

INSPECTION REPORT

ABBOTS FARM JUNIOR SCHOOL

Rugby

LEA area: Warwickshire

Unique reference number: 125580

Headteacher: John Alexander

Reporting inspector: Michael Best
10413

Dates of inspection: 8th – 11th July 2002

Inspection number: 195199

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Abbots Way Rugby
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Sue Skipp
Date of previous inspection:	June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Dr Michael Best 10413	Registered inspector	Mathematics Music Physical education	Characteristics of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well the school is led and managed What the school should do to improve further
Mrs Pat Edwards 10965	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values & personal development How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works in partnership with parents
Mrs Maureen Sinclair 3751	Team inspector	English Art and design Religious education Special educational needs	The curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
Mrs Sanchia Pearse 4787	Team inspector	French History	
Dr Mohindar Galawalia 21317	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Geography Information and communication technology English as an additional language Equality of opportunity	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Abbots Farm Junior School is an average sized school situated on the east side of Rugby. Housing in the immediate area is a mixture of mature private and rented homes, but over half the school's 260 pupils on roll (140 boys and 120 girls) live outside the school's priority area. The proportion of pupils receiving free school meals has dropped significantly this year to under 5 per cent; employment in Rugby is very buoyant with many parents working part-time in the service industries. Attainment on entry varies from year to year; over time, it is just below the national average. About 10 per cent of pupils join or leave the school each year other than at the usual times.

Twenty-one per cent of pupils have special educational needs. The school has implemented the new Code of Practice¹. Compared with other primary schools in England, this proportion is above average and is increasing. Four pupils (about 2 per cent) have statements of special educational need, which is similar to the national average. The vast majority of pupils with special educational needs have specific learning difficulties (dyslexia). Twenty pupils (8 per cent) come from minority ethnic groups. This is well above the national average. The majority speak English as an additional language, with one pupil at the early stages of language acquisition. The main groups represented are Indian and Chinese and the main first languages are Punjabi, Gujarathi and Cantonese.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a caring school that provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. They have positive attitudes to learning and work well together. Given their prior attainment, pupils make satisfactory progress overall. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in English are above average and pupils make good progress.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for and make good progress.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are good and reflect the good provision the school makes for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Attendance is above the national average.

What could be improved

- Standards in mathematics and science are below national averages and standards in religious education are below those expected in the locally agreed syllabus.
- Assessment procedures and the use of assessment information in teachers' planning.
- The organisation and management of the non-core curriculum².

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1997 since when there have been a number of changes of staff and the area from which the school draws its pupils. It has established a reputation for supporting pupils with special educational needs. Standards in English have improved. In mathematics and science, standards have not kept pace with the improvement nationally. Standards have improved in information and communication technology and music, but declined in religious education. The school has made satisfactory progress in addressing the key issues identified at the time of the last inspection. The quality of teaching has improved. Professional development programmes have been put in place for teaching staff and subject co-ordinators given management time to identify and share good practice. The school has taken satisfactory steps to meet the needs of more able pupils, but there is scope for further improvement in this area. Progress in improving the quality of marking has been uneven.

¹ The new special educational needs Code of Practice was introduced during the school year 2001-2. There are now four stages of support – School Action, School Action Plus, Statutory Assessment and Statemented.

² The non-core curriculum refers to art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology, music and physical education.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	B	C	C	D
Mathematics	C	B	D	D
Science	D	B	D	D

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

Provisional National Curriculum test results for 2002 indicate that, in comparison with the national picture for 2001, standards in English are above average whilst those in mathematics and science remain below average. In English, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5³ has increased significantly, with fewer pupils at Level 3. In mathematics and science, although the proportions of pupils gaining the higher Level 5 has increased, the number of pupils gaining Levels 4 and 5 fell short of teachers' predictions. Inspection evidence reflects the school's most recent test results at the end of Year 6.

Standards in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology, music and physical education are similar to those expected nationally. Standards in French at the end of Year 6 are similar to those found nationally at this age. Standards in the use of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology across the curriculum are satisfactory, but their application is not systematic. In religious education, standards are below those outlined in the locally agreed syllabus. Overall, pupils make satisfactory, and sometimes good, progress as they move through the school in relation to their prior attainment. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of the high quality support they receive. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make sound progress in class lessons and good progress in small group work. The good progress made by a significant number of pupils in Year 6 in English is the result of high expectations backed by detailed assessment of their learning needs. Standards in writing have improved significantly in this year group and shortcomings in boys' work have been successfully addressed. The school has established a good target setting system that predicts and tracks individual pupils' progress as they move through the school. This has yet to be matched by the systematic and consistent use of assessment procedures to raise the standards achieved by those who are on the cusp of a higher level.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils concentrate well and are keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Behaviour is very good at break times and around the school. It is good overall in lessons.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils are sensible, polite and willing to accept responsibility. Relationships are good.
Attendance	Good. Pupils enjoy school and most arrive punctually.

³ The National Curriculum has been written on the basis that pupils are, by the end of Year 6 when pupils are aged 11, expected to reach Level 4. If a pupil is attaining Level 5 then he or she is reaching standards above that expected for a child of his or her age. If a pupil is attaining Level 3 then he or she is reaching standards below that expected for a child of his or her age.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory

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.

Taking all the available evidence into account, teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teaching was good or better in just over half of the lessons, with a high proportion seen in English, including an excellent lesson. The literacy strategy is well established in the school and has helped staff and pupils to raise standards. In mathematics, teaching is satisfactory. Most numeracy lessons were of a good standard; analysis of pupils' books shows that teachers are becoming more confident in teaching the numeracy strategy. The support that pupils with special educational needs receive is a strength of the school. Teaching and learning in religious education are unsatisfactory.

The majority of teachers manage their pupils well and where teaching is at its best, there is a very good learning atmosphere where everyone is working flat out. In some classes, teachers are not so well organised and if the pace of the lesson lapses, some pupils lose their concentration. One unsatisfactory lesson was observed during the inspection. The school's assessment procedures are not systematically and consistently followed and teachers do not always have accurate expectations of what pupils know and can do. There is, however, some good practice evident in the school, which is worthy of development.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The school has yet to systematically plan the development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in the non-core subjects. Extra-curricular provision is good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. There is a very effective partnership between the co-ordinator, support staff, class teachers and visiting specialists. This ensures that pupils make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils learn well and make good progress when they receive specialist support. Provision in mainstream classes is satisfactory.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Moral and social development are good. Spiritual development is satisfactory. Cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils have a good knowledge of their local culture, but their understanding of the diversity of cultures in modern day Britain is limited.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory overall. The school cares well for its pupils. Assessment procedures are not consistent.

The school's partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents are satisfied with the information they receive from the school, but their own involvement in the work of the school and their children's learning is often limited.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher successfully promotes a calm and caring learning environment. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed. The quality of subject management varies from very good to unsatisfactory.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. They are supportive of the school and involved in forward planning. Not all statutory requirements are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school carefully analyses test results and sets targets for its pupils. The monitoring, development and evaluation of teaching and learning is not consistently rigorous.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The school has due regard for the principles of 'best value'. Designated funds are appropriately spent.

The school is adequately staffed by suitably qualified teachers and support staff. The accommodation and grounds are well used. Learning resources are satisfactory. Above average reserves are being reduced through a planned refurbishment project.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Seventy-eight parents and carers (30 per cent) completed a questionnaire and eight attended a meeting with inspectors.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High expectations of pupils. • Children mature well. • Children make good progress. • Staff are approachable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More extra-curricular activities. • Closer home/school links. • More information about the curriculum and homework.

Inspectors mainly agree with parents' views, but feel that extra-curricular activities are good. Pupils have the opportunity to take part in musical and sporting activities and specialist clubs such as chess and photography. The school has plans to increase the amount of information it provides for parents about the curriculum and homework.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In the 2001 National Curriculum statutory tests, standards were similar to the national average in English and below national averages in mathematics and science. Compared with similar schools (on the basis of free school meal entitlement), standards were below average in all three subjects. In 2000, standards were similar to the national average in English and above the national averages in mathematics and science.
2. At the time of the inspection, the school had just received the provisional National Curriculum statutory test results in English, mathematics and science taken by pupils at the end of Year 6. These indicate that, in comparison with the 2001 results for all primary schools, overall standards are above average in English, but remain below average in mathematics and science. In both these subjects, the proportions of pupils gaining Level 3⁴ are higher than the national averages and this reduces the overall standards. The proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 5 has increased in English and mathematics, but fallen in science. These results for 2002 are borne out by inspection findings.
3. In conjunction with the local education authority, the school sets targets for Year 6 pupils to achieve in the statutory tests. The targets for 2001 were exceeded in English and not quite met in mathematics. Given their prior attainment, the targets set by the school for 2002 were particularly challenging, as they required Year 6 pupils to make significant progress in a short period of time. Whilst there has been some success in English, the targets were not achieved in mathematics.
4. Pupils' attainment when they enter the school shows a wide range of skills and competencies; analysis of statutory test results and other assessments indicates that over time, overall standards on entry remain just below average. The school has developed a reputation for successfully supporting pupils with special needs. Over half its pupils now come from outside the school's priority area and two-thirds of these are identified as having special educational needs under the new Code of Practice⁵. The school has a higher than average proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language. About 10 per cent of pupils join or leave the school other than at the usual times. Inspection evidence suggests that the proportion of average attaining pupils is similar to that found in most schools. The proportion of above average pupils is lower and that of below average pupils correspondingly higher.
5. At the time of the last inspection, standards were judged to be 'broadly in line with the national average'. In the intervening period, the school's results have usually reflected the national average and the overall trend in the school's results has been consistent with the national picture. However, national standards have started to outpace the school's results. With changes in staffing and the allocation of co-ordinator responsibilities, the school is looking to examine ways in which it can raise standards.
6. In English, the 2002 results demonstrate the success of the school's work in developing pupils' literacy skills. Detailed analysis of pupils' work has identified areas for improvement, particularly in boys' writing, which has shown a substantial improvement. The attention given to analysing pupils' progress as they move through the school enables

⁴ The National Curriculum has been written on the basis that pupils are, by the end of Year 6 when pupils are aged 11, expected to reach Level 4. If a pupil is attaining Level 3 then he or she is reaching standards below that expected for a child of his or her age.

⁵ The new special educational needs Code of Practice was introduced during the school year 2001-2. There are now four stages of support – School Action, School Action Plus, Statutory Assessment and Statemented.

teachers to focus on what pupils need to learn in order to improve. With the high quality support provided for pupils with special educational needs, many of whom have dyslexia, standards are rising.

