

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST WILLIAM OF PERTH RC
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Rochester, Kent

LEA area: Medway

Unique reference number: 118775

Headteacher: Mrs Deirdre Beven

Reporting inspector: Mrs Janet Gill
18706

Dates of inspection: 4th - 7th March 2002

Inspection number: 195526

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Canon Close Rochester Kent
Postcode:	ME1 3EN
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Felim McCarthy
Date of previous inspection:	6 th May 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect Responsibilities
18706	Mrs Janet Gill	Registered inspector	English Art and design Foundation Stage English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19693	Mrs Sally Hall	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
13754	Mrs Judy Morris	Team inspector	Science Geography History Music Special educational needs	
22895	Mr Nigel Cook	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St William of Perth Roman Catholic Primary School is situated a mile from Rochester. Pupils attending the school live in Rochester and the surrounding towns and villages. Six per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is below average. The school has 200 pupils, more than at the last inspection, and is smaller than the average sized primary school. There are now seven classes; previously there were six. Attainment on entry to Reception is broadly average. There are 16 per cent of pupils with special educational needs, mainly with moderate learning difficulties, with one child with a statement of special educational need; this is below average. The ethnicity of the vast majority of pupils is white. There are three children in the school for whom English is an additional language. However, they do not require any assistance with acquisition of the English language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St William of Perth Roman Catholic Primary School is an effective school. The headteacher, strongly supported by the deputy headteacher, staff and governors, provide the school with good leadership. Many good improvements have been achieved. The school promotes educational inclusion effectively; consequently all pupils, whatever their ability, achieve well. The quality of teaching is good and is having a positive impact on learning and, as a result, standards are improving. Children are enthusiastic learners and make good progress. The school uses its resources well and provides good value for money. This is an improvement from the previous inspection.

What the school does well

- The headteacher provides good leadership and, together with governors and staff, has worked hard to improve the quality of education and raised levels of attainment for all pupils.
- There is very good teamwork. All staff fully support each other with a very strong commitment and the capacity to improve the school's provision for the pupils in their care.
- The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good having a positive impact on rising standards. The support staff play a significant role in helping pupils with their learning.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good in this particularly caring school, where relationships are excellent.
- Financial planning supports the school's educational priorities very well. Specific grants are used very effectively; hence pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

What could be improved

- The curriculum and provision for children in the Foundation Stage.
- Communication with parents and carers about events, school policies and procedures.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has improved well since it was inspected in May 1997. It has addressed the weaknesses identified and maintained the strengths. The school has improved the quality of leadership and management, teaching and learning, the curriculum, assessment and the accommodation. Assessment procedures are now good in the core subjects and being extended to other subjects. A particularly good development is the analysis of data and the subsequent action being taken. The school has improved standards in science, information and communication technology (ICT), art and design, design and technology and music. The improvements in science have been very good; also standards in English and mathematics have risen. The school has improved the provision for ICT by placing more emphasis upon the direct teaching of skills through a well-structured programme. The governors' role in monitoring has

improved; they are proud of the strengths of the school and are aware of most of its weaknesses. The school is in a good position to continue to tackle its priorities.

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

Key	
Well above average	A
Above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

In the 2001 Year 6 National Curriculum tests, standards in English and mathematics were well above average and in science above average. In comparison with pupils from schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, results were above average in English and mathematics and average in science. The school has worked hard to raise standards, met its challenging target in mathematics and exceeded it in English. The school's rate of improvement has reflected the national trend. In the 2001 Year 2 National Curriculum tests, standards in reading were average, in writing below average and in mathematics they were well above average. This reflects the higher number of pupils with special educational needs in English. Children enter Reception with broadly average attainment. They make satisfactory progress and most are likely to achieve the early learning goals, with higher attainment in personal, social and emotional development.

Currently standards at the end of Year 2 in reading, mathematics and science are above average. In writing they are average. Whilst in Years 3 to 6, pupils build successfully on their knowledge and skills and, by the age of 11 many are working at above average levels in all core subjects. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well through Years 1 to 6 and make good progress. Given the increased focus on the core subjects it is impressive that the school has raised the standards in foundation subjects that previously were unsatisfactory and maintained standards in geography, history and physical education (PE). Standards are now in line with that expected nationally for seven and 11-year-olds in ICT, art and design, design and technology and music. In ICT, due to a high profile and good skills teaching, in some aspects of the curriculum pupils are working at above average levels.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Attitudes to the school are very good. Pupils enjoy school, are keen to do their best and are enthusiastic in what they do.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave very well in and around the school. There are rare incidents of anti-social behaviour. The school works hard to support the pupils involved. There has been one, fixed-term exclusion during the last year.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are a strength of the school and create a stimulating and caring environment for learning. The pupils enjoy taking responsibility but have little opportunity to show initiative.
Attendance	The attendance levels are very high, with no unauthorised attendance. Pupils are punctual in arriving for school.

The pupils' very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships have a positive impact on their learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Improved quality of teaching is helping standards to rise and supporting the very good attitudes and behaviour seen throughout the school. Of the 55 lessons seen, 17 were good and 18 very good or better. None were unsatisfactory, unlike the previous inspection. This is a good improvement. High quality teaching was observed throughout the school and in many subjects. However, teaching in Years 3 and 6 was particularly strong. Pupils are taught basic skills very well and teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies; these skills are taught well which helps pupils make good progress. ICT skills are also taught well.

