils' personal development, for example, levels of confidence, maturity, behaviour and social skills are recorded. This enables effective monitoring. Personal targets are set where necessary in pupils' annual reports and parents have the opportunity to work with the school regarding areas of concern.
46. Procedures to monitor and improve attendance have improved recently after additional support provided through an Excellence in Cities funded initiative, employing a community liaison officer. The existing procedures are satisfactory but the impact of the recent improvements upon attendance figures are only just starting to be seen. The educational welfare service is appropriately involved where necessary. Holidays during term time are discouraged but the school has had little success in deterring families from taking the local industry annual break called 'Potters Holidays'. Parents are given frequent reminders about the importance of good attendance and punctuality in newsletters. Rewards and certificates are well used to value good attendance amongst pupils. The recently introduced breakfast

club has become very popular with pupils and represents a good provision to support punctuality.

47. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are good. Appropriately detailed records are kept of any incidents of bad behaviour. The home and school liaison officer makes a good contribution by working with pupils to raise their awareness of the seriousness of certain types of behaviour. The merit book is a good means of celebrating acts of kindness and good behaviour with special mentions and certificates awarded in weekly assemblies. These arrangements are effective in maintaining good standards of behaviour in school.
48. The school's procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress are satisfactory in English and science and good in mathematics. The results of national tests at the end of both key stages, and regular assessments at the end of specific topics in all classes provide teachers with information about how well pupils are learning. The information is used to plan work in English and mathematics for groups of pupils of similar attainment and to give specific support where needed. The impact of the way assessment information is used has helped to strengthen the way that lessons are taught and has contributed to improving standards. Targets are set each term and discussed with parents in an attempt to win their support when pupils are experiencing difficulty. However, these targets are as yet too general to help individuals to improve. Marking of pupils' work is not helpful and there few direct links between marking and the targets set for pupils to improve. Comprehensive records are kept for each pupil though the information is not yet used to track their progress and rate of achievement through the school. Good progress is being made in establishing assessment procedures for other subjects, and these are better than is found in many schools. The school targets the work of three pupils on a regular basis in each subject and subject managers check general progress towards the targets. However, this information, and the information gained from the analysis of test results, is not used effectively to identify gaps in the curriculum, for example, in the use of spreadsheets in information and communication technology or pupils' progress in music in Key Stage 2 or in aspects of practical science.
49. Good assessment procedures in the Foundation Stage are used well to plan work for groups and individuals and to identify pupils with special educational needs at an early stage. Assessments at the start of the Nursery and at the beginning and end of Reception show that pupils make good progress. Good assessment procedures, including regular focused observations by the Nursery Nurses and specific tasks, enable teachers to check children's progress systematically. This is a significant factor in children achieving well.
50. Arrangements for identifying and supporting pupils with special educational needs are good. The Code of Practice is fully implemented. Individual Education Plans are appropriately drawn up and reviewed. Forms used by staff to record pupils' progress and assessments are clear, and entries are usually dated. Targets are relevant to the pupils' needs, although outcomes are not always added to the records. A regular review of pupils' progress is made and records updated. The statutory requirements for the provision outlined in the formal statements of Special Educational Needs are met. The school has effective relationships with outside agencies.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

51. Parents have positive views of the school. Although there was a very low response to the inspection questionnaire, and very few parents attended the parents' meeting

with inspectors, responses were largely positive. From the views expressed, it is clear that parents have a high level of confidence in the school and its staff. The majority of parents replying to the questionnaire said that they were pleased with all areas of the school's work, although a few parents are disappointed at the range of extra-curricular activities available for their children. The inspection findings are that the number and range is satisfactory for a school of this size. Parents' views are similar to those expressed at the last inspection in 1997.

52. The quality of information to parents, especially about pupils' progress is satisfactory. The school prospectus is appropriately detailed. The school has developed a useful and well-presented internet information point for parents and others. There is low parental attendance at consultation sessions despite the school's best efforts. Most pupils' annual reports provide a helpful pen picture of their academic, personal and social development. They provide much detail about what pupils know, can do and understand. A good feature is the setting of a 'target' in each subject. Some reports, however, do not make it clear how well pupils could do in numeracy. Also, several reports in different subjects use too much education jargon. The school provides a bright and attractive newsletter regularly and this is useful for parents to keep abreast of issues and dates for events.
53. Links with parents are effective, and their involvement has a satisfactory impact on the work of the school. The contribution of parents to children's learning, at school and at home, is satisfactory. The home and school liaison officer makes a good contribution to developing and improving links and is positively involved in many parental issues. Although the school has developed a good home and school agreement that requires the signature of the head-teacher, parent and pupil, only about 60% of parents have signed up to this. The parents, staff and friends association has supported the school well in the past but they have been inactive in this school year. The school has worked effectively with the college in the community to run courses for parents in school to involve them more in their children's learning. A few parents help in school with activities such as listening to readers and also in the classroom generally. Although there are some positive initiatives with parents, the school could do more to encourage further involvement with the school. This was raised at the last inspection.
54. Generally, there are good links between staff at the school and with parents of pupils with special educational needs. Parents are invited to regular reviews of individual education plans. At times, however, the school has difficulty meeting with parents to discuss their child's targets and progress because some parents are reluctant to talk with staff. The special needs teacher writes weekly records to help keep the class teachers informed and this is working well. In subject policies, the quality of the section on supporting individual pupils' needs is generally satisfactory.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

55. The quality of leadership and management in the school is satisfactory overall. Good leadership by the head teacher ensures staff have a clear focus upon raising standards and this has successfully improved the achievement of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2. The head teacher has developed an ethos of hard work within a strongly disciplined environment that ensures that pupils learn and work hard in lessons and achieve well. Although there is a good focus on ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils, there is a lack of focus on promoting pupils' awareness of the diversity of cultures within the modern world. Communication with and between staff is good, with daily staff briefings and regular meetings for staff and senior staff.

The day-to-day administration of the school is effective and ensures that the school runs smoothly.

56. The head teacher has established satisfactory procedures for the performance management of staff and everyone has a clear job description. The head teacher plays a significant part in ensuring that pupils behave well in the school and is responsible for liaising with parents. The role of other members of the senior management team to the management of the school is not clearly defined and their contribution is unsatisfactory. This means that the role of managing what goes on in classes across the school falls upon the head teacher and makes delegation of responsibilities difficult. Subject co-ordinators make a positive input to the management of the school by checking on what is taught in each subject and by establishing how well pupils learn and make progress, although in some subjects, practical science and music in Key Stage 2, higher expectations could be made of staff. The head teacher makes sure that financial support is made available, through income from the standards fund and from the Education Action Zone, to release staff so that they are able to perform their subject management roles. In subjects such as English, art and design, design and technology and geography, the impact of the subject co-ordinator on standards has been very positive.
57. There are satisfactory procedures in place for consultation with staff to identify what needs to be done to improve the school. These needs are included in the school improvement plan but there are some gaps in the range of areas for improvement and a lack of identified costs to support the strategies to achieve the targets. The school intends to extend the plan to cover these areas in the next couple of months. The plan contains brief details of strategies for further raising standards but there is no reference to a need to improve the fabric of the school or to details of how to ensure staff development is carried out. The procedures for ensuring that the school maintains and evaluates its performance are satisfactory overall. The head teacher monitors the effectiveness of spending upon the standards attained by pupils. The high standards achieved by pupils by the end of Key Stage 2 demonstrate a wise deployment of resources and good staff management, but the senior management team could make a stronger contribution to the management of the school.
58. The role of the governing body is satisfactory. Many members are new and there is a good range of governors representing the interests of the local community. The governing body fulfils its statutory requirements by being involved in what goes on in the school and working with the head teacher to establish how the school can be improved. The chair of governors and the vice chair are actively encouraging new governors to train. Through regular consultations with the head teacher and with staff, and visits by some governors to the school, the governing body gains a satisfactory insight into how the school works. The school's achievements in the end of key stage National Curriculum tests are discussed and analysed and the data used to compare the school's performance with other schools nationally and in comparison with similar schools. This process has identified some areas for further development, for example, the level of achievement in Key Stage 1 science.
59. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is managed satisfactorily by an experienced teacher and a competent, skilled support teacher. The recommendations of the revised Code of Practice are fulfilled and the finances received for pupils with special educational needs are well spent to benefit the pupils. The quality of accommodation used for the withdrawal of pupils is satisfactory but the poor internal state of the building and the furniture are not supportive of pupils' learning. Additional resources to support pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory. The Governing Body does not currently have a person identified for

special educational needs. The head teacher ensures that the Governing Body is kept well informed and matters to do with special educational needs are fully discussed at Governors' meetings.

