

# INSPECTION REPORT

**THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL OF ST GREGORY  
THE GREAT**

CHELTENHAM

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115731

Headteacher: Mrs S Aston

Reporting inspector: Mr A C Jolly  
(8750)

Dates of inspection: 20<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2002

Inspection number: 195271

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Knapp Road  
Cheltenham  
Gloucestershire

Postcode: GL50 3QH

Telephone number: 01242 513659

Fax number: 01242 237870

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Judith Lorman

Date of previous inspection: 9<sup>th</sup> June 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
8750	Mr A C Jolly	Registered Inspector	English English as an Additional Language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and achievements. How well are the pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
19491	Mr R Jones	Lay Inspector		Pupils' attitudes and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
26405	Mrs C Bond	Team Inspector	The Foundation Stage	
22489	Mr I Barker	Team Inspector	Music.	How well is the school led and managed?
21075	Mr S Gould	Team Inspector	Mathematics Design and Technology Geography Equal Opportunities	
19897	Mr A Evans	Team Inspector	Science Art Physical Education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils.
30580	Mr D Bateson	Team Inspector	Information and Communication Technology History Special Educational Needs	

The inspection contractor was:

Weatheroak Inspections Ltd  
4 Elm Drive  
Oversley Green  
Alcester  
Warwickshire  
B49 6PJ

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The Catholic School of Saint Gregory the Great is a larger than average primary school situated in the centre of Cheltenham in Gloucestershire. The school has a very large catchment area with many pupils travelling on school buses. There are 360 pupils aged between 4 and 11 on roll, with almost equal numbers of boys and girls. The percentage of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The percentage of pupils for whom English is an additional language is broadly similar to what would be found in most schools and the very small numbers of pupils come from six different ethnic backgrounds. Attainment on entry is broadly average as indicated clearly by standardised tests. Fifteen per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, which is below average while the percentage of pupils who have statements of special educational needs is average. In September 2001, the school benefited from the provision of a new all weather playing pitch and extensive building improvements are continuing to take place.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

The Catholic School of Saint Gregory the Great is a good school where pupils achieve well and attain above average standards in the key subjects of English, mathematics and science by the time they leave the school. The teaching is good overall. The school is well led and managed by the headteacher, with valuable support from the governors. The school provides good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Standards are good in the key subjects of English, mathematics and science.
- Standards are good in history, music and art.
- The school is well managed and led.
- Extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- Links with parents are good.
- Provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

#### **What could be improved**

- The matching of tasks to pupils' abilities.
- The use of time in the school day.
- The outdoor play area for the under fives.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in June, 1997. Since then long-term plans and schemes of work have been improved by establishing a greater link with National Curriculum Programmes of Study and more clarification of how pupils' skills are progressively improved. The breadth and balance in the curriculum taught to the under-fives has been improved. The school's behaviour policy has been implemented with more consistency and the general approach is positive. The plans for staff development in science, design and technology, information technology, music, art and under fives curriculum planning have been continued. The provision for pupils' all round personal development is now good. Standards have improved in mathematics, science, history, music and art. The quality of teaching has also

improved overall. Therefore the school has made a good improvement since the last inspection and is well placed to improve further.

## STANDARDS

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

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

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

This table shows that standards in the Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests last year were above average in English and average in mathematics and science. However, when compared with similar schools, standards are below average in all three subjects. Year 2000 saw a predicted dip in results but otherwise the pattern of results has followed the national trend.

Key Stage 1 tests results have been consistently well above average in reading and writing. The results for mathematics have been generally at least average. Standards overall in the Key Stage 1 tests are in line with what is found in schools in a similar context. The school has set itself suitably challenging targets for the future. Standards in mathematics, science, English, art, history and music are all good. The pupils' work is not always well presented in Key Stage 1. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily throughout the school. Other pupils achieve satisfactorily in Key Stage 1 and well in Key Stage 2.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very positive attitudes to school. They participate enthusiastically in lessons and the wide range of activities the school provides.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The standards of behaviour around the school and in lessons is consistently good.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good throughout the school. Pupils show initiative when given opportunities.
Attendance	Good. Levels of attendance are above the national average.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING



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

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

The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in 96 per cent of lessons. In half the lessons the teaching is good or better. In four per cent of lessons the teaching is unsatisfactory. There are clear, individual targets for all pupils in literacy and numeracy, which help pupils to achieve well in these key subjects. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good. The marking of pupils' work is consistently good. The quality of learning matches closely the quality of teaching. Clear objectives are set for lessons, which give a sound structure to most lessons. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good. The school meets the needs of most pupils satisfactorily but tasks are not always matched sufficiently to the range of pupils' abilities. The time available for teaching is not always well managed. Pupils learn effectively in most lessons and benefit from very good relationships, particularly in Key Stage 2, to achieve well by Year 6.

### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a good, rich, relevant curriculum for all of the pupils. It offers a wide range of worthwhile activities. Extra-curricular provision is excellent.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Sound. Provision for pupils with special educational needs enables them to make satisfactory progress as at the time of the last inspection. The management of the provision is good. The pupils' learning, which is satisfactory overall, would benefit from a more consistent approach to planning for children of different abilities
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school monitors effectively the provision for and progress of the few pupils with English as an additional language so they achieve well by the end of Key Stage 2.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes very good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is a strength of school life. There is good provision for personal development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	This is an extremely caring school where the welfare and support of pupils is given a high priority and the provision is good.

The school works effectively with parents and provides a good range of information.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides clear and effective leadership and is well supported by the deputy headteacher. The monitoring role of co-ordinators is developing.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are keen and supportive. They fulfil their responsibilities diligently. They are well informed and have a systematic approach to monitoring the effectiveness of the school. The school improvement plan is extensive but does not give clear enough indication of the time scales for completed and evaluated actions.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has analysed its performance fully. It makes good use of data, for example, in setting appropriate, but challenging, targets.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of its resources.

The school's staffing, accommodation and learning resources are good. The school applies effectively the principles of best value. For example, it has negotiated successfully for catering and transport contracts.

#### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• They believe their children make good progress.</li> <li>• They would be comfortable raising questions or problems.</li> <li>• They believe teaching is good.</li> <li>• They feel the school has high expectations.</li> <li>• They believe the school helps their children to become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information about their children's progress.</li> </ul>

There was a good return from parental questionnaires. They confirmed the positive views expressed at the Parents' Meeting held prior to the inspection. Inspectors shared these favourable views about the ethos of the school and general standards obtained. Although there is a homework policy and work is set regularly, inspectors agreed with a few parents that there is inconsistency between certain classes in what pupils are expected to do at home. However, the inspection team disagreed with some parents' negative views about the information provided about their children's progress. This was judged to be good.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. The school's performance in the 2001 National Tests at the end of Key Stage 2 compared appropriately with the national average in mathematics and science and was above the national average in English. However, when compared with schools in similar contexts standards are below average in all three subjects.
2. There was a predicted dip in the Key Stage 2 results in 2000 based on prior attainment of pupils in that cohort. Otherwise results have broadly followed the national trend from 1997-2001.
3. Tests results in Key Stage 1 have been more impressive. Standards have been well above the national average in reading and writing for the last three years. In mathematics standards have been broadly in line with the national average over the same period. When compared with schools in a similar context, standards are above average in reading, average in writing but well below average in mathematics.
4. The major influence on this variability in tests is the performance of the more able pupils. The number of pupils who attain the higher than average Level 3 is well below average in mathematics when compared with both nationally and with schools in similar contexts. The performance of able pupils is better in Key Stage 2 and matches more the general performance. There is very little difference in attainment by gender in the Key Stage 1 tests from 1999-2001. Boys have performed slightly less well than girls in all three subjects in Key Stage 2 tests from 1999-2001.
5. Standards of attainment on entry to the school are broadly average based on standardised tests. Standards in the Foundation Stage are sound and the pupils are on line to meet all the Early Learning Goals.
6. Standards from inspection in the key subjects of English, mathematics and science are above average. Standards are also good by Year 6 in music, art and history. Standards in all other subjects are satisfactory. This reflects an overall improvement on the findings of the last report where all subjects were average, except for English, which was above average. Standards of literacy and numeracy are good.
7. There are fewer pupils identified as having special educational needs than would generally be found in similar schools. Work in lessons is not consistently matched to the range of abilities and so they achieve less well than might be expected, although their progress is satisfactory. In Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress in English and science. Achievement is sound overall. In Key Stage 2 standards rise further so that overall achievement is good. The very few pupils for whom English is an additional language, who come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, achieve well by the end of Key Stage 2.
8. The school has very effective ways of tracking pupils' attainment and has made a very thorough analysis of previous assessment data to inform future planning and target setting. It has set itself ambitious targets which, if attained, will ensure continued improvement and build upon the good progress made since 1997.

## **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

9. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and participate enthusiastically in lessons and other school activities. After school clubs are very well supported. Pupils are keen to show their work to others and explain what they have been doing. In discussions they say that they like school and this is confirmed by the outcomes of the parental questionnaire returns. Attendance levels are above national averages.

