

INSPECTION REPORT

**PELTON ROSEBERRY PRIMARY SCHOOL AND
NURSERY UNIT**

Pelton, Chester-le-Street

LEA area: Durham

Unique reference number: 114208

Associate Headteacher: Mrs L E Lyons

Reporting inspector: A C Davies
3639

Dates of inspection: 26-29th November 2001

Inspection number: 195319

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Nursery, Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Pelton
Chester-le-Street
Co. Durham

Postcode: DH2 1NP

Telephone number: 0191 370 0182

Fax number: 0191 370 2996

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Cllr. J Knox

Date of previous inspection: June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
3639	A C Davies	Registered inspector	Mathematics Physical Education	How high are standards? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
19431	J Holmes	Lay inspector		How high are standards? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
27777	R Greenall	Team inspector	English Art and Design Design and Technology Equal Opportunities	How well does the school care for its pupils?
8245	L Furness	Team inspector	Science	How good are the curricular opportunities offered to pupils?
23392	A Ellison		Religious education Special educational needs	
27677	D Davenport		Foundation Stage of Learning History Geography Music	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is bigger than most other primary schools, with 275 pupils attending full-time and a further 46 attending the nursery on a part-time basis. It is situated in an area that experiences high levels of unemployment and this is reflected in the above average percentage (29 per cent) of pupils entitled to school meals free of charge. Almost all pupils are white and from the local area. No one has English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils on the special educational needs register is average although the number with statements is high. When children start in the nursery or reception classes many display personal and academic skills that are below those expected for their age. Their communication skills are particularly poor. At the time of the inspection the headteacher has been away from school for more than six months and an associate headteacher, from another school, is leading the school on a part-time basis.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school where the strengths just outweigh the weaknesses. Important action has been taken recently to raise standards and to put in place measures to provide staff with clear direction in order to do this. The quality of teaching is good for pupils aged 3 to 7. However, despite examples of very good and good teaching being evident, the teaching for pupils aged 7 to 11 is unsatisfactory. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The new associate headteacher has helped the staff to focus on the need to raise standards and has introduced many effective systems to enable this to happen.
- The attitudes and behaviour of the pupils are positive and help them to move on their learning.
- Staff work hard to raise the confidence and self-esteem of individual pupils.
- Pupils aged 5 to 7 make good progress because of very good and good teaching that takes account of their differing abilities.
- Teachers' marking in literacy and numeracy and the use of individual targets are helping to make pupils aware of what they need to do next in order to improve their work.

What could be improved

- The lack of challenge presented to many pupils in the mental and oral mathematics sessions is holding back standards.
- The standard of spelling, handwriting and the presentation of written work is unsatisfactory.
- The standards in information and communication technology are unsatisfactory and ICT is not used effectively to support work in other subjects.
- In some lessons the insufficient subject knowledge of teachers working with pupils aged 7 to 11 is hindering their progress in English, mathematics, science and ICT.
- Literacy and numeracy skills acquired by the pupils are not being used effectively to make the impact they should in other subjects.

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 and it has made satisfactory progress since that time. However, up until 2001 the school's standards had not improved and, in many instances, had declined.

Recent changes have brought about improvements to teaching and learning for younger pupils resulting in improved standards. This has not yet had the same impact on the teaching and learning for older pupils. The main issues identified at the time of the previous inspection have been appropriately dealt with. However, some still require further attention.

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	E	E*	D	C
mathematics	E	E	E	D
science	E	E	D	C

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

Standards attained by 7 and 11-year-olds have been consistently low up until 2001. In 2000 the standards for English were in the bottom 5 per cent nationally. Since then there has been considerable improvement. In 2001, the standards attained by 7-year-olds match the national average in reading and are above the national average in writing and mathematics. When compared to schools taking in pupils from a similar background the standards are well above average for this age group in reading, writing and mathematics. The current Year 2 pupils are maintaining this good position with very many attaining beyond the levels expected for their age.

The standards attained by 11-year-olds in the 2001 national tests also show improvement for English and science when compared with previous years. In English and science, the overall standards are still below the national average, but they match the level expected when taking account of similar schools. However, in mathematics standards are well below the national average and below the level expected when compared to similar schools. The present Year 6 is attaining at the levels of the 2001 cohort and is therefore maintaining the improvement that has been made. The main reason for mathematics results remaining disappointing is that pupils' mental and oral work is weak. Standards in information and communication technology are unsatisfactory, although this is an improving area.

When children first start in the nursery or reception, many demonstrate personal and academic skills that are below those expected for their age. Their communication skills are particularly poor. During their time in the foundation stage of learning good progress is made and pupils improve their communication and mathematics in particular. Approximately 70 per cent of children reach the learning goals in each of the six areas of learning by the time they finish in the reception class. This represents good achievement. In Years 1 and 2 the good progress continues especially in mathematics, with many pupils attaining the higher levels in national test for 7-year-olds. Pupils learn to read proficiently and begin to write for a range of purposes. The vast majority of pupils are therefore achieving to their full potential during this time. This good momentum is not maintained for pupils aged 7 to 11. In mathematics, only just over half of the pupils attain the level expected in the national tests for 11-year-olds. Lower attaining pupils, who do not qualify for additional learning support, and the more able pupils, under-achieve in mathematics. The underachievement is not as marked for this age group in English and science although it still exists in pockets, especially amongst lower attaining

groups. Pupils' standards in handwriting and spelling are unsatisfactory and aspects of investigative work in science are not fully developed. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress with good support provided for them.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. In most lessons pupils show a great deal of enthusiasm and are prepared to offer suggestions to questions even when they are unsure of the answer.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are polite, well-mannered and courteous. They are a joy to be with and conduct themselves sensibly in lessons, on the playground and in the dining hall.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils take on a full range of responsibilities and act maturely when doing so. They co-operate well and older pupils benefit from having a 'response partner' for their written tasks. This works well in enabling pupils to discuss their work.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Attendance levels are below the national average due, in the main, to parents taking their children away on holidays during term time. Too many pupils are frequently late and this disrupts learning for all during the crucial first lesson of the day.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Unsatisfactory

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 teaching of pupils aged 3 to 7 is having a good impact on their learning. This is resulting in many pupils attaining well in the national tests for 7-year-olds. In Year 2, in particular, the teacher is very good at helping more able pupils fulfil their true potential. For pupils aged 7 to 11 there are also many examples of very good and good teaching. However, too often the lack of appropriate subject knowledge by the teacher results in work not being challenging enough for the more able and the pupils who are just outside the special educational needs register. There is evidence of this in English, mathematics, science, ICT and physical education. Consequently, standards have not improved at the same rate as they have for younger pupils.

All teachers plan thoroughly and are well prepared. In nursery and reception there is good use made of assessments to help plan the next learning opportunities. Throughout the school, the good quality of teachers' marking in literacy and numeracy and the targets that are set are helping to improve the pace of learning. The setting arrangements for older pupils (Years 3 to 6) in English and mathematics are partially successful in focusing attention on individual needs of pupils. However, too frequently the teacher working with the lower set does not have the necessary subject knowledge to help pupils who have difficulties. This results in teaching being unsatisfactory for English and mathematics for older pupils (Years 3 to 6). Very effective attention to the basic skills of literacy and numeracy with Years 1

and 2, results in teaching being good in English and mathematics for that age group. For all age groups, pupils with special educational needs are well supported when working directly with the learning support teacher. This quality of support is not always maintained in the classrooms when the support is not available. The use of individual personal organisers is helping pupils with their homework and enables parents to be directly involved in their learning. Pupils' enthusiasm and interest levels are high and help them to become more effective learners.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Although a satisfactory curriculum is provided, the impact of literacy, numeracy and ICT in other subjects is not yet sufficiently effective.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The extra help provided for these pupils is good. The learning support teacher, in particular, is effective as are the systems in place to provide further additional support, where appropriate. Occasionally, these pupils do not make as much progress when working independently in the classroom.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Pupils are helped to think about their behaviour and their contribution to the school as a whole. They are involved in giving their views through the school council and the effective 'Playground Friends' system helps to create harmonious playtimes. The pupils' awareness of living in a multi-cultural society is not as strong.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares effectively for its pupils. It has good systems for checking on the progress they make. However, issues surrounding unsatisfactory attendance have not yet been resolved.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The associate headteacher gives strong leadership and has managed to get the school to focus on improving standards. She has developed a secure management structure to help team leaders to work with staff to identify priorities which will help to improve the quality of teaching and learning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities. However, the majority of governors are only just becoming aware of the school's difficulties in relation to low standards.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school now uses national test results appropriately to help inform subject leaders about what needs to be done to improve standards. Checking and improving the quality of teaching is at an early stage.
The strategic use of resources	The example of using money to buy additional staff in order to raise standards demonstrates how the school has recently become more aware of the link between spending decisions and the school's

	performance.
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The school is generously staffed with very few teaching groups having more than 25 pupils. The accommodation is spacious and being used effectively to create appropriate teaching groups. There is a well-resourced computer suite but the library lacks the quantity and quality of books expected for a school of this size.

PARENTS’ AND CARERS’ VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The behaviour and attitudes of their children. • The adherence to a school uniform policy. • Children enjoy coming to school. • Their children work hard and make good progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved communication, especially in relation to changes that are introduced. • The amount of extra-curricular activities provided. • Standards being improved • To feel more encouraged to play a part in the life of the school.

The vast majority of parents are very happy with the school. However, a small number are frustrated at the lack of information available about the position of the substantive headteacher. Unfortunately the governors are not able to provide more information as the position remains unresolved. The associate headteacher communicated as much as she could to parents but a fuller explanation of what was happening was not possible due to the confidential nature of the circumstances of the headteacher’s absence. The inspection team agrees with most of the positive comments made by the parents although some pupils are not making the progress they could. Standards have improved although this is more evident amongst the younger pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 Standards have been low for some years but there has been a great deal of improvement in the past two years. This is particularly the case when taking account of the national test results for 7-year-olds and the national test results in English and science for 11-year-olds. Concerns remain about the standards attained by older pupils in mathematics, spelling and handwriting.
- 2 When children start school in the nursery or reception class their academic and personal skill levels vary greatly but are generally below those expected for children of their age. Their communication skills are particularly poor with many pupils not being able to express themselves clearly or use a wide range of vocabulary when doing so. The initial assessments undertaken with children when they first start in the reception class confirm that their language, literacy and mathematics skills are not as advanced as would be expected for their age. During the time they spend in the nursery and reception classes the good range of experiences provided for the children help to improve their basic academic skills and the majority of children are able to meet the goals anticipated in each of the six areas of learning by the time they finish the reception class. This results in most of the children being able to start the National Curriculum years (Year 1) demonstrating skills in language, literacy and mathematics that match those expected for 5-year-olds. Children in the nursery and reception therefore achieve well and make good progress. This is particularly the case for those who have special educational needs because their problems are identified early and appropriate support is provided for them.
- 3 As pupils move through the school they continue to make good progress and achieve well in Years 1 and 2. There has been much improvement in the progress made by pupils in this age group over the past two years. Good attention to help pupils read and write and to develop their mathematical ideas through solving problems has enabled pupils achieve well. The support provided to help pupils increase the range of their vocabulary and to express themselves more thoroughly has aided the process of improvement in writing. Pupils are mostly attentive listeners and are beginning to develop discussion skills, although many pupils find this difficult. The National Literacy Strategy is used to good effect to help younger pupils focus on developing skills in reading and writing. The vast majority of Year 2 pupils read with confidence and enjoyment and have good understanding about the format of non-fiction books. They also use a range of strategies to help them read unknown words. They are also prepared to experiment with new words when writing and are able to use words that they have come across in their reading in their written passages. This good progress in reading and writing is reflected in improved 2001 test results for 7-year-olds. The test results for 7-year-olds in writing for 2001 are above the national average, which is a significant improvement compared with previous years. In reading, a similar level of improvement is noted with results now matching the national average compared to being well below in the previous years. The present Year 2 group is maintaining the good position with many working at levels that are above those expected or their age. In mathematics, the picture is similar with improved test results in 2001 being maintained by the present Year 2 group. Pupils have a good grasp of number patterns and quick to work out which two numbers can be added together to make a given larger number. A large percentage of pupils attained the higher level in mathematics in the national tests because more able pupils between the ages of 5 and 7 are making good

progress. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress at this stage and most are achieving appropriately.