60. The financial management of the school budget is satisfactory overall and spending is directed towards maintaining staff. The governing body and head teacher have managed the school through some difficult financial times resulting from declining numbers on roll but the difficulties arising from these have been resolved. Prudence has enabled a good budget surplus to be built up. All income to the school, including funds from the Excellence in Cities Action Zone, and funds from National Grid for Learning and delegated moneys for special educational needs are spent effectively and in accordance with the directions attached to the grants. The governing body and the head teacher make sure that spending is directed to benefit pupils and there are satisfactory procedures to check that best value is achieved for spending.
61. The accommodation is sufficient to enable the teaching of the National Curriculum but there are some significant weaknesses. Over many years there has been a lack of investment in maintaining the accommodation and in upgrading furniture and the quality of the internal and external décor. Consequently, the school has a drab and unwelcoming appearance outside and many classrooms lack the modern, clean and brightly coloured furniture and storage units found in most primary schools. In parts of the school, rooms are cluttered and some tables and chairs are old and damaged; some table-tops are so damaged that they make it difficult for pupils to write properly. The school has recently developed a safe and secure outdoor play area for children in the Foundation Stage and this provides a very good area for the younger children to play safely. Other aspects of outdoor provision, however, are in need of improvement. The Key Stage 2 playground is uneven and there is a lack of playground markings and the path to the Key Stage 1 playground has uneven flagstones that present a risk to pupils at play. Although there is no direct access to a grassed sports area, the school alleviates the problems this causes by making good use of a nearby sports field. The school is soon to receive a large investment through the Public Finance Initiative to renovate and improve the buildings.
62. Staff have appropriate qualifications and skills to meet the needs of the pupils and to teach effectively. The teachers are supported by a satisfactory number of education support staff so that the needs of all pupils can be met. The procedures for the continued professional development of staff are satisfactory and the head teacher ensures that the effectiveness of all training is monitored and, where relevant, shared with all staff. Funds from the Excellence in Cities programme pay for a home-school liaison officer who effectively liaises with parents and supports procedures for monitoring absence and for promoting better attendance.
63. There is sufficient financial provision to ensure that there are enough resources of suitable quality to teach the curriculum to the range of pupils in the school. Although information and communication technology resources have been improved, there are still some gaps in some software to teach control and sensing and also data handling and analysis. Resources are good for art and design, design technology and geography but the school needs more gymnastics equipment. The Education Action Zone has expanded options for using outside resources through events such as Arts Festivals and funding visitors to the school such as artists in residence. Overall, the school operates the best value principles to ensure that the management and use of resources are satisfactory overall.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

The governors, head teacher and staff should:

- 1. raise attainment in science in Key Stage 1 by:**
 - developing and implementing a scheme that systematically challenges and extends pupils' levels of independence in experiments and investigations.
(paragraphs 22 and 94)

- 2. raise standards in music and information and communication technology in Key Stage 2 by**
 - in music at Key Stage 2, ensuring that each element of the National Curriculum is taught regularly across the school;
(paragraphs 1, 10, 30, 32, 48, 131, 132, 135)
 - in Information and communication technology at Key Stage 2, ensuring that all gaps in the curriculum are closed and extending the range of planned opportunities for pupils to apply computer skills to support learning across the curriculum.
(paragraphs 30, 32, 48, 63, 83, 89, 98, 112, 117, 125, 128, 130, 134, 141)

- 3. improve the pupils' skills of working on their own, using their initiative and making decisions by:**
 - adapting the curriculum so that there are regular opportunities for pupils to apply their good knowledge and understanding of many subjects, for example, in mathematics and science, and by using research skills in history and using the library in English;
(paragraphs 13, 22, 24, 30, 96, 98)
 - strengthening the provision in the Foundation Stage for promoting children's creative development;
(paragraphs 21 and 73)
 - implementing the existing plans to introduce a school council and extending opportunities for pupils to have more opportunities to take responsibility for aspects for the running of the school.
(paragraphs 13)

- 4. make better provision for developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of other cultures by:**
 - devising and implementing a policy and strategy for promoting pupils' knowledge and understanding of other cultures.
(14, 34, 36, 40, 41, 55)

5. improve the effectiveness of the senior management team by

- reviewing the responsibilities of the existing senior management team so that their roles are clarified and contribution to the school management strengthened.

(paragraph 56)

6. urgently take action to improve the quality of the accommodation by:

- ensuring that the school improvement plan has a rolling programme for maintaining and investing in the fabric of the school buildings based upon an annual audit of need.

(paragraphs 59 and 61)

7. increase the level of attendance and punctuality by:

- pursuing existing procedures to monitor and follow up absence and providing a reward system for valuing good attendance and punctuality.

(paragraphs 15 and 46)

In addition, the school should consider the following minor points for inclusion in the action plan:

- improving the record-keeping procedures relating to child protection issues;
- developing and implementing a clear strategy for boosting the quality of Key Stage 1 pupils' speech;

(paragraphs 23 and 46)

- raising expectations for pupils in Key Stage 2 to write in pen;

(paragraphs 6 and 80)

- making better use of marking to link in to individual target setting.

(paragraphs 27, 48, 82, 90, 122)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	48
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	33

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	8	25	12	0	0	0
Percentage	6	17	52	25	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	196
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	127

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	29

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	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	19

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.4
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	15	10	25

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	12	11
	Girls	7	8	8
	Total	18	20	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	72 (77)	80 (77)	76 (73)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	9	8
	Girls	8	7	7
	Total	19	16	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (58)	64 (62)	60 (50)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	91 (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	13	21	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	9	12
	Girls	19	18	21
	Total	28	27	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (72)	79 (69)	97 (94)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	9	9
	Girls	17	19	19
	Total	25	28	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (64)	82 (71)	82 (61)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	220
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	2	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.05
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	109

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	20
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	508,404
Total expenditure	520,404
Expenditure per pupil	2344.16
Balance brought forward from previous year	38,947
Balance carried forward to next year	26,947

Recruitment of teachers

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

222

Number of questionnaires returned

27

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	50	34	4	4	8
My child is making good progress in school.	64	24	4	4	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	36	8	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	48	32	4	4	12
The teaching is good.	68	24	4	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	56	36	4	0	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	76	16	4	0	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	72	28	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	64	20	4	4	8
The school is well led and managed.	48	48	4	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	40	48	0	8	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	12	60	0	12	16

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

62. The school makes good provision for children in the Foundation Stage. This is an improvement since the last inspection and reflects the thorough planning and good assessment procedures related to the successful introduction of the Early Learning Goals. Twenty-six children attend the Nursery full-time following the good induction procedures where children move gradually from attending part-time over a few weeks. Good account is taken of the needs of individual children and the period of part-time attendance is extended when it is necessary. Children spend a year in the Nursery class before moving to the Reception class in the September before their fifth birthday. There are currently 29 children in the Reception class. The Foundation Stage is housed in a spacious, separate building with direct access to a secure outdoor play area. Both Nursery and Reception classes are taught by a qualified teacher, supported by either a full-time or two part-time Nursery Nurses who co-operate well as a team for the benefit of the children. Where sought, good support is given by parents, for example, by hearing children read or in specific projects, such as helping Reception children to fill their memory box with items from when they were very young.
63. The quality of teaching seen during the inspection was good overall, with some very good and excellent features. In a very good lesson the teacher made very good use of first hand experiences to improve children's knowledge. Children explored the school garden to find different mini-beasts in their natural surroundings, and used good questioning, such as "How do we know this is a spider?" This activity also improved their counting skills. In most lessons teachers give very clear instructions so that children know what to do, for example, when explaining how to find a partner in a reading game or the group tasks related to longer and shorter than. The very good relationships that exist between adults provide a good model for children and support their learning well. Nursery nurses are deployed effectively to work with groups and individuals and to assess children's progress by close observation. The support they give in class to small groups of children who are identified as having special educational needs, and the extra help they provide for some Reception children at lunchtime is helping to raise achievement. Teachers' plans show opportunities to develop speaking skills through a range of activities, such as 'Sharing time' at the end of the morning or in creative activities in the afternoon. However, opportunities for children to develop their speaking skills by explaining their thinking during the whole class elements of literacy and numeracy lessons are very limited and this hinders the children's ability to express their own thoughts. Resources are satisfactory and generally well used and there has been a good improvement since the last inspection in facilities for outdoor play. Several areas are allocated to imaginative play, but these are generally lacking in the variety and inspiration needed to encourage children to engage in role-play.
64. The majority of children enter Nursery with skills that are well below average for their age. Through good teaching and careful monitoring of their progress children achieve well. Nevertheless, school assessments at the end of the Reception year, together with inspection evidence, indicate that fewer children than would be expected are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals in each area of their development other than personal, social and emotional development.

Personal, Social and Emotional development

65. Teaching is good in the Nursery and Reception classes and children make good progress as a result of the considerable emphasis rightly placed on this area. The children's personal, social and emotional development is promoted through all aspects of school life and by the time the children start Year 1 the majority have reached the Early Learning Goals for personal, social and emotional development. Background music playing as children come into the Nursery in the morning is a welcoming introduction to school and the good range of activities available for children encourages them to become involved in learning straight away. Good routines are established from an early age as children develop independence by taking their name card to register their arrival. Independence is also encouraged in changing for physical education, though help is available where needed for tying laces. Children respond well to the high expectations of behaviour. For example, a dance lesson in Reception using scarves led to children exercising self-control and following instructions well. Through a good range of interesting activities, children learn to sit and listen and to concentrate on activities for an increasing amount of time. The children's confidence and self-esteem are promoted well through stickers and certificates and expectations for children to use their initiative. Children take turns to telephone the cook to find out the day's menu for the class and teacher and children also give the thumbs up sign to recognise a particular achievement for a class member. Children learn to take turns, by passing round the fruit in snack time in the Nursery, and to treat others with respect by apologising for upsetting someone and also by learning about their own beliefs and those of others in Reception, for example when comparing elements of Christianity and Judaism. The carefully finished paintings and models and also the handwriting, show that children are developing a pride in what they do.