There are significant strengths in teaching. Teachers' expectations are high; this, coupled with interesting activities, helps to motivate pupils so they enjoy learning and make good progress. The quality of planning is good, with clear learning objectives identified for each lesson. Work is usually matched to pupils' ability, where it is not, lower attaining pupils are supported effectively by learning support assistants. This meets the needs of all pupils and helps them learn well. Teachers use effective questioning to focus, check and extend pupils' thinking. The management of pupils, based on the very effective behaviour procedures and excellent relationships, is very good. This results in pupils concentrating well and working hard. Day-to-day assessment is good, although the quality of marking is variable. Where it is good it helps pupils achieve their individual targets and improve their work. The arrangements for homework are satisfactory and support work carried out in lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides pupils with a satisfactory curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 and meets statutory requirements. There is a good emphasis on English and mathematics, which is helping to raise standards. The Foundation Stage curriculum is unsatisfactory. It is based on the National Curriculum instead of that recommended. The school offers a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils are very well supported by all staff and make good progress. Positive class rules and sympathetic support from class teachers and support staff ensure the successful integration of these pupils, who have good access to all areas of the curriculum.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good attention is given to moral development. Social development is good. There is a strong sense of community within the school to which all pupils contribute. Provision for spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory overall. There are insufficient opportunities for the development of pupils' understanding of the multicultural society in which we live.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school is a caring community and there is a high level of mutual respect. The teachers have high expectations of behaviour, but the policies on behaviour and anti-bullying lack sufficient detail. Good procedures are in place for assessing and supporting pupils' academic progress in the core subjects and are developing in other subjects.

Overall, the parents have satisfactory views of the school and make a good contribution to their children's learning. However, the school's links with its parents are not effective. Communication with parents and carers about events, school policies and procedures are unsatisfactory.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school provides good leadership and management. The headteacher is setting a clear direction for the school and is aware of what the school needs to do next to improve. There is very effective teamwork between all staff and a strong commitment from everyone to continue to raise standards. The deputy headteacher offers very good support to the management of the school but often has too little time to support colleagues and implement new initiatives. Delegation to staff of management responsibilities has improved and is good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors' role has improved and is effective. The governing body fulfils most of its statutory duties satisfactorily but there are minor omissions in its Annual Report to Parents. Governors know the school well and are committed to its further development. Overall they have a clear understanding of the strengths and weakness but have not kept parents sufficiently informed.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school works hard to evaluate its successes and weaknesses and is well aware of its overall performance. The school has taken very good action to improve and is an effective school.
The strategic use of resources	Educational priorities are linked very well to financial commitments. The budget is very well planned and monitored by the headteacher and governors. Specific grants are used very well to help pupils make good progress. The school now offers good value for money.

The principles of best value are understood well and implemented by the headteacher and governors. The provision for staffing is good and for accommodation and learning resources satisfactory. The accommodation has improved since the previous inspection. There are two new classrooms and an ICT suite but there is still no dedicated outside area for the children in Reception.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and behave well. • The range of extra-curricular activities is very good. • There are high expectations of what children can achieve. • Children have good attitudes towards school and learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents are not well informed about progress. • The school does not work closely enough with parents. • Some parents feel that the school is not well led and managed. • The quantity and quality of homework. • Communication about events and procedures.

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views. The pupils are enthusiastic about school. They have very good attitudes and their behaviour is very good. The school expects the pupils to work hard and provides a very wide range of after-school clubs. The inspection team does not share most of the parents' concerns. They found that the school provides parents with good information about how their children are getting on. The school's leadership and management are good. Appropriate homework is given. However, links with parents are not effective. Parents are not fully involved or informed about

school policies or procedures. This has led to misconceptions about how the school deals with oppressive behaviour and, to some extent, the role of parent helpers and teaching assistants in the classroom. Sometimes newsletters give parents very little notice of forthcoming events.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards of achievement are better than when the school was last inspected in May 1997. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and 2¹ were in line with the national average in English and mathematics and below average in science. Standards have improved. This is the result of very hard work by the headteacher, staff and governors, who have put into place a number of effective strategies to bring about improvement.
2. Standards of attainment for 11-year-olds in the National Curriculum tests in 2001 were well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. In English and mathematics higher than average numbers of pupils achieved the higher Level 5. These are high results reflecting the commitment to raising standards of which the school can be justifiably proud. When compared to similar schools standards were above average in English and mathematics and in line with the average in science. The fact that few pupils gained the lower Level 3 in the tests in English and mathematics indicates that pupils with special educational needs also achieved well in the tests. The reason that science was not quite as high as English and mathematics is that the proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 5 was around average. However, all pupils did achieve at least the average Level 4². There has been a steady improvement in science over the last few years, although there was a dip in standards in 2000. At the time of the last inspection in May 1997, standards in science were unsatisfactory. Consequently raising achievement in science was a key issue. Very good improvement has been made in the subject and results are now above average.
3. The overall trend for improvement for all core subjects is broadly in line with the national trend. The school's targets are challenging, but they were exceeded in English and met in mathematics. Slightly higher targets have been set for the current Year 6, which the school is confident in achieving. Inspection evidence suggests that it is likely that these targets will be met. Similar targets have been set for English for the present Year 5 pupils but higher targets for mathematics for the National Curriculum tests in 2003. Assessment has improved, which helps the school to accurately predict pupils' progress and attainment.
4. Standards of attainment for seven-year-olds in the National Curriculum tests in 2001 were in line with the national average in reading, below average in writing and well above average in mathematics. When compared to similar schools they were below average in reading, well below average in writing and above the national average in mathematics. The reason standards were not higher in reading and writing was because a higher than average number of pupils did not achieve the average Level 2. This was because there were more pupils with special educational needs in the class who had particular difficulties in English. However, pupils achieved better results in mathematics, and all pupils gained the average level or above. Standards in reading and writing rose steadily between 1998 and 2000 before the dip in standards. In mathematics standards have continued to rise from 1998. This is partly due to the effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and a high focus on the subject. Teacher assessment in science indicates that standards are very high. This is because all seven-year-olds achieved at least Level 2, with an average number reaching the higher level.