10. Behaviour is good. Pupils behave well in lessons and other communal activities such as assemblies and listening to visiting speakers. They are polite and friendly and act sensibly when moving around the school and in the dining room at lunchtime. School property is treated well. Exclusions are extremely rare.

11. Pupils work well together. For example in Year 1 small groups collaborated to produce joint art work and Year 3 physical education teams co-operated to devise their own activities without detailed supervision. In many other lessons pupils work productively in pairs on a range of tasks including sentence construction. They listen to each other's contributions, for example in a personal, social and health education lesson whilst sharing their experiences about how they were treated by others.

12. Relationships throughout the school are very good. Pupils and staff have a good rapport. They play and socialise well during breaks and show concern and help when other pupils are unwell or hurt. Pupils with special educational needs or from ethnic minority backgrounds are fully integrated and included by others in all activities.

13. Parents believe that the school helps their children to mature and become responsible. In part this is achieved by providing opportunities for them to undertake various jobs around the school as monitors. A school council is also in the process of being set up. As part of a strategy for getting pupils to plan for themselves and understand the impact of their actions they are also involved in setting their own academic and personal targets and help devise class rules.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

14. The quality of teaching in the school is good overall. Ninety six per cent of the teaching is sound or better and in one half of the lessons the teaching is good or very good. Fourteen per cent of the total teaching is very good or excellent. This is a clear improvement on the findings of the last report.

15. The teaching in the Foundation Stage is usually sound, sometimes good and occasionally unsatisfactory. Relationships between adults and children are good. There is good teaching of children's physical development indoors in the hall where challenging activities are set. When teaching is less strong, ineffective use is made of the available space and resources.

16. The teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall. Two-fifths of the teaching is good or better and one-eighth is unsatisfactory. The teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy is good and the National Strategies for literacy and numeracy have been introduced successfully. Support staff and resources are both used well. In a very well taught mathematics lessons in Year 2 with lower attaining pupils, the teacher had prepared tasks effectively to match the five ability groups. Very thorough planning and a brisk delivery ensured pupils attained average standards, which was better than would be expected. When the teaching is less effective in Key Stage 1, it is because the pace of the teaching is too slow. The quality of teaching also depends on the way the pupils are managed and

motivated. When there was too great an emphasis on negative remarks by teachers, the ethos for learning deteriorated significantly.

17. The teaching is consistently good in Key Stage 2. There is no unsatisfactory teaching and occasionally teaching is both very good and excellent. Teachers display a good subject knowledge for most subject areas. This is a particular strength in music. Teaching methods are consistently effective and teachers are not afraid to adopt imaginative approaches to develop pupils' learning, which was evident in English and music. There are very good relationships between the teachers and the pupils which has a positive effect on standards of behaviour in lessons.

18. It is clear from the quality of pupils' work in Key Stage 2 that there has been good teaching over time. The consistent, high quality of the marking of pupils' work is particularly impressive. Pupils are not only given a clear indication of their attainment but also helpful and specific advice on how to improve their work. All pupils are given individual targets that helps the process of improvement. Clear objectives are also stated at the start of most lessons so pupils understand what they should learn.

19. The least effective feature of the teaching is the match of the tasks set to the varying abilities of the pupils. Too much reliance is given to the assumption that open-ended tasks will allow pupils to work effectively at their own level. Pupils with special educational needs therefore do not always progress as well as they might be expected. Although homework arrangements are clear and homework is set regularly, there is some inconsistent practice between classes. The teaching of the very few pupils from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, who have English as an additional language, is sound overall. Able pupils are challenged more successfully by targeted teaching in Key Stage 2 than Key Stage 1.

20. The quality of learning matches closely the quality of teaching observed in each of the three stages. Learning objectives are shared consistently with all pupils who make a good effort with all their learning tasks. Children in the Foundation Stage listen well to develop their understanding. The pupils work well collaboratively to acquire further skills and knowledge in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

21. The time available for teaching is not always well managed though usage is satisfactory overall. Lessons often start late after morning and lunchtime breaks and valuable time is lost. There is not a sufficiently clear understanding of a whole school timetable to give a structure to the curriculum. Some planned activities in the foundation subjects are not given sufficient time to be studied in sufficient depth.

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

22. The school provides a good and rich range of curriculum for all the pupils. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage prepares children appropriately in the six areas of learning. The curriculum in Key Stage 1 and 2 affords a very good preparation for secondary school. Whilst there is a strong focus on English and mathematics, other areas of the curriculum, including music and the arts, have not been neglected, with the result that there is a broad and balanced range of worthwhile activities for all the pupils. Total weekly teaching time meets national recommendations for pupils of this age. Much more time is devoted to religious education than is found in most primary schools. As a result, less time than is usually found is spent on physical education, particularly in Years 5 and 6. The school is implementing the national strategies for literacy and numeracy well. Currently, about 56 pupils take advantage of opportunities for instrumental music tuition. There is specialist music teaching in all classes. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have specialist swimming instruction at

the local recreation centre. The school now meets statutory requirements for all subjects of the National Curriculum and this successfully meets one of the criticisms of the previous inspection report. The school meets its obligations to provide a daily act of collective worship. There is good equality of access and opportunity for all pupils to all aspects of the curriculum.

23. Long term planning of the curriculum is soundly based on guidelines in the national strategies for literacy and for numeracy and, for other subjects, on guidelines provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, adapted to meet the needs and resources of the school. In some subjects, such as science, the teachers make use of commercial schemes of work. The teachers plan in more detail for the work which the pupils will do each term and each week. However, there are variations in the quality of short term planning and there is often insufficient planning for the wide range of academic abilities that exist in all the classes. The teachers set worthwhile homework tasks, in order to extend and consolidate learning, though there is some lack of consistency across classes in this provision.

24. The range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school is excellent and is appreciated by the parents. There are no less than fifteen lunchtime and after-school clubs, including a choir, country dancing, games skills, summer games like rounders, rugby, netball, athletics, cricket, chess, computers, French, art and needlework. These have to be limited to pupils in Years 3 to 6 because of numbers. The pupils participate in inter-school rugby and chess leagues and play friendly matches in netball. Last term, the netball team came third in a local competition. The school also competes in athletics competitions. The teachers enrich learning through a wide range of school visits for every class to places such as the Black Country Museum, Cotswold Farm Park and Weston-super-Mare. They also make very good use of the knowledge and expertise of visitors to the school, including the school nurse, road safety officer, community police officer, fire service, theatre and music groups, grandparents and parishioners. Pupils in Year 5 can participate in a weekend computer/activity camp in Shropshire and there is a residential visit to South Wales for pupils in Year 6. Pupils who choose not to go on this visit have an activity week at school.

25. Very strong links with the community have a very positive impact on the pupils' learning. There are very close links with St Gregory's and Sacred Heart's parishes and members of the parish community regularly help in school. There are shared masses and liturgies. The school participates in various local cultural festivals for dance, country dancing and literature and makes very good use of the facilities provided by the town library and the art gallery and museum. Pupils' art work has been exhibited at the gallery as part of a Schools' Art Project. Learning in information and communication technology benefits from good links with a local company. Some Year 6 pupils were invited to produce items for a time capsule to be buried in a local company's new building close to the school. It is planned to use the new supermarket being constructed close to the school to enhance the pupils' learning in food technology. The Cheltenham Catholic Community Centre runs on-site breakfast, after-school and holiday clubs for the children of working parents.

26. There are very good links with the secondary schools to which most of the pupils transfer at eleven. Links with these benefit the pupils in many ways, including some specialist teaching of physical education (PE) and art and an enrichment programme one afternoon a week for five very able pupils in Year 5 provided by secondary school teachers. Work experience students from the various secondary schools, work with the pupils. There are opportunities for Year 6 pupils to visit the secondary schools prior to transfer and secondary school staff come and talk to the pupils here. There are very good links with the on-site private, parish-run nursery, whose children use the school's PE facilities and join in some assemblies. During the Spring and Summer terms, the children visit the school for one afternoon a week for lunch and story time and the Foundation Stage staff visit pre-school.

27. There is a clear policy for the pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) and for sex education and there is a teacher with responsibility for coordinating this. Planning is soundly based on a commercial scheme of work and provision is very good. There are opportunities in prayer/circle time and through the PSHE programme for the pupils to explore feelings and issues that matter to them. Here, too, they can develop confidence and self-esteem. In science and design and technology, the pupils learn of the importance of a balanced diet and healthy eating in contributing to a healthy lifestyle. The school nurse contributes to formal sex education for pupils in Year 6, both separately for boys and girls and in joint lessons. Pupils throughout the school learn about the need to use medicines carefully under adult supervision and they learn of the dangers of drugs misuse. The school makes effective use of the visiting Life Caravan to support this learning. In science and geography, the pupils learn how good citizens care for the environment and conserve and recycle resources.

28. Provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good, which is an improvement from the previous inspection. There is very good provision for the pupils' spiritual development. The school's clear Mission Statement emphasises the message of the Christian gospel as integral to daily life and it has been rewritten in language easily understood by the pupils. There is a strong, caring ethos to the school. New Stations of the Cross in the hall provide a clear focus for the pupils. The teachers celebrate achievement and effort in a special assembly. Pupils in Year 6 have the opportunity to participate in a retreat day away from the school. Here, they can reflect on their time in school and think about the next steps in their education. Acts of collective worship make a very good contribution to the pupils' spiritual development. They have time to reflect on St Gregory as 'the servant of the servants of God'. The lighting of a candle and lovely singing of hymns add to a spiritual atmosphere.

29. Provision for the pupils' moral development is very good. There is a clear behaviour policy and the teachers make the pupils well aware of the difference between right and wrong. Classroom rules are clearly displayed and the teachers reward positive behaviour and effort through an effective system of house points and 'student of the week'.

30. There is very good provision for the pupils' social development. Most parents feel that the school helps their children to mature and to become responsible. All the pupils help with classroom tasks and older pupils exercise further responsibilities, for example helping with younger pupils, in assemblies, in the library and with wet play arrangements. Some of the pupils have additional responsibilities as house captains. The pupils have the opportunity to develop social skills by participating in extra-curricular activities, school visits and residential camps, class assemblies and an annual musical production. The pupils think of people less fortunate than themselves by supporting a number of charities, including Winston's Wish, CAFOD and Kidney Research. They sing Christmas carols for residents of a local nursing home. Pupils in Year 6 can develop their road skills on a cycling proficiency course run by two of the teachers. The pupils learn to interact with two disabled adults who help with reading in school. There are good opportunities in many lessons for the pupils to work collaboratively whenever necessary.

31. Provision for the pupils' cultural development is very good. There are opportunities for the pupils to participate in poetry and dance workshops, an inter-schools' country dancing festival, the Cheltenham Festival of Literature, a World Book Day poetry competition, the local schools' music festival and the Gloucestershire Dance festival. The pupils visit the local library and the art gallery and museum. They are learning about the significance of next month's Golden Jubilee and Year 5 pupils have participated in a Jubilee poetry competition. The teachers ensure that the pupils are prepared for life in a world of diverse faiths and

cultures. They are taking advantage of the imminent World Cup to acquaint the pupils with aspects of life in Japan.

### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

32. This is an extremely caring school where the welfare and support for pupils is given a high priority. Parents clearly share this view.

33. Child protection arrangements are effective. The headteacher is the designated person with responsibility for these matters, and together with staff has received the necessary training. Cover arrangements are in place for when she is not in school. Policies have been kept updated and there are good links with the other agencies involved.

34. Appropriate steps have been taken to comply with the requirements of health and safety legislation and ensure that the school provides a safe environment for its pupils. There are regular safety inspections including external audits and remedial work is put in hand when hazards, such as flooring that was lifting, have been identified. Risk assessments on practical lessons and other activities have been completed.

35. The school uses a computerised system for recording and analysing attendance. Patterns of attendance are monitored regularly and unexplained absences quickly followed up.

36. Pupils' behaviour and personal development is effectively monitored and promoted through the school's positive behaviour policy and its links with parents. Teachers keep records of incidents and where necessary individual support plans are devised incorporating rewards and sanctions that have been negotiated and agreed with the pupils concerned. The formal systems are underpinned by a good, informal network for the exchange of information between staff that know the pupils well and are experienced in identifying those needing help.

37. Pupils receive good pastoral support. A well structured personal, social and health education programme covers such issues as personal safety, relationships, drugs and healthy living. Good use is made of visiting professionals including the police, school nurse and the local education authority's behaviour support service.

38. The school has developed good systems for the monitoring of pupils' academic progress in all subjects. These are particularly strong in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science where pupils undertake assessment tasks devised by the respective subject co-ordinators every half term, as well as taking a range of nationally recognised tests at various times in the year. Results are systematically recorded and used to identify those pupils needing additional help in certain areas for whom booster learning programmes have been formulated, effectively using the support of classroom assistants, to meet these needs. The school has also introduced ability setting in English and mathematics so that pupils can work at the pace best suited to their requirements. The effectiveness of this arrangement in helping pupils is being kept under review.

### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

39. The last inspection report noted that there were good relationships with parents and this remains the case. Parents express very positive views about the school which they feel is both approachable and has high expectations.

40. Communication with parents is good. There are regular newsletters both from the school and on occasions the governors and the school has developed and made use of its own



website to communicate with parents. The headteacher is usually available for informal discussions when parents bring or collect their children to and from school.. Programmed building works should provide a new entrance lobby and more welcoming environment for parents coming into school.

41. Parents are encouraged from the start of their children's school career to become involved with their learning both in school and at home and their contribution is good. There is an effective pre-school induction programme including home visits. Details of what pupils will be working on in each class are sent home at the beginning of the year. The annual reports on pupils' progress are detailed and informative, containing specific targets for improvement. The school also organises meetings on a variety of issues including how parents can help their children taking Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) although a recent initiative in conjunction with a local college to run sessions for parents on literacy and numeracy issues was not well supported.

42. Direct parental involvement in both the curriculum provision and lessons has helped extend the range of opportunities and resources available to pupils. Large numbers give quality help with activities such as reading, cooking, after school clubs and trips. Parental fundraising has helped pay for the acquisition of new computer equipment.

### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

43. The overall leadership and management of the school is good. The headteacher provides effective, purposeful leadership with a clear vision for the school. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher, staff, governors and parents and there is a shared commitment to further improvement.

44. A key issue in the previous inspection was to improve the procedure for monitoring and evaluating the overall school curriculum by involving the senior management team and subject co-ordinators more fully. Satisfactory progress has been made to achieving this key issue. Procedures have been developed and some useful classroom monitoring has taken place. The systems for monitoring now require a sharper focus based on clear priorities that have been identified and agreed by the staff. The system for planning and analysing pupils' work on a regular basis, although satisfactory overall, needs to be more consistently applied across all subjects. All school policies, except for music, are in place and reviewed regularly. The school has developed the use of data to measure its effectiveness and challenging individual targets are set for pupils in the school. All pupils are integrated satisfactorily although in some lessons the work set for higher and lower attaining pupils is not matched closely to their needs or ability.

45. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment. The co-ordinator plans well, using the information that comes into school when the child is admitted and supplemented by a range of diagnostic tests once in attendance. However, teachers' plans do not show generally any alternative tasks for those with special educational needs. Instead, planning shows additional support and a different expectation of the outcomes of the lesson for these pupils.

46. Pupils are well supported by the team of learning support staff who show a sensitivity and educational purposefulness in their work. Differing amounts of support are provided according to the levels of educational and behavioural need. Pupils are supported well within the Literacy Hour and numeracy lessons in particular and by withdrawal work where necessary in the afternoons. Pupils are positive about their role in lessons and the staff who support them. Due to teacher time constraints, assistants have too little time to plan their supportive role and work with teachers.

47. Individual education and behaviour plans for individual pupils are drawn up with an identification of short-term targets that mostly have clear success criteria. Parents are also involved in the reviewing of these targets and this reflects the good contact between them and the school. Assessment schedules for these plans are available as part of the working documents in each class but their use is not yet applied uniformly as could be expected for them to be entirely effective.

48. Statemented pupils are integrated appropriately and relationships between the pupils and their classmates and the pupils with adults are strong. They are happy to show their work and they participate in class, listening and speaking appropriately when it is their turn.

49. Leadership and management provided by the special educational needs co-ordinator are good. She is supported well by the headteacher, the Governing Body and by liaison with outside agencies. Management within the classroom is more variable, due to a lack, in part, of clarity amongst staff about the nature of special needs, since some children to whom the term is applied fall well within the average range of ability. Monitoring of the teaching of special needs remains in the earliest stages and insufficient analysis has been made to see how much time children are withdrawn and the impact this has on their learning in other subjects.

50. The school improvement plan contains a wealth of valuable and relevant information but does not provide clear enough priorities in order of their importance. It does not include enough information regarding start and finish time scales of proposed developments or who is monitoring and evaluating the action. The current plan also does not give enough guidance about how targets will be achieved. There is however, a set of aims and values included in the plan, which is reflected in the work of the school.

51. The governors are keen, interested and are very supportive of the school. Many governors spend much time in the school, working in class and supporting activities and their role as a "critical friend" of the school is being steadily developed. There are committees in place that meet regularly and receive reports from the headteacher and subject co-ordinators. Several governors have individual responsibilities for school matters as well as their corporate role, such as oversight of special needs and finance provision.

52. The school has an appropriate number of teaching staff whose qualifications and experience match the needs of the national curriculum. The previous inspection highlighted the requirement for further staff training in several subject areas and curriculum planning for the under fives. Good progress has been made to achieve this key issue. Professional development is now co-ordinated by a senior member of staff and a long-term programme of induction and staff training is now in place linked to performance management and school improvement. This is a good system that ensures that all staff benefit from the training that takes place. There is a staff handbook that provides useful information. Induction procedures for newly qualified staff are good.

53. The range and quality of learning resources are adequate. Resources have improved significantly in information and communication technology since the last inspection. Under fives outdoor play resources needs further development. The school has an excellent outdoor resource in its synthetic surface pitch.