Communication, Language and Literacy

66. Teaching is good overall and leads to good progress for all pupils throughout the Foundation Stage but by the time they start Year 1, most children have not achieved the standard expected for their age in the Early Learning Goals. There is a high emphasis on developing listening skills. For example, in Reception the teacher emphasises when it is her time to talk and for children to listen. Consequently, children listen well to clear instructions, so they know exactly what to do and get on quickly with their tasks. Children develop their speaking skills in planned activities, such as circle time and when working in small groups with an adult. An example of this was observed when the Nursery Nurse in the Nursery class demonstrated the meaning of longer and shorter when making models. Children found considerable difficulty in using the appropriate words to describe what they had made. Children are also taught a good range of rhymes to improve their vocabulary. The development of speaking skills is less successful in class activities, such as literacy and numeracy, when opportunities for children to express their own ideas and to describe ways of working things out are very restricted. The speech of a significant minority of children is indistinct and the limited vocabulary of some pupils makes it difficult for them to describe what they are thinking.
67. Children are encouraged to make a connection between the spoken and written word from the earliest age. They learn to recognise their name as it is written on their picture card, they line up according to the first sound in their name and they follow the story in the big books. Children in the Nursery also learn that books can be used to find information as they look to match their mini-beasts to the

picture in the book. Higher attaining children in Reception complete the day and weather board independently. Appropriate elements of the literacy strategy are taught very well using a good range of interesting activities, for example, the hidden phonic game in Reception. Regular practice in reading to an adult at school and at home enables most pupils to make very good progress, with the majority of pupils achieving the level expected for their age by the time they start in Year 1.

68. Handwriting patterns are practised regularly both in the Nursery and more systematically in Reception by following the guide letters or writing over the dots. Children develop their writing skills well as they are encouraged to write for different purposes. For example, Nursery children are guided by the teacher to write a list of the food eaten by 'The Hungry Caterpillar', with higher attaining children writing from left to right and forming many letters correctly. In Reception, lower attaining children use their name cards to write out party invitations and higher attaining children can write several sentences of their own following a pattern: "In the park I sawa lake ... a dog...". In general, the level of independence in forming simple sentences is below average because of the impact of the children's limited vocabulary when they start school. Letters are formed well using capital letters and full stops and children are taught and encouraged to hold their pencils correctly from the start.

Mathematical development

69. Teaching is good overall and children make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage, but by the time they start Year 1, most children have not achieved the standard expected for their age by the Early Learning Goals. In the Nursery, every opportunity is taken to count. For example, children register their names on a number line each morning so that they can count the number present and compare this to the number reached on the line. This is extended in Reception as appropriate elements of the National Numeracy Strategy are incorporated into the daily mathematics lesson. After the register has been taken, some can work out that if 26 children are present they need to borrow 4 from the Nursery to make 30 children. Good use is made of 'Charlie Puppet' to encourage children to improve their counting skills as they teach him a number rhyme. Children are developing a satisfactory understanding of simple addition as they draw 'one more' and higher attaining pupils are developing an early understanding of signs as they solve '4+6=?'. A good range of practical experiences helps children to develop an understanding of comparative words such as 'longer' and 'shorter'. Nursery children make towers with bricks, whilst children in Reception place their bean plants in order of length and estimate how many cubes they would need to match the length of each plant. They also develop their understanding as they roll out longer and shorter cheese straws to bake. Children develop a sound understanding of shape in the Nursery, as they learn to sit in a circle and also make a pattern of squares on 'Elmer's' back. In Reception, children put similar solid shapes in the same group and develop their understanding of shape as they use different shaped boxes to make their dinosaurs. There are limited opportunities for pupils to develop understanding through comparing how they work things out or by solving simple problems orally or practically because not enough emphasis is given to this aspect of learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

70. Teaching is good overall enabling children to make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage but, by the time they start Year 1, most children have not achieved the standard expected for their age by the Early Learning Goals. A good range of first hand experiences in the Nursery motivates children to learn. For example, they collect mini-beasts in the garden and look at them closely with a magnifying glass. The teacher points out different features of each creature so children can recognise and name spiders and ants, with one child correcting another to explain that they are looking at a slug not a snail. Respect for living things is encouraged as the teacher explains that they can only keep the creatures for a little while, as they need to go back to their homes in the garden. They learn how plants grow as they monitor the progress of their cress seeds and study different plants as they design and make their own gardens.
71. Teachers make good use of resources to promote children's historical development. For example, children in Reception find out about the past as their parents help them to complete a memory box containing items such as their first trainers, with one child remembering that when he was little his favourite toy was Thomas the Tank Engine but now it is Pokémon. Children examine the area around school closely by taking an autumn walk and looking at photographs of nearby buildings. One higher attaining pupil in the Nursery remarks that bungalows are better for older people as they may have difficulty in climbing stairs. Children in Reception develop scientific ideas about the weather, for example, by learning about the air as they draw pictures of trees and balloons on a windy day and also watching the effect as they try to catch the air in a plastic bag. Design and technology skills are developed as children use a good range of construction toys and learn how to cut and stick as they make models from cardboard boxes. The development of information and communication technology skills is slower than it could be. Older children know how to operate the tape recorder as they listen to a story but the use of the computer to support their learning is limited.

Physical development

72. Teaching is good overall and children progress well but, by the time they start Year 1, most children have not achieved the standard expected for their age by the Early Learning Goals. Good use is made of the secure outdoor play area as children steer the wheeled toys with increasing accuracy. Children in both Nursery and Reception use the space in the hall well. Clear instructions and good use of demonstrations help children in Reception to make large stretching movements and contrast these well with short, sharp movements. Children enjoy using scarves to improve larger movements but find them restrictive when acting out 'Incy Wincy Spider'. Children use the large apparatus with increasing skill and they work well with a partner to help them balance. A small group of children become over excited in the large space of the hall and find it difficult to follow instructions. This hinders their progress in moving with control and co-ordination. The range of physical activities in the hall is very much directed by the teachers and there is little scope for children to develop their own imaginative movements. A good range of construction toys, beads and jigsaws helps children to use scissors and pencils with increasing control. Fruit at snack time is helping Nursery children to understand the importance of keeping healthy.

Creative development

73. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Whilst pupils make satisfactory progress, it is less marked than in other areas and, by the time they start Year 1, most children have not achieved the standard expected for their age by the Early Learning Goals. Children experience a reasonable range of painting, including hand and foot prints, and a wide variety of pictures in the Nursery and paintings of large dinosaurs in Reception. Children also draw and paint well from close observation, for example, Nursery children's detailed paintings of the minibeasts they had seen. Children also have the opportunity to make collage trees and blossom and use clay to make fossils. However, much of the artwork is teacher directed with few examples of individual creativity. Children can sing a good range of songs by heart and can match their movements to the music in dance lessons. There are areas for imaginative play in both Nursery and Reception but these lack the visual impact and excitement to encourage children to express their feelings and ideas through role-play.

ENGLISH

74. Standards in English have improved considerably since the last inspection at the end of Key Stage 2. The results of the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2001 were outstanding and were above the national average. The results are particularly impressive when compared with those of similar schools, being in the highest 5% nationally. The results of the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 were well below the national average in reading and in line with the national average in writing. Compared with similar schools the Key Stage 1 pupils' performance was well above average in writing but below average in reading. Inspection findings indicate that standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are currently above the national average but not as high as in 2001 whilst results by the end of Key Stage 1 are likely to be similar to 2001. The quality of the teaching remains good and the difference in performance derives from the characteristics of the present Year 6 cohort of pupils.
75. Pupils in both key stages make good progress overall, and very good progress in Years 5 and 6. Good teaching ensures that pupils with special educational needs make progress at a rate similar to their classmates. There is no evidence to suggest any significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls in English in either key stage.
76. Most pupils' listening skills are satisfactory and frequently good, but their skills in speaking are below expectation by the end of Year 2. Skills in speaking are satisfactory at the end of Year 6, with the vast majority of pupils being confident speakers but using a limited vocabulary. In class, pupils respond well to the high expectations of their teachers and they listen attentively to each other and to adults. Pupils at Key Stage 1 lack the confidence to ask questions that will help them increase their understanding. Teachers use good question and answer strategies to encourage language development and the beneficial effects of this were particularly noticeable in Years 5 and 6. During the inspection, pupils in Year 6 were observed giving short presentations on a topic which they had chosen themselves. Despite the added pressure of being videotaped as they spoke, they clearly enjoyed the experience and spoke with confidence and pride. In their own speaking, the teachers act as good role models and they further encourage the development of vocabulary by the quality of the labelling and annotation of their displays.