- 4 Older pupils aged 7 to 11 do not maintain the good progress made by pupils aged 5 to 7. This is particularly the case for mathematics, spelling and handwriting. There has, however, been improvement in the past two years in English and science. Serious concerns remain for mathematics because pupils' mental and oral responses are too slow and this is holding back the progress they are able to make. Pupils' written work shows good evidence of them being prepared to use a more extensive vocabulary and explore new ideas but the overall impact is let down by the standard of handwriting and spelling. The progress now evident in day-to-day lessons is good with many new innovations, such as the use of 'response partners', having a good impact on the standard of written work. However, many of the initiatives are new and need time to 'bed down' to enable them to have greater long-term benefit to standards. Setting arrangements for mathematics, for example, have only been partially successful in helping to raise standards.
- 5 The national test results for 11-year-olds show improvement in 2001 and the present Year 6 is maintaining this. In the years before 2001 the school's test results were well below the national average, sometimes being in the lowest 5 per cent nationally. When compared with schools who have pupils from similar social backgrounds, the results did not compare favourably until 2001. There has been improvement in English, mainly due to the focus that the National Literacy Strategy has provided for teachers. The improvement does not match that for younger pupils but it is heartening none-the-less. In mathematics, there has not been the same improvement made. Standards still remain low with too few pupils attaining the level expected for their age and not enough moving on beyond the level expected. There is more insecurity amongst teachers when it comes to teaching mathematics, resulting in the pace of learning sometimes being too slow. In science, there is evidence of improvement very much in line with English results.
- 6 The school's failure to ensure that pupils are using their literacy and numeracy skills as fully as they should in other subjects has resulted in standards being held back in many foundation subjects, especially geography and history. There are lost opportunities for pupils to advance their literacy and numeracy skills with too much of the work being based on worksheets, which require minimal amounts of writing. Similarly, there are lost opportunities for pupils to record their findings through graphs, tables and matrices.
- 7 Standards in information and communication technology are unsatisfactory. This is despite the increased attention given to the subject in the last year or so. Improvements in resourcing the subject have helped to raise achievement but there is much lost time to make up before standards improve sufficiently. There are too many lost opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology to develop on-going work. This results in ICT work being quite low key and lacking the necessary depth required to enable pupils to use their skills in other subjects.
- 8 Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress on the whole. When they are withdrawn for specialist support, they achieve to their full potential. However, this level of work is not always maintained when they work within classrooms. More able pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress but this is not the case for more able pupils in Years 3 to 6, especially in mathematics. Older, lower ability pupils who are just outside the special educational needs register, make unsatisfactory progress in mathematics. This is due to their

mental and oral number being poor and therefore lacking confidence to cope with mathematical problem solving tasks.

- 9 In the past few years girls have tended to attain better than boys but this trend was partly reversed in 2001. There is no clear reason as to why differences have occurred in the past or the present time as the school is giving equal opportunity for pupils of both genders without giving undue preference to one or the other.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 10 There has been a very good level of improvement in the pupils' behaviour and attitudes to school in the recent past. This is an area that many parents commented positively about during the pre-inspection meeting and in the questionnaire responses. Overall, the pupils' attitudes to work were good at the time of the previous inspection and this has been maintained and improved upon. However, parents indicated that behaviour had deteriorated after the previous inspection but started picking up again in the recent past.
- 11 Pupils have a very good attitude to learning and enjoy school. Pupils work very co-operatively and respond well to questions. They listen to teachers and show interest when others are speaking. Questions are answered sensibly and most pupils contribute confidently to discussions. They are generally not afraid to attempt an answer even when unsure. Whilst the pupils enter school with speaking skills that are below average, as they progress through the school they become more articulate and are confident when communicating with adults. The very good relationships that exist between pupils and staff contribute to pupils' positive attitudes.
- 12 Behaviour is good both in class and around school even when pupils are not directly supervised. The behaviour at lunchtime is good with pupils lining up quietly and orderly. Pupils display a good level of self-discipline even when the lessons are not challenging. There was no oppressive behaviour observed in the school during the inspection. During discussions with pupils, they remarked that there was some bullying in school but incidents were quickly dealt with.
- 13 Pupils' personal development is good. A group of pupils forms the School Council with individuals being elected by their peers. A number volunteer to help in the nursery and in the school office at lunchtime. Older pupils act as 'Playground Friends' to look after younger pupils if they are upset or do not have friends to play with. Pupils also act as monitors in and around the school. The pupils on the School Council have clear views about what they want to achieve. During discussions they pointed out that they want to make the school a better place for all pupils and would like more sports equipment available, such as netball, basketball and football posts plus games for use during wet playtimes.
- 14 There are very good levels of trust and respect between staff and pupils and relationships are very good. Pupils are confident and interested in learning, work well together, share resources and listen to others' points of view. Pupils effectively support each other. In one class there was spontaneous applause at a pupil's achievement and in another pupils were concerned when one of the members of the class was upset. Some responsibility is given to pupils for their own learning mainly through homework assignments. The writing response partner which exists in the upper part of the school, is helping pupils widen the knowledge of not just their own but others' work as well.

- 15 Attendance is below the national average and is unsatisfactory. There has been no analysis of the reasons for the higher than average absence carried out. The school would benefit if a full analysis were systematically undertaken. There were no exclusions in the past year. The level of unauthorised absence is below national average with parents consistently notifying school of absence. Registers are taken promptly and the school is aware that punctuality is not satisfactory with a number of pupils being late on a regular basis mainly, but not exclusively, due to them travelling to school by bus.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

- 16 The teaching and learning varies from being good overall in the foundation stage of learning and for pupils aged 5 to 7, to being unsatisfactory for pupils aged 7 to 11. However, the teaching for older pupils is not consistently unsatisfactory with many lessons being very well taught. The teaching is at its best in Year 2 where a very effective teacher is able to work at a very challenging level with pupils and make demands upon them that they respond very positively to. A lack of teacher confidence and security in a range of subjects makes teaching unsatisfactory for older pupils. The subjects involved are English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology and physical education. A number of teachers are strong in teaching some subjects but unsatisfactory in others. When compared to the previous inspection, there is less unsatisfactory teaching now evident. There has been improvement in the quality of teaching for younger pupils. However, there are more concerns about the quality of teaching for older pupils.
- 17 In the foundation stage of learning teaching is good with examples of very good teaching evident especially in the reception class. In both the nursery and the reception class one of the strong features is the way there is effective team-work established. The contribution of the nursery nurses is particularly effective. This helps to create a secure and caring environment for all the children. The staff working with this age group have embraced the new national guidance for working with young children and have established a good balance between practical and taught lessons. The children respond well to the teaching and they are learning at a good rate.
- 18 The teacher in the reception class successfully uses quality literature to generate excitement and interest amongst the children. During one lesson when the teacher read 'We're going on a bear hunt', she helped children to express their ideas by giving time for them to think about what they wanted to say. This good attention to children's communication skills is helping their speaking and listening skills, which are not as good as they should be for their age. There is good attention to basic skills with appropriate reinforcement of a range of key words to aid their reading or experimenting with words new to them when describing characters from stories. In one example the children had just had read the book, 'The Meanies' and were beginning to use descriptive words such as, horrible, nasty, ugly and smelly. There is also good attention to creative development with role-play areas in both the nursery and reception classes being well organised and well resourced to allow children to move from the 'real' world to a 'make-believe' world.
- 19 Teachers in Years 1 and 2 have good subject knowledge and this helps them to move on the pupils' learning. The Year 2 teacher is particularly skilful in helping pupils acquire new skills. She prepares and uses resources very well to support new ideas. In this way pupils are able to re-arrange the sequence of writing they meet so that it follows a sensible order. The pupils' tasks take account of their present knowledge and understanding and there is good use made

of assessment to help in this respect. During a mathematics lessons, the same Year 2 teacher is able to move pupils on from the position they are to take on new knowledge because of the careful consideration that is given to what the pupils already knew. This, together with the demanding pace of mental and oral work, is helping pupils deepen their understanding. The more able pupils in Year 2 make very good progress because the pupils work at a demanding pace and are well supported by the teacher. In all, Year 1 and Year 2 planning the teachers clearly state what it is they are to learn and the lessons are organised so as to enable pupils to meet the objectives outlined. During one religious education lesson taught by the Year 2 teacher, there was effective use of pupils' literacy skills when pupils wrote about why they thought baptism was important.

- 20 Teachers of pupils aged 5 to 7 are particularly effective in motivating their pupils. They create a sense of excitement about learning and use literature to good effect in doing so. This results in very good attitudes being prominent and in pupils taking pride in their work. Their learning is helped by their involvement in calm and purposeful classrooms, where much is expected of each and every pupil. Pupils respond well to this and show good levels of concentration. Interest levels are high with many pupils talking with great enthusiasm about books they have read in lessons. Opportunities provided for pupils to express themselves are abundant, as was noted in one lesson when pupils were very articulate about describing their feelings about being asked to do a special job for someone. These opportunities are helping pupils to improve their speaking and listening skills and by implication their literacy and language skills.
- 21 Older pupils experience a greater degree of variation in the quality of teaching. There are some examples of good and very good teaching but these are intermixed with examples of unsatisfactory teacher knowledge in key areas leading to a lack of challenge for some pupils. The same teachers who are strong in certain subjects are not competent or confident in others. There are examples of teachers lacking subject knowledge in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, music and physical education. Too frequently the lack of teacher knowledge is not able to help lower ability pupils to understand difficult ideas. This was the case in older pupils' lessons in English, mathematics and science. There is also a lack of challenge provided for pupils during mental and oral work in mathematics. This results in the pace of lessons being too slow and in pupils not being able to respond as quickly as they should when dealing with number work. The setting arrangements for older pupils in English and mathematics are partially successful in helping pupils make progress. However, too frequently the teacher working with the lower ability set does not have the necessary subject knowledge to improve the learning of the pupils.
- 22 In contrast to this, examples of teachers having good subject knowledge enhance the quality of pupils' learning in English, mathematics and physical education. In one dance lesson for pupils in one of the Year 3/4 classes, the teacher's own expertise enabled pupils to develop a range of sequences that took full account of the pathways, direction and the level of their movements. In a Year 6 literacy lesson for more able pupils the teacher's handling of a potentially difficult text helps pupils to gain a deep understanding and enjoyment of Shakespeare. In science, a Year 5 teacher is able to set up a task that helps pupils investigate how a seed is dispersed. The practical and useful way that the task is presented to the pupils is helping them develop appropriate fair testing methods. The teacher, in this instance, demonstrated good knowledge of the process and was able to explain to the pupils how seeds are dispersed in different ways. In a Year 6 lesson a similar area of learning was not explained as well and resulted in some pupils being confused and not fully understanding the fair-test process.

- 23 Teachers throughout the school have differing levels of confidence and expertise in information and communication technology. There are examples of lessons in this subject being well taught, as was noted during Year 2 and 3/4 lessons. However, there are too many occasions when opportunities are not maximised to use ICT to support other work. In many of these instances it is as a result of the teacher having insufficient subject knowledge.
- 24 Teachers of all age groups are consistently good at managing pupils. They use a range of appropriate strategies to ensure that pupils are highly motivated, interested in their learning and show good concentration. In most lessons the teachers use an appropriate range of methods to make learning interesting for the pupils. However, there are examples of pupils having to sit for too long, especially during music lessons. There is good use made of classroom support assistants in most classes with individual assessment sheets used effectively to help them focus their work on different pupils.
- 25 There are good examples of teachers using their marking to help pupils understand more about what they need to know and do next in order to improve. This is particularly effective for literacy and numeracy. Teachers use the information from their marking to set targets for the future. This process is helping older pupils to improve their own understanding and knowledge of their work. Despite this good practice teachers are not maximising opportunities for pupils to use newly acquired literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects, although there are isolated examples of this being effective as in the religious education example noted above. In most cases homework is used appropriately to support on-going work. Pupils use their personal organisers most effectively to help them in this respect. However, some inconsistencies in the amount and range of homework is apparent.
- 26 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress when working directly with the support staff. There is very good tracking of the progress being made by individuals and good links have been established with outside agencies. However, when these pupils are part of a larger class, the support they receive is not as effective. Too often the work is not organised so as to provide the level of support they require to succeed.

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

- 27 The curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils are satisfactory. All statutory requirements are met, as are the recommendations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. In the foundation stage of learning (nursery and reception) the curriculum is good and all six areas of learning recommended for children of this age are effectively addressed through an appropriate range of practical activities. Good attention is given to communication, language and literacy skills, mathematical development and the personal, social and emotional development of the children. When appropriate, the relevant sections of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are introduced and the children are prepared effectively for their work in the National Curriculum as they move into Year 1.
- 28 The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented successfully and this is beginning to have a positive impact on standards in English and on pupils' achievement. However, the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has been less successful and there are weaknesses in the mental and oral starter sessions and in teachers' own knowledge of the subject. These issues are having an adverse effect on pupils' attainment and progress in

mathematics. In addition, the use of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills across the curriculum is unsatisfactory and not systematically planned.