7. In mathematics, the school recognises the need to make better use of assessment information to inform teachers' planning and address identified shortcomings in pupils' attainment. Analysis of pupils' work demonstrates improvements in the quality of teaching and learning resulting from the majority of staff attending intensive numeracy training. However, pupils' confidence in understanding and using mathematical language and applying different methods of solving problems requires further development. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 in the 2002 statutory tests in Year 6 shows an encouraging improvement, but teachers' assessments were higher than pupils' test results, highlighting inconsistencies in current assessment procedures.
8. In science, the school's curriculum plans do not provide a cohesive scheme of work that meets the needs of pupils of different abilities and challenges them to raise their achievement. Although pupils' basic factual knowledge is mainly satisfactory, their skills of scientific enquiry are unsatisfactory because their learning does not build systematically on previous work. Standards in information and communication technology have risen since the last inspection and are now similar to those expected for pupils at the end of Year 6. However, the equipment currently available hinders pupils' achievement of higher standards, particularly in multi-media work.
9. In the non-core subjects of art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education, standards at the end of Year 6 are similar to those expected for pupils of this age and progress is satisfactory. These results are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection, other than in history, where standards were above average. Concerns about the lack of motivation and progress by pupils in Year 6 have been addressed. However, the findings of this inspection indicate that opportunities for pupils to achieve higher standards in many subjects are limited by the absence of up-to-date teaching guidelines that set out the systematic development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding.
10. The school chooses to teach French to all pupils. Standards are similar to those expected at the end of Year 6 and pupils make satisfactory progress. Standards in religious education fall short of those outlined in the locally agreed syllabus. The amount of teaching time allocated to religious education is significantly below that recommended and the curriculum provided is unsatisfactory.
11. Analysis of test results indicates some small differences in the attainment of boys and girls from year to year, but, as at the time of the last inspection, these are not particularly significant. Inspection evidence confirms this; the detailed analysis of pupils' writing undertaken as part of the school's participation in a nationwide monitoring of the National Literacy Strategy has helped the school to focus on boys' writing skills and raise standards. Similar strategies would benefit standards in numeracy, particularly with regard to mental mathematics.
12. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is frequently good and their achievement is often high compared to their earlier attainment. Those with specific learning needs or emotional and behavioural problems often make very good progress in relation to the targets set for them. Pupils, who require additional help with their language development, also make good progress. The early use of diagnostic testing enables good individual educational plans, usually with short term, specific targets to be drawn up. These are implemented methodically and well. The school is aware that more able pupils may also have special educational needs and makes appropriate provision through

individual education plans. As yet, it does not maintain a register of gifted or talented pupils.

13. Twenty pupils come from minority groups and all speak English as an additional language. Pupils make good progress when working in small groups led by visiting specialists or support staff. Where they are not specifically supported in class, pupils make satisfactory progress. The school analyses the results of national tests by ethnicity and gender. However, some teachers are not always certain of how well pupils are attaining in comparison with other pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Throughout the school, the attitudes, values and personal development of the majority of pupils are good. The positive aspects highlighted in the previous inspection report have been maintained. Parents are happy with their children's attitudes to school. They feel pupils are encouraged to behave well and to do their best.
15. Pupils enjoy coming to school and talk enthusiastically about their work. The majority of pupils listen carefully and show interest in the activities provided. They sustain good levels of concentration and respond to their teachers well, as seen in a Year 6 mathematics lesson based on prime numbers and factors. Throughout the school, pupils work hard in lessons and are pleased with their achievements.
16. During the inspection, the behaviour of pupils in lessons and around the school was good overall. At break times, and when changing classrooms, pupils' behaviour is often very good. Pupils demonstrate their acceptance of a clear moral code and show care for one another, their belongings and school property. Where, on occasions, inappropriate behaviour does occur in lessons, not all teachers follow the school's agreed procedures and move too quickly to remove pupils from the class. Few incidents of bullying occur in the school, but when these are reported, staff take effective action. There was one permanent exclusion during the last reporting year.
17. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from a structured approach to helping them overcome difficulties. They gain from the school's focus on speaking and listening and valuing the contributions of all. Although there are a number of pupils with quite complex problems, they are regarded, and regard themselves, as an integral part of the school community. Their attitudes, values and behaviour are not noticeably different from those of other pupils.
18. Relationships between all members of the school community are open and friendly. Pupils from different ethnic groups mix well with each other in the playground and support each other in class. Pupils recognise staff want what is best for them and this has a positive impact on the way pupils treat one another. Pupils are honest, trustworthy and welcoming to visitors to the school. They are willing to accept responsibility. A school council is in an embryonic form and will be further developed during the next academic year. Pupils act as classroom helpers and volunteer as litter pickers. Year 6 house captains take responsibility each day for the school late book. Older pupils help at lunchtimes, in the hall and with organising games and other lunchtime activities, such as the chess club. It is mainly through homework that pupils have opportunities to use their initiative and to take responsibility for their own learning.
19. Attendance is good and above the national average. Most pupils arrive punctually for school making a positive contribution to pupils learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. Taking into account all the available evidence, the overall quality of teaching and learning in the school is satisfactory. These judgements draw upon a wide range of evidence gathered during the inspection from the scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning, as well as inspectors' classroom observations.
21. During the inspection, teaching was satisfactory in 45 per cent of the lessons seen, good in 37 per cent and very good or better in 16 per cent of lessons. One excellent lesson and one unsatisfactory lesson were seen. No poor or very poor teaching was seen during the inspection. These statistics show an improvement on the last inspection when 9 per cent of lessons were very good or better but 13 per cent were unsatisfactory or poor.
22. Teaching is good in English. In religious education, it is unsatisfactory. In the other subjects, it is satisfactory. Although the amount of very good and better teaching is good, the proportion of good teaching is less than that found in most schools. A contributory factor is the lack of up-to-date curriculum guidance to help teachers with their planning. Another is the inconsistent approach to gathering and using assessment information.
23. The quality of teaching in literacy is good. There has been a particular focus on improving and developing writing, and results are much improved. Teachers and learning support staff provide pupils with quality help that successfully addresses their particular needs. This is helping to raise standards. Teachers' planning closely follows the guidance provided by the National Literacy Strategy, although some teachers occasionally deviate unnecessarily from their plans.
24. Staff have worked hard to improve pupils' speaking and listening skills and standards are higher than at the time of the last inspection. Teachers try to involve all pupils in responding to questions, not just those who volunteer an answer. In English lessons, they promote regular opportunities for pupils to develop speaking and listening skills by engaging pupils' interest and stimulating their thinking skills. Pupils are familiar with the school library and most can independently select fiction and non-fiction books.
25. Although the overall quality of teaching in mathematics is satisfactory, the numeracy teaching observed during the inspection was good. Most staff have received intensive numeracy training and now follow the national strategy well. They are working hard to develop pupils' mental mathematics and problem-solving skills. Teachers successfully share learning objectives with pupils and the overall standard of teachers' questioning is good. A shortcoming of teachers' numeracy planning is that assessment information is not systematically used to identify the next steps in learning.
26. The teaching of information and communication skills has improved since the last inspection when it was poor. Recent in-service training for staff is having a positive impact on standards and the standard of teaching is now satisfactory. Specific skills that will support pupils' learning in other subjects are being successfully taught.
27. Staff provide opportunities for pupils to use and develop their skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology as part of their everyday learning across the curriculum, but this is not systematic and varies from subject to subject and class to class. There is no overall, strategic guidance as to how this should be achieved.
28. As at the time of the last inspection, the teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Specialist school staff withdraw pupils to give highly structured tuition that has been expertly tailored to reflect their requirements and they give good support in class. A positive feature of the school is the very good teamwork that results in a coherent

approach, which benefits the pupils. Specialist teachers and staff ensure that pupils make good progress towards reaching the targets in their individual education plans.

29. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is effective because of the careful regard given to pupils' specific needs. This in-depth knowledge of their strengths and weaknesses is based on good diagnostic testing. It is reinforced by the systematic, ongoing recording of concerns and progress. These highlight success or areas that require revision. An emphasis on challenging and realistic targets produces a brisker pace of learning than is often seen. This intensive and focused teaching results in very effective learning for the pupils. Class teachers normally support these strategies well and learning assistants help pupils retain their focus during whole class sessions and group activities.
30. Overall, teachers have good expectations of pupils' behaviour. Good relationships, built on trust and respect, are evident between all members of the school community. In most lessons, teachers manage pupils well by clearly establishing what is to be learnt, maintaining a steady pace and making work interesting. Shortcomings in the motivation of pupils, identified at the time of the last inspection, have been addressed.
31. In some instances, teachers try to give too many instructions at once and pupils find it hard to remember all they have been told. When this happens, pupils' concentration lapses. Occasionally, teachers do not correctly apply the school's behaviour management policy. In most lessons, pupils respond well to instructions and maintain their interest. They enjoy opportunities to work with each other. Pupils co-operate well and respect the thoughts and views of their colleagues even if they do not always agree with them. They try hard to apply their previous knowledge and understanding to new work.
32. In the best lessons seen, such as a literacy lesson in Year 6 and a writing lesson in Year 5, teachers successfully capture pupils' interest and completely immerse them in their work. They use time well, setting realistic targets for the completion of work. Very good use of questions ensures that pupils understand the instructions they have been given before getting down to their own work. This balance of teacher input and pupil activity is successful, particularly when the teacher moves around the class, bringing pupils together to check that they are on the right lines. Pertinent questions and timely reminders, for example about spelling rules, successfully maintain the momentum of pupils' learning and challenges pupils to work well. This close attention to maintaining and directing pupils' energies was also evident in an art lesson in Year 3 where the teacher successfully promoted pupils' use of sketchbooks so that their designs evolve in a systematic yet creative way.
33. The pace of learning in lessons is satisfactory. Overall, lesson introductions have a clear focus and most teachers share with pupils what they are going to achieve by the end of the lesson. Sometimes, however, teachers spend too much time explaining what pupils are going to do. On occasions, they provide too much information for pupils to remember and the focus of the lesson gets lost. Most teachers use questions effectively to check pupils' understanding during lessons. However, end-of-lesson review sessions, when staff and pupils share what they have achieved, are sometimes too brief for teachers to make the best use of this information to re-enforce key points in learning.
34. There are shortcomings in teachers' planning, use of assessment information and their expectations of what pupils can achieve that stem directly from the fact that the school has not updated schemes of work to reflect the requirements of the 2000 revisions to the National Curriculum. This is particularly evident in science and the non-core subjects where teachers do not have a clear picture of the systematic development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. These shortcomings contribute to the overall unsatisfactory level of teachers' expectations.