77. By the end of Year 2, pupils' reading is below the national average but they are achieving well and making good progress after starting Year 1 with standards that are below expectations for their age. The higher attaining pupils are reaching the national average and, in a few instances, some are exceeding this. Pupils take pleasure in reading, they respect books and treat them well and they are able to name favourite stories and books. For many of them the classic children's stories such as Cinderella still hold an enduring fascination. Teachers ensure that help is available for those pupils who need support in their reading and the home/school reading log is a useful document in assessing the needs of many pupils so that effective support can be provided. Pupils invite parents into their classes at frequent intervals to assist with a reading afternoon and this is proving very successful as parents share stories with their children in the classroom.
78. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' reading skills have improved greatly. Pupils are reading independently and demonstrate an eclectic choice of literature, ranging from the current favourites, such as Harry Potter, through traditional classics and also including the more weighty tomes of the reference library. Older pupils can easily identify genre and they have a good appreciation of the stylistic conventions used by their favourite authors. A number of pupils expressed an interest in poetry, including that of poets such as Ted Hughes. Few can speak with any knowledge about plays but know Shakespeare to be a writer of great importance. All pupils have access to the school library and know how it is catalogued and where to look for a book. Pupils in Year 6 act as librarians, which is an important feature of their personal and social development, as is the reading buddies' scheme where older pupils support younger ones. Some updating of the basic reading scheme has taken place recently but many pupils are also reading from a stock of older books that lack the relevance of any association with their own environment or experience.
79. Pupils' writing is in line with the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and above average at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Year 2. Teachers work hard to encourage their pupils' writing skills and the quality of the written work is improving. Often at Key Stage 1 pupils lack the vocabulary skills that will ensure higher standards in writing but teachers make good use of the resources available to encourage their pupils in their writing. By the end of Year 2 pupils are writing in short, coherent sentences and are able to put a short story into the correct sequence. In a class discussion pupils in Year 2 showed a good understanding of the use of language in riddles and could transfer this understanding to their own writing. At this stage, however, pupils struggled with the humorous content of the riddles and rhymes being addressed. By the end of Year 6 pupils are producing pieces of extended writing that are technically very good as they follow the correct conventions of grammar and punctuation. Some pupils produce pieces of extended writing through the use of the word processing and publishing packages on the computers. Although much of their writing is in the form of short, pithy sentences, pupils have a knack of communicating well in writing.
80. Pupils' handwriting and spelling varies in quality at the beginning of Key Stage 1 but shows good progress in all years. Most pupils have regular handwriting practice but in the early years they do not always transfer the skills acquired to other areas of their work. In Year 1 the very heavy reliance on the use of worksheets helps to improve some technical skills but allows insufficient opportunity for pupils to develop their skills of independent writing. By the end of

Year 6 pupils write in a good hand and their work is very well presented although they do not use a pen on a regular basis.

81. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and during the course of the inspection some very good and excellent teaching was observed. Teachers have successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy and have high expectations that their pupils should make good progress. The strategy has ensured that pupils are given a wider range of writing opportunities than before its introduction. Teachers manage behaviour very well and this contributes to classrooms being scenes of considerable industry. Pupils are well motivated to succeed and, as a result of the high expectations of their teachers, they take pride in their work and enjoy sharing its fruits with others. In lessons, teachers maintain a good balance of activities and ensure that personal support is given to those pupils who require extra help, for example, those with special educational needs. The teachers in Years 5 and 6 have a very mature relationship with their pupils and do a great deal to foster the development of their moral and social skills as well as preparing them for the transition to secondary school. Lesson planning is good in both key stages and this contributes to the efficiency of the lessons and enables the pupils to have a clear idea of the objectives being pursued. Teachers also make good use of homework to improve pupils' learning in English.
82. The quality of the marking of pupils' work is satisfactory overall in rewarding pupils' efforts although the quality of comments differs from class to class. At times, too much work is marked only with ticks although usually suggestions are given to assist pupils in developing an understanding of their own progress. The work in pupils' books in Years 1 to 4 generally demonstrates a lack of target setting or the realisation of learning objectives. The workbooks used by pupils in Years 5 and 6 have clearly defined objectives for their work and this assists them in measuring their own progress. The quality of the dialogue between teachers in Years 5 and 6 and their pupils gives the pupils feedback on how they are progressing and this adds to their level of motivation.
83. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinator is an experienced member of the school staff. She has a strong sense of the need to boost pupils' attainment and has played a major part in their successes in recent national tests. She has overseen the beneficial impact of the National Literacy Strategy on writing across the curriculum and is now looking towards expanding the use of information and communication technology to improve pupils' work in English. Resources are satisfactory overall and pupils have access to a small but well stocked library in addition to those resources placed in their classrooms. The stock of books for the teaching of reading is satisfactory overall. The stock is being renewed but there is still a heavy reliance on an older, very dated collection of material that has little relevance to the daily experiences of the pupils. The subject makes a good contribution to the social development of the pupils, especially through the Reading Buddies scheme and the presentations made by pupils in Year 6. Moral development is also fostered through the debates and discussions held by older pupils, such as those observed in Years 5 and 6 during the course of the inspection.

MATHEMATICS

84. Since the last inspection standards in mathematics have improved, especially by the end of Key Stage 2. In the 2001 national tests for eleven-year-olds, attainment was exceptionally high, with standards well above the national average. In the corresponding tests for seven-year-olds, results were well below the national average, and boys did slightly better than girls. In comparison with similar schools, the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 were very high and in the highest 5% nationally whilst the end of Key Stage 1 results were in line with the average for similar schools.
85. Inspection evidence is that standards are currently below the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and are broadly in line with the national average at the end of Key Stage 2. This shows that over their time, pupils make good progress from a low starting point. In Key Stage 1 pupils make satisfactory progress and in Key Stage 2 it increases and is good overall. The discrepancy between the inspection evidence and the most recent key stage National Curriculum test results is explained by the difference in the natural abilities of the year groups. Progress is strongest in the last two years of Key Stage 2, owing to very good teaching in these year groups. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make progress at a similar rate to their peers. There is no difference in the provision for boys and girls or in the quality of the teaching.
86. Very good teaching in Years 5 and 6 ensures that in Key Stage 2 all areas of mathematics are developed well. Teachers ensure that a good understanding and knowledge of basic computation is achieved, with most pupils knowing their multiplication tables up to ten. Pupils are able to use this knowledge quickly; for example, when undertaking a problem of finding an ever-increasing number of operations to make a sum correct, having been given the same starting number and answer. Teachers give pupils very good encouragement to develop a variety of ways for working things out successfully, and by Year 6 many pupils can explain their methods clearly, although some still find this hard. Pupils are given different tasks that closely match their ability and their next learning need; for instance, when learning about equivalent fractions in Year 5. By the end of the observed lesson two-thirds of the class could very competently identify equivalent fractions. All pupils were able to keep up with the fast pace of the lesson, helped by the teacher's very clear explanations.
87. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 make good progress and are able to add tens and units (and some pupils can add hundreds, tens and units) with a reasonable level of accuracy. They can measure amounts of liquids in millilitres, and identify and draw halves of shapes. Teachers satisfactorily encourage pupils to visualise shapes and talk about them, identifying the line of symmetry on pictures. In a Year 4 lesson observed during the inspection, pupils showed their answers to mental arithmetic questions by holding them up on a set of card numbers, which they enjoyed. This worked well in ensuring that all children contributed to the session and the pace was brisk. It also enabled the teacher to assess pupils as the task proceeded and to tailor the next teaching points to their needs.
88. In Key Stage 1, although pupils make satisfactory progress overall, it is not as good as it should be because a high percentage of the work is done on commercially produced worksheets. Whilst many sheets that the teachers use are worthwhile, the instructions for completion are sometimes complex and occasionally confusing. This means that the teachers' time is taken up in explaining how to fill in sheets rather than teaching the mathematics involved.

Sometimes, pupils' efforts would be better spent in repeating tasks practically and talking about how they completed them, rather than labouring over the recording. By the age of seven, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of adding and subtracting numbers to 20, and many can recognise odd and even numbers and enjoy playing games to reinforce that knowledge. A very few are starting to understand multiplication. In other areas, such as shape, their understanding is more limited, with the younger pupils finding the identification and naming of three-dimensional shapes very hard. Throughout the school, pupils generally demonstrate a good level of interest in their work and are keen to learn.