- 29 The provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education is good. Pupils have numerous opportunities to relate to others, in a variety of situations, so that they learn to respect the values and beliefs of other pupils and adults. Many opportunities, in and out of classrooms, for pupils to show initiative and take responsibility effectively support their personal development. Younger pupils deliver messages between classes and put out and tidy away resources and equipment in lessons. Older pupils, at various times of the day, look after younger pupils in a caring way. Pupils in Year 6 are nominated as 'Playground Friends' and they have the responsibility of supporting other pupils who are lonely, need a friend or have a problem that needs to be solved. Pupils take this 'job' very seriously and are pleased and proud when it their turn to assume the role. There is appropriate provision for sex education, which stresses the importance of warm and caring relationships. Pupils are helped to develop good attitudes towards healthy eating and, with the support of the school nurse, are made aware of the harmful effects of drugs.
- 30 The school tries hard to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum and equality of opportunity is implicit in all aspects of its life. All policies include a reference to equal opportunities and the co-ordinator checks regularly that all pupils are able to access the range of activities that are available. However, the needs of pupils with the potential for higher attainment are not always satisfactorily addressed. Also pupils in the 7 to 11 age range who are in the lower set for mathematics do not always receive work that is appropriate for their needs.
- 31 Effective systems support pupils with special educational needs and enable them to make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Teachers plan effectively for the needs of these pupils and classroom assistants are used well to support their learning. Good procedures ensure that the progress they make is checked and their learning needs adjusted accordingly. Good use is made of outside agencies to help with any specific difficulties that pupils may have. However, these pupils do not make as good progress when working independently within the classroom.
- 32 Pupils are able to take part in a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities. A wide variety of clubs, including football, tennis, gymnastics, computer and newspaper clubs, are available. At the present time a dance workshop is preparing to provide a presentation at the local high school. The school arranges for numerous visitors to come to school, including authors, artists, professional musicians and drama groups, who work with pupils to develop their skills across a range of areas. There are satisfactory links with the community, especially the local church and the high school. Parents also come into school to work regularly with pupils through the 'Better Reading Partnership.'
- 33 As in the previous inspection, the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and effectively enriches the quality of the school's life as a community, helping pupils to develop positive attitudes, a sense of responsibility and high self-esteem. The school's aims for pupils' development in these areas are strong and well supported by the values that permeate the daily running of the school.
- 34 The pupils' spiritual development is fostered through the curriculum and the close links with church. Religious education lessons play an important part in this development and teachers regularly give pupils time for quiet personal reflection throughout the school day. The teachers

value pupils' ideas and efforts, and this is shown by the way that all pupils are encouraged to make contributions during lessons and by the way their work is carefully displayed around school. Assemblies effectively create an atmosphere of spirituality in which pupils can quietly reflect. This was seen during a good assembly for pupils in Years 1 to 4 when the use of music and the lighting of the candle encouraged pupils to think carefully about kindness and the importance of keeping promises. This aspect has improved since the previous inspection.

- 35 Moral development is positively promoted through the school's approach to encouraging good behaviour. A high value is placed on understanding the difference between right and wrong and the school successfully raises awareness that an individual's behaviour affects others. Moral themes feature in many aspects of the curriculum and are an integral part of the school's ethos. The adults in school provide very good models and value pupils in their care, acknowledging and praising their efforts and achievements. Class rules and their consequences are well understood and most pupils respect each other and try hard to live up to the school's good standards. Good behaviour is rewarded publicly through celebration assemblies. The staff work hard to promote a sense of fairness among pupils and are successful in teaching them to be tolerant of each other.
- 36 The provision for social development is good. The school works hard to develop pupils' social skills so that effective learning can take place as they pass through the school. This is important, as many pupils start school with poor social skills and low self-esteem. They are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and to work and play together with respect and tolerance. From the start of their time in school, pupils have good social development opportunities. Pupils listen to and respect the opinions of others, as was seen during the introductions and round up sessions of most lessons and in 'circle-time' activities. They are encouraged to work collaboratively in pairs and small groups, as is especially evident in English, mathematics, science and physical education lessons. The School Council is used effectively to promote pupils' understanding of citizenship and the importance of community needs and decisions. Very good relationships underpin all of the school's work, being based on mutual trust and respect between staff and pupils.
- 37 The pupils' cultural education is enhanced through work in English, music, history and geography. This is supplemented by the provision of extra-curricular activities, including visits and visitors. In lessons, the pupils are able to experience stories, music and art from a range of cultures and to work with visiting musicians, authors, poets and artists. In religious education lessons, there is often emphasis placed on learning about the beliefs and traditions of other faiths and cultures. As pupils come from an area in which a variety of cultures are not represented, the school recognises the need to further develop their awareness of life in multi-cultural Britain.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 38 Since its last inspection, the school has maintained the good quality of its provisions for the care and welfare of its pupils. It has also significantly improved its procedures for assessing attainment, tracking pupils' progress and setting targets to drive up standards. In the foundation stage of learning and in English, mathematics and science, these procedures are now very good and are used well, whereas in the last report they were judged to be unsatisfactory and a key issue for action. However, the school's procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are not rigorous and effective enough.

- 39 The school has worked effectively to improve the ways in which it both assesses pupils' work and uses assessment information to help all pupils to perform better. In the Foundation Stage of Learning, very good systems for first assessments of children's attainment enable teachers to identify individual needs, and to plan, support and check progress. Thereafter, the school regularly collects substantial evidence about pupils' attainment, both from its own procedures and from the end-of-year national and optional tests in English and mathematics.
- 40 The co-ordinators for these 'core' subjects carefully analyse this evidence and use it effectively to track pupils' progress as they move through the school. On this basis, teachers project targets for the performance of each pupil and each group. These targets are translated, for example through the marking of written work, into specific goals that the pupils themselves can understand and use. Regular checks on progress identify who is performing less well or better than anticipated. This informs teachers how and where to raise the level of either support or challenge. All pupils, not least those who have special needs, have targets in English and mathematics and understand what they have to do to achieve them. Assessment is well used to allocate support for pupils with special educational needs and to arrange teaching groups in English and mathematics by prior attainment. Most teachers are increasingly using their knowledge of pupils' differing attainments to set them work at a suitable level of difficulty, to question their understanding, and to encourage them to think about the quality of their learning. This very good use of assessment information to guide planning starts in the Foundation Stage and is most consistently effective in helping pupils in Years 1 and 2 to progress at their best rate. The much better performance of 7-year-olds in the most recent national tests reflects this greatly improved provision.
- 41 In the classes for pupils aged 7 to 11, most teachers make equally effective use of the improved assessment procedures and here, too, standards are rising significantly as a result. However, not all pupils benefit equally because some teachers do not use the procedures consistently well. For example, although all teachers add detailed and constructive comments on the written work of pupils aged 7 to 11, the comments provided by some teachers betray a lack of subject knowledge. Assessments miss key points and the targets set are not the ones that the pupils most need. As a result, efforts are misdirected and progress suffers. Whilst the improved procedures have raised teachers' awareness of pupils' very different needs, this awareness is not yet reflected in the planning of work in all subjects. Assessment has hardly begun to make an impact in subjects other than English, mathematics and science, even in terms of the effective use of pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy. The more able pupils often have undemanding work, whilst the lower attaining pupils who are not on the register of special needs, seldom have the provisions that would enable them to make good progress.
- 42 The school takes good care of the social, emotional and personal well-being of its pupils and has maintained a full commitment to their health, safety and general welfare. As a result, pupils have a sense of belonging and they feel valued and able to learn in a safe, secure and well-ordered environment. Personal, social and health education has high status in the curriculum. This links with the use of 'circle time', which gives all pupils a regular and equal chance to talk about issues that are important to them. Teachers monitor and record pupils' personal development, and they encourage pupils to play a part in this process through entries in their 'personal organisers'. Through the School Council, pupils have a voice in regulating their own affairs, and older pupils, in their role as 'Playground Friends', help to ensure that pupils are not oppressed or excluded by the behaviour of others when outside the classroom. The school's commitment to the promotion of self-esteem, mutual respect and social responsibility was recognised by an 'Investor in Children' award.

- 43 The school has good procedures for promoting good behaviour and for deterring bullying and dealing with it if it occurs. Pupils' 'personal organisers' clearly outline these procedures and the conduct that is expected. Teachers know their pupils well and provide good support to those who tend to drift off task or who have social and behavioural needs. All staff consistently guide and motivate pupils with clear expectations of acceptable behaviour and the award of merits. Pupils enjoy these recognitions of their efforts and appreciate the order and purpose that they represent. All pupils know that bullying will not be tolerated and they are clear about what they must do if any problems arise. Lunchtime staff are continually vigilant and follow clear guidelines for dealing with any incidents that occur.
- 44 Very good procedures are in place for child protection. Two senior teachers share overall responsibility for child protection matters. All members of staff have had recent training and are well aware of their responsibilities and of the relevant support systems and the procedures to follow. Procedures for ensuring other aspects of pupils' welfare are satisfactory overall. The headteacher acts as the health and safety officer and presents a report to every meeting of the governing body. Fire drills and evacuation exercises are regularly practised and reported to the governors. There are clear procedures for dealing with and recording accidents and emergencies. Several members of staff are trained in first aid and proper procedures are followed for the security and use of medication. Teachers constantly promote good health and safety practice. For example, when pupils work with food in lessons in design and technology, teachers require that they follow a strict code for food hygiene and safety. They also seek parents' permission to ensure that pupils are not asked to taste foods to which they are allergic or which may offend in some way. At the same time, parents and pupils dislike some aspects of the lunch service. The associate headteacher and the governor with responsibility for health and safety carry out regular risk assessments and make any necessary changes. For example, lunch boxes are now stored in a cooler place, and because the staircases are considered hazardous, pupils are no longer allowed upstairs. Tighter security measures have recently been enforced and teachers now formally escort children off the premises after school. However, the security fence around the school grounds remains incomplete and a few trip-hazards, such as deep mat wells, need attention.
- 45 The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are unsatisfactory overall. The previous inspection report also noted shortcomings in this area. Teachers register pupils efficiently at the start of morning and afternoon sessions and they ensure that pupils understand the importance of punctuality. The school now keeps better records of attendance, contacts parents about unexplained absences and refers cases of unauthorised absence to the educational welfare officer. However, the procedure for analysing attendance data and the strategies for promoting better attendance need to be reviewed and improved.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 46 Parents and carers express a satisfactory view of the school. Fifteen parents attended the parents' meeting and 118 returned the questionnaires out of 298 sent out. The majority of responses indicated support for the school and they felt that the teaching was good, the school expected the children to work hard, was making the child more mature and the children liked school and were making good progress. The responses indicated that a significant minority of parents felt that the school did not work closely with parents, their children did not get the right amount of work, they were not well informed about how their child was getting on and the school did not offer an interesting range of activities. The pre-inspection meeting indicated some dissatisfaction with the levels of communication about the position of the substantive

headteacher. However, the governors have acted correctly and are not in a position to give parents more information than they already have.

- 47 The inspection confirmed all the positive points from the parents. The parents receive general information of a satisfactory level and the introduction of pupils' personal organisers should improve communication between home and school at a personal level. However, parents did not feel they were consulted about broader issues in the school. The school have consulted parents on statutory points, such as a proposed change in the finish time of the day, but parents felt that the school did not consult on such issues as the change to the lunchtime arrangements. A number of parents did not feel that their children got the right amount of homework. It was found that children did receive an appropriate amount of homework although there was some inconsistency across the school. The school does offer a range of activities some at lunchtime, although the number of after school clubs is limited. Some of the issues raised by parents are as a direct result of the changes that the associate headteacher has recently made. These changes were needed to help the school sharpen its focus on raising standards.
- 48 The school has effective links with parents of the youngest children with parents being invited to play and stay with their children when they bring them to school. Parents would like to be more involved in their child's education. A mathematics workshop was offered to parents but there is no information sent out regarding the curriculum or topics being studied. Parents are not regularly invited into school for assemblies to participate in the celebration of achievements. A significant number of parents mentioned that they felt that they were not welcome in school because of the school's clerical administrator's abrupt manner. The inspection team was not able to make a judgement on this issue but observed parents being treated politely and courteously during the inspection week.
- 49 The annual reports to parents about their child are satisfactory and meet statutory requirements. There are two opportunities each year for parents to discuss their child's progress, although there are a number of parents who find the system difficult to fit into working patterns. Parents receive a written report each year which is satisfactory and meets statutory requirements.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 50 The inspection occurred at a very difficult time for the school. The substantive headteacher had been absent for some months and an associate headteacher, working at the school on a part-time basis, was managing the school's affairs. In addition, the deputy headteacher was ill during the inspection week.
- 51 The previous report indicated that the substantive headteacher displayed strong pastoral leadership, was well regarded in the local community and worked closely with his chair of governors. There were weaknesses evident in the school's focus on raising standards in some aspects of its strategic management. It is evident that this was largely the position before the associate headteacher took up her position. There was only limited focus on raising standards and there was little by way of a clear direction provided for staff to enable them to improve the quality of work or standards being attained.
- 52 When the associate headteacher arrived at the school, many issues were in need of attention. The most important was that standards were not high enough and there was little evidence to suggest that things were improving. As a consequence, she had to take many decisions quite

quickly, some of which were not initially popular. One of her most important achievements was to ensure that all staff had a focus on improving standards. She achieved this by helping individual subject leaders to have a better overview of the work that was happening within their own subject. For example, although there are deficiencies mentioned in the provision for mathematics, the co-ordinator is now very well aware of these and has already started to take action to deal with the issues. Similarly, the English co-ordinator has a more comprehensive overview of provision and standards attained within her subject. This is as a result of the help they have received to analyse test results and to make hypotheses built on their analysis.