¹ Key Stage 1 includes pupils in Years 1 and 2. Key Stage 2 includes pupils in Years 3 to 6.

² Level 4 is the average level pupils of 11 attain in the National Curriculum tests taken during the summer term.

5. The effective teaching with a shared commitment to high standards from the headteacher, deputy headteacher, co-ordinators and all staff, ensures all pupils throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 make at least good progress in the core subjects and some in Years 3 and 6 make very good progress. Above average standards are attributed to better teaching than in the last inspection. There are a number of reasons for this: the successful implementation of both the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies; the very high focus on science teaching and learning throughout the school and good analysis and interpretation of data to identify weaker areas in the subjects. For example, in mathematics greater emphasis is now given to teaching the interpretation of graphs and tables. Effective planning and good quality teaching mean that standards continue to improve. The teaching of English and mathematics is usually good and at times very good. Pupils are highly motivated and interested in their work, moved on at a rapid rate and their thinking challenged.
6. When children start in the Reception class their attainment is broadly average, with a minority of children achieving higher than expected for their age. Children make satisfactory progress and, by the end of the Foundation Stage³, many are well prepared to start Year 1 work. Good quality teaching ensures that children make at least sound progress in all areas of learning and many are likely to achieve the early learning goals. In some aspects of language, literacy and communication, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world many pupils exceed the early learning goals. Linked with the school's very high emphasis on personal development and promoting good behaviour, many children exceed the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development.
7. Inspection evidence shows that at the end of Year 2, pupils attain average standards in writing, but in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics and science standards are above average. In writing they have improved and are average. The present Year 6 pupils are working hard and achieving good results. Inspection evidence indicates that by the time pupils are 11 standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. Standards in reading are particularly high in Year 6. However, in writing they are not as high but they are still above average. Writing and spelling are key priorities for the school in both key stages and a detailed action plan has been devised. The strengths in pupils' mathematics include: good attention to using mathematical vocabulary; effectively working on mental mathematics in the introductory sessions, and being able to articulate their thinking when encountering problems. The strengths in English and mathematics at both key stages reflect the good quality teaching, the depth of coverage achieved and the structure and consistency provided by the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The school is making very good progress in pushing up standards in science. Pupils enjoy science, try hard and have good skills in being able to predict what might happen in a fair test. One of the reasons achievement in science has improved is the development of investigative skills and a good balance between investigations, factual learning and recording.
8. In the foundation subjects there has been good improvement in art and design, design and technology and music and standards are in line with those expected for seven and 11-year-olds, previously they were unsatisfactory. Particularly good improvements have been made in information and communication technology (ICT). Standards are average overall for pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6 but in some aspects of ICT, such as in communication and information retrieval, pupils are working at above average levels. This is due to a high focus on the subject, improved teacher expertise and specific teaching of skills during dedicated ICT lessons in the suite. Average standards have been maintained in history, geography and physical education (PE) by seven and 11-years-of-age. It is to the credit of the school that all these subjects are all in line with national expectations considering the drive to raise standards in the core subjects.
9. The school has managed to combine raising standards in the core subjects with a satisfactory curriculum offering a wide range of interesting opportunities for learning. The school has adopted Qualification and Curriculum Authority (QCA) national guidance which has also helped to raise standards. This is because there is a clear progression in pupils' skills development and interesting activities to help them practise their newly acquired skills. For example, in both art and design and design and technology pupils' standards have improved because they have

³ Children in the Foundation Stage are those who are in the Reception class.

opportunities to work with a range of media using different techniques. They work with care, modifying their pictures and designs and produce well-finished articles. In ICT teachers are teaching skills well and giving pupils plenty of opportunities to practise them in a variety of situations in many subjects, such as in English, mathematics, art and design and geography.