89. The mathematics curriculum is good overall. It is broad and balanced at both key stages, with all areas of the mathematics curriculum being taught. However, in some classes too few opportunities are provided for pupils to have to think for themselves and work independently, following their own lines of enquiry. In Key Stage 1, a high number of worksheets are used and, consequently, pupils are not used to recording findings for themselves or finding their own way of displaying information. Across the school, pupils do not make enough use of information and communication technology to develop their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding. Other subjects make a limited contribution to mathematics; for instance, pupils' time-lines in history. The small number of gifted pupils are well challenged. The subject makes a good contribution to children's social development when teachers give pupils opportunities to talk and work in pairs; for example, to check understanding or find a variety of solutions.
90. Teaching and learning are satisfactory at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, teaching and learning are good overall, and very good in Years 5 and 6. The teachers are familiar and secure with the National Numeracy Strategy. The three-part lesson is satisfactorily established, although not every lesson contains a focus on mental arithmetic skills. Where this focus does take place, the mental arithmetic part of the lessons, and the methods that teachers employ to ensure that all children contribute, are beginning to have a positive impact on standards, especially in Key Stage 2. Teachers' subject knowledge is generally good. Lessons are planned satisfactorily, sometimes very briefly, but mostly with good regard to planning for the different abilities of pupils within the classes. Teachers usually share the learning objectives with the class and, in some classes, pupils write them as the heading in their books. This helps to ensure that pupils are clear about how the tasks are designed to help them and helps pupils to understand what they need to do to succeed. Some teachers return to the learning objectives at the end of lessons and this good feature of teaching provides pupils with a good opportunity to check their understanding and learning. In more successful lessons, teachers give clear exposition and impart a sense of urgency so that pupils are very focused on completing the work in hand. The marking of exercise books is satisfactory overall but is not always consistent and at times it is not helpful enough in directing pupils to understand how they can improve. Teachers manage pupils well. They have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour and conduct and this helps all pupils to learn in lessons. Good teamwork between teachers and support staff ensures that pupils with special educational needs make progress that is as good as other pupils in their class. At Key Stage 2, pupils' attitudes and behaviour in mathematics lessons are very good. They listen well and are very keen to answer and contribute in whole class sessions. Homework is used regularly and well to reinforce learning.
91. The curriculum is broad and balanced. The school has satisfactory systems in place for the monitoring of planning and results, although there is little overall tracking of the progress of different cohorts of pupils. The co-ordinator is given

time to monitor teaching and gives feedback to other staff on a regular basis. The last report suggested a stronger role in monitoring for the co-ordinator, and this is now happening. The co-ordinator uses the data from national assessments to analyse overall weaknesses and trends and set targets for improvement. The school has a good assessment and record-keeping system and adequate resources for the subject. The unsatisfactory state of internal decoration in the school and the age and condition of some of the classroom furniture does not provide the school with the best basis on which to teach the subject.

SCIENCE

92. Since the last inspection in 1997 the standards attained by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 have improved significantly and in 2001 the end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum test results were in the highest 5% both in comparison to all schools nationally and to similar schools. Inspection evidence shows that the scientific knowledge of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 is very high. Between Years 3 and 6, all pupils make very good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of science although their progress in being able to perform science experiments and investigations is unsatisfactory. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, learn at a good rate overall. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.
93. At the end of Key Stage 1 inspection evidence is that pupils attain standards that are below the national average and the rate of improvement since the last inspection has not been as good as it could be. When pupils start Year 1, the majority has still not reached the levels of knowledge expected for their age, despite the good progress they have made in the Reception class. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress as they move between Years 1 and 2, but still do not achieve the standards expected for their age by the end of Year 2. The standards attained were in the lowest 5% nationally in teacher assessments. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.
94. In Years 1 and 2, pupils' skills in scientific enquiry are below the national expectations for their age and the progress they make between Years 1 and 2 is not good enough. Although pupils experience practical activities, teachers make too much use of worksheets to guide pupils' activities rather than demanding that pupils think for themselves. Pupils are not given enough guidance about how to conduct scientific enquiries although some directed activities, such as testing different magnets to find which is the strongest, have been performed. Most pupils can make simple observational drawings and complete simple tables that, for example, record the difference between natural and man made materials, but it is rare that pupils are expected to make predictions to inform tests and gather information through investigations. Too few pupils are able to perform a fair test and record their findings on their own. The expectations for pupils in Year 2 to perform experiments are higher than in Year 1 with simple activities, such as investigating the way seeds grow and finding which materials are waterproof. Pupils' knowledge of science is better than their levels of scientific enquiry. They know that plants need water and light to grow and that animals need to feed and move and have a suitable place to live. Some pupils can explain how roots work and have satisfactory knowledge of key words, such as leaf, stem and flower. Most pupils have benefited from observations of living things, such as worms and wood lice, and are aware of different habitats outdoors. Pupils are starting to use evidence to draw conclusions but they are not yet always scientifically accurate.

For example, when one pupil was asked, "Why do you think a worm was found in the mud?" the answer was, "Because it was hiding!"

95. The knowledge and understanding of science of most pupils in Key Stage 1 is below the standards expected for their age by the end of Year 2. A significant factor in this is the low level of knowledge and understanding that most pupils have when they start Year 1. Most pupils in Year 2 competently sort materials into groups and have a basic knowledge of how materials can be changed, for example, by bending, squashing, dissolving and melting, but very few are aware that some changes can be reversed. Pupils know how sounds are made through vibrations and are aware of the importance of electricity and the basic idea of a simple circuit. Pupils know that a force is a push or pull but their level of understanding is lower than normally found.
96. By the end of Year 6, pupils have improved their knowledge of science considerably. Their use of scientific vocabulary is very good and far better than expected for their age. Their performance in scientific enquiry, however, is much lower than it should and could be. Pupils improve their knowledge of science rapidly, especially in Years 5 and 6, in response to the very well organised and directed teaching. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a very good knowledge of the properties of materials. They can explain the way liquids and solids change and many exceed the expectations for their age by using a secure knowledge of simple particulate theory to describe what happens as solids change into liquids and then into a gas. Higher attainers know that some changes are permanent, for example, when plaster of Paris sets whilst other changes can be reversed for example, when salt is dissolved in water. Pupils' knowledge of change is used to explain how the Water Cycle works and terms such as evaporation, condensation and thermal conduction are used to describe the process. Pupils develop a thorough knowledge of the functions of plants, for example, the principles of photosynthesis and transpiration and the parts of a flower and their importance for reproduction. Pupils have a very detailed knowledge about the way the organs of the human body work and they produce a high standard of work in their books. Difficult ideas associated with forces and their effects are understood well by most pupils. Key words such as 'upthrust', 'friction' and 'balanced and unbalanced forces' are understood. Pupils in Years 6 confidently use these terms to explain the way things move, float and fall. Key ideas associated with Earth and space, electricity and sound and light are developed through the very good focus on teaching key ideas and words. However, the pupils do not achieve their full potential because not enough attention is given to enabling pupils across Key Stage 2 to apply their knowledge and understanding alongside developing their enquiry skills.
97. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2 but throughout the school there is a comparative weakness in the teaching of scientific enquiry skills. In Key Stage 2, some outstanding teaching was observed in Year 4 and Year 6, and good teaching in Year 5. Elsewhere, the quality of teaching was satisfactory. In all lessons, pupils are very well managed and there are high expectations for pupils to work hard and complete a lot of work in their books. Because teachers are generally very well informed, pupils show high levels of interest in their work and listen with good levels of attention. In Years 5 and 6, there is a quite exceptional level of attention given to teaching key vocabulary and concepts and this prepares pupils very well for answering the end of key stage National Curriculum tests. The learning objectives are shared with pupils so that they know what is expected of them. Class discussions are skilfully led so that all pupils are expected to express their

opinions and think about what they are being taught. At times, good use is made of simple experiments to illustrate scientific ideas. For example, in a lesson about the way the eye works, pupils were given simple activities by the teacher to illustrate the existence of the blind spot on our retina. Lessons are very well planned to meet the needs of all pupils and expectations for pupils to apply literacy skills are good overall. During a lesson involving labelling the eye, pupils responded well to expectations for them to take their own notes and in so doing, most pupils displayed good skills of recording evidence accurately and in the correct sequence. Throughout Key Stage 2, there are very good relationships between teachers and support staff and this enables all pupils, regardless of ability or gender, to participate equally in all science lessons. Good use is made of homework to support learning in Key Stage 2. Although the quality and quantity of work in the pupils' books is of a very high standard, there is a distinct lack of evidence of any scientific investigations or experiments.