- 53 The associate headteacher is particularly strong at analysing the school's needs and making decisions to try and address them. One of the decisions she took quite quickly was to re-organise the management structure so that there was greater accountability taking place and more support available for all staff. Staff who had the potential to lead were provided with every opportunity to take on additional responsibility. This helped some individuals to flourish and to develop their leadership skills. The acting deputy headteacher was one person who developed very quickly within this system. The new management structure ensured that team leaders for each phase of the school managed regular meetings to help give the school more purpose and direction. Subject co-ordinators had more opportunity to develop their role. The limitation of their role was noted as a weakness at the time of the previous inspection.
- 54 Clearly, the school requires a full-time leader to help it continue with the momentum of change and improvement that is now taking place. However, the uncertainties relating to the position of the substantive headteacher makes it difficult for the school to plan long-term. However, what is important is that the momentum of change has had a positive impact and needs to be maintained in order for the school to continue improving.
- 55 The associate headteacher had picked up on the issues relating to the lack of some subject knowledge amongst some teachers. She had noted that some teachers working with the lower ability sets in Years 3 to 6 did not have sufficient knowledge to help the pupils improve. However, she has not yet had sufficient opportunity to provide the level of support necessary to help support these teachers. This is a natural next step that needs to be considered. The associate headteacher is already thinking about the potential of looking at more opportunity for specialist teaching to help overcome the problem. This shows that she is thinking deeply about the issue and looking at potential solutions to move the school forward.
- 56 The special educational needs co-ordinator is very experienced and has developed efficient administrative systems to ensure that the school's practice is in line with national guidelines. She has a thorough understanding of the needs of pupils who have been identified with difficulties and provides teachers with support. However, there are times when teachers are not acting on the advice and this leads to inconsistent support being provided for pupils on the register.
- 57 The Local Education Authority has worked closely with the associate headteacher to develop an appropriate school improvement plan. The monitoring that has taken place has included an in-depth analysis of the standards being attained by pupils as well as the quality of teaching and learning that is taking place. The outcomes from the analysis have been incorporated into the new development plan. The actions outlined have helped to move the school on and are responsible for the improvement that has occurred in the recent past.
- 58 The governors are very caring people who had only limited knowledge of the school's problems until very recently. There are a number of new governors in place and they are very

keen to play a more active role in supporting the school. At present a number of governors are not too clear about the full range of their authority or responsibilities but are keen to be more involved. Systems are not fully in place that will allow all governors to have knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This makes it difficult for them monitor the school's work and to assess how improvements are being implemented. In all other respects the governors are fulfilling their statutory obligations.

- 59 The governors' financial committee has been very active in helping the school see how best to get the most from its budget. Cost effective measures are well understood and applied to help the school use money to improve standards. The recent initiative of buying in additional staff to help to raise standards is one example of the governors working closely with the associate headteacher on identifying future priorities and supporting action with money.
- 60 The school is generously staffed, with additional teachers currently being employed to ensure that they are able to focus attention where it is needed when setting arrangements are organised for literacy and numeracy. There is a good level of classroom support available and staff are appropriately deployed to support young children and pupils with special educational needs.
- 61 The school has recently established a well-resourced computer suite. Its potential has not yet fully realised but this is planned for as, and when, staff benefit from further training. The suite will undoubtedly provide an excellent resource in the future. The library is not as useful as it should be because the quality and quantity of books are limited for this size of school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 62 In order to improve standards further and to help pupils achieve to their full potential, the governors, associate headteacher and staff need to:
- Ensure that the mental and oral sessions in mathematics lessons are more challenging; (Paragraphs 1, 4, 5, 8, 90, 91, 92, 96 and 98)
 - Improve the standard of spelling, handwriting and presentation of work; (Paragraphs 1, 4, 77, 104, 123 and 150)
 - Improve standards in ICT and ensure that ICT is used more effectively in all subjects; (Paragraphs 7, 23, 28, 61 and 125-131)
 - Improve the subject knowledge of individual teachers who teach pupils aged 7 to 11, (Paragraphs 5, 16, 21, 41, 55, 83, 97, 103 and 112)
 - Ensure that pupils are using their newly acquired literacy and numeracy skills more consistently across the curriculum (Paragraphs 6, 25, 28, 41, 78, 93, 115, 117, 121, 123 and 150).
- 63 In addition to these main key issues, the governors need to attend to the following less pressing matters:
- The level of challenge provided for more able pupils in Years 3 to 6 (Paragraphs 8, 30, 80 and 90);
 - The support provided for lower attaining pupils aged 7 to 11 who are not on the special education needs register (Paragraphs 8, 21, 26, 30, 79, 91 and 92);
 - The low level of attendance (Paragraphs 15, 38 and 45);
 - Increasing pupils' knowledge about living in a multi-cultural society (Paragraph 37);
 - Increase the range and quantity of books in the school library (Paragraphs 61 and 84);
 - Deal with the health and safety issues identified (Paragraph 44).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

68

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

71

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	13	27	16	6	0	0
Percentage	0	21.0	43.5	25.8	9.7	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	23	275
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		79

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	5	77

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	18
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

Attendance

Authorised absence

%

Unauthorised absence

%

School data	6.8
National comparative data	5.2

School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	26	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	21	22
	Girls	12	10	13
	Total	31	31	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (74)	79 (81)	90 (93)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	23	23
	Girls	13	12	12
	Total	35	35	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (76)	90 (89)	90 (93)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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
		2000	23	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	15	18
	Girls	5	9	12
	Total	14	24	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	36 (47)	62 (40)	77 (49)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	14	12
	Girls	6	9	7
	Total	16	23	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	41 (38)	59 (47)	49 (40)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	245
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	0	0
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.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.2
Average class size	25

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	120

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	25
Number of pupils per FTE adult	11.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000-01
	£
Total income	602,263
Total expenditure	604,459
Expenditure per pupil	1,895
Balance brought forward from previous year	34,472
Balance carried forward to next year	32,276

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

39.6%

Number of questionnaires sent out	298
Number of questionnaires returned	118

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	51	46	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	46	53	0	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	31	61	3	2	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	47	11	2	3
The teaching is good.	56	43	1	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	40	40	20	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	51	40	7	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	53	45	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	34	49	14	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	32	56	6	5	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	41	56	1	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	15	23	29	7	26

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

- 64 Children aged up to five are taught in a nursery and a reception class. Currently there are 46 children attending the nursery on a part time basis and 30 children in the reception class.
- 65 A nationally approved initial assessment (baseline) shows that most children enter the nursery and reception classes displaying personal and academic skills that are below those expected for their age. They have particularly poor skills in communication, language and literacy and mathematics. However, by the time they finish the reception year approximately 70 per cent of children achieve the learning goals in each of the six areas of learning. This represents good achievement and is a direct result of good teaching in both the nursery and reception classes. The rich learning environment ensures that children are provided with a good start to their education. This is a strength of the school.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- 66 The staff place good emphasis on providing a wide range of well-planned activities to develop this aspect of children's learning. As a result, the children achieve well and the majority leave the reception class having achieved the expected learning goal for their age. The children settle quickly into school life where a happy and secure atmosphere is created for them within the classrooms. Children learn to play amicably with others, to share resources and to cooperate with adults and each other. The majority of children are able to undress themselves for physical education activities with minimal help and they look after their own personal hygiene. The children's attitudes to lessons are very positive and they carefully follow the instructions given by the adults working with them. Adults have high expectations of children's behaviour, which were well met in all lessons observed. The staff provide good opportunities for the children to become increasingly independent. For example, they ensure children are fully involved in classroom tasks such as taking registers to the office, giving out milk and tidying up after activities.

Language, Literacy and Communication

- 67 The children make good progress in this area of learning and the majority achieve the requirements of the early learning goal by the time they leave the reception class. Where appropriate, the relevant sections of the National Literacy Strategy are introduced. The teachers and support staff place a great deal of importance on teaching the basic skills of reading and writing and in giving the children many planned opportunities to talk about their work and personal experiences. For example, the reception children were eager to describe the 'witches spells' they had 'written' in the imaginative play area. The majority of children enjoy listening to stories and, through careful adult questioning, are able to respond well to them. When choosing a book they hold it the right way, understand that words and pictures carry meaning and are aware that print is read from left to right. They recognise and read accurately their own name and key words from the reading scheme. The teachers give children many opportunities to talk about the structure of a book and, as a result, they have a good understanding of the terms associated with a book, such as title, page and cover. They are beginning to associate sounds with patterns, words and letters and to read simple familiar

words with accuracy. For example, in the reception class, they confidently recognised the initial sounds of word and objects and could read a variety of suitably challenging, often used words. Children enjoy mark-making and basic writing experiences and they use a range of marking implements for drawing, scribbling and writing. Role play activities are structured to encourage children to express themselves and spelling is improved by a planned approach to the teaching of letter sounds.

Mathematics

- 68 The children achieve well in mathematics and by the time they leave the reception class the majority of the children have achieved the early learning goals. Where appropriate the relevant sections of the National Numeracy Strategy are introduced. The very good teamwork between the teachers and the nursery nurses has resulted in a stimulating mathematical learning environment with well-planned activities which build on children's prior attainment. In both classes children sort and count objects and sequence patterns by size, colour and shape. The nursery children learn to count one by one, up to five, and add and subtract through a range of activities, for example, in role play as firemen. Children in the reception class extend their number work as they count and order numbers to 10. They learn to recognise and count coins accurately and work out how to pay, for example, for ice creams and toys. Their number work is consolidated, in both classes, by the singing of a variety of number rhymes, which the children thoroughly enjoy. These rhymes, together with outdoor play, baking and sand and water activities, help develop children's mathematical language as they are encouraged to use terms such as 'more than', 'less than', 'under', 'over'. The majority of children recognise and name correctly regular shapes such as circle, triangle and square and can name the days of the week as they change their weather chart. They record their birth months as a pictogram.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

- 69 The children achieve well in this area of learning and, again, the majority achieve the early learning goal expected for their age. The staff plan activities which stimulate the children's curiosity, develop their powers of observation and encourage them to ask questions. For example, through their science activities children learn about their teeth and how to look after them. They can correctly identify parts of the body and, during a physical education lesson, learn that their heart beat has 'quickened' after exercise. This work is further enhanced by a recent visit to the local hospital. A display of photographs, books and artefacts give children a sense of times past as they look back to the time when they were babies. The children's geographical knowledge is developed as they use photographs to identify their school environment, walk around the local area and make well planned visits to a farm and to the seaside. They are showing increasing confidence as they work on the computer and demonstrate good mouse control. The children show interest and enjoyment in all their practical activities and work well, readily helping each other.

Physical Development

- 70 Children achieve well in this area of learning and the majority achieve the early learning goal as they leave reception. Effective teaching ensures that children have good opportunities to improve their manipulative skills by using scissors, holding pencils and brushes, threading, rolling, completing jigsaws and using small construction apparatus. In a physical education lesson seen, nursery children demonstrate well several different ways of moving, for example, running, hopping, jumping, walking. Their awareness and control of their own and each other's

space is developing well as is their ability to stop at a given signal. The good, clearly marked, outdoor play area is used well for a range of role play activities, for example, 'painting' walls and fences, and lorries and construction vehicles to 'move' small pebbles in a container. However, adults sometimes miss opportunities during this activity to develop children's language skills. There is a good number and selection of wheeled toys available including cars, bicycles, prams and tricycles which children push or pedal, sometimes within a marked pathway. Opportunities are provided for children to build and climb outside and in the recently developed indoor space.

Creative Development

- 71 The majority of children achieve the standards expected by the age of five in this area of learning and make good progress as a result of the good quality teaching they receive. They have many opportunities to draw, paint and make objects. Children know the primary colours and learn how to mix paint and make shades and tones from one colour by adding to it. They make leaf prints using paint before making leaf collages. Good links are made to literacy as children make large co-operative pictures of the 'Gingerbread Man' and 'Brave Little Bear'. Imaginative play is encouraged in the role play areas in both nursery and reception class. Pupils participate well in musical activities. They are able to use sleigh bells to accompany their singing and can accurately identify percussion instruments, for example, shaker, tambourine, triangle and bells. They enjoy singing songs and rhymes and are able to add actions appropriately.

Teaching, Learning and the Curriculum

- 72 The quality of teaching for children in the foundation stage is good in both the nursery and reception classes with some very good teaching being seen, again in both classes. Overall, the teaching is good in each area of learning and helps to move the children's learning forwards. The teachers, nursery nurses and other helpers work effectively together as a team to create a very caring and secure environment. Their enthusiasm and sense of fun, particularly evident in literacy and mathematics lessons, is having a positive impact on children's learning. They form good relationships with the children and have high expectations of their behaviour to which the children respond well. The effective planning and the staff's good understanding of how children of this age learn, create a happy, stimulating atmosphere in which children work and play well together and make good gains in their learning. They feel secure in developing their learning and they grow in confidence through the constructive praise they receive from all staff who work in the nursery and reception classes.
- 73 The curriculum is well planned to effectively cover all areas of learning and particular emphasis is placed on communication, language and literacy, on mathematics and on personal, social and emotional development. The staff plan very well together and the clear learning objectives provide an effective focus for the children. Detailed weekly plans show what work is to be covered in each area of learning and what skills the children are expected to learn through the well structured activities. Future planning is based on the weekly evaluations of what children have achieved. This good quality planning has a positive effect on the standards that the children achieve. Opportunities are provided for the children to take part in a variety of well planned visits out of school, for example, the local environment, the hospital, the seaside, a farm and a department store. These enrich the curriculum by providing significant learning experiences for them. Assessment, recording and reporting procedures are thorough and enable the staff to monitor effectively the progress that each individual child makes. Initial baseline assessment is carried out appropriately and the information from this is used to plan

subsequent learning experiences. Regular targets are set for both nursery and reception children so that parents can share in their children's learning and help consolidate work done in school. There is effective involvement with parents who are encouraged to take part in a number of initiatives, for example, 'Stay and Play' activities and Positive Parenting classes. There are good arrangements at the end of the year to support the children's move from nursery to reception and to transfer the relevant information about their attainment and achievement.