10. The school makes good arrangements to ensure that all pupils are included in the full range of activities. This ensures that there is little difference in the progress and attainment of boys and girls throughout the school. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is effective and so they make good progress towards targets set in their individual education plans (IEPs). The clear well-planned provision for pupils is helping them to achieve their best. They work alongside other pupils in the classroom and because of the expertise and very good support from the learning support assistants their specific needs are met well in everyday lessons. Pupils are encouraged to join in with lessons and there is high expectation of their learning and behaviour. For Years 3, 4 and 5 pupils the school will be carrying out a literacy programme – Additional Literacy Support (ALS). This is for selected pupils who are likely to benefit from daily focused work to enable them to keep up with the National Literacy Strategy objectives. This ultimately will also help to raise standards as pupils are already making good progress. Year 6 pupils will be selected for booster classes early next term to ensure those that have the potential to attain the average level in the core subjects will be given every chance to do so.
11. Pupils with the potential for higher achievement are usually set work at a level appropriate to their ability. This is evident in the number of pupils reaching higher levels in English, mathematics and science. When the same work is set for all pupils in the class, learning support assistants skilfully work with lower attaining pupils in order for them to access the curriculum. This is evident in the results from the recent National Curriculum tests, as most pupils achieved the average Level 4 in the tests in English and mathematics and all achieved Level 4 in science. This is good achievement and reflects the commitment of the school to be fully inclusive and to ensure that all pupils, whatever their talents and ability, reach their potential. Pupils with English as an additional language speak, read and write English with competence and so achieve equally well in lessons. They require no extra assistance with the acquisition of English and benefit as much as other pupils do from the good teaching and effective implementation of the National Literacy Strategy.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. The children in the Foundation Stage are developing well in personal, social and emotional skills. This was seen in a lesson in the computer suite when the youngest children in the Reception class learnt to 'drag and drop' in order to build up an individual face on the computer screen. They were excited about using the computers, but behaved very sensibly and treated the equipment with respect. Each child worked independently and was confident to ask an adult for help. They were able to make choices in building up their pictures and were decisive about hairstyles and facial expressions. They listened carefully to their teacher and remembered her instructions. They enjoyed looking at each other's pictures and showed pride in their work. Their good personal and social skills enabled them to complete complex tasks quickly and accelerated their learning.
13. The pupils' attitudes to school are very good and have improved since the last inspection, when they were good. The parents are delighted their children love coming to school. The pupils' enthusiasm for learning has a very positive impact on their progress. This was seen in a Year 3 literacy lesson when the class were reading the Hindu story of 'Rama and Sita' from a big book. The pupils listened attentively to the teacher and were keen to answer her questions. They became engrossed in the story and there were gasps as the heroine was kidnapped by the demon king. They sustained their concentration for a considerable length of time and then moved to their tables without fuss for their group work.
14. Behaviour at the time of the previous inspection was good; it is now very good. The parents are impressed with the pupils' behaviour and like the 'family atmosphere' of the school. The school generally operates as a happy and harmonious community free from oppressive behaviour and this has a very positive impact on pupils' learning and relationships. The pupils know that adults who work in the school expect good behaviour and the pupils nearly always behave very well.

Sanctions are rarely needed. In lessons pupils put their hands up to answer questions and do not shout out. The pupils behave sensibly during lunch and play well together in the playground. The midday supervisors are justly proud of the pupils' conduct. The pupils say that incidents of anti-social behaviour are rare. The pupils are trustworthy. During the inspection three pounds worth of dinner money was lost in the playground. The money was found by pupils and returned to the office. There was one, fixed term exclusion last year when a pupil brought a weapon into school.

15. The pupils' personal development and relationships are very good. Relationships throughout the school community are excellent. The pupils work very well together in groups and support each other in lessons. They show respect for adults working in the school and feel confident in asking for help. Some older pupils enjoy taking responsibility around the school and act as librarians and help at lunchtime. The pupils enjoy raising money for charity and greatly enjoy taking part in the wide range of extra-curricular activities. The caretaker is impressed with the pupils' respect for the environment. There is no litter or graffiti. However, the pupils have no opportunities at present to bring about changes in school life. The school is aware this an area for development and have plans to introduce a children's parliament.
16. The pupils' attendance is very good and has improved since the last inspection when it was good. The attendance rate of 95.8 per cent for 2000/01 is well above that found in similar schools and there was no unauthorised absence. The vast majority of parents bring their children to school on time. The pupils' very good attendance and punctuality have a positive impact on their attainment and progress.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. Improvements in the quality of teaching have made a significant contribution to the rise in standards seen since the school was last inspected. The overall quality of teaching is good, with much that is very good. In the May 1997 inspection 34 per cent of unsatisfactory teaching was seen; 66 per cent was satisfactory, with 11 per cent good or better. The lessons ranged from very good to poor. Improving the quality of teaching was a key issue in the previous inspection. Now 65 per cent of all teaching is good or better. That the standard of teaching has improved is largely due to the good monitoring of teaching and learning supported by good professional development. Also the successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies together with other recent developments in literacy and numeracy have given teachers considerable expertise in these subjects. In the current inspection no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Of the 55 lessons seen, 36 were good or better with 19 being very good or excellent. High quality teaching was observed throughout the school and in many subjects, although the strongest teaching observed was in Years 3 and 6. The overall quality of teaching is good in English, mathematics, science, ICT, design and technology and PE. It is satisfactory in art and design, history, geography and music. The high levels of good and better teaching result in good learning taking place throughout the school by highly motivated and hard working pupils.
18. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good overall. Very good teamwork between the class teacher and the learning support assistants helps to create a safe, secure and stimulating environment, where much effective learning takes place. However, the planning is based on the National Curriculum, which is school policy, rather than the recommended areas of learning and does not incorporate activities outside of the classroom. This is an area of weakness. Nevertheless, there are strengths in teaching in all areas of learning, with a particularly strong focus on personal, social and emotional development. Assessment arrangements are satisfactory and information is used appropriately to ensure children are identified that may need extra support. Children make satisfactory progress and the majority of children are likely to achieve, and a few exceed, the early learning goals by the end of the Reception year.
19. Teaching is good for pupils with special educational needs. Throughout the school, teachers and support staff are fully aware of the targets set for these pupils and meet regularly to review and plan for the next step in learning. This is ensuring that lessons are being planned with the needs of pupils clearly in mind. The contribution made by the learning support assistants is of very high quality. This is partly due to the fact that they receive very good training from the school and are

highly valued members of the school team. In addition, class teachers prepare them very well for the work they undertake in each lesson. They give particularly good support in ensuring the pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all activities and are helped to achieve well for their abilities. This enables the pupils to make the best possible progress and develop confidence. In group activities this support and encouragement ensures that pupils complete the work set thereby having good access to the curriculum.