98. In Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and during the inspection some good teaching was seen. In terms of developing pupils' scientific knowledge, lessons are generally well planned and match the overall needs of pupils in the key stage. However, there is an over emphasis upon guiding and directing pupils through the use of worksheets rather than giving attention to developing pupils' skills of independence. Where teaching is good, effective use is made of learning resources to get difficult ideas across to pupils. For example, in a lesson observed during the inspection, some very good use of information and communication technology was made to illustrate the way plants grow. Images gathered from the internet were projected onto a screen with the result that the difficult idea of plant growth was very well explained and pupils' attention was very successfully gained and held. Pupils are well managed in lessons and the good relationships between support staff and teachers ensure that pupils with special educational needs participate equally in lessons. Because of the over emphasis on using worksheets, opportunities for pupils in Key Stage 1 to use science as a way of improving their skills of literacy are few and far between. Equally, the limited opportunities for pupils to develop their skills of scientific enquiry restrict opportunities for pupils to practise and apply their numeracy skills. Opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology to support their learning are rare.
99. Despite the strongly directed style of teaching, pupils enjoy learning science and work hard in their lessons. In Key Stage 2 especially, pupils take great pride in producing neat and well-presented work with good quality writing and illustrations. The contribution made by science to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. The work on living things contributes a sense of awe and wonder but the excitement often gained from the joy of scientific discovery is missed because of the weaknesses in the taught curriculum. The strongly applied rules for behaviour underpin the moral development of pupils and discussions about the needs of living things raise an awareness of the duty that humans have for protecting the natural environment. The opportunities for pupils to work in small groups as part of scientific investigations are unsatisfactory and this reduces the impact of science on pupils' social development.
100. The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory overall. The policy of concentrating on teaching knowledge in Key Stage 2 is partly justified by the resulting high standards in the end of the key stage tests but there is a lack of planning for promoting pupils' scientific enquiry across the school. The co-ordinator has implemented satisfactory steps to assess and record pupils'

progress across the school and procedures have been established to monitor how well pupils do. The resources are adequate overall and are, at times, supplemented by using local environmental areas and the pond in the school grounds. Resources for supporting science with information and communication technology are weak and need improving. Classrooms are cramped, especially in Key Stage 2, and the old furniture and lack of suitable work surfaces makes it difficult for pupils and teachers to set up and leave scientific investigations.

ART AND DESIGN

101. Pupils' attainment is above national expectations at the end of both key stages. Pupils of all abilities make good progress as they move through the school. They experience a well-structured curriculum and, with the exception of working in the medium of clay, they enjoy a broad spectrum of activities. Standards have improved since the time of the previous inspection. Teaching is good and promotes very positive attitudes amongst pupils towards their work and high levels of enthusiasm when carrying out their tasks in art and design.
102. Pupils in both key stages use sketchbooks well and are able to practise their techniques in this way. They engage in observational drawing and some of the work on display shows a great sensitivity to line, light and shade. The work on display around the school shows that pupils are making good progress in their skills. Pupils get great pleasure from experimenting with techniques and styles and those pupils who have endeavoured to replicate the style of Jackson Pollock have used colour to great effect. One very clear indicator of the progress being made is found in the representations of self and others in the various portraits that adorn the walls of classrooms. Pupils in Year 5 have produced work on the theme of 'Me, myself and I' and their work shows subtle recognition of the way in which individual differences can be portrayed.
103. Pupils are also given good opportunities to link the work in art and design with other areas of the curriculum. In Year 1, explorations of the medium of sculpture have introduced pupils to the use of solid and resistant material that links with their work in science and design and technology. The study of Chembakoli in geography has been used as a basis for producing artistic representation of figures from the community in India by pupils in Year 2. The effects of the work being done are often dramatic in their impact on the viewer and the more talented pupils are able to work at their own level of challenge as they experiment with materials and media.
104. The work of well-known artists, mostly from the European tradition, is used effectively as a stimulus for ideas and activities. Pupils in Year 1 have been able to look at the work of a range of sculptors, such as Elizabeth Frink, Escobar and Flanagan, and will be able to follow this with a visit to the sculpture trail at Cellarhead. Through links with the Education Action Zone project, pupils have been introduced to the artistic styles of other countries and have produced some excellent patterns based on Rangoli designs. Pupils have also considered the work of artists as varied as Canaletto and Jackson Pollock, with the styles of Vermeer, Bruegel and Lowry also being present in their work. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have a good recall of work done during their time at school and are able to describe how they have been affected by their encounters with the work of different artists.

105. Although painting and drawing occupy the bulk of the time spent in art and design, pupils also have the opportunity to work in three dimensions, using fabrics and other materials and, more recently, using the computers to generate their work. Clay is currently the missing medium in their experience. The school possesses a kiln which is out of action and in need of repair and should now consider the use of air-dried materials to bring this experience back into the curriculum. The effective use of computers has produced some interesting work and some pupils have linked this with their work in mathematics as they have experimented with patterns and symmetry. As experience with computers in art and design is growing, pupils are beginning to see them as a 'tool' to support their work.
106. The quality of teaching in art and design is good in both key stages. Teachers work to a well-structured and coherent curriculum plan. The high expectations of teachers are reflected in pupils' careful responses as they move from discussions to producing their work. In Year 5, the teacher encouraged artistic experimentation by stressing that right and wrong are not considerations in individual creative efforts. This enabled the pupils to transfer sketches representing sounds into painted lines and patterns to create a wall hanging. This freedom gave pupils the opportunity to improve their appreciation of pattern and representation in two dimensions and they made very good progress. Pupils respond with high levels of enthusiasm and they show good levels of independence in their work. They express great pride in their work and enjoy sharing the displays with visitors. This pride flows directly from the encouragement being provided by teachers who are also keen to describe the context of the work done to complete them. Displays are labelled and annotated to increase pupils' vocabularies and to link the work with other areas of the curriculum.
107. Leadership of the subject is very good. The co-ordinator has a good view of the work being done and has an infectious enthusiasm in describing the efforts made by the pupils. Close monitoring of the work being done by the pupils enables the co-ordinator and other colleagues to identify talented pupils and measure the progress of all pupils as they move through the school. Resources, with the exception of the use of clay, are good in quality and variety. Pupils do not have access to CD-ROM information on art galleries and artists, which might help to compensate for the lack of opportunities for visits to art galleries, and museums although they do have a stock of good quality text based sources.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

108. Standards in design and technology are above national expectations at the end of both key stages. This represents an improvement since the time of the previous inspection when standards were satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 1 but unsatisfactory at the end of Key Stage 2. Teaching is good, and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Attitudes and behaviour in lessons are positive and pupils are enthusiastic in their work.
109. In Key Stage 1, pupils systematically develop their basic designing and making skills progressively. By the end of Year 2 they have gained experience in using tools, paints and glues with accuracy and are able to join materials so that they can be moved or remain static. They are able to use a combination of found and provided materials as they experiment with form and structure in making puppets, vehicles, moving pictures and models of varying kinds. Pupils enjoy making their

chosen objects and the good quality teaching ensures that they also pay appropriate attention to the design process. Clear instructions and a sense of purpose give the children an enthusiasm to engage with all aspects of the design process and they are also given good opportunities for linking their work with other subjects of the curriculum. The making of vehicles and models with moving parts links well with their work in science and mathematics and, in conversation, the pupils in Years 1 and 2 are able to explain the cross-curricular elements of their work. When evaluating their work, pupils are encouraged to use the correct vocabulary and, in Year 2 in particular, this helps with their general speaking skills.

110. Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 2 in both the designing and making aspects of their work. They have frequent opportunities to link design and technology with other areas of their work. Pupils in Year 3 have made musical instruments that relate closely to other work done in producing an illustrative system of notation for percussion instruments. Pupils in Year 5 engage in a car crash vehicle project that brings them into contact with some of the problems that have to be solved in the commercial world of design and technology. Pupils are encouraged to develop originality in their work and this does much to enhance their feelings of confidence and self-esteem as they compare outcomes with each other. They have the confidence to change and modify their designs when confronted with problems and, as their designs progress, standards remain high as a result. Some of the designs produced, such as the money containers produced by pupils in Year 4, for example, also show a developing appreciation of aesthetics as pupils strive for patterns in their work. Pupils are able to revisit their work in ways that help their understanding of basic concepts and by the end of Year 6 they are mature in their appreciation of design in the wider world. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have an ability to relate design to the demands of the market and they know that fashion can play a major part in people's choices.
111. The quality of teaching is good in both key stages. Teachers provide their pupils with many opportunities for developing confidence and skills and they encourage pupils to be self-critical. Teachers also provide pupils with a good range of tools and materials, except in the area of food technology where the pupils do not gain an adequate experience of this aspect of designing and making. Good teaching combines with the positive and enthusiastic responses of the pupils who also make good cross-curricular links in their work. Recent work on designing a paper model with load bearing strength afforded an ideal opportunity for pupils to investigate stresses and other forces at the same time. The display of this work indicates also that teachers are encouraging pupils in the use of a good quality subject vocabulary.
112. Leadership of the subject is good in both key stages. The co-ordinator is very experienced and has a good overview of the subject throughout the school. He is unable to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom because there is not enough planned non-contact time for him to do this but in all other respects he has a clear knowledge of the progress being made by pupils throughout the school. Resources for design and technology are good and there is a good range of tools and materials available. There is a lack of resources in the area of information and communication technology and the pupils have an inadequate experience of food technology as part of their work. The co-ordinator keeps good records and, although there is no formal assessment policy, all teachers have a clear idea of the standards being achieved.