ENGLISH

- 74 Standards have improved significantly since 2000, when results in the National Curriculum tests were well below the national average for 7-year-olds and in the bottom 5 per cent nationally for 11-year-olds. These results marked the lowest point in three years of steadily declining performance for both age groups. Serious underachievement in English was evident in the fact that performance at age 11 rose steadily in mathematics and science in the same period. In 2001, the results for 7-year-olds were above the national average in writing and average in reading. Numbers reaching the higher than expected level were more than double those in 2000 and were well above the average for similar schools. The percentage of 11-year-olds who reached the expected level for their age rose from 36 in 2000 to 64 in 2001. Performance at the higher level was also much better. Whilst these results still fall below the national average for this age group, the improved performance brings the school into line with the average for similar schools after being well below that average in 2000.
- 75 Inspection evidence shows that this improvement is not a flash-in-the-pan because it points to a further, but relatively marginal, rise in 2002. Challenging targets reflect the school's commitment to continued improvement, although in both Year 2 and Year 6 over a quarter of the pupils are on the register for special educational needs. The clear change from a downward to an upward trend results from actions taken in the past year or so to give stronger impact to the school's work with the National Literacy Strategy. New systems use assessment information to set challenging work and targets for groups and individuals of differing attainments in all years. This has made teaching more focused and raised the rate of progress. However, progress is better in Years 1 and 2 than in Years 3 to 6 because the procedures are used more consistently and more rigorously. The previous inspection noted a similar difference in effectiveness between these two key stages.
- 76 Standards in speaking and listening are average overall in Year 2 but below average in Year 6. Pupils make good progress through Years 1 and 2 but slower progress after that. Most pupils in Year 1 find it difficult to take turns and to listen and respond to each other's contributions in an ordered way during class discussion. Many have immature pronunciations for their ages and cannot develop their brief answers. They do, however, listen attentively to the teacher, understand her instructions and use talk to support each other when working in small groups. They benefit from good opportunities to speak in role, for example when trying out different voices to decide which best suits each Billy Goat Gruff and The Troll. In Year 2, most pupils speak confidently and relevantly to develop a topic or a story. Many use special terms, such as vowel, phoneme and verb, to identify and comment on the features of words or texts. Some more able pupils initiate new ideas or lines of enquiry and become adept at expressing their understanding of a character or situation. The teacher provides good opportunities for language development through role-play in different subjects. In a lesson in religious education, for example, a pupil in 'the hot seat' as John the Baptist expertly explained John's 'special job' in response to questions skilfully posed by other pupils. Opportunities of this kind

and quality are relatively rare in Years 3 to 6. Teachers tend to use talk as a means to learn other things rather than as a skill to be developed in its own right. As a result, pupils develop good skills in answering questions and in following an extended discussion. Regular and demanding practice in collaborative tasks enables them to improve their interpersonal and learning skills by using talk to support each other and to negotiate agreed solutions to problems. In Years 5 and 6, pupils help each other as response partners. This responsible role involves good interaction between speaking, reading and writing as pupils read each other's work, discuss its merits critically and write a commentary on how it could be improved. However, they do not develop more formal skills to the same level. Few pupils read literature expressively, or effectively present and explain their work at length to an audience.

77 In writing, the attainment of pupils in Year 2 is broadly typical for their age, whilst that of pupils in Year 6 is below average. The evidence of pupils' completed work shows good progress in most classes. This is because writing has been a particular focus for action to raise standards. Pupils now benefit from additional weekly lessons for extended writing and teachers mark completed work thoroughly and identify individual targets for improvement. Pupils take these very seriously and use them to direct and monitor their efforts. These systems ensure that pupils have better opportunities for developing their understanding and control of the range of skills involved in writing. Other developments within the school's literacy strategy also boost progress. For example, pupils now experience a better range of quality texts and teachers make more effective links between reading and writing. These enable pupils to understand and imitate the distinctive features of different kinds of texts and to develop a practical awareness of how to plan, draft and edit their own writing. In some classes a system of 'response partners' fosters these creative skills and helps pupils to be more alert to the needs of their audience. These are all good developments and they are making a decisive difference to pupils' confidence, self-awareness and progress. However, they are mainly recent innovations and it is clear that progress over the longer term has been uneven and that some groups of older pupils, especially the higher attainers, have seriously underachieved in the past. Spelling is weak throughout the school, particularly from Year 3 onwards, and there are, as yet, no initiatives to raise standards in this area. An improved scheme for handwriting is now in use, but it needs careful review and it has too little impact on the older pupils whose writing reflects the influence of less consistent approaches. Some pupils will leave the school before they have achieved a fully joined and fluent style with which they can record and communicate ideas quickly and effectively in the future.

78 Pupils in Year 2 clearly benefit from well-planned opportunities to use the concepts and skills they learn in the literacy hour. Even their misspellings, such as 'ellifut' and 'uncuftbull' reveal a growing awareness of regular patterns. As they retell stories such as 'The Enormous Crocodile', they use linking words such as so, when, and because to make logical connections between events. More able pupils show a sharpening awareness of sound patterns to evoke sensory experience. The poems they have written, entitled 'The Box of my Favourite Things', contain lines such as,

I can feel my silky soft toy seal.

The development of these skills can be seen in the work of older pupils. 'Time stories' in Year 4 show skilful changes of tense to mark the movement of the plot. More able pupils in Year 5 cleverly catch the rhythms, verse forms and linguistic humour of the 'rap poem' they have studied. Pupils in Year 6 respond well to literacy models and their teacher's push for 'premiership words'. They have written some really evocative pieces in imaginative response to Caliban's speech, 'The isle is full of strange noises'. However, the more able pupils have not been introduced early enough to higher-order skills in writing and their control of length, text organisation and complex sentence structures is not as good as it should be. Improving

opportunities for pupils to write at length address this problem, but these opportunities need to be planned into other subjects in a concerted way and with a clear focus on standards in writing and reading. There are too few examples of the quality that was seen in a design and technology lesson in Year 6 when pupils had to write up and evaluate their work against strict criteria for style, structure, layout and presentation.

- 79 Standards in reading are average overall in Year 2 and below average in Year 6. In relation to prior attainment and the number of pupils with special needs, this represents satisfactory achievement by the older pupils and good achievement by those in Year 2. Pupils in Year 1 can apply their developing knowledge of consonants and vowels to ‘sound out’ the letters of short words and to build sets of words that rhyme. Higher attaining pupils can explain the meaning of speech marks, exclamation marks and bold print. In Year 2, pupils show a good understanding of the features of instruction texts and can explain why they need ‘bossy verbs’ and ‘everything in the right order’. They know the essential difference between fiction and non-fiction books and predict that the latter will contain ‘real-life pictures’ and an index. Most pupils read accurately and with confidence, and also read for meaning and enjoyment. When they meet a new word, they pause rather than guess and use a mixture of strategies to reach a solution that makes sense. For example, a higher attaining pupil struggled to read ‘spaghetti’. Her existing knowledge convinced her that ‘gh’ represented the sound ‘f’. She would not accept the answer that this produced because it did not ‘make sense’, so she read on, recognised that the passage was about food and came to the correct conclusion. Teachers use assessment effectively to ensure that pupils progress through the reading scheme as well as they are able. Homework and personal organisers support this process and help to develop a good habit of reading with the use of more varied story-books. The reading scheme is well established but lacks some of the qualities needed to resource the literacy strategy. Skills and attitudes develop in diverse ways in Years 3, 4 and 5 and there is evidence of very uneven progress. Some lower attaining pupils, especially boys, have little knowledge of, or taste for, books and authors other than joke books and information books related to their personal interest. By the time they are in Year 6, pupils perceptively identify both the effect of an unseen story text and the main features that create this effect. The more able pupils comment on the author’s choice of language and refer to stories of a similar kind. These pupils have well-developed preferences for particular books and authors. They can explain how and why they choose and judge the books they read and can briefly explain the context and evoke the flavour of the passage they are going to read. Other pupils lack these skills, some almost completely. Yet all pupils can explain how to locate books and information in the library and how to take notes. Most pupils can contribute to the process of listing the various features that distinguish information books from story-books. They read and recall different texts accurately and pay due regard to punctuation, but very few read aloud expressively with a sense of audience.
- 80 The school aims to be inclusive in its work. Improved procedures for assessing attainment, tracking progress and setting suitably demanding work and personal targets help it to achieve this aim. Pupils who have special educational needs are served well in English by effectively co-ordinated provisions. Their individual needs and progress are clearly reflected in well-written educational plans. Teachers provide work, resources and support that take account of the targets in these plans. Pupils make good progress in relation to the difficulties they have in literacy because the daily support they receive, both in class and in the base room, is skilful, positive and well informed. The quality of opportunity for other pupils who find it difficult to reach the expected levels is less consistent, but it is improving because of better learning targets and the introduction of the programme of Additional Literacy Support in Years 3 and 4. The planned extension of this programme, both down and up the age range, will boost the

quality of learning opportunity and access for all these pupils. The more able pupils do not advance steadily at their best rate through the school because they are not consistently challenged to do so. Here too, however, provision is improving because more rigorous procedures help teachers to plan better. The tracking system identifies any underachievement so that action can be taken. At the same time, the process of setting specific targets based on each pupil's work, makes teachers think more critically about where that pupil can get to than about where age broadly suggests most pupils should be. Planning for some groups of more able pupils, in Year 2 for example, reflects this. However, in the junior classes planning still does not introduce them early enough to higher-order skills in reading, writing and speaking.

- 81 The quality of teaching is good for pupils aged 5 to 7 and unsatisfactory for pupils aged 7 to 11. The quality of learning is better than this because pupils maintain an eagerness to learn even when teaching is dull and slow-paced. In Years 1 and 2, teaching is good or very good and pupils learn well. In Years 3 to 6, the quality of learning is satisfactory and the work of most teachers is good. However, almost a quarter of the lessons observed were unsatisfactory and this is an unacceptably high proportion.
- 82 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn key skills in clear steps through interesting activities and tasks. This is because teachers plan and prepare their lessons carefully to build new learning in small steps and to provide a variety of methods and resources to stimulate and involve their pupils. Pupils are clear about their learning because they know their own targets and understand the specific learning intentions of each lesson. Relationships are very good because teachers make good use of praise and of highly interactive methods and game-like activities. They also make very good use of ongoing assessment to plan tasks which challenge each group to move on from their prior attainment. For example, in a lesson in which all pupils in the Year 2 class developed their understanding of how instructions are written and sequenced, each group had a different, but demanding, task. The highest attaining group had to read the story of 'The Giant Jam Sandwich', and extract information from the story to write the full recipe for making the giant sandwich. The task fully extended these pupils, but the challenge was well supported and thoroughly enjoyed and it promoted very good learning in talking, reading and writing. These teachers prize assessment information and all classroom staff record the observed progress made by the pupils they work with. As a result pupils move on well from target to target, from book to book and from lesson to lesson.
- 83 In seven of the lessons seen in Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching and learning was good. Here too teachers manage their pupils well. They use lively methods, interesting resources and demanding tasks to promote new learning and eager responses in relation to clear aims. The use of resources such as word fans and wipe boards is often effective in providing opportunities for pupils to note and display their developing understanding and for teachers to see and assess it. In these lessons, teachers' knowledge of both the subject and their pupils enables them to maintain high interest and expectations, and to provide and use opportunities for pupils to think for themselves. The marking of pupils' work is a particular strength. All teachers write full and constructive comments, which refer to existing targets, celebrate progress and identify points for further improvement. Pupils note these points on their target cards and monitor their own progress towards them. They value the small awards given when targets are achieved. This is very good practice, although not all teachers have good enough subject expertise to assess accurately and identify the best targets for all their pupils. Teachers are often able to draw pupils into the exploration of good texts in ways which directly model the use of knowledge and key skills in reading and writing. However, not all groups experience teaching and learning of this quality. In some lessons, the pace is slow, the approaches and subject knowledge uncertain, the intentions unclear, and the tasks and

resources inappropriate to the needs of the pupils. On occasions, a practical task is allowed to become so absorbing in itself that the language focus is lost that the task was planned to serve. There were specific instances of a teacher giving explanations that were too detailed and rambling for pupils to follow and use; of a support assistant lacking a clear role and of the use of commercial worksheets which had little relevance to the lesson's aim or to the needs of the pupils. Nevertheless, pupils always tried their best to gain some value from the activity.

- 84 The good actions taken recently to raise standards have effectively built on the hard work done by the literacy manager over time. She has written detailed schemes of work to guide planning for learning throughout the school, has developed systems of assessment to track the progress of groups and individuals, and ensures that teachers plan consistently for pupils' specific needs. She has also developed the library, the reading partnership and a very good collection of story sacks to promote interest and skill in reading. The loan stock of fiction books needs replenishing, and the library's potential as a learning centre for independent research is seriously underused. Information and communication technology and other subjects need, to their own advantage, to play a more cohesive part in the literacy strategy. Much remains to be done to ensure that all pupils achieve their best, but a good basis has been established and its success is beginning to show.