20. Teachers have good expertise, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. As a result, the majority of the basic skills are well taught, particularly in Years 3 and 6 and pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress in learning. Literacy skills are taught well in other subjects, such as in design and technology when Year 6 pupils write evaluations about their hats that they had designed and created for literary characters. Numeracy skills are promoted well through a good focus on ensuring pupils acquire mathematical vocabulary as well as the mental recall of basic number facts and simple calculations. Teachers also make sure that pupils learn to apply their skills in practical and problem-solving activities and provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to use numeracy skills in other subjects, such as using keys and co-ordinates in map work in geography.
21. Information and communication technology skills are taught well because teachers are confident teaching the subject. There is more emphasis of direct teaching of ICT, with the effective use of the suite. More opportunities are provided for pupils to use their skills across the curriculum, such as in mathematics, geography and in art and design, when Year 2 pupils used a digital camera to take photographs of the environment when studying landscape paintings.
22. The quality of lesson planning is good and is consistent throughout the school. It is related well to medium-term planning, with effective adaptation according to the progress pupils have made previously. The match of work to the abilities of pupils is satisfactory with work usually adapted to meet the needs of all pupils. When this is detailed it helps all pupils make good progress, whether they are higher attaining pupils or have special educational needs. However, there are some occasions when all pupils carry out the same task when it would be more appropriate for a closer match of pupils' ability to the task. Usually the learning support assistants work with the lower attaining pupils, offering very good support which helps them access the lesson. A strong feature of the planning is the clear intention about what is to be taught in each lesson; this is shared effectively with pupils. When it is revisited at the end of the lesson and pupils are asked for their opinion on the progress they and others have made it reinforces what pupils have learnt in the lesson well. A very good example was in a Year 5 literacy lesson when the teacher said 'tell me one thing you have learnt today'. Pupils discussed 'learning about possessive pronouns' and 'writing stories that would be suitable for a particular audience'. This is a strategy that helps to motivate and challenge pupils and ensures they gain a good knowledge of what they are learning. In all lessons teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and this, together with the interesting activities provided, results in pupils achieving well.
23. An effective range of teaching methods is used, being adapted well to both the requirements of different subjects and usually the needs of most pupils in the class. This means all the pupils make good progress in their learning as well as gaining in independence. Teachers explain things clearly, give good examples and demonstrate well. They use effective questioning to focus, check and extend pupils' thinking. This was evident in a Year 4 art and design lesson when pupils were challenged to think creatively about the chairs they were making. They had to offer their opinions about the use of different tools and materials they were using and consider whether they would work. This had the effect of motivating pupils and of enhancing their learning and enjoyment of the subject as they discussed their work with animation. In addition, speaking and listening skills are promoted effectively as they listen to each other and share their ideas.
24. The inspection of this school included a focused view of the contribution of teaching assistants to teaching and learning in literacy and mathematics. The learning support assistants are very effective in making an extremely positive contribution to the teaching and learning in literacy and numeracy. They have taken the very good opportunities offered to train to support pupils in daily lessons and through intervention programmes such as Early Literacy Support (ELS), Additional

Literacy Support (ALS) and Springboard (numeracy support). Consequently, they have very good knowledge and understanding of the strategies and help the teachers to teach basic skills very effectively. They are effective in reinforcing concepts learnt in the lessons, which means pupils make good progress. This was clearly illustrated when the learning support assistant worked with a lower attaining group of Year 3 pupils in numeracy. She skilfully went over work pupils previously found difficult and then built on their knowledge of fractions to move on to the present lesson. It was through her careful analysis of pupils' previous difficulties that the teacher adjusted the planning in a subsequent lesson. This helped pupils to make very good gains in their learning.

25. Pupils' learning is promoted well by opportunities they are given to discuss their work with a partner, improve it and then report back to the whole class, as observed in a Year 6 literacy lesson. The good teaching methods seen throughout the school in all subjects help pupils to acquire knowledge and skills easily and to work hard. Teachers are skilled at moving learning forward and in all lessons a good pace is maintained, ensuring that pupils remain focused and work hard.
26. The outstanding relationships seen in the school, together with the consistent application of the very high quality behaviour management procedures ensure that the organisation and control of pupils in lessons is very good. This very strong aspect of teaching, together with the challenging and interesting activities provided, means pupils are interested in what they learn. They concentrate well, taking an interest in their work, ensuring it reaches the high standards expected of them. Resources are carefully chosen and effectively used to help pupils understand and make good progress. For example, in Year 3, pupils' historical skills are enhanced when good use is made of resources such as census forms and old maps of Rochester.
27. The scrutiny of work that pupils had completed previously showed some good quality of marking. Marking includes helpful comments, encourages improvement and acknowledges when this has been achieved, although there is some variation in the quality in some classes. Where the assessment has been thorough, the information is used well to plan the next lesson and identify any problems pupils may have had. During lessons, assessment procedures are effectively used by all teachers; this enables them to refine what they are teaching when necessary and support individual pupils well and at the same time challenge the higher attaining pupils. Homework is satisfactorily used to support pupils' learning, mainly in English and mathematics.