35. In English, there are clear guidelines to help teachers plan their lessons. They make good use of analyses of pupils' writing, for example, to identify areas for development. In mathematics, recent in-service training has helped to focus teachers' understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy. However, their approach to recording information about what pupils know and can do is not consistent and this affects the overall impact of teaching and learning on standards.
36. Teachers' lesson planning follows a standard format. In literacy and numeracy, it is guided by the national strategies. In science and the non-core subjects, nationally available plans are utilised. In religious education, there is inconsistency in the use of the agreed syllabus. Overall, the quality of lesson planning is satisfactory. Most lessons have a clear introduction, development and review session; in the majority of lessons, activities are specifically identified for pupils who learn at different rates, with clear briefings provided for learning support staff. Whilst some teachers wisely revise and amend their plans in the light of their questions and discussions with pupils, others occasionally waver from their planned focus.
37. Although satisfactory overall, teachers' use of assessment information to inform their planning varies from good to unsatisfactory. In the majority of lessons, teachers set clear learning objectives and share these intentions with pupils. This helps pupils to understand what they are learning. In the more successful lessons, teachers have a good understanding of what pupils of all abilities have achieved. However, some teachers are less sure as to who has achieved, exceeded or not achieved what they expected in a lesson. This is particularly the case for the nearly average attaining pupils.
38. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are unsatisfactory because the information they have is not always sharp enough to identify the level at which the next steps in learning should be pitched. Subject co-ordinators are starting to build up collections of pupils' work. This is a positive move to help teachers know what pupils can achieve and enable them to set pupils more accurate targets for improvement. The school has established a system whereby individual pupils are set targets for improvement. These are discussed with pupils and parents and recorded in pupils' *Bull's Eye* books⁶. Analysis of pupils' work indicates that, at present, the use of these books to monitor progress lacks consistency.
39. Teachers' application of the school's marking policy also lacks consistency. In the best practice, teachers make constructive comments that help pupils to identify what they need to do to improve their work. Teachers do not give enough attention to pupils' presentation of their work. Some otherwise good work is marred by poor presentation. In some mathematics work, very basic mistakes in computation result from the careless layout of computations. The school has identified presentation as an area for development.
40. Overall, teachers' knowledge and understanding are satisfactory. Many teachers have particular subject strengths, such as in French, and apply these to their teaching to good effect. Most staff have recently received training in numeracy and information and communication technology. Teacher's knowledge and understanding in English is good. The headteacher has identified that some teachers' performance management programmes would benefit from the more rigorous identification of areas for development. A programme of in-service training has been arranged.
41. Teaching and learning for pupils for whom English is an additional language is good when taught by a specialist in a small group. It is satisfactory in the mainstream classroom, but could be better if teachers improved their knowledge and understanding of how pupils acquire a second language. At present, they do not plan their lessons with an identified

⁶ The agreed targets are recorded in the *Bull's Eye* books and there is space for pupils and teachers to make comments on the progress made towards them.

focus on the specific language needs of pupils. The quality of learning for these pupils would also improve if the bulk of the support teaching took place within the mainstream classroom and withdrawal was kept to the minimum to focus on individual, specific language needs.

42. The school has a policy outlining the arrangements for homework. A small number of parents are concerned about the inconsistencies between classes and year groups, but many more say they would appreciate more information about how they can help their children at home. The school has plans to increase the provision of information based on a recently completed pilot scheme. Reading and spellings are regular features of homework. Pupils say that they like to do work at home.

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

43. Overall, the school provides a satisfactory curriculum that meets all statutory requirements. Although the school allocates slightly less than the recommended time for the delivery of the curriculum, it provides a broad coverage of all the National Curriculum subjects. It has adopted the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. French is taught and there is appropriate provision for personal and social development, including health and sex education. Pupils' work on display indicates good participation in drugs awareness sessions.
44. However, there are aspects of the curriculum that are unsatisfactory. The time allocated for the teaching of religious education is now very low when compared to other schools and this is one reason why attainment does not meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. It is below that recommended in the non-core subjects, such as history, geography and art, and this is preventing pupils achieving above average standards.
45. The whole school planning of many of the non-core subjects lacks the detail and coherence to ensure the systematic development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. An exception is music for Years 5 and 6, which is planned and delivered by an outside specialist. In most subjects, the school has adopted nationally available plans, but retained its old guidance for teachers. Governors have recently approved new policies in geography and history, but these have yet to be fully implemented. Whilst there are references to the latest curriculum changes, these are not always firmly embedded. Subjects, such as personal, health and social education and religious education are sometimes planned and taught together. Essential learning points are missed, particularly when subjects are delivered within topics.
46. There has not been a recent whole school audit to establish whether pupils' learning systematically builds on previous work, particularly in the non-core subjects. Monitoring of the delivery of some of these subjects lacks the necessary rigour. Disparities in the time allocation to subjects are not clearly explained, particularly in the context of the time allocated to French, which is not a statutory requirement at this age.
47. There are good arrangements for all pupils to have access to the curriculum and opportunities to experience the full range of activities. For example, older pupils are taught English and mathematics within sets in order to meet pupils' needs more precisely. The school ensures that highly qualified specialist staff teach pupils with specific special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. Provision for pupils with special educational needs continues to be good. Planning for these pupils takes account of current changes and there are good individual education plans that stress short term, achievable targets. Senior management tries hard to facilitate the inclusion of pupils with physical difficulties within the school community. A number of actions have been taken to improve boys' literacy skills and these are having a positive effect.

48. The previous report stated the information and communication technology curriculum was a significant weakness. Not all aspects were fully taught. This has been addressed, although the use of information and communication technology by all subjects is uneven. The National Literacy Strategy is successfully implemented throughout the school and parents report that it has increased their children's learning. There is evidence of some good application of literacy skills across the curriculum. For example, lesson plans refer to subject vocabulary. However, the school recognises this as an area for further development. The National Numeracy Strategy is satisfactorily in place, but again, pupils' use of numeracy skills across the curriculum is uneven.
49. At the time of the last inspection, a strength of the curriculum was its enrichment by an extensive number of extra-curricular activities, mainly sport and music. Since then, the range has been extended and pupils have opportunities to join chess, wildlife and drama clubs. A number of English activities enable pupils to extend their horizons, as does the school's involvement in the combined infant and juniors after school club. The inspectors do not agree with some parents that extra-curricular provision is limited and judge the quality of provision to be good. However, they agree that more clubs and activities could be opened to younger pupils. There is a good range of visits and visitors.
50. The school delivers a satisfactory personal, health and social education curriculum. It is involved in the 'Healthy Schools' initiative. Pupils learn about road safety and the dangers of fire as the display of their posters indicate. There are appropriate arrangements for sex education. A new co-ordinator for personal, health and social education and Citizenship has been appointed and an audit of current practice has just taken place. This highlights a fragmented delivery and there are plans for a more rigorous approach.
51. Overall, the links with other schools are satisfactory. There are sound induction programmes for pupils entering and leaving the school. Year 6 is taught specially prepared lessons that link with the secondary school curriculum. The local community extends pupils' learning in history and English. For example, classes visit the library and pupils are involved in literacy activities and competitions.
52. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, as it was at the time of the last inspection, and the school has maintained its high standards. It continues to be a strength of the school. The school has implemented the new Code of Practice well, although it has yet to involve all pupils in the setting of targets. The curriculum makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs because of the early identification of problems and the accurate matching of learning needs to appropriate activities and support.
53. The special educational needs co-ordinator uses external specialists very well to implement and underpin the detailed and systematic programmes that are so very effective. Overall, the quality of the pupils' individual education plans is good; they have short term, highly specific targets. Pupils with a statement of educational need are provided with an education that reflects their requirements. Good use is made of national initiatives to enhance teaching and learning for those pupils whose attainment has improved or just need more time and one-to-one help to get better results. Well-trained learning support assistants ably implement the programmes, which stress the structured development of reading and writing through a focus on letters and sounds.
54. The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
55. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Assemblies provide appropriate opportunities to discuss and reflect on important aspects of life. Statutory requirements for collective worship are met. Stories are well used to enable pupils to think

about the feelings and personal beliefs of others. There are some displays of pupils' artwork and poetry, such as the attractive display on silver, which demonstrates a spiritual dimension. However, there are missed opportunities to promote spiritual development and sense of wonder.

56. Good provision is made for pupils' moral development. A high priority is given to providing pupils with a clear set of moral values and teaching them the difference between right and wrong. All staff, including support staff and lunchtime supervisors, model the principles they promote, including fairness, respect for property and caring for others. The red and yellow card system is popular with pupils and is used effectively and fairly by staff. Moral issues are discussed, such as the preservation of forests, but Circle Time⁷ and class discussions are not regular features of the school's work. Class teachers use them as and when they feel the need.
57. The provision for pupils' social development is good. Teachers demonstrate respect for pupils and take opportunities to encourage their self-esteem. Assemblies celebrate achievement and contribute effectively to the pupils' social development. Appropriate use is made of a residential experience to build good relationships. Pupils co-operate in learning activities, such as in a Year 4 music lesson where pupils were composing an accompaniment to a song they had written about a dragon. The school provides suitable opportunities for pupils to think of others less fortunate than themselves when raising sums of money for charities such as Barnados.
58. The school makes satisfactory provision for the development of pupils' awareness of their own culture through subjects, such as literacy, art, history and music. The effective display on a walk along the Oxford canal demonstrates this well. Pupils visit places of interest, such as the local museum and Sulgrave Manor. Pupils gain an insight into other cultures through religious education and visits from theatre groups and musicians. However, opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of modern day Britain as a multi-cultural society are limited and there are missed opportunities to celebrate the wide range of cultures within the school community.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

59. In line with the findings of the previous inspection, the school provides a caring environment where teachers know their pupils well and value them as individuals. The majority of parents are pleased with the care and guidance offered to their children. Teachers regularly monitor pupils' personal development informally through regular discussions. Each spring term, teachers and pupils jointly complete an assessment report together.
60. Early identification and a good range of tests are used to pinpoint the difficulties pupils with special educational needs may have. Their individual plans are regularly updated, informed by the continuous and detailed assessments of their performance. Additional tests and external specialists are very well utilised. This information is effectively used to provide amended tasks or to help pupils modify their behaviour and attitudes.
61. The special educational needs co-ordinator organises the work of the specialist learning support staff well. This is highly structured and directed towards the meeting of certain targets. Pupils' progress in each lesson is assessed and recorded in a book with class teachers supplying additional information. This procedure enables the special educational needs co-ordinator to have a good overview of teaching and learning. She also receives regular reports from all the visiting specialist teachers. All staff are involved in decision

⁷ During 'Circle Time' pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. All pupils agree that no interruptions should occur and only one person at a time will speak. Respect for other pupils' views will occur at all times and, therefore, pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease and free from any form of interference or interruption from other children.

making about future targets or movement up and down the register and this process aids the monitoring and review of teaching and learning.

62. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are well supported by visiting specialists. Record keeping of language assessment and language gains by the support teacher is satisfactory. The school does not analyse assessment results and hence, is not certain how well these pupils are attaining in comparison with other pupils. They receive satisfactory support in the mainstream classrooms.
63. The majority of staff implement the school's behaviour policy consistently. Pupils and parents are aware of the rules of the school and support these through the home school agreement. Staff deal with any reported incidents of bullying or inappropriate behaviour effectively. Pupils with behavioural problems are well supported.
64. Procedures for checking attendance are very good. Teachers call the registers promptly at the beginning of each session and any unexplained absence is followed up on the second day. Letters are always requested for any absence. The Education Social Worker is available if any problems with attendance arise.
65. The school has an effective child protection policy. Procedures comply with those of the area child protection committee and all staff are fully aware of these procedures. Training is regularly undertaken.
66. The arrangements for first aid, including the recording of accidents and informing parents, are good. Most staff have undertaken emergency first aid training. The school has a comprehensive health and safety policy and regular checks on equipment and risk assessments are carried out.
67. Statutory tests and assessments for English, mathematics and science are well established and the school uses the nationally available tests in English and mathematics in Years 3, 4 and 5 to help with target setting. However, aspects of the school's arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are unsatisfactory. The school uses several procedures, but these are inconsistently applied across the years and within the subjects. Procedures in English are more thorough and consistent than in other subjects. Pupils' progress is tracked and targets set for improvement. This has helped to raise standards in English to above average. Pupils' performance in mathematics and science tests is also analysed, but it is not rigorous enough to have significant impact on raising standards in these subjects. Procedures consist of end-of-unit checks that pupils have achieved the key objectives studied. Staff do not complete these in a consistent manner.
68. In some subjects, for example religious education, design and technology, history and geography, teachers make informal end-of-year assessments. As a result, it is difficult to collate data for comparing how well pupils are progressing between the classes, years and subjects, and to improve the curriculum to raise pupils' standards of attainment. Some subjects have partly completed portfolios of pupils' work. Some of these contain examples of pupils' work for which teachers have agreed a standard in relation to National Curriculum levels, for example on light in Year 3. Some subjects, for example information and communication technology, have introduced pupils' self-assessment, which pupils tick what they have achieved against statements. These help pupils to know how well they are doing in the areas where these have been developed.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

69. The school has a satisfactory partnership with the parents. The majority of parents are satisfied with what the school provides and achieves. The quality of information provided by the school is satisfactory. Parents feel the school's monthly newsletters keep them well informed about events. At present, little information about the curriculum being taught is sent to parents, but the school has plans to improve this. Consultation meetings are held in the autumn and spring terms and opportunities provided for parents to discuss annual progress reports with class teachers at the end of the summer term. The current school prospectus provides a useful practical introduction to the school, but the table showing the school's results for national tests omits the national averages. The school makes parents feel welcome and parents find staff approachable and willing to discuss concerns at any reasonable time. Pupils' annual progress reports are clear, providing information on work covered, the progress made and some ways in which improvements might be made. However, the language used in communications with parents is sometimes specialised and may not always be easily understood by the recipients.
70. Parental involvement with the work of the school is satisfactory. Homework is set consistently, but some parents play little part in ensuring its completion and return. Reading diaries contain useful comments from teachers and letters have been sent to parents from the school with advice on how to help children with reading. However, many parents, for various reasons, provide little support for reading at home. A small number of parents and volunteers assist the school both in class and with other activities especially art, design and technology and an after school tennis club. Staff are appreciative of this regular and reliable help. The 'Parent Teacher and Friends' Association' has good ideas through which to support the school.
71. Liaison with parents of pupils with special educational needs is good. Parents are made aware of the targets set in the individual education plans and most work in close partnership with staff to help their children. They are involved in the regular review procedures. The school maintains sound contact with parents of pupils for whom English is an additional language.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

72. The leadership of the school is satisfactory. The headteacher continues to successfully promote a calm and caring learning environment where pupils are valued and feel secure. The positive ethos of the school, reported at the time of the last inspection, has been maintained. Relationships are good and the school works hard to ensure that all pupils, particularly those with special educational needs, have full equality of opportunity.
73. Day-to-day routines are well established. The school makes appropriate arrangements to support staff new to the school. Although it does not currently offer placements, the school has the capacity to provide initial teacher training. Performance management is satisfactorily established in the school. Teachers were provided with appropriate training when the new arrangements were introduced and an annual review cycle is now established, although there have been some disruptions due to staff absence. An external adviser supports the governing body in their review of the headteacher's performance.
74. The experienced, committed special educational needs co-ordinator manages the provision of support for pupils with special educational needs well. She is the lynchpin that ensures the smooth running of a strong, highly motivated team that produces a coherent and focused curriculum. A particular strength of the school is its effective use of a wide range of external specialists to aid its assessment of pupil need and the implementation of a fine tuned, relevant programme of help. Support staff feel part of the team and play a

valuable role in helping the pupils. The co-ordinator has a very positive attitude to continual improvement and on-going training for the team.

75. Leadership and management of the support for pupils for whom English is an additional language are satisfactory. However, action is needed to help the mainstream staff to meet these pupils' needs more effectively in the mainstream classroom and for the school to more effectively monitor and evaluate their attainment in comparison with other pupils in the school.
76. At the time of the last inspection, the school was adjusting to lower staffing levels brought about by re-organisation. In many respects, that transition is still taking place; there has been a significant turnover in staffing, leading to many changes in curricular leadership. Some long-term staff absence has disrupted pupils' education. Although the school is able to fill permanent teaching vacancies, filling short-term vacancies is more problematic. For example, the deputy headteacher was absent through ill-health during the inspection; although her teaching commitments were covered by temporary staff, many of her day-to-day responsibilities were not. This is particularly relevant as the deputy headteacher has traditionally assumed oversight for those areas of the curriculum where there is no co-ordinator.
77. The quality of subject management varies from very good to unsatisfactory. Many co-ordinator responsibilities have recently changed. Leadership in English, which is very good, combines vision with the ability to plan and implement. The impact of monitoring and subject development is evident in the quality of teaching observed and in the improvements in standards. In mathematics, the new co-ordinator is benefiting from the help and guidance of the local education authority's advisory staff. Most teachers have now completed a five-day numeracy course and improvements in teaching and learning are starting to come through. Standards in information and communication technology have improved since the last inspection; the co-ordinator is successfully supporting staff in developing the quality of their teaching and, in turn, pupils' learning. However, at a senior management level, monitoring has not been sufficiently rigorous to identify and correct inconsistencies and anomalies in policy and practice, particularly in the non-core subjects.
78. Staff are committed to improvement. This is evident, for example, in the tracking and analysis of pupils' attainment and progress in English and the quality of the support provided for pupils with special educational needs. However, in other areas, their capacity to succeed more rapidly requires focussed, strategic direction by senior managers. Although current nationally available curriculum plans have been adopted in science and the non-core subjects, the school does not provide sufficiently detailed guidance for teachers regarding the systematic development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding; the way in which attainment and progress will be assessed; or about different ways of teaching and learning. As a result, there is an insufficiently firm basis for co-ordinators to monitor, evaluate and develop their subjects. This is particularly evident in science and religious education. Whilst the school's decision to focus on English and mathematics was appropriate, delays in addressing other subject requirements have complicated the management and organisation of the curriculum. This has been exacerbated by changes in, or the absence of, subject co-ordinators.
79. The school's procedures for monitoring pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science form an effective basis for development. Information is gathered from pupils' records when they join the school and from non-statutory tests and teacher assessments, as appropriate, at the end of each academic year. Targets are then set for the following year and for the end of Year 6. These targets are discussed with parents at a parents' evening and, in the best practice, pupils are aware of what they need to do to improve. Good quality analysis of pupils' work in English has enabled teachers to be far more accurate in their assessments of what pupils could achieve this year. The school is aware

that the development of its target setting depends on it successfully addressing current inconsistencies in assessment procedures.

80. The work of the governing body is satisfactory. With the exception of the current prospectus, all statutory requirements are met. Governors are particularly supportive of the school and many have long-established links with the school. They receive regular detailed reports from the headteacher and have a satisfactory understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Appropriate sub-committees are in place. A strength of the governors' work is the regular weekly meeting held between the headteacher and the chair of governors. The governor with special responsibility for pupils with special educational needs is kept well informed by the special educational needs co-ordinator, with whom she has a good working relationship.
81. The school development plan is a detailed document that is drawn up in consultation with all teaching staff. It reviews the progress made in the previous year and outlines plans for future development for all subjects and aspects of the school's work. From these objectives, the school identifies its priorities for development. The school's current priorities are appropriate to its present needs and designed to secure and maintain improved standards. All objectives have a timescale, the personnel responsible, identified success criteria and the means of achieving these. Many are not, however, costed; the school explains that it costs those that are identified as priorities and those for which particular funding is available. For example, spending on learning resources for English has been carefully targeted and has helped to raise standards. The governing body receives reports as to the progress being made towards the fulfilment of the identified objectives. Less developed is the governors' evaluation of the success of planned initiatives in relation to the school's budget.
82. The amount of funding the school receives from public funds is below the national average for primary schools. The governing body has a clear grasp of the school's financial situation. In recent years, the school has been able to build up some reserves through various grants, rebates and budget savings. At the end of the last financial year, these balances exceeded recommended levels, but the governing body has a clear strategy for the deployment of these funds, including improvements in security, information and communication technology upgrades and the maintenance of more generous pupil/teacher ratios. The projected balances for the end of the current financial year are within recommended guidelines.
83. The school applies the specific grants it receives correctly and pupils benefit from the additional spending the school provides for supporting pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. More-able pupils in Years 5 and 6 similarly benefit from smaller teaching groups and this is reflected in the improved proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in English and mathematics in the 2002 statutory tests.
84. Financial controls are good. Good use is made of new technologies to process orders and run the school budget. The governors are aware of the principles of 'best value' and the school's bursar takes appropriate steps to ensure that supplies are obtained from the most competitive source. School policies and documentation are maintained on computer and the school makes appropriate use of electronic mail.
85. Teaching staff have an appropriate range of qualifications and experience to teach the subjects provided. Learning support assistants are trained well and are effective in their work. The special educational needs co-ordinator and the specialist learning support assistants are experienced and well qualified. Appropriately qualified and experienced visiting staff provide additional support for pupils with special educational needs and those

for whom English is an additional language. Visiting teachers make a good contribution to the development of instrumental music.

86. The accommodation is satisfactory. Classrooms are of an appropriate size. There are specialist teaching areas for information and communication technology, food technology and areas for pupils to work with staff individually or in small groups. The demountable classroom is well used as a teaching area. There is a good-sized hall and the library and reception areas are soon to be refurbished. The school site is clean and kept tidy by a hardworking staff. However, the outside of the building, which is of wooden construction, has areas of wet rot and poor paintwork. The playground and field are spacious and include a pond.
87. Overall, learning resources are satisfactory to support the needs of the curriculum. They are well utilised by staff. There is a good range of resources for pupils with special educational needs, including some computer programmes. Visiting staff provide appropriate resources for pupils for whom English is an additional language. The library stock has been reviewed and pupils are familiar with its organisation. However, the application of research skills across the curriculum is not consistent. There are insufficient books and artefacts to support the teaching of religious education. Higher standards in information and communication technology are impeded by the quality of the available equipment.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

88. Building on the priorities already identified in the school development plan, the governing body, headteacher and staff should now:

- (1) improve standards in mathematics by making full use of assessment information to address specific shortcomings in pupils' mathematical skills and knowledge, particularly those who are on the borderline of achieving the national average or above the national average;

(paragraphs 7, 107-118)

- (2) improve the proportion of pupils reaching and exceeding the national average in science by putting in place teaching plans that systematically build upon pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding as they move through the school;

(paragraphs 8, 119-126)

- (3) raise standards in religious education by ensuring that:
 - (i) pupils' knowledge and understanding are systematically developed in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus as they move through the school;
 - (ii) sufficient teaching time is devoted to the subject throughout the school year;
 - (iii) the subject is effectively managed;

(paragraphs 10, 175-180)

- (4) improve the organisation and management of the curriculum in the non-core subjects by ensuring that:
 - (i) all subjects have an appropriate allocation of teaching time;
 - (ii) planning procedures are consistent across the curriculum and throughout the school, so that pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are systematically developed;
 - (iii) assessment opportunities are consistently identified and the information gathered effectively used to plan the next steps in pupils' learning;
 - (iv) teaching and learning, and their impact on standards, are rigorously monitored, evaluated and developed.