MATHEMATICS

- 85 The 2001 National Curriculum test results show that by the end of Year 6 the attainment of 11-year-old pupils is well below the national average and below average when compared to schools in similar circumstances. Furthermore, the progress made by pupils between the ages of 7 and 11 is below average when compared to schools where pupils had attained similar standards at the age of 7 in 1997. The attainment of more able pupils at the age of 11 is well below the national average and below the average for similar schools. Inspection findings give a similar picture for pupils between the ages of 7 and 11. Standards are unsatisfactory overall. This indicates unsatisfactory improvement since the last inspection.
- 86 Standards attained by 7-year-olds have been consistently low until 2001. In 2001 the results showed a considerable improvement. The 2001 National Curriculum test results show that by the age of 7 pupils' attainment is above the national average and well above average when compared to schools in similar contexts. Furthermore, the attainment of more able pupils is above the national average and well above average for similar schools. Inspection findings show that current Year 2 pupils are maintaining this good position with many attaining beyond the levels expected for their age.
- 87 When pupils first start school in the nursery or reception, the majority have skills that are below the level expected for their age. Few are familiar with number rhymes or with basic counting. By the age of 5, however, the majority of pupils' attainment is in line with levels expected for their age. This represents good progress.
- 88 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in the nursery and reception classes and satisfactory progress between the ages of 5 and 11. Pupils between the ages of 5 and 7 receive both well-targeted work and support by classroom assistants and they make satisfactory progress. Between the ages of 7 and 11 pupils are ability grouped for mathematics. This enables pupils with special educational needs to work within small groupings and to have additional classroom support and they make satisfactory progress.

- 89 Between the ages of 5 and 7 pupils make good progress in mathematics. Progress is particularly good in number and, where teaching is good, pupils are beginning to develop their mental skills. The correct and consistent use of mathematical vocabulary is a strong feature in this age range and pupils readily use familiar mathematical language when talking about their work. The majority of 5 and 6-year-olds know by heart pairs of numbers with a total of 10 and learn to count on from the largest number to find addition facts to 20. Most pupils can do this, with a minority of higher achieving pupils working up to 50. However, in this age range, pupils' attainment in subtraction is less secure. Only a minority of higher achieving pupils can use a number line to count on to find the difference between two numbers. Most pupils aged 6 and 7 can manipulate numbers to 20, with higher attaining pupils working to 50. Overall, progress in mental calculation is satisfactory and by the age of 7 pupils have a good understanding of place value and have clear strategies for partitioning two-digit numbers to aid mental calculation. They can use these strategies to add together 2 two-digit numbers and to solve addition problems involving money. They have developing competence in subtraction and use counting on to solve problems to 20. Pupils use doubling strategies beyond 20 competently and are able to recognise odd and even numbers with an understanding that even numbers are multiples of 2. An understanding of shape, space and measures is gradually developing. Five and 6-year-olds understand the process of measuring and can use non-standard apparatus to develop accurate measuring skills. Six and 7-year-olds can select the most appropriate apparatus for standard measurement and can measure accurately to the nearest centimetre using a rule. Pupils in this age group can solve problems involving measures. They can give change up to the value of 50p and higher achieving pupils can use the £p notation with confidence. Pupils can recognise and name common two-dimensional shapes and can describe the features of them using correct geometric vocabulary. The use of ICT within mathematics in this age range is underdeveloped and its impact on learning is unsatisfactory.
- 90 The progress of pupils aged 7 to 11 is unsatisfactory. It is the weakness in mental mathematics that is the most significant contributor to this unsatisfactory progress. Furthermore, there is some concern about the negative impact that the setting arrangements in this age range have on the progress of lower attaining pupils who are attaining at a level just above the threshold for special educational needs provision. Lower attaining 7 and 8-year-olds are working at a level that is approximately two years below the expected level for their age. They are insecure in their knowledge of the 2x and 5x tables and in quick recall of number bonds to 20. They are developing an understanding of the need to count on to find the difference between 2 single digit numbers and can record an associated number sentence correctly with the largest number first. Higher attaining 7 and 8-year-olds are working at the level that is expected for their age. They can use their understanding of place value to partition and recombine in order to solve problems involving money. They are developing the vocabulary and strategies associated with mental calculation and rapid recall but these remain underdeveloped and are inhibiting progress.
- 91 Lower attaining 8 and 9-year-olds are insecure in their knowledge of place value to 1000. They have difficulty in finding the largest and second largest number from four given digits and are not confident in identifying odd and even numbers from a range of four digit numbers. They complete pictograms to record personal preferences of fruit and begin to develop an understanding of the use of bar charts to handle data. Higher attaining pupils use partitioning and doubling and halving strategies to solve addition and subtraction problems including finding fractional parts of whole numbers. They are able to use inverse operations to check solutions to problems and can associate fraction problems with division and repeated subtraction. Pupils are able to construct bar charts independently and are familiar with the terms x and y axis. Lower attaining pupils aged 9 and 10 are developing a secure understanding of simple number

sequences and are confident to use their knowledge of multiplication to investigate and explain the concept of square numbers. They can talk about their work using correct mathematical vocabulary and are able to draw upon existing knowledge to support new learning. Higher attaining 9 and 10 year-olds who are taught by a temporary teacher have difficulty in responding to the brisk pace within oral mental activities. They are slow to respond to counting on and back in units of five and they have particular problems with bridging tens. Their response to more formal written methods is, however, good. They can find multiple factors of given numbers and take initiative to push their own learning forward by discussing patterns found and checking solutions to multiplication problems through use of inverse operations.

- 92 Lower attaining pupils aged 10 and 11 are working at a level that is approximately two years below the level expected for their age. In mental oral work, they struggle to find number bonds to 20 around 40 per cent of pupils are reluctant to respond. Pupils can complete simple number patterns and sequences and are beginning to understand the concept of negative numbers. A small minority of pupils can explain their reasoning using the correct mathematical vocabulary. Higher attaining pupils are more confident in mental oral work although almost 50 per cent rely heavily on concrete resources such as fingers and number lines to count on and back in decimal fractions. They are more confident in their understanding of the 8x table and work well in pairs to solve mental problems related to this within a target board activity. They can use their understanding of multiplication to solve problems expressed as formula and are able to explain their reasoning using the correct vocabulary and terms. The use of information and communication technology within mathematics for pupils aged 7 to 11 is underdeveloped and its impact on learning is unsatisfactory.
- 93 The opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills in other subjects are mostly unsatisfactory. However, good examples were prominent. In one class pupils aged 5 and 6 use measuring and counting skills to record evidence in science and they reinforce their understanding of horizontal and vertical lines in ICT. In another class pupils aged 7 to 9 use data handling within science and ICT to record correlation between body measurements and age.
- 94 Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning are very good. Pupils are eager to learn. They are supportive of each other and give spontaneous praise to peers in the course of lessons. The level of independence is good and pupils enjoy taking responsibility for their own learning. Older pupils show respect and intervene appropriately in order to offer alternative strategies and to ask questions that will take their learning on further. Pupils enjoy challenge and are anxious to meet the learning targets that have been agreed with them.
- 95 The quality of teaching in mathematics is unsatisfactory although it is good overall for Year 1 and 2. The main contributory factor in this is the weak teaching of oral mental mathematics, particularly of the pupils aged 7 to 11. Teaching is unsatisfactory in 11 per cent of lessons, satisfactory in 33 per cent, good in 44 per cent and very good in 12 per cent of lessons.
- 96 The quality of teaching varies throughout the school. In the teaching of 5 to 7 year-olds it is never less than satisfactory with three-quarters being good. One of the key features in the good teaching in this age range is the teachers' consistent good use of mathematical vocabulary and the effective use of resources, including classroom support assistants. Teachers manage pupils' learning well and provide an interesting range of activities to match the learning needs of pupils. Pupils are aware of what is expected of them due to the clarity of the objectives that their teachers share with them. Where teaching is not as good, the

weakness is in the first part of the lesson during the teaching of oral mental mathematics. The teaching lacks pace and challenge and fails to pick up on pupils' misconceptions.

- 97 The greatest inconsistency in the quality of teaching exists in the 7 to 11 age range. Between the ages of 7 and 11 pupils are ability grouped for mathematics and the recruitment of additional part-time staff has enabled small classes to be organised. The lower achieving pupils are in the smallest groups with additional classroom support assistants. The teaching of the higher attaining pupils is good or very good. The very good teaching occurs with higher attaining pupils aged 8 and 9. The teaching here is due to very good teacher subject knowledge and clarity of exposition. Planning is good and a brisk pace is maintained which sustains interest in the lesson. The good teaching of other high attaining pupils and of a group of lower attaining 7 and 8 year olds, taught by a temporary teacher, is characterised by effective planning, good questioning and classroom management strategies and good subject knowledge that is able to challenge and extend pupils' thinking. Whilst the teaching here is good there is a need to improve the initial part of the lesson in order to increase pupils' capability in mental and oral mathematics. The least effective teaching in the 7 to 11 age range is for three groups of lower attaining pupils. The satisfactory teaching of pupils aged 8 to 11 does not challenge pupils sufficiently and insecure teacher subject knowledge fails to pick up on errors leading to misconceptions. The unsatisfactory teaching of 7 and 8 year-olds lacks pace and due, to low levels of subject knowledge, the teacher is not able to take pupils learning forward appropriately.
- 98 The greatest weakness is in the teaching of oral mental strategies. There is a concern that the current teaching arrangements of pupils between the ages of 7 and 11 do not adequately support all pupils. This is a particular concern for lower achieving pupils who are attaining at a level just above the threshold that would entitle them to special needs provision. These pupils are taught by a number of permanent and part-time staff who have insufficient subject knowledge to support and accelerate learning to a satisfactory level.
- 99 The effectiveness of the school's strategy to teach the skills of Numeracy is satisfactory. The time allocated to mathematics is in line with statutory entitlement and the school uses the framework for the National Numeracy Strategy to guide planning. This is effective for all pupils except for lower attaining pupils aged 7 and 8 where the medium term plan for the previous year and previous stage of learning is being used. This is not in keeping with the intention of the National Numeracy Strategy as it does not offer pupils access to the range of mathematical opportunities they are entitled to for their age. The quality and range of resources to support learning are unsatisfactory, particularly to support the development of oral mental strategies. This is an area for the school to address in conjunction with improving teaching and learning in this aspect of mathematics. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress against targets and the use made of this information are very good. Pupils are involved in the target setting process and know what they need to do to improve. Pupils enjoy this level of challenge and are well motivated to achieve their targets. The marking of pupils' work is consistently good and supports pupils' progress towards targets. Regular assessment is made against short-term plans, specific learning is reinforced and support is re-focused to meet individual needs. In addition, analysis of pupils' attainment in statutory and non-statutory tests at the end of each year provides whole school curricular targets for improvement which are shared with pupils and clearly understood by them.

- 100 Leadership and management of the subject is good. The coordinator has a good overview of attainment throughout the school and, through rigorous unit analysis, has successfully identified key curricular targets for each teaching group in order to ensure that teacher and pupils alike have a clear focus for future learning. The coordinator has developed effective systems to regularly monitor teachers' planning and the outcomes of pupils work. Although monitoring does not involve observation of teaching, there are plans to introduce this as part of the Senior Management Team monitoring system in the near future. The coordinator has begun to share her own good practice with colleagues through the 'Springboard Mathematics' initiative and recognises that this needs to be further developed, in order to support the school towards improvement. The good monitoring systems developed have enabled the coordinator to correctly identify the strengths and weaknesses within her subject. She has made good use of non-contact time to write an action plan which gives priority to improving standards in oral mental mathematics throughout school. This is already being addressed as a matter of urgency with the support of Local Education Authority's numeracy consultants.