GEOGRAPHY

113. Standards in geography are above national expectations at the end of both key stages. This represents an improvement since the time of the previous inspection when they were described as satisfactory. Pupils of all abilities including those with special educational needs make good progress and there is no significant difference in the progress being made by boys and girls. The quality of teaching and learning is good and geography is linked with other areas of the curriculum.
114. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good grasp of the basic skills of geography. Maps are a prominent feature of their learning and they are able to draw and read simple maps with accuracy. They have a good appreciation of the geography of their local area and understand the place of the school within it. Pupils' direct experience of the environment in which they live forms an important part of their learning and they have a good understanding of the juxtaposition of natural and man-made features within it. Although opportunities for local fieldwork are limited, pupils in Key Stage 1 have access to a good range of photographic and other materials that they can use to study the environment. Pupils make good use of opportunities to discuss a range of social issues. For example, in Year 1 pupils have examined the problems of making the local area a safer place to live and have designed a safer school entrance that takes account of the problem of traffic concentrating in what is virtually a cul-de-sac. Barnaby Bear also figures prominently in giving insights into the wider world of travel and adventure and displays show how far he has travelled in the past year. Pupils in Year 2 have a good knowledge of the location of Chembakoli in India and the contrasting imaginary island location of Struay. In all cases, good links are made to other areas of the curriculum and the pupils have been able to engage in data handling and art and design as part of their geographical studies.
115. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of the map as the basic tool of the geographer and make effective use of the resources available. Investigations of the local area build effectively on the progress begun in Key Stage 1 and the pupils develop a real sense that the community is a dynamic element in their lives. They also engage with the problems and dilemmas of environmental improvement and this assists with their moral and cultural understanding as they look in detail at the impact of human settlement and economic activity. In discussion, pupils from Years 5 and 6 were able to articulate an understanding of the increasing significance of water supplies in many parts of the world and also showed an awareness of the problems of waste and pollution. Pupils have developed a good understanding of the place of Britain in Europe. The idea of an international community shows signs of developing from Year 4 onwards and pupils know that geography forms an integral part in the understanding of major international changes. Good links are also maintained with other areas of the curriculum as pupils increase their data handling skills through their investigations of weather and the water cycle and traffic and transport.
116. The quality of teaching in geography is good and ensures that pupils of all abilities make good progress. The linking of geography with other subjects, such as history and science, gives pupils greater insights into this area of their learning. Despite the lack of opportunities for fieldwork, because of difficulties in funding such visits, teachers ensure that pupils have a good knowledge of the local environment as the basis from which to build geographical knowledge. Pupils respond to the good teaching with enthusiasm and this is reflected in the care with which they present their work in books and displays. Behaviour in

classrooms is positive and enthusiastic and pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to each other. Teachers encourage the use of a good subject vocabulary and this contributes to the pupils' general language development. The National Literacy Strategy has had an impact on the written work in geography and older pupils in particular write in an erudite fashion as they record their thoughts and observations on geographical topics. Teachers also make good use of homework opportunities to improve their pupils' geographical knowledge further.

117. Leadership in the subject is good. The co-ordinator has been recently appointed and has a lively and effective vision for her subject. No time is available for the monitoring of teaching and learning in classrooms but the co-ordinator has a good overview of work and a clear understanding of progress from the work sampling that she undertakes. The resources for geography are of good quality and are used effectively. There is a lack of resources in the field of information and communication technology but text resources are good.

HISTORY

118. Standards are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages and pupils make good progress across Key Stages 1 and 2 from a low starting point. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a particularly good knowledge of history and their recording of this knowledge in most exercise books is outstanding. The majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress which is better than at the time of the last inspection when progress was satisfactory.
119. In Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress after starting Year 1 with a knowledge and understanding of historical ideas that are below the expectations for their age. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of why some people from history, like Florence Nightingale, are famous, and why Christopher Columbus's soldiers wanted to be friendly to the native Americans whom they encountered in the West Indies. Teachers often give pupils interesting, challenging tasks and ways of learning; for example, pupils were encouraged to pretend to be a soldier or a native American, wearing the correct head-dress and trying to find out about each other by asking and answering questions in pairs. These sorts of methods work well, and enable pupils to enjoy their lessons and to retain a lot of the information taught to them. The way pupils record their lessons and activities could be broader because pupils tend to use worksheets. In each year group, teachers stress the correct vocabulary and encourage pupils to compare and notice the differences between then and now, for example, between toys that their grandparents would have played with and their own.
120. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is in line with the national expectations. The quality of teaching is good overall with some good and very good teaching and explanations that help to enliven lessons. Older pupils have good factual knowledge of the periods of history they have studied. In Years 5 and 6, the quality of the recording of historical facts in exercise books is excellent and is a considerable strength of the pupils' performance. In Years 3 and 4 pupils are taught well to use historical data; for example, by constructing an inventory of the contents of a Tudor house, with objects such as a 'porringer', and by comparing the life of rich and poor people then with those in modern times. By the end of Year 6, many pupils are beginning to combine information from different sources.

For example, when writing about the finds in Egypt in Tutankhamun's tomb, pupils were very keen to explain how we know the historical facts are correct by combining information well into a newspaper account, explaining the main characters and what they found. A few pupils make links between the periods studied and can explain well why people did what they did. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are interested in history. They are keen to answer questions, and behaviour is good. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teaching and support staff. They join in fully with the lessons and make progress at a similar rate to their classmates. Information and communication technology is used to support learning. For example, pupils drew pictures of Greeks soldiers and printed labels and captions.

121. Teachers make good use of history to promote pupils' moral education through discussions about the impact of historical events, for example, the contrasts between the life styles of the rich and poor in Victorian England. History also promotes cultural development by encouraging pupils' understanding of other cultures during a range of periods of history, such as the Greeks and the Victorians. History promotes pupils' social development well by providing opportunities for pupils to work together. For example, pupils in Key Stage 2 worked together to write play scripts based on the World War II, then co-operated to plan ways of acting the plays for the rest of the class.
122. Across the school the quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teaching is stronger overall at Key Stage 2, with the particularly good teaching of facts and information. Across the school, teachers have a good knowledge of the period that they are teaching, and lessons are well prepared and generally well structured. Teachers make good use of a suitable range of resources and many use interesting methods. They challenge pupils appropriately though their good questioning skills. Good links are made with developing pupils' literacy skills, with the amount and quality of the writing for older pupils being very good. Teaching is satisfactory in helping pupils to develop an understanding of change, why historical changes took place and the impact of these changes on people's lives. The quality of marking is satisfactory overall although better use could be made of written comments that direct pupils as to how to improve their work.
123. The quality of the leadership and management of the subject is satisfactory overall and has improved since the last inspection. The subject is effectively planned with the curriculum being evaluated and adjusted to suit the needs of the pupils. A simple assessment structure of following the progress of a small number of pupils has recently been introduced. Resources are satisfactory. The co-ordinator regularly reviews planning but has not yet been given enough time to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

124. Standards are in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 but below national expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. Since the last inspection, attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has been maintained but has declined at the end of Key Stage 2. The main reason for the decline is that until very recently there were inadequate resources and staff lacked the confidence to make full use of computers. This resulted in gaps in the curriculum available to pupils. Recent improvements to the range and quality of resources and better training for staff are starting to improve the standards and progress of all pupils across the school.

125. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress overall. Good use is made of information and communication technology to support pupils with special educational needs in all classes, including specific programs in literacy and numeracy. Pupils in Years 3 to Year 6 do not make as much progress as they could because of gaps in the curriculum. Some use is made of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in literacy and numeracy. In English pupils use word processing packages and they use computer programs to developing an understanding of angles. The laptop computer was used well in a science lesson in Year 1 to illustrate how plants grow. However, the use of information and communication technology is not an integral part of teachers' planning to support learning across the curriculum. This is due in part to a lack of suitable resources, such as sensors, but also because some teachers do not place enough importance on making the links when planning their lessons and some teachers lack confidence. In Key Stage 1, the rate of progress of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. In Key Stage 2, whilst the progress is increasing rapidly, the weaknesses in the curriculum in the past have resulted in unsatisfactory progress occurring over time.
126. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have developed a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of how to use the computer to support their learning. Pupils are very familiar with the keyboard and can punctuate their work correctly. Pupils make good use of the Internet to research their topics, for example, when finding pictures of Tyrannosaurus Rex to support work about dinosaurs. Pupils understand how to gather data and represent it on the computer at a level appropriate for their age. For example, they entered information to draw a graph representing the hair colour of everyone in the class. Pupils have used some modelling skills when running programs that simulate activities to locate a lost treasure under the sea. By the end of Year 2, pupils have learned to control a programmable toy through well-planned activities and can direct it along a path and make 90 degree turns.
127. There are some aspects of information and communication technology in Key Stage 2 where pupils achieve standards that are in line with the national expectations. Pupils acquire satisfactory skills of using the computer to write text and to create simple publications. Pupils know and understand how to use the keyboard to write and to edit and save their work. Pupils in Key Stage 2 know how to vary text by using different colours, selecting different fonts and styles and using tools such as the spellchecker. By the end of Year 6, pupils can add graphics and images to enhance their writing to design good quality school brochures and greetings cards. Pupils confidently use icons to open files and use CD ROM to find information to support their learning in some subjects for example, that the Chinese were the first people to play a form of football.
128. In a number of aspects of information and communication technology, standards by the end of Key Stage 2 are below the expectations for pupils of their age. There are gaps in the curriculum that prevent pupils from experiencing each aspect of the National Curriculum. Pupils have a limited knowledge and understanding of databases and spreadsheets, and of how to use of e-mail and computers for sensing and control. This is due to the lack of suitable resources in the past. The introduction of a the new computer suite is starting to raise standards, but the large gaps in the curriculum for older pupils mean that there has been insufficient improvement overall since the last inspection. Deficiencies in resources for the teaching of the monitoring and control aspects of the curriculum were identified in the last inspection and have yet to be addressed.