54. The accommodation is very good. There is plenty of available space, which is well managed. There have been many improvements since the last inspection. These include refurbishment of the outside toilets and internal carpeting of some areas.

55. The budget is based on the needs identified in the school improvement plan. The governors finance committee monitors the expenditure on a regular basis. Care is taken to obtain best value on all purchases and the principles of best value are applied effectively such as organising school transport and catering. The smooth and effective day-to-day management of the school by efficient office staff supports the teachers well and is carried out with the minimum of disruption to teaching. The large financial carry forward has been used to supplement the reduced income for this financial year so that current staffing arrangements have been maintained. The school has managed its resources well so that the expenditure per pupil is above the national average but the school benefits from several donations. Taking into account the standards achieved and the overall quality of education, the school provides good value for money.

### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

In order to raise standards further the school should:

- **Ensure tasks are matched more consistently to the different abilities of pupils (paragraphs 19, 57, 74 and 94);**
- **Make more effective use of the time available for teaching by (paragraphs 21, 86, 113 and 124):**
  - \*ensuring lessons begin on time;
  - \*ensuring lessons are of the right length to cover the planned activity;
  - \*having an agreed timetable for all classes to ensure curriculum coverage.
- **Provide a more stimulating outdoor play area for the under fives (paragraphs 53 and 63).**

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

72

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

12

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	7	23	36	3	0	0
Percentage	4	10	32	50	4	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

YR – Y6

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

360

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

31

#### Special educational needs

YR – Y6

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs

5

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

45

#### English as an additional language

No of pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language

9

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of pupils

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

27

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

4

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.9

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	20	29	49

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	18	20
	Girls	29	29	29
	Total	49	47	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100(96)	96(94)	100(100)
	National	84(83)	86(84)	91(90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	20	20
	Girls	29	29	29
	Total	47	49	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96(94)	100(100)	100(100)
	National	85(84)	89(88)	89(88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	32	29	61

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	27	25	29
	Girls	25	24	27
	Total	52	49	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85(78)	80(60)	92(82)
	National	75(75)	71(72)	87(85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	25	25	26
	Girls	23	23	26
	Total	48	48	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79(76)	79(75)	85(91)
	National	72(70)	74(72)	82(79)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	1
Indian	1
Pakistani	-
Bangladeshi	-
Chinese	1
White	299
Any other minority ethnic group	8

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.9 : 1
Average class size	27.7

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	183

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	-	-
Black – African heritage	-	-
Black – other	-	-
Indian	-	-
Pakistani	-	-
Bangladeshi	-	-
Chinese	-	-
White	3	-
Other minority ethnic groups	-	-

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

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2001/2
	£
Total income	726,725.0
Total expenditure	718,639.0
Expenditure per pupil	1,892.0
Balance brought forward from previous year	50,000.0



## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	360
Number of questionnaires returned	168

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	33	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	58	39	2	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	52	41	5	1	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	46	7	4	0
The teaching is good.	64	33	2	0	15
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	55	32	10	0	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	26	1	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	32	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	57	35	5	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	60	34	4	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	63	33	3	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	42	43	7	1	7

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

56. There are two reception classes that plan similar activities but do not work closely enough together in the practical provision of the curriculum to meet the Early Learning Goals. Overall the quality of provision for the children in the Foundation Stage gives pupils a satisfactory basis for their education. This was the finding of the last inspection. Areas of concern from the last inspection, namely, the standard of curriculum planning and the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum have improved but there is still room for further improvement in the regular provision of activities for the children so that they can better meet the national Early Learning Goals. The medium term planning is very good and if used diligently would help to improve the quality of provision for the children. There is a lack of coherence and continuity of provision for the full achievement of the Early Learning Goals except in communication, language and literacy and mathematics.

57. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. This is confirmed by standardised assessments carried out during the early weeks following admission. Children continue to make sound progress and it is likely that most children will achieve the Early Learning Goals in all six areas by the time they move to Year 1. Teaching varies from unsatisfactory to good. When it was unsatisfactory the teaching was not matched closely enough to the abilities of the children and the method was inappropriate for this age group. Where lessons were good the children were fully occupied and work was well matched to pupils' abilities. Teachers are ably supported by support staff who show initiative and have a good manner with the children. Progress is satisfactory except for lower achievers where more specific support is required. The matching of work to children's abilities is inconsistent. Children with special needs are identified sensitively and appropriate support is given. The children have very positive attitudes and relationships are sound.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development.**

58. Children's development is good and good progress is made. The children in both classes mostly demonstrate good concentration when completing tasks such as list making and cutting out a mouse template to help them in another activity. They converse well with each other, offering support and help over choice of equipment; sometimes they wait patiently, for example, in sharing a spreading knife. Behaviour is generally good although one or two children in both classes are prone to shouting out. The children take pride in their work and the adults who teach them show appreciation of the efforts children make. Children in both classes have opportunity to explore and learn outside. Some physical equipment is provided such as tractors and scooters but the range could be beneficially widened. The school acknowledges that the current outdoor facilities require attention to provide a more stimulating environment.

#### **Communication, language and literacy.**

59. The teaching is satisfactory or better and consequently, most children make good progress in this area of learning to attain well. In story time they listen well, focusing their attention on the adult. They make sensible replies in response to questions although there is some interruption by other children. Instructions and explanations are mainly clear which help the children to understand what is required of them. Children in both classes speak with confidence. Although there are free-play sessions some afternoons, the children have limited opportunity to practise their newly learned vocabulary in structured child led play sessions

throughout the day. Many children have grasped initial sounds in reading and some are beginning to understand the idea of last and middle letter sounds. Higher achieving children are beginning to read limited text with confidence whilst lower achieving children can predict story endings. Middle achievers use letter sounds to build words and sequence stories. By the end of the year, higher achieving children are beginning to write simple sentences unaided, and to understand the use of capital letters and full stops. Most children show good pencil control.

### **Mathematical development.**

60. By the end of the reception year attainment is average and sound progress is made. The children can sort and match objects and they develop their ability to count through a satisfactory range of experiences provided. Some children can add two sets of objects together up to ten. Most can sort objects by size and have also been introduced to the idea of longer and shorter, for example, by making mice with tails of different lengths. They play with construction materials and develop the language associated with two and three-dimensional shapes.

61. Learning objectives are shared with children in lessons. Opportunities are not always taken to extend the learning of the more able pupils and there is, on these occasions, an insufficient focus on the needs of pupils with different abilities.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world.**

62. All children make sound progress in both classes and attainment is satisfactory. Most children are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals at the end of the year. The teaching in this area is sound. Children have learnt about the force of air by making simple hovercraft with a balloon and polystyrene bowl. The children can cut, join and build for a range of purposes. Information technology is beginning to be used to support the curriculum. For example, the children, with adult help, have produced a flyer for car washing. Children were observed handling the computer mouse well in operating a software program called "Magic Paint". Other children used the computer to design a playground.

### **Physical development.**

63. Children make satisfactory progress and attain soundly in this area of learning. In physical activities in the hall the children move in different ways and show good awareness of space, carefully avoiding bumping into each other. They enjoy dance and show well developed body control whilst pretending to be a wolf during a dance lesson. The teachers use their voices and body language to capture the children's interest and imagination, which ensures that the majority of children concentrate and make progress. The outside area gives little opportunity for children to develop their physical ability because it is not suitable for large outdoor apparatus. This requires further resourcing, as does the uninspiring environment in which the children play.

### **Creative development.**

64. Attainment in this area is average as children make sound progress. The children experience a range of techniques and use different media. They explore texture and colour through paint, such as bubble printing, sticking, when designing outside play area equipment, and collage. A role-play area is available for children to use but there is not enough opportunity for good quality imaginative play. Reception children enjoy singing but limited opportunity is offered for musical making experiences in lessons and less formal settings.

Current attainment levels do not indicate that they will achieve the Early Learning Goals in this part of their creative development.

## **ENGLISH**

65. Standards in English at both the age of seven and eleven are above average, which reflects the findings of the last inspection report. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress. The progress of the few pupils with English as an additional language is well monitored so they achieve appropriately.

66. The results in the 2001 Key Stage 1 National Tests were impressive. The percentage of pupils attaining the expected Level 2 was well above average for writing and in the top five per cent of schools nationally for reading, as all the pupils were successful. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was also above average in reading and average in writing.

67. Standards in the national reading and writing tests at the end of Key Stage 1 have remained above average, while following the national trend. When compared with schools in a similar context, standards in 2001 were above average in reading and average in writing.

68. In the Key Stage 2 tests, standards have exceeded the national average between 1999 and 2001. The percentages of pupils who attained the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5 were both above the national average in 2001. However, the percentages were both below average when compared with pupils in similar contexts.

69. In Key Stage 1 both boys and girls have exceeded the national average for their age group for the last three years. From 1999-2001 in Key Stage 2, girls have performed slightly better compared with their age group than boys, but in 2001 the boys performed relatively better compared with their age group than the girls.