SCIENCE

- 101 The results of the 2001 National Curriculum tests for pupils' aged 11 were below the national average but matched the average in comparison with similar schools. On the basis of teacher assessment, pupils' results at the age of 7 match the national average and are average in relation to similar schools. The results of the 2001 tests indicate that standards have improved, especially in the percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels at the age of 7. The standard of attainment of the pupils currently Year 6 is below that expected for their age but, in Year 2, the attainment of pupils match that expected for their age, which shows that they achieve well in relation to their below average skill levels on entry to the school. There was no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls and none was noted during the inspection.
- 102 The quality of teaching overall is unsatisfactory although there is evidence of good and very good teaching throughout the school. Teaching is good for pupils aged 5-7. Teachers prepare their lessons thoroughly, have good subject knowledge and emphasise the importance of learning through well-planned, structured, practical activities. The majority of teachers have good expectations of pupils' behaviour and of what they can do. As a result, they set challenging and interesting work. This was shown in a Year 2 lesson when pupils worked in pairs to develop their understanding of healthy and unhealthy foods. A 'big book' was used effectively to draw pupils' attention to the contents of a sandwich. Pupils aged 5-7 learn how to handle a variety of simple scientific equipment carefully and safely and to take part in discussions about scientific ideas. Good emphasis is given to teaching pupils the basic skills of carrying out an investigation and of recording their findings in different ways. Higher attaining pupils show appropriate skills in making sensible predictions and are able to carry out a simple, fair-test with help from their teacher. The attitudes of pupils are good and they work well together, listen attentively to the teachers and show interest in their activities. They show much curiosity and enjoyment when involved in practical work and are very keen to answer questions. There are many opportunities for pupils in Years 1 and 2 to be involved in practical activities to develop their scientific knowledge and understanding of life and living processes and of different materials. However, other aspects of the science National Curriculum programmes of study are less well developed. This is confirmed by teacher assessment results in 2001 when pupils' understanding of physical processes was well below the national average.
- 103 The teaching of pupils aged 7-11 is unsatisfactory although it varies from unsatisfactory to very good. In the very good Year 5 lesson taken by the temporary teacher, pupils interestedly

explored the effects of air resistance. The teacher's clear explanation skills and very good questioning ensured that pupils developed a good understanding of the effect of surface area on an object falling to the ground. Through carrying out a timed test the higher attaining pupils had learnt by the end of the lesson that the number of paper clips attached to a spinner affects the time it takes to fall. However, few pupils understood the link between air resistance and weight. In another very good lesson in Years 3 and 4, pupils identified questions that could be investigated in the context of work on moving and growing. Again, the very good explanation and questioning skills of the teacher enabled the pupils to turn questions into a form that could be investigated. Numeracy skills were used well in this lesson as pupils measured around each others heads to try and answer the question, 'Do the pupils in Year 4 have heads that are larger than those of pupils in Year 3?'. In both these lessons the teachers demonstrated very good subject knowledge which ensured that pupils learning opportunities were maximised and their achievements were very good. However, in the unsatisfactory lessons seen, teachers' subject knowledge was insecure which was an issue identified from the previous inspection that has not been satisfactorily addressed. Teachers' did not understand themselves the concept of air resistance and the need for a fair-test was not appropriately stressed, again a weakness identified in the previous inspection. Consequently pupils in Year 6 made limited steps in acquiring new scientific knowledge in the lessons seen and pupils' achievement was unsatisfactory. The weaknesses identified in the previous inspection with regards to the teaching of science for pupils aged 7-11 have not been satisfactorily addressed and still require 'the expert help beyond that which is within the school'.

- 104 Pupils use literacy skills appropriately as they write up investigations and label scientific drawings and diagrams of structures such as the human heart. A good example of the use of literacy skills is the way in which pupils in Years 3 and 4 have made a booklet, with a contents page, to show the need for healthy eating. In some classes, pupils' unsatisfactory handwriting and presentation skills detract from the quality of their work. Pupils also make satisfactory use of their numeracy skills, as was seen in Year 5 science work when pupils used a stop-watch to measure the time it takes for a spinner to fall to the ground. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through this subject. Pupils are given many opportunities to discuss ideas, work collaboratively together and consider the opinions of their friends.
- 105 The curriculum is satisfactory and it meets statutory requirements. The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory, however, as more thorough and rigorous monitoring and evaluation is needed and more effective support given to address the weaknesses identified. The planning procedures appropriately incorporate national curricular guidance and provide teachers with clear information about the key learning intentions and skills to be taught. However there are unsatisfactory issues within planning, as the teachers of the younger pupils often subsume the science into a topic and consequently some aspects of the National Curriculum programmes of study are not delivered in an appropriate depth. Also, pupils in Years 5 and 6 are carrying out the same activities and the work given to the pupils does not satisfactorily provide for the differing ages and abilities within the two age groups. Assessment and record-keeping procedures are satisfactory although written marking does not effectively enable pupils to know why their work is good and what they must do to improve their scientific understanding and knowledge. Resource provision is satisfactory and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. The current provision in the subject shows unsatisfactory improvement since the last inspection, as many of the weaknesses identified then remain the same.

ART AND DESIGN

- 106 As no art lessons were timetabled during the period of inspection, it is not possible to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching and learning. Judgements on standards and other aspects of the subject are based on pupils' work seen in displays and portfolios and also on discussions with pupils and, in the absence of the subject co-ordinator, on examination of teachers' planning. This limited evidence indicates that the subject lacks status in the curriculum. It also shows that pupils do not have a good enough range and quality of opportunities to develop their knowledge, understandings and techniques to the levels expected for their age. In several respects, the work produced by pupils now in Year 2 and Year 6 is of a lower standard than was reported by the previous inspection and is below that achieved in most schools by pupils of the same age.
- 107 In Year 2, pupils have a secure understanding of how to mix and match different colours and their portrait studies show sound colour selection and control of paint. In their observational drawings of local buildings such as Holy Trinity Church, the more talented pupils control pencil line accurately to represent shapes and features. The work of other pupils is below the expected level as it is limited by uncertain pencil control. The school has maintained the use of sketchbooks that was favourably reported by the previous inspection. As then, the sketching of faces, trees and buildings at regular intervals both promotes and records the development of pupils' skills in observational drawing. However, there are no equivalent records of their work and progress in other media.
- 108 Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have explored the theme of movement through a limited range of two-dimensional materials and techniques, which include string printing, paper collage, crayon sketches and figure sequences. The work on display is restricted in its control of media and in its experimentation with form, colour, texture and technique to express aspects of the theme. Pupils' response to relevant works by famous artists shows little awareness of the style and effect of the original. The Year 6 work is neither better observed nor more accomplished than that of Year 5. Pupils can recall very few opportunities to use their sketch books, or to work creatively with textiles or with clay and other three-dimensional materials. They do, however, recall good opportunities to use their drawing skills to support learning in other subjects. Displayed examples of observational drawings of the school and of the Souter Lighthouse are of good quality, as are some character sketches based on the book, "Goodnight Mr. Tom". Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have used a paint program on the computer to create good designs for stained-glass windows, and also to create flower studies in the manner of Seurat by arranging small dots of colour. Most art opportunities in other subjects, however, only provide further practice in pencil and crayon drawing because they are not planned and used to promote specific advances in art and design.
- 109 The limited evidence seen during the inspection indicates that shortcomings identified in the previous report still remain. The programme of work still lacks a clear focus on the systematic development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skill across a more balanced range of art media and techniques and of the work of notable artists and craftspeople in two and three dimensions. Still not enough is done to monitor and evaluate the work of the subject. Resources are of good quality and well organised for access and use, but they are very limited in range.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 110 Only two lessons, both of which were in food technology, could be observed, and the school could offer no examples or photographic records of previous work in other branches of the subject. Judgements are based on the evidence of the two lessons, together with evidence provided by teachers' planning and discussion with teachers and pupils. This evidence covers too limited a range of activities, understandings, skills and ages for overall judgements to be made on teaching and learning, or on standards other than in food technology.
- 111 In both the lessons seen, pupils showed the levels of understanding and skill expected for their age. This indicates that the standards attained in food technology are higher than when the school was last inspected. In a lesson of satisfactory quality, a class of middle and lower attaining pupils in Year 1 extended and reinforced their understanding of the range of factors involved in preparing a fruit salad. The lesson was well planned and organised and very well resourced to enable different groups to work and learn at their best level. The teacher placed strong emphasis on hygienic practice and on points of healthy eating. As a result, pupils were able to explain when and why it was necessary to wash hands, wear aprons, use clean utensils and avoid coughing near food. Some showed an early grasp of the value of a fibre diet and could link different tools correctly to different fruits. With support, lower attaining pupils learned about why it is necessary to prepare a fruit salad in a strictly ordered sequence of steps. All pupils worked hard and with good concentration and enjoyment throughout a productive lesson, although the quality of new learning suffered in the final stages because the activities were too rushed.
- 112 A good lesson challenged a class of Year 6 pupils to design and make a decorative finish for a biscuit product that would attract a particular type of consumer. In discussion, and in the practical activities of drawing their designs and decorating their biscuits, pupils showed a secure understanding of the factors they needed to consider, particularly that of how the finish of a product is influenced by the intended consumer. Discussion was brisk and well-focused and proceeded quickly into challenging practical activities because the teacher's questions and instructions were clear, the classroom was well organised, and the pupils were eager, attentive and responsible throughout. Most pupils drew their designs carefully, making good use of the shapes and colours of the decorative materials that would be attractive to their customers. As a result, their finished biscuits gave them justified satisfaction. All pupils tried hard to record their learning by writing up their practical procedure and evaluating their product. The teacher gave strong support to those with special needs to enable them to complete all phases of the lesson. Many pupils found this element very demanding because it stretched their literacy skills to the limit. However, in the lesson's final phase the pupils showed that they had learned well about what made some designs effective and what could be improved. In discussion, pupils in Year 6 talk convincingly about the products they have designed and made, using a range of materials, components, ingredients, processes and techniques. They express much enthusiasm for the subject and its activities, although they do not use appropriate vocabulary to discuss their work and can say very little about their experience of mechanical and electrical systems.
- 113 Sound leadership of the subject has ensured that the most significant issues raised by the last report have been tackled and successfully resolved. National guidance is being carefully adapted to the needs of the school and stronger links with science are being planned to create better opportunities for the two subjects to support each other. The good depth of practical detail in the emerging scheme of work strongly supports teachers' planning and carries a clear line of progression. Improved systems for monitoring pupils' progress need to be developed to support the established process whereby teachers evaluate each completed topic. Care needs

to be taken to ensure that pupils experience a good balance and range of topics across the subject and that all topics can be supported by quality resources.

GEOGRAPHY

- 114 Due to the organisation of the school's timetable, no geography lessons were seen in the 5 to 7 age range. However, scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning indicates that pupils reach the nationally expected levels for their age and progress is satisfactory. Pupils aged 11 attain the levels expected for their age and achievement is satisfactory. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
- 115 Pupils aged 5 to 7 successfully learn about their immediate environment through the practical observation of it and by the age of 7 are familiar with features within their own school and locality. They are introduced to the concept of maps and how to plot features on them as they record their own journey to school. Pupils apply their mathematical knowledge, when conducting a traffic census, by using a tally chart and recording their findings in graph form. The ongoing display of 'Barnaby Bear's Holidays' introduces pupils to other countries of the world. Pupils record their work through drawings, sequencing activities and short descriptions. However, opportunities for extending pupils' writing skills are lost in follow up activities, which lack challenge as pupils draw and colour on photocopied worksheets.
- 116 Pupils in the Year 3 and 4 classes are developing their knowledge of life in India and are able to compare social conditions there with their own, through a study of photographs. In the Year 5 and 6 classes pupils demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of the water cycle through classroom displays and their own, labelled diagrams. Through practical investigation and pictorial references, pupils develop an understanding of the importance of clean water and a plentiful supply and learn correct technical terminology, for example, filtering, sedimentation and coagulants, as they study water treatment.
- 117 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with examples of some very good but some unsatisfactory teaching being observed. Teachers' planning is good, pupils clearly know what they are to learn and resources are readily to hand. For example, in the Year 3/4 classes teachers effectively use photographic resources to help focus pupils' attention and deepen their understanding of what is being taught, whilst in the Year 5 and 6 lessons the samples of different types of water immediately engage pupils' interest. The teachers' clear explanations and good questioning techniques extend pupils' thinking and they have clear expectations of their behaviour. However, although the learning support teacher works effectively with the less able pupils during group tasks, she is not used as efficiently as she could be during introductions to lessons. In a Year 6 lesson, where teaching is unsatisfactory, explanations are unclear, questions lack challenge and the pace is slow. All pupils listen carefully to instructions, concentrate on the tasks set, enjoy working collaboratively and behave well. Presentation of work is satisfactory, however pupils need to apply their literacy skills, for example, punctuation and spelling, more accurately when writing up information and there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to extend their independent writing skills during follow up activities. Pupils apply their mathematical skills as they keep a weekly tally on the consumption of water within their own household. However, insufficient use is made of information and communication technology for pupils to develop their geographical skills.
- 118 Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. There is an up-to-date policy and the nationally produced scheme of work is used successfully to plan a suitable range of work

for all pupils on a 2-year cycle. Pupils' work and teachers' planning is checked by the co-ordinator but there is no evaluation of teaching and learning. Pupils' work is assessed appropriately at the end of the topics but there are no formal systems in place to assess or record their progress to ensure they are making continuous progress throughout the school. Resources are satisfactory although some reference books in the library are outdated and good use is made of the local environment, visits to Hadrian's Wall, Souter Lighthouse and the seaside to enhance pupils' learning.