(paragraphs 43-58, 67-68, 76-79)

The governing body and staff should also consider the following issues in their action plan:

- improve the standard of presentation of pupils' work; *(paragraphs 39, 98, 116, 147, 150)*
- encourage a greater involvement of parents in children's learning; *(paragraph 70)*
- more systematically develop literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills across the curriculum; *(paragraphs 8, 11, 25, 46, 108, 116, 123, 125, 148, 151-2, 178)*
- develop class teachers' knowledge and understanding of teaching English as an additional language; *(paragraph 41)*
- increase the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in swimming by the age of 11 years. *(paragraph 171)*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

59

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

34

Teaching was graded in 55 out of the 59 lessons observed.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	1	8	20	25	1	0	0
Percentage	2	14	37	45	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

Y3 – Y6

Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)

260

Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals

12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

Y3 – Y6

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs

4

Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register

56

English as an additional language

No of pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language

20

Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of pupils

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission

11

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

14

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.5
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	37	24	61

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	30	24	33
	Girls	21	17	21
	Total	51	41	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (84)	67 (79)	89 (93)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	29	28	19
	Girls	21	20	13
	Total	50	48	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (79)	79 (82)	83 (94)
	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	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	12
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	5
White	240
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	1
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: Y3– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.29
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	33

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	101

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2
	£
Total income	515,146
Total expenditure	516,498
Expenditure per pupil	1,971
Balance brought forward from previous year	43,160
Balance carried forward to next year	41,808

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6
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)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 27.6%

Number of questionnaires sent out	282
Number of questionnaires returned	78

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	51	46	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	32	56	10	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	37	55	4	1	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	18	63	13	4	2
The teaching is good.	27	62	5	0	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	27	59	13	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	45	41	10	1	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	49	46	5	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	24	54	13	4	5
The school is well led and managed.	46	37	9	0	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	35	60	3	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	21	45	19	6	9

Other issues raised by parents

Parents indicated that they would like:

- more information about the curriculum and homework;
- more extra-curricular activities for pupils;
- closer home-school links.

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

ENGLISH

89. Inspection evidence indicates that, by the end of Year 6, standards are above the national average. The provisional results of the 2002 national tests support this view. More pupils attained the expected Level 4 than usual and two-fifths of the year group reached the higher Level 5, reflecting the fact that more-able pupils are doing well. There has been considerable improvement since the last inspection and these results are better than those of the past two years, which were average.
90. Highly effective leadership of the subject ensures that pupils make good progress. For example, a range of tests and assessment strategies enables teachers to pinpoint successes in teaching and learning and to highlight areas that need to be developed, such as writing. Analysis of pupils' work confirms that the school has achieved this. There is still some variation in the accomplishments of boys and girls, although the boys are now doing relatively well when compared to national figures. Pupils with special educational needs are also making good progress because a skilled, well-informed and dedicated team provide appropriate help. Those from ethnic minority backgrounds achieve as well as the rest of the class because of the support and help they receive.
91. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are above average. In the vast majority of classes, good relations, based on mutual respect, create an atmosphere where pupils gain the assurance to talk and express views. A deliberate focus on this aspect of English results in many opportunities, planned and unplanned, for pupils to develop their ability to speak and listen. For example, pupils share ideas and express feelings in assemblies and when discussing the quality of their clay models with their classmates, as in a Year 3 class. A particularly effective feature of the teaching is the promotion of the pupils' confidence to engage in serious debate that goes beyond a mere 'yes' or 'no'. For example, children in a Year 4 class, including those with special educational needs, discussed adverbs, adjectives and complex sentences with the teacher. Consequently, the understanding of all increased. Year 5 pupils were happy to express and justify their views about the personality of characters in *Wind in the Willows*.
92. Teachers skilfully integrate these discussions with reading activities and writing tasks, thereby enhancing these aspects of the English curriculum. Reading is taught well throughout the school and pupils learn effective strategies. Year 3 pupils read well for their age, responding to punctuation and enhancing their reading ability. Less able readers use their phonic knowledge when trying to read unknown words by breaking them into sounds. They read to adults on a one-to-one basis and in groups. They particularly like reading with their reading partners in Year 5. A good home-to-school reading system reinforces learning, although not all children are involved on a nightly basis. By the age of 11, most pupils are good readers as the result of teaching that focuses on developing comprehension skills. Older pupils read with careful regard for expression, intonation and punctuation. A colour coding system allows pupils to choose books to match their ability and they make above average progress.
93. Pupils make good use of the re-organised school library and find books from the satisfactory range of fictional and non-fictional books. Books have been carefully chosen to reflect the interests of boys and girls and the reading needs of all pupils. Pupils talk about using the library at lunchtime and the help that they receive from the pupil librarians. This ease of access encourages reading and girls and boys have a positive attitude towards books, referring to the enjoyment they give.

94. Less able readers, and those with special educational needs, are well supported in reading and writing. Skilled specialists help those with specific needs and learning support assistants work sensitively with small groups and individuals. Pupils benefit from the sustained, structured and multi-sensory approach to learning to read and write. They enjoy the games and activities and make good progress as they increasingly master more complex vocal sounds and word patterns.
95. Parents comment that pupils enjoy story writing. Pupils of all ages produce good written work, often using speaking and listening activities as a starting point. For example, a group of higher attaining boys in a Year 5 lesson listened thoughtfully to each other's dialogue before writing it. Teachers carefully plan to ensure that pupils consider a range of vocabulary and consequently, pupils' writing is lively and interesting. Year 6 pupils write poetry that expresses the feelings and emotions of a marooned man well. A Year 4 class wrote convincingly of what it felt like to walk in a wood, using phrases such as *The silence of the wood carried on* and *I looked up and saw rays of sunlight bursting through the trees*.
96. Grammar and punctuation are formally taught and frequently reinforced. As a result, achievement is high and younger pupils' written work indicates a good awareness of past and present tenses. Older pupils know about active and passive structures. By the time they leave the school, many pupils are correctly using punctuation that is more advanced. Pupils try hard and take care with their written work. Throughout the school, they write well-structured work for a variety of purposes and audiences. This ranges from reports on storm damage to keeping a diary during school trips. Pupils write biographies of famous people, play scripts and welcome letters to prospective Year 3 pupils. There are, however, too few examples of detailed considerations of arguments for and against a particular viewpoint, and the good and subtle use of persuasive writing.
97. All classes use the computer suite weekly, but there are missed opportunities for additional research and the more frequent use of computers as a redrafting tool.
98. By the age of 11, pupils' handwriting is mainly good, well proportioned and legible. Difficult words are spelt correctly. The systematic teaching of these skills, and good modelling of handwriting techniques, enables pupils to write quickly and well. However, the presentation of work is often weak. Headings are untidily underlined and books have a forlorn look.
99. The school has 20 pupils who are learning English as an additional language. They are at different stages of language development. Pupils' reading is better than their writing. Pupils' enjoy reading books, though not all read at home and this hinders their progress. Pupils at earlier stages of learning English have a secure knowledge of basic phonics and a reasonable sight vocabulary. Their skills in tackling unfamiliar words, for example *foliage*, is developing, but many do not read with full understanding or correct their reading when they misread words such as *weighed*. Those who are more advanced, read fluently, accurately and with expression. Their understanding of inference is developing well. Pupils recognise the author's use of metaphor. Their handwriting is mostly joined and the use of punctuation is mainly correct. Spelling is developing at a steady pace. Speaking and listening in everyday situations is progressing satisfactorily.
100. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make good progress when they receive specialist support. The teacher combines praise, encouragement and effective use of questioning to promote successful learning. For example, an advanced learner improved her understanding of inference and metaphor and two pupils at earlier stages of language development improved their vocabulary. They enjoyed reading a book and talked about the books they liked and why they liked them.

101. Good teaching contributes to the high standards in English, as does the excellent teaching in Year 5. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen and three-quarters of the lessons were good or better. These begin with a revision of work previously covered and the learning objectives are clearly explained. Pupils are engaged in the learning process and respond well. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. Questions are used well to reinforce understanding and extend thought, frequently in well-implemented sessions at the end of the lesson. Work is planned to meet the needs of the pupil and teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils respond accordingly. Good relationships permeate the classroom, with pupils keen to work and to please the teacher.
102. Lessons that were satisfactory would have been good if teachers had kept more closely to their plans so that some tasks did not have to be rushed. Routine notes of reading progress are not always evident. At times, planning lacks detail, although the format of the lessons is usually consistent with the National Literacy Strategy outline.
103. Pupils for whom English is an additional language receive satisfactory support in the mainstream classrooms and they make satisfactory progress. Class teachers' knowledge and understanding of how pupils acquire a second language is variable. Not all plan their lessons with an identified focus on the language needs of these pupils. Pupils' progress could be improved if the bulk of the support teaching was moved into the mainstream classroom and withdrawal was kept to the minimum to focus on individual pupils' specific language needs.
104. Other subjects support English and literacy by providing some opportunities for pupils to write in a variety of styles. For instance, they write reports in science and recount events in history. There are references to vocabulary in teachers' lesson plans. However, there is comparatively little written work in religious education and geography. There has not been an audit to ascertain exactly what contribution other subjects are making or to highlight potential contributions. The school sees this as an area that needs developing.
105. The co-ordinator is very committed and hard working. A challenging target of 81 per cent of the Year 6 pupils reaching the expected Level 4 has been met and writing has improved. The co-ordinator is an excellent role model as a class teacher. Her enthusiasm for English is effectively communicated to the pupils and has acted as a catalyst for change and development within the school. Target setting in writing has begun, with detailed references to attainment levels and pupil involvement. The co-ordinator and Year 4 teachers are testing a suitable format to record speaking and listening. More rigorous spelling tests have been introduced and the library reorganised.
106. A most commendable feature of the subject leadership is the continuing readiness to widen pupils' horizons and use of English. The school's involvement in local and national challenges is very good. These range from pupils' successful participation in local poetry and writing competitions to the schools involvement in the British Film Institute's project on using film to promote literacy. Pupils take part in creative experiences that centre on a multi-media approach to drama. Pupils have written newspapers and joined writing and drama clubs as well as entering Young Writers' competitions. These activities help explain why pupils find English an enjoyable subject.