70. Standards in reading are good throughout the school. Other annual standardised tests confirm the above average standards. Younger pupils use phonic clues to aid word recognition and almost all read with reasonable fluency, benefiting from regular practice. By the end of Year 6 most pupils are confident readers who can discuss their preferences. An able child, for instance, was able to compare different types of fantasy stories he had read. Other able Year 6 pupils could judge the effectiveness of current popular stories with perceptive insight, relating their judgements to a breadth of reading.

71. Pupils' writing has been given considerable emphasis to bring an improvement to standards, which are good overall. Many pupils in Year 2 can write a logical sequence of sentences, punctuated with full stops and including good description. Standards rise progressively and in Year 6 most pupils write with both an effective command of the basics of spelling and punctuation and use a wide vocabulary for description. An anthology of animal poems by Year 6 pupils shows a particularly effective mastery of similes.

72. Standards in spelling are good. There is a focus on teaching patterns and rules, with weekly spelling tests in each year group, which are matched to pupils' ability. Standards in handwriting are good. Pupils in Year 2 write with a legible style and regular form. By the end of Year 6, pupils are writing with individual style but standards of presentation remain good.

73. The quality of teaching is sound in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. There is no teaching that is less than satisfactory. The National Literacy Strategy has been introduced successfully and now the school is showing more flexibility in its implementation. All pupils have been given individual targets and teaching is directed consistently at the achievement of both those targets and clear objectives, which are outlined at the start of lessons for pupils'

benefit. The best teaching shows a lively approach, encouraging pupils to take an active part in lessons. This was particularly noticeable in a lesson where Year 5 pupils acted out an imaginary public meeting about a proposed new supermarket. They learnt the power of persuasive writing and talking and empathised with the supposed characters involved. The standard of marking of pupils' work is consistently good in English and teachers provide regular, constructive comments to pupils on how they can improve.

74. In the best taught lessons, good use is made of time limits for activities to give pupils a clear sense of purpose. When teaching is less effective, particularly in Key Stage 1, the pace of lessons is too slow which has a detrimental effect on the pupils' learning. There is often insufficient provision for the range of abilities in a class and tasks are not matched to pupils' abilities.

75. The pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. Standards of speaking and listening are both good. Pupils respond enthusiastically to questioning and listen politely to the views of others. They respond very well to any opportunities to show initiative.

76. The co-ordinators are providing good leadership. The school has a well-developed target-setting process and good systems for assessment. There is strong evidence of considerable thought and planning being given to the development of the writing process. The planning of pupils' writing contains clear aims and a paragraph structure and marking is related to clear criteria.

77. There has been clearly considerable emphasis on monitoring the standards of pupils' work and developing effective, consistent procedures, which are particularly evident in marking and assessment. Some monitoring of teaching has been undertaken but with insufficient rigour to guarantee that the consistently good standard in teaching is maintained overall.

78. The school has set itself suitably challenging targets for the future. Pupils have achieved well for a number of years and this should be maintained, as there is a shared commitment to improve and a clear capacity to succeed.

## **MATHEMATICS**

79. Standards in mathematics are average in Key Stage 1, but above average by the time the pupils leave the school. All pupils, including those with special needs and for whom English is an additional language, make good progress. The 2001 National Test results in mathematics show that by the end of Year 2 standards are in line with the national average, although these results also suggest a minority of the more able pupils are under achieving. The results are well below average when compared to similar schools. The boys' and girls' National Curriculum average points scores show a decline over time since 1997. The Headteacher has introduced changes to reverse this decline and the evidence suggests that standards are rising, particularly with regard to the more able cohort of pupils.

80. By the end of Key Stage 2 standards in the tests are in line with national averages, but slightly below average for similar schools. The number of pupils achieving the higher level was in line with the national average. The significant dip in standards in 2000 has been reversed. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. A setting system has been introduced, designed to ensure that pupils work at levels relevant to their age and ability. However, very little differentiation of task was seen in the tasks provided for the majority of the upper or lower groups during the inspection. Boys and girls attain equally.

81. Pupils' computational skills are well developed in Year 6 and they work confidently with numbers up to 1000. They have a good knowledge of place value, multiplying and dividing whole numbers and use the correct mathematical vocabulary. They can convert fractions to decimals, have developed an understanding of the associative law and can present and interpret data contained in graphs. A very good lesson was observed where pupils were converting imperial measures to metric using calculators. This lesson also made good links with the class's current history and geography topics. The acquisition and development of number skills is given a high priority throughout the school and pupils display strengths in this aspect of mathematics.

82. Year 2 pupils are developing an understanding of mathematics through a wide range of activities. They have an understanding of place value to 100, can add three digit numbers, tackle simple division with remainders, find quarters and halves of numbers and show some understanding of equivalent fractions. Less able Year 2 pupils were observed confidently counting in 5's and were able to sequence 5's and work out questions, such as  $12 \times 5$  and  $13 \times 5$ . Year 1 pupils are gaining an understanding of money, recognising coins and adding coins to make values of 10p, 20p and in some cases 50p. By the end of both key stages standards in shape, space and measurement are in line with those expected nationally. By the end of Year 2 pupils know about two dimensional shapes and curved lines, while by Year 6 pupils have a well developed understanding of shape properties and can position shapes using co-ordinates. There is some evidence of data handling. For example, a geography display in a Year 5 class, shows a graph recording the traffic flow in the area around the school. There was little evidence of the use of information and communication technology in mathematics lessons. Although in a Year 2 class, two pupils were using a computer to reinforce their knowledge of the five times table.

83. The mental mathematics session at the beginning of lessons is, on the whole, delivered with enthusiasm and well linked to the main teaching activity. In Year 2, a teacher made good use of a flip chart as pupils counted in steps of five, while in Year 6 the teacher linked the starter activity to pupils' geography topic. Pupils were asked to calculate the viewing time of a World Cup game in different parts of the world, staged at 4.30pm in Tokyo. Several teachers used individual pupil white boards effectively in their mental starter.

84. Pupils are making good progress and the grouping of pupils in upper and lower ability sets is having a positive effect. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily but a closer match of work to their needs would enable them to make better progress. Higher attaining pupils are clearly challenged by the tasks provided for them.

85. The response of pupils to their mathematics lessons is never less than satisfactory and in the majority of lessons it is good or very good. Pupils are well motivated and have good attitudes to their work. They co-operate well in paired work and when given an opportunity they are keen to explain their answers and outcomes of tasks.

86. The quality of teaching in both key stages is never less than satisfactory and in the majority of lessons it is good or very good. It is at its best in Key Stage 2. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject is good. Lesson planning is very detailed with learning objectives stressed and given good emphasis. In one or two lessons the pace slowed, with the teacher talking too long and then giving pupils insufficient time to be actively engaged in their own tasks and leaving too little time for the plenary session. In three lessons, which were very good, one in each of Years 2,3 and 6, the pace, challenge and expectations were high and pupils achieved well. In another Year 3 class the teacher used the blackboard very effectively to underline the main points of the lesson. There are mathematics displays in all classrooms and these serve to promote the subject and reinforce the concepts taught.

87. Pupils' work is marked regularly and constructive comments written to improve understanding. Although there was clear evidence that Year 6 pupils had had Standard Assessment Test (SATs) revision homework, evidence of homework being set consistently in mathematics, across both key stages, was limited.

88. The subject is well led. The co-ordination, monitoring, planning and assessment of the subject have improved since the last inspection. Teachers prepare a weekly numeracy plan. The co-ordinators have had time allocated to monitor planning and work and give advice to colleagues.

89. There is a clear subject policy that provides for equal opportunities. The National Numeracy Strategy is fully implemented. Commercial texts are used where appropriate. These help to ensure that all the relevant aspects of maths are covered from Years 1 to 6. Pupils are set targets and these are assessed every half term. Standardised tests are used to identify pupils for 'Booster' groups. A commercial analysis of these tests is used as a guide to help to predict Key Stage 2 outcomes. The Standards Grant has been used for study support to provide opportunities for extending pupils' numeracy skills through activities and games. Resources are satisfactory and readily available to staff and pupils. Additional information and communication technology software is needed in Key Stage 1.

## **SCIENCE**

90. By the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, standards are above average. This is an improvement from the previous inspection, when standards were average. This results from good teaching, with an emphasis on developing the pupils' skills of scientific enquiry, without too much direction from the teachers. It also results from the introduction of a new scheme of work to which the teachers are committed.

91. Teacher assessment of Year 2 pupils' attainment in 2001 was very high compared with schools nationally and with similar schools at the expected National Curriculum Level 2 or above. However, at the higher Level 3, attainment was below average. By the end of Year 2, boys and girls are attaining equally. In the 2001 national tests for eleven year olds, pupils' attainment was average compared with schools nationally at both the expected Level 4 and at the higher Level 5. However, compared with similar schools, standards were below average. In these tests, the boys did slightly less well than boys nationally, and over the past three years, girls have outperformed them. Currently, there is no evidence of a significant difference in attainment by gender. Over the past five years, there has been a steady rise in standards by the end of Year 6. Throughout the school, all the pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress. They have positive attitudes to work. They enjoy their lessons and are keen to undertake practical investigations. Most pupils in Years 3 to 6 take care to present their work neatly, but in years 1 and 2, there is room for improvement in the way in which many pupils set out their written work.