HISTORY

- 119 No history lessons were observed during the inspection and few examples of recent work for pupils aged 5 to 7 were available. There is, therefore, insufficient evidence to make a judgement on attainment and progress for pupils aged 5 to 7 or on the quality of teaching throughout the school. From a scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussion with pupils and the co-ordinator, pupils aged 7 to 11 attain the nationally expected levels for their age and make satisfactory progress. Standards for pupils in this age range have been maintained since the previous inspection.
- 120 The teaching of history is timetabled to alternate with geography and religious education on a 4 weekly block basis. Evidence from teachers' planning, pupils' work and discussion with the co-ordinator indicates that pupils aged 5 to 7 experience an appropriate range of history work.
- 121 Between the ages of 5 and 7, pupils are helped to develop their understanding of time by listening to stories about the past and about how famous people contributed to change, for example, Guy Fawkes. They show a sound knowledge and understanding of significant events in British history, for example, the Gunpowder Plot. They write, with the aid of pictures and independently, to correctly sequence the main events of the Plot and describe the character of Guy Fawkes. This contributes to pupils' moral development as they discuss the issues of right and wrong. They learn about everyday aspects of life at this time, for example, clothes and record their findings in pictures. Pupils record dialogue through speech bubbles and use information books to make accurate drawings of, for example, costume. However there are few opportunities for pupils to write independently at some length, with an over dependence on photocopied worksheets and drawing and colouring activities.
- 122 Pupils aged 7 to 11 achieve satisfactorily as teachers present them with a wide range of experiences that develop their understanding of what it was like to live in a particular age. In the Year 3/4 classes, for example, pupils develop their factual knowledge in studies related to Tudor times. They learn about Henry V111 and they understand in simple terms some of the consequences of the split with Rome. Good links are made with art and music as pupils make a large collage of Henry V111, listen to Tudor madrigals and experience a special 'Tudor day'. Through a study of Ancient Greece pupils in Year 5 and 6 demonstrate a sound knowledge and understanding of the religious beliefs, city states and important events, for example, the Battle of Marathon. They know about Greek myths and in one Year 6 class pupils use their literacy skills well as they write and illustrate individual books recounting the stories of, for example, Theseus and the Minotaur. Pupils in Year 6 talk enthusiastically about their work which they enjoy and remember previous topics well as they make comparisons between life in Victorian times and now through a study of school life.
- 123 In all topics studied, time lines are used to support pupils' sense of chronology and enhance their numeracy skills. Pupils are provided with a good range of resources, including,

photographs, artefacts, information books, videos and the internet to help them research information. However, pupils need to apply their literacy skills, for example, spelling and punctuation, more accurately when writing up information and take greater care with the presentation of their work. Opportunities for extending pupils' independent writing skills are lost in follow up activities where, for example, in Year 3/4 classes, information is simply copied or worksheets are used.

- 124 Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has a good knowledge of what is happening in history throughout the school as she monitors teachers' planning and standards in pupils' work. Although there is no monitoring of teaching or systems in place to assess and record pupils' attainment and progress, the co-ordinator has clearly identified these as areas for development in her current action plan. Resources are satisfactory and effectively supplemented by the museum loan scheme. Visits to Hadrian's Wall and Eden Camp and the use of the local area are used well to raise pupils' awareness of British history and enhance their learning. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 125 Pupils' progress in information and communication technology is satisfactory in word processing and graphics but they demonstrate far fewer competencies within, and across other areas of the curriculum such as data handling, spreadsheets and control. Only one lesson was observed in which information technology was explicitly taught and judgements have been made on examples of pupils' work and displays around the school and after discussion with staff.
- 126 Progress through the 5 to 7 age range is satisfactory as pupils are able to use the mouse with increasing skills. Children in the reception class can use an appropriate program to put clothes on a teddy and their work has been assessed according to their capabilities. In Year 1 and 2 pupils are able to use different fonts and to change the colour. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 show increasing skills in graphics and have progressed from 'taking a line for a walk' to drawing faces, choosing appropriate colours and inserting features. Overall attainment is below the national expectation.
- 127 In the 7 to 11 age range progress is unsatisfactory and largely limited to word processing and graphics. In Years 3 and 4 pupils are able to use clip art to insert and move pictures and are beginning to use art programs. In Year 6 pupils are able to find relevant articles on the internet and insert them into their work. They are learning to use the hyperlink tool with increasing expertise and confidence.
- 128 There is evidence that information and communication technology is beginning to be used across the curriculum. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 were using a programmable toy in mathematics to develop skills in estimating length and to identify number bonds to twenty. However, expectations were low in both instances with pupils required only to press the start button to move the programmable toy after the teacher had set the sequence for moving straight ahead and the number bonds program did not challenge pupils and the keyboard skills were not proficient. Information and communication technology was also used to support science for older pupils when they were required to record data in lessons on moving and growing and to plan a healthy meal.

- 129 Resources in ICT are now good with a well-equipped suite housing 11 new computers on a school-share system. Some classes in Years 1 and 2 have stand-alone machines but all are networked to the Internet. Present timetabling arrangements do not make best use of the ICT suite. The teaching of literacy and numeracy in the morning means that the computer suite is often not used for more than half the day. Years 1 and 2 classes with single computers in the classrooms are not allocated a session in the suite and these pupils do not have the opportunity for discrete lessons in ICT. The digital camera has been used to enhance display around the school and to provide graphic records of pupils' visits.
- 130 The subject co-ordinator has recently returned from a secondment to the Local Education Authority and has worked hard to revise planning to ensure a coherent curriculum. Staff are not all confident in their ICT capabilities but are working hard to develop their skills. All eligible members of staff have participated in professional training and some have also registered for more advanced training. The co-ordinator holds a weekly 'surgery' when staff can come to him for advice or training and his support is appreciated.
- 131 The co-ordinator has begun an extra-curricular club for pupils that is well attended with pupils enthusiastic about the time they spend there. He has compiled a short-term development plan to implement use of the suite and develop ICT across the curriculum and also plans to develop record-keeping, assessment and monitoring of the subject. He has a clear policy and vision of how to progress the development of ICT within the school.

MUSIC

- 132 Due to organisation of the timetable only two music lessons, for pupils aged 7 to 11, were observed during the inspection. It is, therefore, not possible to make an overall judgement on attainment, achievement or the quality of teaching. However, teachers' planning, curriculum documentation and discussion with pupils indicate that all pupils experience an appropriate range of musical activities.
- 133 Pupils aged 5 to 7 are given many opportunities to sing and to play instruments. They learn to clap a variety of rhythms, keep a steady beat, identify and name a range of instruments and recognise the sounds they make.
- 134 As pupils aged 7 to 11 sing in assemblies and in lessons, they show satisfactory control of pitch, dynamics and tempo. They are taught how to improve their singing by sitting up straight, breathing properly and pronouncing the words clearly. In a Year 3/4 lesson pupils discuss how the mood of a song can be conveyed through their singing. They are introduced to the terms 'tempo' and 'dynamics' to help them and evaluate their work in order to achieve the correct effect for the final 'performance'. Pupils in Year 6 correctly identify repeated phrases and the chorus within the lyrics of a new song. They fit the words to the tune by listening carefully first, adding the chorus and finally all the words. However, in the final performance pupils are speaking the words rather than singing them.
- 135 The quality of teaching in the lessons seen is satisfactory. Teachers' planning is well structured with clear learning objectives shared with the pupils. Teachers effectively build on pupils' prior knowledge and through careful questioning give them opportunities to offer ideas and evaluate their work. Pupils listen carefully and behave well. However, teachers lack confidence to model work for the pupils and they rely heavily on taped music. There is ineffective use of space within the music room to encourage correct posture, as pupils sit on the floor throughout the lessons.
- 136 Music contributes effectively to other areas of the curriculum, for example, speaking and listening, numeracy, drama and dance activities and history, as pupils listen to Tudor madrigals. There are opportunities, for example, during assemblies to listen to music from other cultures. Some older pupils receive good instrumental tuition in cello and violin from peripatetic teachers from the local education authority's music service.
- 137 There is currently no music co-ordinator as the specialist music teacher left the school in July. This is having a detrimental effect on the subject as there is no longer a choir or recorder group and teachers lack clear direction and support. However, there is a good policy and guidelines in place to help teachers plan their work and the school uses a music scheme specifically developed to enable a non-specialist teacher to be confident when teaching the subject. There is no monitoring of teaching and, although pupils are given opportunities to assess their work, there are no formal systems in place to assess and record pupils' attainment and progress to ensure continuous progress as they move through the school. Pupils have opportunities to perform to an audience as they present their Christmas concert to parents. There are good quality resources, including the introduction of new songbooks, to support teaching and learning and music makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 138 Physical education does not have a high profile in the school. However, from the limited amount of lessons observed, standards match the levels expected for pupils' age.
- 139 In the 5 to 7 age range there is good progress made in games and satisfactory progress in gymnastics. Pupils aged 7 know about the value of warm-ups and participate eagerly in physical education lessons. In games lessons, pupils have enough time to learn new skills and to practise them as they throw and catch balls to each other. There is good attention to the different ability levels of pupils and this adds to the quality of learning that takes place. During gymnastics lessons, too much time is taken to put out apparatus, which limits the amount available to practise.
- 140 Teachers working with the 5 to 7 age group are very conscious of the need to teach techniques to the pupils. In the games lesson, the teacher is very keen to show pupils how to splay their fingers out to catch a ball correctly. In a gymnastics lesson, the teacher was keen to point out how they should land carefully and safely when dismounting a piece of apparatus. The teaching is good overall for this age group and there is good attention given to pupils' evaluation. Pupils have learnt to be critical, but in a constructive way, and this helped them to improve their own as well as others' performance.
- 141 Only two dance lessons were observed in the 7 to 11 age range. Both lessons were with two of the three Year 3/4 classes. They provided quite a contrast in their quality. One was taught by the physical education co-ordinator who had the necessary skills to help pupils develop sequences of a high quality. The other teacher was less successful and resulted in the lesson lacking clarity or purpose. In the first of the lessons, where the teaching was very good, pupils were able to build on their previous performance and gradually improve their sequences. They were asked to consider the pathways they took and the direction and level of their movements. The end result was pleasing with pupils being fully engaged. This was in contrast to the other lesson where many pupils were unclear about what they were aiming for and therefore expectations were not high enough. These pupils lost interest and, although their behaviour remained good, there was a sense that some were just marking time.
- 142 The co-ordinator has much expertise but has not had the opportunity of sharing much of it with the rest of the staff because other subjects have taken priority. She recognises that some staff lack confidence in teaching the subject and has tried to introduce a 'fail-proof' scheme to help them. Dance is an area that most staff feel insecure about. However, until physical education has some whole staff development priority there is only a limited amount that can be done to improve the present situation.
- 143 There is only a relatively small amount of time allocated to physical education. Pupils are provided with opportunities to learn to swim. They aim to achieve swimming 25 metres unaided and then their place is allocated to younger pupils. The co-ordinator runs a very successful gymnastics club, which has gained a good reputation because of the standards attained by the participants. There is a range of other sporting activities offered to pupils including some of a competitive nature such as cross country, athletics, boys and girls football.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 144 The school has adopted the Agreed Syllabus of the Local Education Authority and is presently amalgamating the requirements of this syllabus with national guidelines for planning.
- 145 Religious education is not afforded the status of a core subject and the complicated timetabling arrangement of linking religious education with history and geography, and allocating 3- hour blocks a week on a 4-week rota, has weaknesses. This means that the subject is not visited at all for 8 week periods throughout the year. Knowledge and understanding of religious education are not, therefore, steadily and consistently developed and reinforced.
- 146 In Years 1 and 2 pupils' attainment in learning about religion is unsatisfactory although pupils make satisfactory progress in the subject. In Year 2 they are aware of the Christian practice of baptism, which has recently been studied, but are not confident in their knowledge of religious stories or beliefs. Their attainment in learning from religion, however, is good and pupils are able to empathise and explore feelings. There was good evidence of this as pupils studied the story of John the Baptist baptising Jesus and were able to identify his feelings and transfer them to their own feelings when being trusted with a special job. They showed original thought as they compared feelings of being independent or happy as they fed pets or helped grandparents for the first time.
- 147 In the 7 to 11 age range pupils make satisfactory progress as they study world religions but attainment overall is still below the levels expected in the Agreed Syllabus at the end of the Key Stage. Pupils are able to recount the main elements of major world religions including Muslim and Hinduism but had little knowledge of Old or New Testament stories and their ability to give meaning to religious beliefs and ask questions about puzzling aspects of life is limited.
- 148 Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They are attentive and able to work co-operatively in small groups, as in Year 6 when they discussed the differences between churches and chapels. They listen to each other and respect the opinions of others. Assemblies make a valuable contribution to the religious education of the children with appropriate ethos and participation of pupils to create interest and understanding.
- 149 When religious education is covered in the timetable, teaching is good in both Key Stages. Artefacts are used to make points and children's understanding is developed as when Year 2 teachers used photographs of local churches or different types of baptism to generate discussion or extend knowledge. Teaching of thinking skills is being developed in the school and this is making a valuable contribution to the way pupils learn from religion. Good use is made of visits to local churches and of visitors to the school and pupils benefit from these first hand experiences.
- 150 There is a whole-school policy in place but planning is still being established as the staff moves from the national guidelines syllabus to the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus. Resources have been increased in recent years and this is helping with teaching. The curriculum co-ordinator has recently lost her previously available time to monitor books and there is a need for this to be restored. Work in books is spasmodic and is not always well presented. Often writing within the subject lacks depth, although there is evidence of effective work on Hinduism in some Year 3/4 classes where the children had made divas to celebrate the festival of Diwali.

- 151 The co-ordinator has attended courses and has been able to disseminate relevant information to staff. This has been effective in the improved teaching of thinking skills within the subject where pupils are now being taught to think and pose questions. At present there are no assessment procedures in place. To improve the subject the timetable arrangements need to be reviewed to assess whether on-going learning experiences would enhance knowledge and understanding of, and about, religion. There is a need to recognise that religious education is considered to be equivalent to a core subject.