MATHEMATICS

107. Compared with the national average, overall standards in mathematics are below average at the end of Year 6 and this is reflected in the results of the 2002 National Curriculum tests. The range of attainment is particularly wide, with an above average proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 5. However, this is outweighed by an equally above average proportion of pupils reaching the lower Level 3. Compared with its 2001 results, the school has successfully increased the proportion of pupils gaining the higher level, but has not, despite its hopes, managed to realise better results for those on the cusp of Level 4, the standard expected for pupils at this age. At the time of the last inspection, standards were reported to be in line with national expectations. Up until 2001, pupils' results in the national tests at the end of Year 6 were at or just above the national average.
108. There are a number of contributory factors to this picture. On the positive side, the school responded to the disappointing results in 2001 by creating four teaching groups in Year 6 and grouping pupils by prior attainment. This has helped a number of pupils to achieve better results than the voluntary tests, taken at the end of Year 5, indicated. A much greater emphasis on the development and practice of numeracy skills is evident in pupils' work as the academic year progressed, reflecting the influence of intensive in-service training provided for most staff. However, many of the lower attaining pupils still lack confidence in applying their numeracy skills. Although their work shows that they have made satisfactory progress over time, it is clear from lesson observations and from talking to pupils that many are still not willing to 'have a go' at solving oral and written problems, let alone try different methods of undertaking a calculation. In dealing with such problems, many look for adult support to help them interpret the language used in what is asked of them.
109. In the Year 6 lessons observed during the inspection, all pupils were working on nationally published work designed to ease the transition from primary to secondary school. Teachers' planning was based on these materials. The majority of abler pupils are familiar with terms, such as *factors* and *prime numbers*, and readily give examples in response to questions. Average pupils understand the term *product* and know that a prime number is the product of two different factors. Pupils use calculators efficiently, with some routinely checking their answers mentally. Less able pupils face the challenge of having only 3p and 5p coins to pay for a range of items. Their task is to combine coins in different ways to pay for individual items. For example, one group found that by offering two 5p coins and receiving two 3p coins by way of change, they could pay for an article costing 4p. It was particularly evident that many pupils have difficulty in understanding exactly what the question asks of them. In particular, they are not quick enough to determine what information is relevant and what can be disregarded.
110. Analysis of test results indicates that, for a number of pupils, a few additional marks would have secured them the Level 4 expected for their age. Conversely, a small, but significant number of pupils scored particularly low marks on the mental mathematics paper. Observation of some of these Year 6 pupils in lessons indicates that they have a limited grasp of number facts, particularly multiplication tables, and their recall of prior learning lacks accuracy. In the observation of an abler group of Year 6 pupils, it was noticeable that some pupils wavered when recalling multiplication facts from the three-times and five-times tables. Such difficulties stem from earlier in their school careers. Although given attention, they have not been successfully addressed and this is reflected in pupils' results.
111. Analysis of pupils' work across the school indicates that most teachers are moving away from an over-emphasis on repetitive written practice. Teachers now plan to the National Numeracy Strategy and the co-ordinator is introducing a new commercial scheme to replace the workbook materials previously relied upon by staff. Teachers' planning shows that there is appropriate coverage of the different aspects of the mathematics curriculum.

There is evidence of information and communication technology being well used, particularly in data handling, but there are missed opportunities to use computer-based programs to support pupils' learning in everyday lessons. Likewise, although there are examples of numeracy being used in other subjects, such as science, geography and design and technology, it is not systematic.

112. Teachers are successfully using new materials for the mental work at the beginning of lessons, the majority achieving a good degree of challenge for their pupils. For example, one group of Year 5 pupils were able to correctly respond to quick fire questions asking them to calculate 10 per cent of a range of numbers from 10 to 99. They quickly identified and explained a method to do this. Likewise, in a Year 3 class, pupils were quick to use their marker boards to show how many halves there were in numbers from five to thirty. They too were able to explain their methods and appreciated that *doubling the whole number* and *multiplying the whole number by two* were equally acceptable in arriving at the right answer.
113. Information gathered by the school suggests that when pupils enter Year 3, their overall attainment is below that found nationally. Although the majority attain the expected Level 2 in the National Curriculum tests at the age of seven, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 is below that found in the majority of schools. Inspection evidence indicates that the majority of pupils make satisfactory progress and that some make good progress. However, such progress is not uniformly steady, particularly when pupils' learning has been disrupted by staff absence and where assessment information is not used effectively to plan the next steps in learning for pupils. There are no significant differences between the attainment or progress of boys and girls. However, in some groups, notably in the older classes, the girls are more logical in their approach to solving problems, but less willing to offer or try out their ideas. In comparison, the boys are keen to suggest and try different methods without necessarily having a clear rationale for what they want to achieve. This has implications for the way in which boys and girls are taught, something the school plans to develop through staff training.
114. Pupils with special educational needs invariably make good progress in mathematics as a result of the good quality support they receive from adults. Many individual education plans include numeracy targets and pupils are well on track to achieve these. In the majority of lessons observed, teachers planned successfully for the differing needs of pupils. For example, in Year 3, work on two-dimensional shapes was well tailored to suit different groups of pupils and planning information clearly reflected pupils' prior achievements. Support staff were clearly briefed as to their role in working with individuals and groups of pupils and they successfully encouraged and supported pupils to participate in discussions and practical work. Similarly, in Year 5, one pupil successfully followed an individual programme because the support assistant combined a worthy amount of challenge with practical help. Not all pupils with special educational needs have specific adult support in every mathematics lesson; in lessons observed in Year 4, teachers successfully planned work on time for pupils to undertake independently. Pupils were able to explain what they were doing and what they were aiming to achieve; they were not afraid to ask other members of their group for help or to use their initiative to find their own way around a difficulty.
115. The school has an above average proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language. They are well supported by staff, who provide help with vocabulary and explain what is required a step at a time. Pupils take a full part in lessons and make similar progress to their peers because language difficulties do not impair their mathematical understanding. Some pupils from minority ethnic groups have a limited experience of mathematics beyond basic numeracy. The school makes good provision to help such pupils widen their knowledge and understanding through intensive adult support in lessons.

116. Taking all the available evidence into account, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. The majority of numeracy lessons seen during the inspection were of good quality, reflecting the improved level of expertise amongst the staff. Analysis of pupils' work and teachers' planning indicates that standards of teaching and learning have improved during the course of the academic year, but there is still room for further development in order to raise standards. For example, both the quality of marking and the standard of presentation of pupils' work are variable. Lesson plans reflect the National Numeracy Strategy, but some teachers do not yet plan small enough steps in learning to move pupils' understanding and skills on in a systematic way. A significant weakness stems from the lack of consistency in the recording and use of assessment information to plan sequences of lessons. The school's agreed assessment format identifies key learning objectives upon which lessons are planned. Staff do not, however, adopt the agreed format for recording information against these objectives. Although teachers know their pupils well, the quality of the information they record is variable and lacks the fine tuning that is necessary to identify gaps in individual pupil's knowledge and understanding.
117. The majority of pupils are interested in mathematics and apply themselves well to the work they are set. Most are attentive to instructions, keen to respond and willing to work independently. A small number of pupils in Years 4 and 5, mainly boys, are immature and easily distracted, especially if the pace of the lesson slows. Most teachers manage their pupils well, but some do not consistently apply the school's behaviour policy.
118. The co-ordinator has recently assumed responsibility for the subject and has used the management time available to her wisely to identify priorities for development and the means of achieving these.

SCIENCE

119. By the end of Year 6, pupils' standards are below the national average. The school has made insufficient progress in raising standards since the previous inspection when standards were 'barely in line' with national averages. This lack of improvement is mainly due to weaknesses in the curriculum. It lacks cohesion and its planning does not build systematically on pupils' achievement as they move through the school. Assessment procedures are not used consistently to chart pupils' progress and the available information is not used effectively to improve planning of curriculum. As a result, teachers' expectations of the standards that many pupils can achieve are not high enough.
120. By the end of Year 6, pupils' knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things and of materials and their properties are average. For example, more able pupils understand pollination and the different ways seeds disperse. Average attaining pupils understand what photosynthesis means and where it takes place. They describe how sieving and filtering can be used to separate mixtures. Lower attaining pupils know how badgers and frogs adapt to live in different habitats. In physical processes, there are gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. For example, higher attaining pupils have a partial understanding of effects that are caused by the movement of the Earth, but they cannot explain how the combined effect of the Earth's tilt and its orbiting the Sun cause changes in seasons.
121. Standards are below average in scientific enquiry. Pupils do not have sufficient understanding of *fair testing* and cannot explain phenomenon, such as why the pitch changes when three bottles are filled with different amounts of water. Very few pupils make informed predictions when constructing and interpreting graphs.
122. The attainments of boys and girls show no consistently significant differences. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress because of teaching assistants'

support and co-operative working with other pupils when carrying out scientific enquiry. However, teaching does not consistently provide enough challenge for all higher attaining pupils. As a result, they do not make as much progress as they could. Pupils for whom English is an additional language and minority ethnic pupils make satisfactory progress. However, there is a need to improve access to the science curriculum through better planning, especially for those who are not fully competent in English.

123. Overall, teaching is satisfactory. Teachers' clear explanations reflect secure subject knowledge, but they miss opportunities to link ideas and skills, for example, factors that might affect fair testing and comparisons. Most lessons are well prepared and have clear learning objectives. However, tasks are not considered carefully enough to meet the learning needs of different pupils in mixed-ability classes. Sometimes, the work is too challenging in quantity and intellectual demand in relation to pupils' previous learning, for example, to construct graphs and interpret information in graphs. Teachers' expectations are not always high enough for higher attaining pupils. As a result, not enough pupils reach the higher expected level for their age and several pupils remain at below the expected level.
124. Teachers' explanations promote pupils' knowledge and understanding of, for example, food chains and associated vocabulary. Whilst teachers make effective use of questioning to assess pupils' learning, they do not consistently use the information effectively to modify teaching. Teachers do not always attend to pupils' misconceptions or elaborate their explanations to deepen pupils' understanding of scientific phenomenon, for example, why boiled water will cool down to room temperature and not continue to cool down to zero degree centigrade as many pupils had predicted. Teachers manage pupils well and this promotes a good learning atmosphere, although occasional inappropriate behaviour sometimes reduces the effectiveness of learning. Teachers make effective use of resources, for example a digital microscope to examine root hair.
125. Marking is not effective in attending to pupils' misconceptions. Analysis of pupils' work in their folders shows that teachers are not consistent in setting high standards of organisation of recorded work. For example, these contain undated, untitled and unfinished sheets of work in no particular order. This disorganisation of work hinders the systematic development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding of science. Development of pupils' numeracy skills, for example in data handling, is unsatisfactory. The use of information and communication technology is inconsistent as is the application of literacy skills. For example, some teachers begin their work with a list of key vocabulary, but others do not.
126. The co-ordinator has recently taken over responsibility for the subject. Pupils' performance in national tests of 2001 has been analysed to identify weaknesses. These findings have been shared with staff. Teaching has been monitored. However, this information has yet to be effectively used to raise standards. A fundamental weakness is that curriculum planning does not provide a cohesive scheme of work that meets the needs of pupils of different abilities to challenge them to raise their achievement. Assessment arrangements are in place, but are not consistently applied. These do not inform curriculum planning so that it better meets the needs of all pupils in the class.

ART AND DESIGN

127. Standards in art meet national expectations for pupils by the end of Year 6 and have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils use a variety of media and their efforts, although not extensive, are displayed around the school. Overall, there is a satisfactory level of achievement. Some work, such as clay models based on a nature theme, is good. Pupils experience a range of artistic techniques and are confident in explaining them,

including the use of digital cameras, to progress their good work on their *nature installations*.