92. By the end of Year 2, the pupils can undertake practical investigations into the properties of different materials. They know that materials can be changed and they know that some changes, like the melting of ice, can be reversed. The pupils investigate pushes and pulls as forces. They use their mathematical skills well to measure the distance covered by toy cars after travelling down a ramp of different heights. However, they are not very sure about the need to make a scientific test fair. They also make good use of their mathematical skills in recording the width of pupils' hand spans by means of accurate bar charts. The pupils plant broad bean seeds in different materials. They make sensible predictions as to which seeds will grow best and measure growth a week later. They have a good understanding of the need for a balanced diet to help them keep healthy and of the dangers of excessive smoking and careless use of medicines.

93. By the end of Year 6, the pupils have a good understanding of how to make a scientific test fair and of making reasonable predictions as to the outcomes. They use these skills well in investigating numerous topics, such as evaporation and the changing size of shadows. The pupils are able to investigate different types of soil and they know how a plant's root system works. They have a good understanding of the ways in which animals are adapted to their environment and of their position in a food chain. They know that micro-organisms can be both harmful and beneficial. The pupils have a clear understanding of the structure of the human eye and ear and of the ways in which humans can see and hear. They use their mathematical skills well in using Newton meters accurately to record the force needed to pull various objects. They can use their information and communication technology (ICT) skills well to record their findings by means of accurate bar charts, though they are not given many opportunities at present to use these skills.

94. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good. The teachers give the pupils the opportunity to develop their skills of independent scientific enquiry and to develop their ability to find information for themselves. For example, pupils in Year 6 learn to use a study guide effectively, in order to retrieve information about forces. A particular strength of the teaching is the high quality of much of the marking of the pupils' work. Written comments, such as 'Always give a scientific reason for your prediction' and 'You need to add that the roots have to grow deeper for stability' are very useful in helping the pupils understand how they might improve. Although the teachers usually make sure that pupils who finish work quickly have other work to move on to, planning does not always take account of the varying needs of different groups of pupils in the class.

95. The teachers use questioning very well, in order to make the pupils think carefully. In a lesson for pupils in Year 5, the teacher asked, "Can you think of two ways in which the petals might attract bees?" and this helped the pupils to suggest ideas about colour and shape. The teacher said "Be precise in your use of scientific language" and this helped the pupils in developing their understanding of the male and female parts of a flower. He had prepared resources well, with a wide selection of flowers, which the pupils observed and dissected, in order to learn about petals, stigmas, anthers, stamens and ovaries. In an excellent Year 3 lesson, the teacher made the pupils think carefully by asking questions such "Why do your milk teeth fall out?" and this helped the pupils to learn about the functions of the different kinds of human teeth. This teacher, too, had prepared a good range of resources and she also made good use of ICT, as two pupils finished the lesson by researching teeth on a CD Rom. She made effective use of the pupils' own experiences at the dentist and this made learning more real for the pupils. She encouraged the pupils to make predictions about which liquid might cause the most decay.

96. In a lesson for pupils in Year 4, the teacher made effective use of the school grounds to enrich learning about organisms and their habitats, though it was unfortunate that she had no clip boards to help the pupils write, as other teachers had obtained them first! The teachers ensure that all the pupils are fully included in learning. This was evident in a Year 2 lesson, where the teacher tried to involve everyone in a discussion about pushes and pulls as forces which make objects move, and in a Year 3 lesson, where the teacher ensured that all the pupils took a fair share of work in investigating the effects of different liquids on egg shells (imitating teeth).

97. The co-ordinator manages the subject very well. Her subject specialism is science and she uses this expertise to teach the subject to both classes in Year 3. A clear policy meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Planning is soundly based on a commercial scheme of work, which has improved the confidence of the teachers in developing pupils' skills of scientific enquiry. The co-ordinator monitors teaching, in order to ensure that



planning meets practice and to share ideas. There are good procedures for assessing and recording the pupils' progress and information gained is being used well to plan the next steps in learning. This is an improvement from the previous inspection. The teachers have taken samples of pupils' work and have matched and agreed on their National Curriculum levels of attainment. This has helped the teachers in the accuracy and consistency of their assessments. The co-ordinator has developed a good action plan to improve standards further. This includes a greater use of ICT in teaching and introducing further assessment procedures. The co-ordinator has worked hard to increase the amount of resources for teaching and learning and these are now very good. As part of the Cheltenham Festival of Science, learning during the inspection was enriched by the visit of a science 'magician', which was a wonderful experience for all the pupils.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

98. By the end of Year 2, standards are average, which reflects the findings of the previous inspection. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average and this is an improvement from the previous inspection. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 are making sound progress in developing their artistic skills, whilst in Years 3 to 6 progress is good. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as other pupils and boys and girls attain equally. The pupils have positive attitudes to their work. They are keen to learn and to do their best.

99. By the end of Year 2, the pupils know how to mix primary colours to make secondary colours and they display these skills well in painting effective colour wheels. They are able to use pencils, pastels, chalk and felt pens soundly to produce sound pictures on themes such as keeping clean and healthy. They make effective collages of flowers in vases. They observe patterns in fruit and in the colouring of animals. The pupils know how to shape clay in making sound decorated clay pots. They know how to make rubbings of various materials in the school grounds, such as bark and concrete, though standards here are quite variable.

100. By the end of Year 6, the pupils can make good pencil sketches of scenes around the derelict St James Station site, using tone and shade well. They use various techniques, such as light or heavy brush strokes, sponging, wash and pointillism, to produce effective landscape scenes from around the world. Some of these are in the style of Van Gogh and they show a very good understanding of perspective. The pupils use pencils well to reproduce effective pictures of urban scenes in the style of L.S.Lowry. They are able to draw good quality observational sketches in pencil of scenes around the school and of still life objects in the classroom. They produce very effective collage work, complete with feathers, fabrics and beads, to illustrate aspects of their history work on the Aztecs. They explore different textures and materials in work linked to ancient Egypt. These include good papyrus pictures, where the pupils use oil pastels well to create deep colour and tone. The pupils use textiles very effectively to make models of plants and their root systems, in work linked to science. The pupils use pastels well to reproduce Gauguin's painting of two women, with bold colours and good composition. They discuss the relationships between the two women as depicted in Gauguin's painting. In work linked to mathematics, the pupils make effective painted clay tiles with a repeating pattern.

101. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. The teachers use art well to support learning in other subjects and they make effective use of visual stimuli to generate ideas. For example, in a lesson for pupils in Year 6, the teacher asked some pupils to model a variety of headwear, which she had brought in. This helped them to make very imaginative hats quickly out newspaper and to talk about the characters that might wear these in a dramatic performance. In a lesson for pupils in Year 2, the teacher clearly demonstrated how to use a variety of tools and this helped the pupils as they had their first experience of shaping

clay. They used the palms of their hands to flatten balls of clay into square shapes and then decorated them with designs, which they had already planned. The teachers maintain a sound balance between two and three-dimensional work. For example, in a lesson for pupils in Year 1, the teacher provided a very wide range of flowers and foliage from her garden. This helped the pupils as they drew sound observational pictures, using green foliage as a stimulus. The pupils then chose a variety of leaf shapes and twigs to create imaginative natural three-dimensional pictures. They place a particular emphasis on developing the pupils' drawing skills, such as tone and perspective, and on developing their ability to observe objects and features carefully, with attention to detail. The teachers ensure that the pupils acquire correct artistic terms, such as 'line', 'tone' and 'texture'.

102. The co-ordinator has made a sound start in managing the subject. There is a clear policy, which meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Planning is soundly based on guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. There are satisfactory procedures for assessing the pupils' progress and for making use of this information to plan the next steps in learning. The co-ordinator has monitored some teaching, in order to ensure that planning meets practice and to share successful ideas. The curriculum is enhanced by the input from secondary sixth formers, who act as 'artists in residence' and by visits to the local art gallery. Year 5 pupils have benefited from the expertise of a visiting professional artist. About 50 pupils attend regular after-school art and needlework clubs. Members of the art club are painting effective murals on the sheds in the school grounds. There are adequate resources to support teaching and learning.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

103. Although only three lessons were observed, two in Year 5 and one in Year 6, from these observations, the scrutiny of work displayed around the school and from the evidence in pupils' books, attainment at the end of both key stages is average and pupils are making satisfactory progress.

104. There has been an improvement since the last inspection, namely in relation to teachers' subject knowledge, planning, monitoring and the evaluation and assessment of pupils' work. There is evidence of some technological control work, but no evidence of computer generated design.

105. Year 1 pupils have been finding out about foods that keep us healthy and in the Autumn Term Year 2 pupils designed fabric finger puppets. Their designs in workbooks looked good and the finished products were well embellished with buttons and coloured threads. Year 3 have completed clay photo-frames, a sandwich topic and cooked and evaluated their biscuits. There was a good display in Year 4, where pupils had designed money containers. The work was of a good standard and pupils have thoroughly evaluated the topic by stating, what had gone well, what problems they had encountered and how they would improve their designs in the future. Year 5 pupils were given an opportunity to design a model, with a gear that moved, using a construction kit. In Year 6 pupils were observed investigating how different toys worked. Although these pupils completed their evaluation sheets showing some understanding of how the toys were designed and what made them move, the items available to them were limited.

106. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are mostly good and they show an interest in their work so that their learning develops appropriately. Once working however, they are not keen to stop and it takes time to get their attention and this hinders progress. Teaching was never less than satisfactory and was good in a Year 5 class where the teacher showed great enthusiasm, related the task to real life examples and had a good personal knowledge of the subject.

107. The co-ordinator has an infectious enthusiasm for the subject and helps colleagues with their planning. There is a new design and technology policy that takes account of 'inclusion' and 'equality of opportunity', a curriculum map indicating the work to be covered in each year group and details of the procedures for monitoring and recording of work completed. As yet there are no portfolios of examples of completed work for each year group to illustrate specific design and technology tasks.

108. There is a dual-purpose design and technology/information technology room and new resources have been purchased. These are accessible to staff and pupils. There is no specific non-teaching support for design and technology and tool boards for storing equipment indicate that some items of equipment have gone astray. The selection of source books is very limited. Key stage 1 pupils have a large shared area where they can complete practical tasks. They have a small cooker for food technology work, but this is poorly stored, adjacent to combustible material and there is limited access to staff and pupils. The overall quality of resources and accommodation is adequate.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

109. Four lessons were observed during the inspection, one in Key Stage 1 and three in Key Stage 2. However, from these and a scrutiny of geography work and discussions with pupils, it can be judged that standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are average.

110. All pupils are fully included in lessons and those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, although no differentiation of task in geography was observed. Boys and girls attain equally.

111. Pupils have a positive attitude to their work and behaviour in lessons is never less than satisfactory and often good. Pupils listen patiently to instructions, co-operate well when working in groups and are keen to share their findings with the rest of the class in plenary sessions.

112. By the age of seven pupils are gaining an understanding of their school in relation to its local environment and the changes that are taking place around the school with the development of the area. Additionally, by following the travels of Barnaby Bear they are developing an idea of the position of their school in relation to such areas as Scotland, Dublin, Italy, New York and Baffin Island. A very good display in a Year 1 class highlights Barnaby's travels and reinforces this concept.

113. Overall the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is satisfactory but there are good and very good features. Lessons are planned in detail, with learning objectives stressed at the start of each lesson. Most pupils are making appropriate progress, although progress is inhibited as some geography lessons have insufficient time to fully develop the aims as planned.

114. Eleven year olds have a grasp of a variety of concepts in physical and environmental geography. In their Autumn term river topic, work showed they had understood the formation of a river and its passage from source to estuary, the development of settlements, uses made of the river and associated appropriate language, such as, source, meander, estuary, erosion and tributary. Their most recent work, investigating the characteristics of a mountain environment, is enabling pupils to develop their research skills by using the Internet, CD ROMs, reference books and tourist information.

115. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils were designing and drawing maps and gaining an appreciation as to how human and physical features affect the construction of maps. The more able had grasped the difficult concept of 'contours'. By the end of the lesson most had produced maps showing key features and had used a key in order for these to be identified.

116. There is a clear subject policy that takes account of 'inclusion' and 'equality of opportunity' and a curriculum map to plan for the relevant aspects of geography to be covered from Reception to Year 6. For example, in the summer term, Year 2 is developing a topic on a seaside locality. Satisfactory procedures are in place to assess pupils' progress. In the summer term Year 5 are required to trace a route on a map from one locality to another.

117. The subject is led by a new and enthusiastic co-ordinator. The co-ordination and planning of the subject has improved since the last inspection. She has time allocated to monitor and advise colleagues on the suitability of geography activities. However, as yet, time has not been allocated for her to observe her colleagues teach or for them to observe her, although this is planned for in the new School Improvement Plan.

118. Resources have improved, but these are still not adequate to fully meet the needs of the subject. Some reference books are out of date and there is a need for more local maps and information and communication technology software. Geography resources in Key Stage 1 are not well organised.

119. Class geography displays are a prominent feature. They range from excellent to poor. In the Year 3 classes there are excellent topical colourful World Cup displays. Japan is shown in relation to the rest of the world, with the flags of the 32 competing countries and their location shown on a world map. Year 2 is developing a good display showing, 'where we go on holiday'. Year 4 and 5 history displays have good links with geography. The River Nile being prominent in the Egyptian display, whereas the Year 5 Aztec topic shows a fine map of the Caribbean. By contrast the display in a Year 6 class was less impressive.

120. The subject contributes positively to the pupils' personal development, by making them aware of environmental concerns and the cultures of other countries.

## **HISTORY**

121. Standards in history are satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. This is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection report. No teaching was observed in Key Stage 1, as it was not timetabled to take place in the half term of the inspection. The evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' past work, the school's planning and talking to pupils is that standards by the end of Year 2 are in line with schools nationally. Pupils have learnt that now and long ago are different and illustrate this knowledge through giving examples of clothes, homes and electrical items. They can arrange pictures in the correct time sequence and suggest sources of information such as textbooks. They know some books are stories and some are about 'real things'. Some pupils know that events in history have causes and can offer ideas, for example 'They wanted more land'.

122. By the end of Year 6 pupils have a good factual knowledge, for example, in their work about Britain since 1948, they knew about the date of the Queen's coronation and when Winston Churchill had died. They handle artefacts well and deduce uses and differences. This was particularly effective when they discussed a fur stole that provoked not just revulsion but also reflection about changing attitudes. Some pupils could offer good reasons for major changes and offer opinions about progress. None of them wished to live in former times but Victorian times appealed the most. Pupils have a good grasp of significant events, although not of chronology, and recognise similarities and differences between now and the

past. Pupils in year 5 were able to explain in their work on the Aztecs how the people created man-made islands with a piped water system and required a government to organise them.

123. Pupils' written work is nearly always well presented, with good cursive writing and illustrations. Some pupils have done some significant extended and interpretative writing about voyages of discovery. The work on Ancient Egypt has been enhanced through the use of the Internet. Classrooms provide a stimulating environment for history with good displays about the Aztecs, especially the 'talking textiles' one, the Egyptians and Britain since 1948. All pupils make visits to the library and to museums, of which the Black Country Museum is the most popular.

124. Pupils' responses to teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good overall but varies from satisfactory to excellent. Response is weakest where the organisation of the lesson is unclear, for example when pupils are not sure when it is their turn to move from one table of artefacts to another. In another lesson the teacher was too rushed because of the pressures of a late start after break and a very short time before the arrival of the peripatetic music teacher. In other lessons, where quiet was established, pauses taken when necessary and each stage of the lesson clearly stated, the responses were much better. At their best these responses were ebullient but focused, humorous and purposeful.

125. The teaching of history in Key Stage 2 is good overall. There is good planning and subject knowledge that could be extended further by greater provision of different tasks for pupils of different abilities. Where teaching is very good, even if planning is differentiated by outcome and support only, worksheets contain extension activities that appropriately demand the use of higher-order skills. These teachers use a good range of open and closed questions to promote recall of previous work and reflection on the current topics. Pupils are encouraged to think for themselves and relate history to their own experience. This planning and questioning is supported by good classroom control. Teachers ensure quiet before moving on, never talking over children and using praise readily for co-operative behaviour and appropriate answers. They do not dwell on misdemeanours, dealing with them quickly and seeking early opportunities for pupils to put it right by giving correct answers. They are unfailingly polite but brisk and purposeful. They use a variety of voice tone and smile in appreciation of pupils' commitment to learning. Where teaching is satisfactory there is a more casual approach to noise and undue movement in the classroom and a less clearly defined sense of purpose.

126. The requirements of the National Curriculum are met. The co-ordinator has come only recently into post but is well supported by the senior management team. There is a good plan across the school based on the Qualification and Curriculum Authority scheme of work and this provides a broader curriculum than the statutory requirements. This plan could now be refined into the shorter term to ensure greater consistency of teaching and the provision of different tasks for children of different abilities. Assessment is well planned with focused activities and the collection of four levels of attainment. Tracking of progress and the setting of pupil progress targets would be aided by assigning National Curriculum levels to all pupils' tasks. Monitoring of teaching in history is in its early stages but there has been a good audit of resources and teachers' responses to the subject. This information has determined the areas of activity within history, which form part of the school's improvement plan.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

127. Standards in information and communication technology are average overall by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, in line with those expected for pupils' ages across the school.

128. By the end of year 2, pupils are able to enter, save and retrieve text both for recording work and for writing stories. Using a paint programme they can draw simple pictures to illustrate these. Pupils have begun to use databases, entering fields of information based around their choice of Pokemon cards. Work has also begun on control technology: pupils can programme a floor turtle in order to determine its route and they can link this with both counting skills and learning about directions in geography. CD ROMs are also in use for research in geography where work on contrasting climates had worked in pupil interest in the forthcoming World Cup. Most children use computers at home and know various uses for the family, for example, e-mail, writing letters and looking after money. Most of all they identify computers in the home with playing games.