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

28. A significant amount of work has been undertaken since the previous inspection to address curricular weaknesses. Key issues related to the need to raise attainment in science, ICT, design and technology, art and music; to develop schemes of work to ensure continuity; to review the time allocations for all subjects; and to use assessment to analyse data and inform subject development. Statutory requirements are now fully met in all subjects.
29. The school has adopted schemes of work based on Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) national guidance that effectively informs planning and what should be taught in each year group. This provides a satisfactory basis for ensuring that a balanced programme is delivered and skills are taught in a progressive manner throughout the school. Subject co-ordinators recognise that these schemes need to be adapted to match the needs of the school more closely. Work on this has already started in some subjects. Staff are keen to undertake continuing professional development. Recent training in ICT for staff has directly helped to raise expectations of pupils' work and therefore improve standards. Subject co-ordinators have a clear idea of what they would like to develop in their curricular responsibility and this is set out well in the school improvement plan.
30. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum overall in Key Stage 1 and 2 and meets legal requirements. There are effective cross-curricular links, particularly ICT with numeracy and literacy. The curriculum gives good emphasis to literacy and numeracy. Planning has improved and is

good. Lessons have clear objectives and assessment is used to inform subject development and the next stage in pupils' learning. However, the time allocation for some foundation subjects, such as design and technology, limits the development of some aspects of work and higher standards. The curriculum for the children in the Foundation Stage, however, is unsatisfactory. It is based on the National Curriculum rather than the early learning goals, which is the recommended guidance for young children. In a number of areas of learning, such as physical and creative development, provision is inadequate.

31. The school motivates its pupils to have a good attitude to work and has a positive effect on their learning. The school has established the National Literacy Strategy effectively and there is a good use of literacy skills in other subjects, such as in design and technology and history. The National Numeracy Strategy is established and has been instrumental in raising standards of attainment; good links with such subjects as science and geography reinforce numeracy skills well. ICT is used effectively in other curricular areas, such as literacy, numeracy and geography. For example, a Year 2 lesson was observed where pupils used mathematics software in the computer suite to effectively reinforce division in mathematics.
32. The school meets the particular needs of its pupils and lessons contain activities that are matched to the ability of the children. Where this was done well extension activities or different tasks for higher attaining pupils were planned for and carried out. Pupils with potential for higher achievement are encouraged and challenged well in lessons; consequently a significant proportion of pupils attain the higher levels in the National Curriculum tests.
33. Curricular provision for pupils with special education needs is good, often as a result of the support of very effective learning support assistants (LSA). Pupils usually work in ability groups in the core subjects and in mixed ability groups at most other times often supported by a LSA. There is good individual support for most pupils either within a group or on a one-to-one basis for pupils with statements of special educational need. These pupils have full access to the National Curriculum. Pupils' individual needs are defined and targets are set out in the Individual Educational Plans (IEPs). Statutory annual reviews and reviews at different stages of the Code of Practice⁴ are observed. The school has a policy of full inclusion of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and the Code of Practice is fully implemented, although the new procedures have not yet been implemented. Good class rules and sympathetic support from class teachers maintain the successful integration of all pupils, including those with special educational needs.
34. The governing body has approved an appropriate policy for the teaching of sex education, and matters relating to personal, health and social issues are dealt with sensitively. The programme of work is included mainly in the science and religious education (RE) schemes of work. Whilst there is a policy, the school does not have a scheme of work. Instead commercially produced guidelines are used supplemented by school activities. For example in Year 5 circle time⁵, feelings are shared and thoughts for others are developed. The school nurse supports Year 6 pupils in dealing with sensitive issues within the sex education programme. Children are supported well in making the right choices in areas such as relationships and misuse of drugs.
35. The wide range of extra-curricular activities is very good and includes football, gardening and drama. These are well attended and recognised by parents as a strength of the school. These clubs effectively extend pupils' experiences and enjoyment. Sports clubs give pupils opportunities to enter into competitive activities both within school and against other schools. The provision for clubs are largely dependent on the voluntary efforts of teachers, learning support assistants and other helpers, usually parents.
36. The school's partnership with the community is good and has improved since the last inspection. The school has maintained its strong links with the parish and has extended its range of visits and

⁴ Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

⁵ Circle time – time allocated during Personal, Social and Health (PSHE) lessons for discussion between pupils and their teacher about a range of relevant topics and issues.

visitors. These links make valuable contributions to the pupils' attainment and personal development. For example, the pupils benefited from drama workshops when they studied 'Twelfth Night', and the transport police talked to the pupils about health and safety. The school makes good use of local places of interest, such as Rochester Guildhall and a synagogue, to enrich the curriculum. The school has developed beneficial links with the world of work through contacts with a local bank. The school encourages pupils to raise funds for charities and the oldest pupils develop their social skills on the leavers' residential visit.