128. Pupils enter the school with varied experiences of art education and they make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. By the time they are aged 11, pupils use paint, pencils, chalk, crayon and clay to produce a range of imaginative and illustrative work that meets national expectations. Year 4 pupils talk knowledgeably about the different effects of using oil pastels and chalk when producing a large mural of a habitat. They also carefully studied the work of Andy Goldsworthy as a stimulus for their own ideas on creating a sculpture reflecting nature. Pupils paint in the style of Turner and Kandinsky, demonstrating their ability to use a range of colours and textures. They make sound use of a range of pencils to produce observational drawings that reflect light and shadow. Pupils in Year 6 have experimented with mosaic patterns and made collages of *The Creation* by using a range of materials, including textiles.
129. Work in their portfolios indicates a steady increase in ability, reflecting the schools' planning that emphasises the development of skills. An analysis of the pupils' sketchbooks indicates satisfactory progress over time. They are effectively used to evaluate ideas and record new approaches and techniques. There is little evidence of the extensive use of computers for design or research and there are missed opportunities for art to be used as basis for the development of literacy and numeracy.
130. There is no discernible difference in the achievement of boys and girls, or in the achievement of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. However, little very high quality work was seen, indicating that the higher attaining pupils remain unchallenged.
131. Most pupils enjoy art and are keen to talk about their work, at times complaining that they do not have art lessons on a weekly basis. Where teaching is very good, pupils respond to the high quality of resources and instruction and participate well in the learning process. They are prepared to experiment and strive to reach the high standards set by the teacher.
132. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with the quality of the teaching in the two lessons observed varying from satisfactory to very good. Teachers use good questioning techniques to highlight pupils' prior learning and to stress how it links to the lesson. A good use of resources, such as Warhol's multiple images, engaged the pupils' interest and made it easy for them to understand the characteristics of printing. However, the use of templates for the indentations of the printing plate limited pupils' creativity and opportunity to learn through making mistakes.
133. The use of photographs, including those taken by the teacher, were a powerful resource in helping a Year 3 class gain an insight into the scale of the clay sculptures that they had so carefully made. Very good teaching stressed the importance of their sketchbooks as a working document to underpin their modelling. A very well organised session enabled pupils to share evaluations of their work and that of their classmates. They frequently referred to their sketchbooks and were confident and competent in discussing their ideas. Pupils benefited from the teacher's good subject knowledge and about a fifth of the class produced some fine sculptures, with good attention to detail, colour and texture. Pupils with special educational needs took part in the good discussion work and received good support from capable classroom staff.
134. The school has been without effective subject leadership for some time. Resources are satisfactory and well organised. Portfolios of pupils' work have been introduced, although assessment is still in its infancy. However, curriculum development has fallen behind and the school is using some planning documentation that is now old. There are references to new national guidelines, but these have not been embedded into a new curriculum that fully takes account of up-to-date initiatives. Less time is allocated to the teaching of art

than in many other schools and some of it is taught within topics. Little monitoring of teaching and learning has taken place. There has been no investigation to consider whether these factors are explanations for standards in art, which whilst satisfactory, are not higher.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

135. At the end of Year 6, pupils' achieve similar standards to those expected for pupils at the age of 11 years. These standards are similar to those found in the previous inspection. Boys and girls show similar interest and commitment and make similar progress. Pupils with special educational needs, and those who are learning English as an additional language, also engage in learning activities with good zeal and make comparable progress to other pupils.
136. Designing and making of products such as slippers is above average. Pupils research the design, make detailed plans and select materials carefully. They show a good understanding for the need for quality and function. They use a sound range of tools and techniques. Standards in evaluating processes and products are less secure, as are pupils' knowledge and understanding of materials and components. Their skills in using mechanisms are not developed as well as expected.
137. Pupils make the best progress in Year 3 due to good opportunities for learning. They design and make products, such as free-standing picture frames, moving toys using simple levers and pneumatics, buggy and sandwiches. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Year 4. They design, make and evaluate products, such as bread, shadufs and moving books, but the standard of these products, for example of moving books, is not as high as expected. Progress in Year 5 is barely satisfactory because teachers do not expect high enough standards. Pupils design, make and evaluate products, such as biscuits, moving toys and musical instruments using junk materials, but the quality of products, such as moving toys using cams, is below average.
138. Teaching overall is satisfactory. In the best lessons, teachers set and expect high standard of work. The setting of work and time targets ensure that pupils work productively. Management and relationships are often good. Standard of work is not as high when teachers' expectations are low and pupils do not explore a sufficient range of materials for their products.
139. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Teaching has been monitored in some classes. The curriculum is satisfactory, but the allocation of time is a constraint on the systematic development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in the subject. Assessment is informal and is done at the end of the year. Links with literacy and numeracy are sound, as is the use of information and communication technology. Skills are appropriately applied, for example using software to create a three-dimensional plan of their design of a bedroom.

GEOGRAPHY

140. Standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 are average and similar to the previous inspection. Teaching is satisfactory and pupils have good attitudes to the subject. Boys and girls make similar progress. Pupils, who are learning English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, receive appropriate teacher support and make satisfactory progress.
141. By the end of Year 6, pupils have above average knowledge and understanding of the physical features of a river and how erosion, transport and deposition change the landscape. They use a sound range of sources of information, including maps at different

scales, atlases and globes, and develop sound understanding of physical features and the impact of human geography on the environment. They ask appropriate questions and investigate how the lives of people differ in different localities.

142. Learning is satisfactory as a result of sound teaching in Years 3 to 6. Teachers make effective use of questioning to review previous work. Clear instructions and effective use of resources help pupils to build on previous learning. For example, they compare physical and human features of Bradgate Park and Rugby and then prepare posters to attract tourists. Good management and relationships lead to productive learning. Pupils are encouraged to ask questions and use resources to find information, for example climate and tourist attractions/landmarks of India. Pupils enjoy finding out about other places, for example World Cup countries and European Union countries, their location and populations.
143. Learning is less successful when teachers do not specify work and time targets in the lessons. The use of information and communication technology is satisfactory. For example, teachers support the use of the Internet to find information about the World Cup countries and about Rugby. There is appropriate focus on literacy, for example, vocabulary associated with the physical geography of a river. Links with numeracy are sound; for example, pupils collect population data of the countries of the European Union and represent this using a bar graph.
144. The current leadership and management of the subject is in transition and only just satisfactory. A new policy document has recently been agreed by the governing body, but is not yet fully implemented. Teaching is monitored, but its impact is not evaluated critically. Planning does not promote systematic and progressive acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding of geography. There is no formalised assessment. The school lacks a consistent approach to assessing pupils' attainment and progress.

HISTORY

145. Pupils reach standards in history that meet national expectations by the end of Year 6. The previous inspection reported attainment as above average. There is now less time allocated to history. A new policy has recently been approved by governors, but is not yet fully implemented.
146. In Years 3 to 6, pupils enjoy history, especially the visits, such as to Sulgrave Manor in Year 5, where they dress up in Tudor costume. They benefit from good links with the new museum and library in Rugby and other local facilities. This encourages pupils to put a local perspective on historical events. For example, Year 6 pupils relate to the local information about the Second World War. This topic fires their imaginations. They enjoy interviewing grandparents and local people, who experienced the war, and are fascinated by using local ration books to work out how they would have managed clothing and food. In these ways, pupils pursue their own personal research and begin to appreciate the difference between first-hand evidence and secondary sources accessed through books and videos. The activity-based work, including role-playing an invasion in Year 3, helps pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language to capture the essence of the concepts involved. All pupils benefit from using the computer to access information from the Internet and specialist software, relating to their history topics. Pupils develop a sound understanding of the local culture, but there is a lack of a multi-cultural perspective in relation to British history.
147. From the pupils' work, discussions and the one lesson seen, teaching is sound, with some good features evident. When time allows, the better teaching promotes independent research and lively activities that stimulate the pupils' interest and imaginations. Where teaching is sound, there is still too heavy a reliance on worksheets, as noted in the

previous report. There are some sound displays of pupils' work, but, mainly, the presentation of work is not a high priority. This adversely affects the pride pupils take in their work and their sense of progression. The marking of pupils' work varies. At best, teachers make summary comments at the end of topics. However, these evaluations concentrate on pupils' attitudes to the work rather than specific historical knowledge or skills gained. Assessment in history, therefore, needs further development and consistency across all classes.

148. The quality of art work and cross subject links appears to have deteriorated since the last inspection and this is due, in the main, to lack of time. There are some good examples of creative writing and factual accounts, mainly from the higher attaining pupils. The use of appropriate styles and opportunities for good extended writing need to be strengthened in order to support the school priority of developing reading and writing skills in all subjects.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

149. The previous inspection found that the standard of attainment by the end of Year 6 was well below average. The school has made significant improvements since then. Standards are now average. This is due to the combined effect of several factors. The subject knowledge of teachers has improved through nationally specified training this academic year. This knowledge is supplemented with good guidance from the subject leader. The subject is taught regularly because of improvements in the planning of the timetable and overall satisfactory curricular planning and resources. All pupils, including boys and girls, those with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress throughout the school because they are enthusiastic and receive quality support and guidance from staff.
150. Expected standards by the end of Year 6 are seen in various areas of pupils' work. Pupils use spreadsheet modelling for designing a three-dimensional bedroom within a given budget and for calculating the area of rectangles by entering a formula. They combine different forms of media and show awareness of the intended audience and the need for quality in their presentations. Pupils do this by creating anti-smoking posters and designing leavers' concert invitations. Pupils negotiate databases. They are aware of the need to frame specific questions. In this way, they find specific answers, such as which monarch ruled for a certain number of years, or more. They successfully use the Internet to communicate with children in other countries. They use the screen turtle to draw complex patterns and combine different shapes to create paintings in the style of Kandinsky.
151. Pupils make satisfactory progress due to sound teaching and learning. Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour make an important contribution to their progress. In Years 3 and 4, teachers' effective use of questioning develop pupils' understanding of different ways of communicating information. Clear instructions lead to pupils to log on quickly and make effective use of software to draft a piece of writing for subsequent e-mailing. Pupils use the usual word processing skills of *cut*, *copy* and *paste*, and change *font style*, *size* and *colour* for effect. Pupils with English as an additional language draft thank you letters as well as the majority of the other pupils. Class management and relationships are often good and promote mutual respect and good work habits. Planning, however, does not promote the more effective use of time for developing pupils' application of skills. A very effective lesson in Year 5 promoted very good learning in writing procedures for drawing different regular polygons. Pupils successfully integrated the information into a word processing application and manipulated the images to fulfil their brief of creating the ideal classroom.
152. Leadership and management of the subject are good. Teaching is monitored and the subject leader is well aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and what

needs to be done to improve the provision. The curriculum is based on a nationally available scheme of work, adapted to the software available in the school. There are good links with other subjects, such as literacy, numeracy, history, geography, art and design and technology. Skills are successfully applied, for example, in researching and presenting information. Links with science are inconsistent and less well developed.