129. Standards attained by the majority of pupils at the end of year 6 are in line with national expectations with a few pupils achieving the higher than average Level 5. Pupils with special educational needs achieve appropriately in relation to their prior attainment.

130. By the end of Year 6, some pupils have learned how to retrieve stored text, graphics and photographs to select, merge, amend and print. They talk about the advantages of computers for communication, finding information, the control of machines and for speeding things up. Three quarters have access to computers at home, they and their families using them for homework, games, accounts, accessing the Internet and making Christmas cards.

131. In Year 4 pupils are confident in programming a screen turtle. Having first discussed the task in class they were then able to work in the suite, inputting and correcting commands in order to make the turtle move in specified patterns of squares and flights of stairs. Later in the week, after working manually on graph paper, this activity was developed successfully so that all pupils could command the turtle to draw the initials of their first names. Pupils in year 5 know about the use of sensors in heating, lighting and sound systems. They are able to use the computer to graph the changes in temperature caused by putting the sensor probe in different water temperatures and to suggest how this ability of sensors to register change might be used elsewhere, for example in a domestic boiler.

132. Pupils respond with enthusiasm to the subject, working with a good amount of effort and concentration. Occasionally groups are too noisy but part of this could be attributed to the excitement caused by the re-opening of the computer suite in the week of the inspection. Pupils know what they can do and when to ask for help. They are respectful of each other and the equipment. They are courteous and forthcoming with visitors and patient with one another. Relationships are good, whether working in single sex pairs or, more frequently, in mixed gender pairs. Pupils enjoy this subject: both boys and girls are motivated and confident and those with additional needs are catered for satisfactorily.

133. The overall quality of teaching is good. There is a good overall plan based on the QCA guidelines and teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and set clear objectives for the lessons. Lessons could be improved by providing different activities for those with different abilities rather than by relying on different outcomes or different levels of support for children's learning. Teachers question pupils carefully to involve them and to check their knowledge. They have high expectations and they manage pupils' behaviour generally in a quietly authoritative way. The most successful behaviour management seen conveyed that it was the behaviour that was disapproved of and not the child concerned. These teachers use pace and pause, together with humour, to engage the pupils and bring the best out of them.

134. There are the beginnings of the development of a portfolio of examples of pupils' moderated work to help assessment processes. There is also a good plan of targeted assessment with a prescribed assessment task and the collection of four levels of attainment in response to the task. There is not a comprehensive record of national

curriculum levels of attainment and this prevents easy tracking of pupils' progress. When data is collected in this way it will also enable percentage targets to be set for the subject.

135. Information and communication technology is neither used well as a means of presentation for other subjects nor regularly in a cross-curricular way. However, the school has identified in its development plans the necessary resources to effectively promote these aspects. Together with systematic implementation of the schemes of work, ICT could be better used as a tool for learning across the curriculum. The planned expenditure and training of staff should enhance the very good facilities of the existing computer suite.

136. The subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. It is well managed by the co-ordinator who is enthusiastic and has expertise. He and two other members of staff are qualified to train others. The co-ordinator has audited the subject's future requirements well and priced improvements to equipment required using best value principles.

## **MUSIC**

137. In the last inspection standards at the end of Key Stage 1 met the national expectations and were sometimes well above average but at the end of Key Stage 2 attainment was mainly average. Currently standards in Year 2 are average and above average in Year 6 which reflects an improvement. Pupils enjoy their music making activities. Tuition provided by visiting specialist teachers is extensive and enhances the provision for older pupils. This enables the more able pupils to achieve well. Pupils aged 7 to 11 who play musical instruments attain good standard in their ability to read and play music.

138. Younger pupils sing with enjoyment and show a sound control of rhythm and dynamics. They can clap and sing in time to music. Older pupils sing in rounds and accompany these with a variety of instruments such as keyboard, recorder, tambourine and violin. Most pupils by Year 6 can read simple music and play a recorder to accompany simple tunes. Their involvement in the church, variety shows and choir gives them experience of range of music. They also have the opportunity to listen to professional players who visit the school. Older pupils listen attentively to performances by other pupils. One class prior to the start of a lesson listened to a violin performance by a class member. During the course of the inspection pupils were not observed composing or reviewing music.

139. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. It is particularly good in Year 6 due to the teacher's high expectations, the pace of the lesson and accurate matching of tasks to pupils' abilities. Music is taught by a specialist teacher, whose enthusiasm, knowledge and understanding of the subject has raised standards. She used musical terminology effectively to foster in the pupils a deeper understanding of the subject.

140. Hymn singing is good and is taken by two class teachers who run the school choir. All lessons have a clear structure even where the document planning is weak. Most lessons are carried out at a good pace which motivates pupils to think and to concentrate well on what they were doing.

141. Pupils respond very well to music and in particular singing which is of good quality. During a lesson based around the song, "Turn, Turn, Turn" based on the Book of Ecclesiastes, the pupils behaved well and showed a great deal of respect for their teacher. They concentrate on their task and work well with each other.

142. There is no music policy currently. The school uses a commercial scheme to structure its music programme. Resources are just adequate but multi-cultural musical resources are inadequate.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

143. By the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, standards are average, which reflects the findings of the previous inspection. It was not possible to observe any lessons in gymnastics or dance during the inspection. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making satisfactory progress. Most of the pupils enjoy their lessons and participate with enthusiasm. They dress appropriately for physical education (PE). They work well with a partner or in groups. There is a small minority that is less attentive and can be silly. These pupils have weak listening skills and do not respond quickly to instructions.

144. By the end of Year 2, most of the pupils have satisfactory ball control skills. They can throw and catch a small ball with varying degrees of accuracy. Higher attainers can bounce a ball and bat it with reasonable accuracy to a partner.

145. By the end of Year 6, the pupils are developing sound skills in athletics and there are a few pupils who achieve high standards. They can throw balls of various sizes, beanbags and quoits reasonable distances, with underarm and overarm throws. The boys easily outperform the girls in this. The pupils are developing sound skills in relay races, though many find it difficult to pass the baton accurately. In this aspect of athletics, the girls generally outperform the boys. The girls can also use a skipping rope very well in running along the 75 metre track. With a few noticeable exceptions, the boys are much less proficient at this. Standards in swimming are good. By the end of Year 6, almost all the pupils can swim at least 25 metres unaided, with good technique, and many can swim much longer distances than this.

146. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. All the pupils are fully involved in learning. The teachers dress appropriately for PE lessons and they manage pupils' changing sessions well. Good class control ensures that the pupils remain focussed on their tasks. The teachers ensure that the pupils are properly warmed up for physical activity. In an athletics lesson for pupils in Year 6, the teacher made effective use of a 'circle' team game, which helped the pupils to learn how to pass a relay baton quickly and accurately. In another Year 6 lesson, the teacher gave some sound teaching of specific athletics skills. She demonstrated how to transfer body weight from the back foot to the front foot, when throwing a ball, and this helped the pupils to put their full weight behind their throws.

147. In a lesson for pupils in Year 3, the teacher used questioning well, in order to reinforce previous learning of striking and fielding skills. She monitored progress carefully, intervening appropriately, and this helped the pupils to improve both their concentration and their performance. She made the tasks progressively harder and allowed the pupils to use their own initiative to accomplish this. This helped the pupils to improve their bowling skills. Nevertheless, there was still a lot of poor catching and inaccurate throwing. In a Year 4 lesson, the teacher gave the pupils the opportunity to practise their passing skills in small team games. The teachers make satisfactory use of demonstrations of work, both by themselves and by selected pupils, so that others can learn from sound practice. In a lesson for pupils in Year 2/3, the pupils had the opportunity to evaluate their partner's ball skills and to suggest improvements in technique. At times, however, it is difficult for all the pupils to see a whole class demonstration. In some lessons, tasks are not always well matched to the pupils' abilities, with the result that activities are too hard for some pupils, whilst they sometimes are insufficiently challenging for higher attainers. As a result, the pace of learning is slow. In a swimming lesson for pupils in Year 5, the teacher displayed immense patience as he worked one to one with a non-swimmer, whilst the other pupils worked with swimming instructors to improve their technique in different styles and to gain a variety of swimming awards. As a result, this pupil gained confidence in the water.



148. The co-ordinator has made a sound start in managing the subject. There is a clear policy, which meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Planning is firmly based on guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. The co-ordinator is piloting a commercial scheme of work in gymnastics. There are satisfactory procedures for assessing the pupils' progress. The curriculum is enriched by a good number of excellent after-school sports clubs. In one of these observed during the inspection, about 15 girls were attaining a very high standard of country dancing. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 can participate in outdoor and adventurous activities, such as canoeing, sailing and abseiling, during residential visits to Shropshire and South Wales. Accommodation for physical education is excellent. For a primary school, it is outstanding. Since last September, the pupils have benefited from a superb, brand new all-weather sports ground, with facilities for a number of sports, including football, rugby, five-a-side football, athletics and netball. There are two halls for dance and gymnastics and a very good range of apparatus and equipment.