37. The school has established good links with its partner institutions. As members of the local consortium, staff meet with other teachers from local primary schools to share good practice and undertake joint training. The school has established useful links with local secondary schools and the pupils benefit from specialist PE teaching.
38. Equality of opportunity is provided satisfactorily except when pupils are withdrawn from lessons for music lessons. This results in pupils regularly missing the same lessons. Lessons are paid for by the parents; therefore, not all pupils have the opportunity to access them as part of the school curricular provision.
39. In the last inspection, the school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development was good. This provision has been maintained and remains good, overall. The attitudes and values embodied in the school's aims and mission statement pervade the school. The headteacher and staff value every member of the school family and this acts as a good example to pupils. The school provides a very caring environment in which the personal development of pupils is a high priority. The good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning.
40. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Pupils enter the hall for assembly quietly but opportunities to create a spiritual atmosphere by playing appropriate pieces of music are missed. Singing in assemblies and hymn practice make some contribution to creating a spiritual atmosphere. Daily acts of collective worship provide pupils with opportunities to confirm their beliefs in Christianity but this aspect is mostly affirmed during a prayer. Pupils are given sufficient opportunities for reflection. As an example, in assembly, the teacher read a story illustrating how a soldier helped his Muslim enemy to be restored to good health after his injuries. Pupils responded sensibly to questions as: how feelings might have changed towards the enemy; how would they feel and what had they learnt from the story. The story linked well as to how pupils can help each other in school even if they did not know or like them. Opportunities for pupils to present assemblies to one another enable pupils to share their experiences and through religious education lessons their knowledge of other world faiths and beliefs are extended. Prayers are said at various times of the day such as before lunch and before going home. The use of circle time where pupils can more fully explore their thoughts and feelings is not widespread throughout the school and this is a weakness. Religious education makes an important contribution to pupils' spiritual development and other subjects provide pupils with moments when they experience some awe and wonder. For example, in a Year 3 science lesson, a pupil spontaneously expressed the term "it's like magic", when he discovered the strength of a magnet.
41. The very good provision for pupils' moral development is a strength of the school. It is founded on the very high expectations that staff have of them. Relationships are excellent. All staff act as very good role models for the pupils and are very consistent in the way they show respect for both pupils and adults. The school has a very positive approach to the management of behaviour that works very well. Weekly "Achievement Assemblies" contribute to building pupils' self-esteem and respect for others. Staff make pupils aware of what is acceptable and help them to develop an appropriate idea of what is right and wrong. Pupils are well behaved in and around the school. They discuss and decide on their own very positive class rules, which are displayed in the classrooms and which they adhere to very well. Through their sporting activities, pupils are developing a healthy sense of competition, an awareness of rules and pride in their team's achievements.

42. Provision for pupils' social development is good. There is a strong sense of community within the school to which all pupils contribute and this is embedded in the school's ethos. The school provides positive corporate experiences through assemblies, team activities, clubs, residential experiences and school productions. Pupils work well together either in pairs or groups within lessons discussing their work sensibly and sharing resources. They collaborate on decisions such as how to successfully perform together in PE and dance lessons. Pupils care for the environment and are helping to plan and improve the school grounds. However, there are insufficient planned opportunities for pupils to exercise leadership and responsibility. Some older pupils initiate responsibilities themselves when they sort, tidy and order reading books used by younger pupils.
43. Overall, the school makes satisfactory provision for cultural development. Pupils have opportunities to learn about their own culture through history, art and traditional stories. The numerous visits that are made out of school, use of visitors and the extra-curricular activities that are available enhance the provision further. Religious festivals are celebrated throughout the year. Through art, story, music and the study of other countries, pupils gain a fair understanding of the variety of different cultures around the world. There are some opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures in British society but these are limited. The development of pupils' understanding of Britain as an ethnically and culturally diverse society is not yet fully developed.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

44. The school provides good educational and personal support for its pupils. The school is a very caring community and the headteacher is particularly supportive when pupils and their families have difficulties. One pupil said that the headteacher 'made her feel much better' after talking to her about a personal problem. The adults working in the school know the pupils well and there is a feeling of mutual respect throughout the school community. The pupils say that they would feel able to talk to teachers, learning support assistants and lunchtime supervisors if they were upset. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good and the teachers make helpful comments in the pupils' annual reports.
45. Overall, the school has good procedures to ensure the pupils' welfare, health and safety. The school has appropriate arrangements for child protection and has drawn up a clear policy. The headteacher is the designated member of staff with responsibility of child protection and carries out her duties effectively. Adults working in the school are aware of the school's procedures.
46. The arrangements for first aid are good. A member of staff is qualified in first aid and others have undertaken basic training. Pupils who are ill or injured receive very good care and attention. However, there is no medical room and pupils are treated in the corridor or foyer and there is a lack of privacy. Good records are kept of accidents but the school does not keep records when medication is given.
47. The school pays due attention to health and safety. The staff and particularly the caretaker are vigilant of any potential risks. The school has adopted a model local education authority (LEA) health and safety policy but has not yet adapted it to the needs of the school. During the inspection some minor concerns were brought to the attention of the headteacher. Supervision before school and during breaks is good. The school has an Internet Access policy and ensures that reasonable steps are taken to ensure that there is safe use of the Internet for its pupils.
48. Overall, the school's arrangements for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory. Attendance data is analysed and monitored by the class teachers. They follow up unexplained absences and the school works with the educational welfare officer on the rare occasions when attendance or punctuality is a cause for concern. There are variations in the methods for marking the registers and the attendance policy is vague about procedures for monitoring attendance. The school rewards good attendance.
49. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. This is not a highly regimented community, but one where there is an ethos of mutual respect and high expectations of good behaviour. Pupils and adults working in the school are generally very good

role models. There is a satisfactory behaviour policy which contains details of sanctions, but does not include the successful rewards system.