153. Assessment is inconsistent. Currently, teachers do not assess pupils' attainment in terms of National Curriculum levels. The school is awaiting the local education authority's assessment package expected to be ready in the autumn term of 2002. Pupils' self-assessment of their performance has been introduced. As a result, pupils know how well they are doing and what gaps there are in their skills, knowledge and understanding. However, the self-assessment does not yet cover all the areas of the National Curriculum 2000. The school's resources are old and hinder pupils' progress beyond Level 4. The lack of a multimedia projector means that, at present, pupils do not fully benefit from teachers' class demonstrations of skills involving the use of icons and keyboard. However, plans are in hand to purchase a projector and update other equipment.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE: FRENCH

154. Pupils attain sound levels of confidence in speaking, listening, reading and writing in French. From Year 3, they take pleasure in using French in the classroom and around the school. Pupils benefit from this early start and several girls and boys in Year 5 acknowledge that learning French has given them an interest in starting other languages once they move on to secondary school.
155. Pupils make sound progress in listening and speaking skills. They listen carefully to the teacher and to tape recordings and show understanding of basic instructions, such as identifying the relevant animal picture in Year 3 and following simple directions in Year 6. Where teachers have the confidence to speak in French beyond the key phrases and words being taught in the lesson, pupils respond positively to the challenge of trying to understand.
156. Pupils speak French with enjoyment and confidence, especially in Years 3, 4, and 5. For example, boys and girls in Year 4 volunteered to speak in French while conversing over lunch and Year 3 pupils responded enthusiastically to the register taken in French. Year 6 pupils are more self-conscious and need a wide range of differing activities and stimuli to maintain their former enthusiasm. The higher attaining pupils show pride in what they now understand, but middle and lower attainers are less well motivated. The most highly motivated pupils often have been to France or have experience of speaking another language. For example, a pupil with English as an additional language in Year 3, who is often very shy in class in other lessons, joins in French with gusto. She easily remembers new vocabulary and gains self-esteem by being able to prompt the memories of others in the class. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teaching assistants or by the class teacher's awareness of their need for additional support. Some pupils, who do not attain well in other subjects, do better in French, where the emphasis is on speaking and listening rather than reading and writing. They also benefit from working in mixed attainment groups, for example, with paired conversations or team games.
157. Pupils develop sound reading skills. As pupils learn the sounds through speaking first, even pupils with specific learning difficulties in reading have the confidence to attempt reading familiar words from the wall displays or published booklets with reasonable accuracy. Pupils show sound understanding by choosing the correct option from a range of words or phrases. They benefit from their teachers' positive encouragement and the ethos that allows everyone to try without fear of humiliation.

158. Pupils' written work rightly increases as they progress through the school. The standards of accuracy in writing mainly mirror the pupils' attainment in English, with pupils with specific learning difficulties struggling to reproduce the correct spellings. However, these pupils benefit from the support and guidance of teaching assistants. Although there are sound displays of pupils' work in most classrooms, the use of sugar paper folders and sheets of paper does not allow pupils to present their class work in the best light. Year 6 pupils appreciate using an exercise book that readily shows their progress and allows them to refer back more easily to work done earlier in the year.
159. Teaching is now undertaken by most class teachers with their own classes and is sound overall. Where teachers are fluent French speakers, the teaching is good, as they have the confidence to talk to the pupils in simple French that builds understanding. They model good pronunciation and demonstrate how to form French sounds correctly. They talk with enthusiasm about their experiences in France, which helps pupils understand the similarities and difference in culture. The better teachers have good expectations that, from Year 3 onwards, pupils can understand the basics of grammar if it is presented in a lively and relevant way. All teachers make the lessons fun with a range of activities, including games and songs. Where teachers have less fluent French, they successfully use tape recordings and videos from published materials in order to help pupils imitate native French speakers. Where teaching is sound, there is a tendency to over rely on the published materials and opportunities are lost for reinforcing key phrases in a variety of ways.
160. The school's policy for teaching French has changed from the previous inspection where teaching was good overall. At that time, only specialists taught French. In order to regain the good progress attained in the previous report, the school needs to look carefully at the use of the experienced French teachers, especially in relation to the work in Year 6.
161. Pupils benefit from self-assessment and regular mini-tests that help them understand how they are progressing. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make sound progress through the four years. Pupils are proud of their achievements in French and know that they can speak and understand more as they move through the school.

MUSIC

162. A visiting specialist teaches music to classes in Years 5 and 6. In Years 3 and 4, class teachers deliver their own lessons. It was not possible to observe any specialist lessons during the inspection, but evidence was gathered from some class music activities and the Year 6 pupils' preparations for their leavers' concert.
163. Standards in music at the end of Year 6 are similar to those found nationally. Pupils in Year 3 have a good sense of rhythm and their singing is tuneful. Recorder players follow a conductor carefully, with good breath control. Pupils selected to play a range of untuned percussion instruments and successfully maintained *ostinati* rhythms based on the words of the song *There was an old man called Michael Finegan*.
164. In Year 4, pupils successfully compose melodies to accompany the words they have written, for example, about a dragon. They work well in groups, discussing what they want to achieve, and how they will achieve it, sensibly. They respond well to their teacher's encouragement to listen and evaluate their work. In Year 5, work on rhythm and pitch improves the quality of pupils' singing. Pupils are building up a repertoire of songs from different countries and cultures. Their listening diaries show that they are becoming familiar with a range of pieces from different periods and styles. At the time of the last inspection, standards were below expectation in performing and composing. These

shortcomings have been successfully addressed. Standards remain satisfactory in listening and appraising.

165. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Lessons are well prepared and teachers' subject knowledge is sound. Teachers make positive efforts to involve all pupils in lessons, enabling them to make sound progress. In the best lessons, teachers ensure that pupils have sufficient time to practise and develop their ideas. Boys and girls have equal access to instrumental work and pupils with special educational needs are given help and support to enable them to take a full part in lessons. Although some pupils for whom English is an additional language understandably have some difficulty with the words of nonsense songs, they readily join in with the accompaniment.
166. The school has an equipped music room and a satisfactory range of learning resources. An audit of instruments has been carried out and necessary repairs undertaken. Many pupils benefit from instrumental tuition provided by visiting specialist teachers. There are extra-curricular recorder groups and a school choir.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

167. Standards are similar to those expected by the end of Year 6. The school provides a good range of activities, including dance, games and athletics. There are a number of extra-curricular sporting activities, including some specifically for pupils in Years 3 and 4.
168. Pupils make satisfactory progress in lessons. Teachers ensure that boys and girls alike have opportunities to participate in all activities. Those with special educational needs have sensitive and discrete help and support to enable them to play a full part in lessons. For those for whom English is an additional language, staff take care to explain instructions and build up pupils' knowledge and understanding of rules and skills in a systematic way. There is limited use of numeracy, information and communication technology or research skills at present.
169. Pupils appreciate the value of physical exercise for their well-being. Lessons seen began with warm-up activities and concluded with cool-down activities that were appropriate to the focus of each lesson. Pupils and staff were appropriately attired and the necessary attention was given to health and safety issues.
170. In Year 3, pupils have a good appreciation of space and respond well to instructions. They work well with partners and, when throwing and catching, focus well on developing their handling skills. Good concentration meant that work with large balls, and over increasing distances, was successfully achieved and standards raised. Another class of Year 3 pupils showed increasing control of the ball as they learnt to throw from the wrist. They successfully established a repeated sequence of throwing, catching and bouncing, but did not have the opportunity to incorporate this into a game. Pupils in Year 5 are developing throwing and batting skills in cricket and honing their baton passing skills in athletics. The school is blessed with generous grassed playing fields that provide plenty of space for pupils.
171. Swimming takes place in Years 3 and 4. The school funds tuition, but parents are asked to contribute towards the transport. The governors' charging policy ensures that no child is excluded from swimming. For many pupils, this is the only opportunity they have to learn to swim during their primary school careers. The school reports that by the end of Year 4, when the school's swimming tuition finishes, most pupils can swim 10 metres and about half achieve 25 metres. This is below the national expectation. It actively promotes locally available intensive swimming courses during school holidays to help pupils improve their skills and, where appropriate, take life saving and other qualifications. The school is

concerned that a number of parents wish to withdraw their children from swimming lessons for reasons other than medical conditions.

172. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Where teachers have high expectations, pupils listen carefully and get down to work quickly. On occasions, teachers' instructions are rather detailed and pupils' concentration starts to wander. Teachers make effective use of good practice to model skills and this helps pupils to understand what is required of them. There is a tendency for teachers not to give pupils sufficient time to evaluate and develop their own performances.
173. Most pupils enjoy physical education lessons and are keen to participate in extra-curricular activities. The school takes a full part in the sporting life of the area, with teams taking part at local and county level.
174. The co-ordinator has recently taken over responsibility for this area of the curriculum and attends local co-ordinator meetings. She has identified areas for development, particularly the development of assessment procedures to complement the school's scheme of work. This is based on nationally available materials and maintains a good balance between various activities. Improvements have recently been made to learning resources in athletics. Overall, learning resources are satisfactory and equipment is regularly maintained.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

175. Attainment in religious education does not meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards have not been maintained since the last inspection when they were satisfactory.
176. The school allocates far less time to the teaching of religious education than other schools and this is insufficient to allow in-depth teaching of the subject. Additionally, the way the religious education curriculum is delivered compounds the problem. The subject is not always taught discretely, but often as part of a topic. What is taught in religious education is then governed by the requirements of another subject and does not always readily build on pupils' prior learning. For example, pupils briefly wrote about *priests' holes* because they were studying the Tudors, but this piece of work was out of place in relation to what the pupils had been doing in religious education.
177. In such circumstances, the cumulative increase in knowledge and understanding is lessened and pupils' progress over time is unsatisfactory. Unsatisfactory progress is also due to the practice of linking the teaching of religious education with the delivery of the personal, social and health education curriculum without rigorous curriculum planning. For example, the planning for a lesson with the aim to *empathise with feelings and attitudes* failed to put this within a religious context. An analysis of pupils' books indicates that this is a fairly common approach in the school. Even where there are references to religious events and belief, they are often superficial. There is an inappropriate balance between exploring feelings and experiences and learning about events and the basic beliefs of Christianity and other religions.
178. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 do not systematically build on their earlier learning about the Old and New Testaments whilst extending their understanding of Hinduism, Sikhism, Islam and Judaism. They have some knowledge of Hindu festivals, such as Divali, and some understanding of aspects of Sikh teaching. They have been taught about the Five Pillars of Islam. However, much of this work lacks depth and, on occasions, does not go much beyond a colouring exercise. The quantity and quality of written work is unsatisfactory and there are many missed opportunities to extend literacy skills by, for example, encouraging pupils to write play scripts of significant encounters or newspaper reports of important

events. Written work is not always well presented. There are no links with numeracy and little evidence of information and communication technology to aid communication and research skills.

179. Taking all the available evidence into account, teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. In one lesson seen, the teacher effectively used questions to recap the story of Abraham and Isaac and to encourage a consideration of what it feels like to be rejected. However, the task set for pupils, looking up of words in a dictionary, reduced the pace of the lesson. Although the teacher did respond to pupils' comments about God as a spirit, this intervention was not successful in promoting the high level of discussion that pupils were capable of sustaining. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour were good. In another lesson seen, the teacher had limited knowledge of the lesson's theme and did not successfully engage pupils' interest or attention. In these lessons, all pupils, regardless of gender, ethnic background or special educational needs requirements, made the same progress. The analysis of pupils' books shows that marking is very variable and pupils are rarely told what to do in order to improve.
180. The management of the subject is not effective. Too little teaching time and unsatisfactory organisation has hindered the delivery of a satisfactory religious education curriculum. The policy and subject documentation are over six years old. The co-ordinator, who took over the subject in September 2001, has not yet had the opportunity for in-depth training for the new role. A new locally agreed syllabus will apply from September 2002. The school has not had a copy of this, although sample units have been received. In these circumstances, there has been little planning for the implementation of the new curriculum. Pupils' work is not formally assessed and progress is not carefully monitored against the requirements of the agreed syllabus. Little monitoring of teaching and learning takes place. Pupils visit Coventry Cathedral, but the use of visits and visitors from other faiths is underdeveloped. There are far too few books, artefacts and videos to successfully support the teaching of religious education.