129. The quality of teaching and learning during the inspection was good although the low standards at the end of Key Stage 2 indicate that it has been unsatisfactory in the past. The recently acquired information and communication technology suite has boosted the use of computers and good teaching is now taking place in the suite. Teachers make very good use of the correct vocabulary to support information and communication technology and this is improving pupils' understanding. Explanations given by teachers are generally clear so pupils know what to do and get on with their task quickly. In Year 2, pupils successfully apply mathematics ideas to help them to plan the path of a programmable toy before inputting the instructions. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development through the good opportunities given to pupils to co-operate in pairs to solve problems.
130. Management of the subject is satisfactory overall. It is recognised that teachers' knowledge and understanding of computers needs improving and there is an effective programme established to boost teachers' confidence and expertise. The school is adopting a scheme of work based on national guidelines but currently does not give appropriate emphasis to all areas that need to be covered. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress are satisfactory overall, but the information is not sufficiently used to plan work for different groups. There are enough computers overall for the number of pupils, but there is insufficient software for some aspects of the subject and for using information and communication technology in other areas of the curriculum.

MUSIC

131. By the end of Key Stage 1 the attainment of pupils is broadly in line with national expectations. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards achieved are well below the expected level and their progress falls well short of expectations. This represents a significant deterioration since the last inspection where standards were said to be average by the time pupils left school. This is due to the fact that pupils from Year 5 onwards have had no music lessons for some considerable time. Whilst they have the opportunity for singing in hymn practices, the rest of the music curriculum has not been covered. The school is now taking steps to alleviate the lack of music lessons by employing a music specialist, the subject co-ordinator, to teach weekly music lessons from the beginning of this term to three classes each half term, starting with the youngest classes. Teaching will be continued in the alternate half terms by the class teacher, with the support of a series of recorded programmes. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 but in Key Stage 2 progress is not good enough.
132. Pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 have benefited from music lessons with their class teacher and more recently with the music co-ordinator and their achievement is satisfactory. Achievement for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 is not as good as it should be. Whilst the subject makes a reasonable contribution to the pupils' personal development as they join together in singing, there are missed opportunities for pupils to listen to, compare and appreciate music from around the world.
133. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils enjoy singing and they quickly learn a new hymn by listening to the teacher and repeating a line. They can repeat a simple rhythm by clapping. In discussion with pupils they can recall how to play different percussion instruments and remember how they used different instruments to

represent each character in "The Long Blue Dragon!" They enjoyed rehearsing for the Christmas Concert, to improve their singing before performing for their parents. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils enjoy the chance to sing. However, in their enthusiasm, they have a tendency to shout which mars the tunefulness of their singing. Pupils have only scant recollection of other music lessons in school, although they recall how much they had enjoyed performing in the Christmas Concert and are looking forward to practising for the end of year Leavers' Assembly. Pupils in Year 5 drew various lines in art to reflect peaceful or lively music.

134. The quality of teaching observed in two hymn practices was satisfactory. In the practice for Year 1 and Year 2 the teacher models the words and the tune for pupils to repeat. Pupils also improve their understanding of rhythm as they clap in time to the new tune. During a Key Stage 2 singing practice, the teacher introduced a new song by using one hand to play the piano. This enabled pupils to concentrate on the timing as they followed the words on the overhead projector. To help pupils to improve their singing the teacher repeated the lines where pupils experienced some difficulty with pitch. There was an improvement in the quality of singing over the lesson, although pupils would have benefited from being conducted, indicating higher and lower notes. A satisfactory contribution is being made to teaching by the opportunity for pupils to join an after school choir. This is well attended with the majority of pupils showing a commitment to improving their singing. Information and communication technology is not used to support learning in music because of the lack of suitable software.
135. The subject co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership and management and has a clear overview of the subject. The weaknesses in the curriculum have been identified. Steps are being taken to ensure that the pupils in Key Stage 2 in particular are regularly taught each part of the music curriculum so that they can reach their true potential. A scheme of work has been prepared that provides for all aspects and skills to be taught systematically, although until now this has been severely restricted by the lack of teaching time available and the lack of confidence on the part of some class teachers.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

136. Standards in physical education are in line with the national expectations for pupils at the end of both key stages. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. As pupils move through the school, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress overall. Although the facilities for physical education are unsatisfactory in terms of outdoor facilities, the staff make good efforts to overcome this by using a nearby sports field for events and coaching. Standards in swimming are better than normally found because pupils from Year 1 to Year 4 regularly attend coaching sessions in a local swimming pool.
137. In Key Stage 1, satisfactory teaching ensures that pupils make satisfactory progress overall. By the end of Year 2, pupils have developed satisfactory skills of throwing and catching and a good sense of team-work and commitment. As part of an indoor lesson, pupils met the challenge of working with others to accurately throw bean bags into hoops. When working in pairs, pupils then showed the ability to throw and catch a ball with a partner. As a result of very firm management by the teachers, pupils behave well in physical education lessons and work hard and share in the success of others. Lessons are well managed

and pupils respond well but the level of control from the teacher is high and reduces opportunities for pupils to develop their independent skills. By the end of Key Stage 2, the performance of pupils is in line with national expectations. During a lesson that involved practising the skills of rounders, pupils demonstrated satisfactory levels of co-ordination when throwing, catching, hitting and moving around. Pupils listen to their teachers and try hard to improve following advice and directions. They behave well and have a good sense of teamwork. Although there is obvious disappointment when called out, most pupils show no disrespect to others and follow the rules of the game willingly and happily.

138. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. Pupils respond well to expectations for them to wear appropriate clothes and teachers set an appropriate example for them to do so. Care is taken to ensure that pupils' health and safety is protected. Time is spent to warm up pupils' muscles at the start of lessons and enough time is given in lessons for pupils to cool down. The curriculum is satisfactorily balanced and pupils have access to a suitable range of sports ranging from dance to gymnastics, games and swimming. Pupils have the chance to participate in inter-school team games, such as soccer and rounders, and events such as cross country and athletics. Close links with Port Vale FC benefit the pupils' development of soccer skills. There are limited opportunities for pupils to experience outdoor activities as part of educational visits. Overall, the subject is satisfactorily managed so that pupils have access to a suitable physical education curriculum.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

139. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus. Standards are in line with expectations and progress is good from a low starting point. The attainment of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 is above expectations and pupils make good progress overall with particularly good progress being made in Years 5 and 6. This is better than at the time of the last inspection, where progress was found to be satisfactory at both key stages. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress.
140. Teaching and learning are satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. Lessons follow a long-term plan that draws satisfactorily on the Locally Agreed Syllabus but also uses materials from government documents and other sources. This forms a satisfactory base for the lessons, and pupils develop a good knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. Stories from the Bible and other religious traditions are used well; for example, the story of the Prodigal Son from the Old Testament in Year 2. The range of teaching methods is satisfactory and sometimes good, such as the use of good visual aids and discussion. This helps to keep pupils interested and involved. By Years 5 and 6 pupils produce written work of good quality with a real depth of knowledge. The subject makes a satisfactory, and sometimes good, contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. In a Year 3 lesson, the teacher showed the pupils a very large old family Bible to introduce some knowledge about the Jewish religion and the Torah. The pupils were in awe of the Bible; its size, age and condition amazed them. They were fascinated by the way it had been preserved and handed down, and had been used to record a local family's history. In most lessons relationships are good and contributions and ideas from pupils are

sensitively encouraged and valued. However, too few opportunities are given to develop pupils' independence and initiative.

141. Pupils are very keen to talk and be involved in the work, and they contribute well to discussion when the teachers' lesson plans include opportunities for this. Year 3 pupils can explain some of the connections between the Jewish and Christian religions. They learn the story of Moses receiving the Ten Commandments and talk about the 'laws' that govern their lives. Pupils routinely behave well. They are well managed by the teachers who have high expectations for them, of both behaviour and learning. Older pupils know the importance of the main Christian festivals, such as Christmas and Easter, and many pupils can explain the major events of these festivals. They can explain that Jesus was crucified with thieves, having been betrayed by 'a friend' and that as a result of this, a cross became a symbol of the Christian church. They can also list other symbols of Christianity and explain why they are important to Christian believers. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of Islam, the Jewish beliefs and festivals and stories from the Old Testament, such as the flight from Egypt. Work is generally well planned with clear learning objectives. The limited time given to religious education is well used and the subject is systematically taught and displayed throughout the school. Information and communication technology is little used in the subject.
142. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership and management for the subject. Planning and teaching are regularly monitored which is an improvement from the last inspection. Accommodation could be much better and does not provide a situation conducive to learning. There is no school-wide assessment system or record-keeping system for religious education. Resources have also improved since the last inspection and are satisfactory overall.