50. The procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are generally satisfactory. The headteacher and staff are vigilant of rare incidents of anti-social behaviour and work hard to support the pupils involved. The school's anti-bullying policy lacks detail and does not reflect the school's practice. The parents' concerns about bullying arise in part because the school has not involved them in developing and informing them of the school's anti-bullying policy and procedures.
51. Since the last inspection there has been a good improvement in the procedures for assessment and analysis of data. In the Reception class pupils are assessed using the LEA entry assessments. They are not always used sufficiently to ensure children are set appropriate work. This is because the children tend to be in two main groups for literacy and numeracy dependent upon their age rather than their ability. These arrangements are reviewed towards the end of the spring term. In the intervening period between the National Curriculum tests in Years 2 and 6, the school uses optional tests for Years 3, 4 and 5 similar to those at the end of Key Stage 2. Results are carefully analysed in order to identify and rectify weaknesses in the curriculum. As an example, attainment in science at the end of Key Stage 2 has shown a marked improvement since weaknesses in provision were addressed.
52. Other formal assessments and an analysis of pupils' progress relating to English and mathematics has been used to identify pupils who have not done as well as they might. As a result 'catch up sessions' - 'Additional Literacy Support' (ALS), 'Springboard' and 'Booster' groups have been introduced to raise attainment for underachievers in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, to good effect. Other tests are administered regularly and the results are carefully monitored and used to set targets for future learning. The school has established a timetable to ensure that all subjects are regularly assessed after each unit of work but in some foundation subjects this is not yet sufficiently established to identify the next stage in learning. Assessment of pupils with special educational needs is good and used well to set targets for improvement.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

53. Overall, the parents have satisfactory views of the school. They recognise the school's many strengths and most have made a positive decision to send their children to St William of Perth. However, a significant minority of parents are unhappy about certain aspects of school life.
54. The vast majority of parents feel that behaviour is good, but a few parents are worried about bullying amongst older pupils. The parents say that their children like school and are expected to work hard. They are pleased that the school helps the pupils to become mature and responsible and feel that there is a good range of extra-curricular activities. The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views and considers these areas to be strengths of the school.
55. Over one third of the parents who returned the questionnaire feel that the school does not work closely with them. A similar proportion of parents say that the school does not give them enough information about how their children are getting on. A significant minority of parents are unhappy about homework and have concerns about the leadership and management of the school. The inspection team considers that appropriate homework is given, usually in English and mathematics. It extends and reinforces concepts taught in lessons. Leadership and management are now good and consequently there have been many improvements since the previous inspection.
56. The school's links with its parents are not effective. Although the school is welcoming, the staff and governors do not involve parents or keep them fully informed about school policies and procedures, for example with regard to anti-social behaviour and the role of learning support assistants and parent helpers. This has led to misconceptions about how the school deals with oppressive behaviour, including bullying. Newsletters are only produced once a term and parents were upset that the latest newsletter was sent out very late, giving them very little notice of future events.

57. The quality of information which the school provides to parents is good. The prospectus is informative, but the governors' annual report to parents does not contain all the information it should. Each term, the school sends parents helpful information about the topics their children will be studying. The parents appreciated the opportunities to work alongside their children in science and ICT lessons. The inspection team found that throughout the year the school provides parents with good information about progress. The pupils' annual reports are detailed and give parents useful information about how their children can improve their work. The school offers parents beneficial opportunities to meet with the class teachers each term to discuss their children's progress.
58. The impact of the parents' involvement on the work of the school is good. Parent governors are supportive of the school and help to shape its future. Parents enjoy attending productions and musical soirees and the SWOP (St William of Perth) Friends organise fundraising and social events. Working parties of parents are making considerable improvements to the school grounds. Nearly all parents have signed the home-school agreement.
59. The parents' contribution to their children's learning is good. A considerable number of parents help in the classroom and others assist with extra-curricular activities. Parents are keen to support their children and attendance at the autumn and spring consultation evenings is very high. Twenty per cent of parents who returned the questionnaires had concerns about homework. The inspection team found that homework made a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning. The contact books are often used as an effective means of communication between home and school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

60. St William of Perth Roman Catholic Primary School is well led and managed. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. All the key issues identified at the time of the previous inspection have been tackled very positively. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior staff manage the school well. The leadership provided by the headteacher is good. She sets a clear vision and direction for the work of the school and is aware about what the school needs to do next to improve still further; this is shared effectively with the staff and governors. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. However, parents are not always fully informed about some aspects of the work of the school and this is a weakness.
61. The headteacher has generated a strong team spirit amongst the staff. All staff fully support each other with a positive shared commitment and the capacity to improve the school's provision for the pupils in their care. The school's aims and values have been agreed by all in the school community and are now reviewed regularly. There is a consistency of approach that ensures that the school's fundamental aims and values are reflected in everything that they do. The school aims to develop confident, caring individuals and in this it is successful. This is a school in which every child is valued and encouraged to develop their full potential. There is a concerted effort to ensure that every pupil is included in this process and a genuine belief that each individual has the capability to do well. This results in a well-ordered, stimulating and pleasant learning environment, where there are excellent relationships in which pupils are able to learn effectively.
62. Delegation to staff of management responsibilities has improved and is good. The deputy headteacher offers very good support to the management of the school but often has too little time to support colleagues and implement new initiatives. A range of responsibilities has been appropriately delegated to staff in addition to their teaching commitment, which is an improvement from the previous inspection. They are playing an increasingly active part in the further raising of standards, although as yet, with the time constraints, they have had limited opportunities to observe teaching and learning. Therefore, there is some room for improvement in this aspect of their work, particularly in the foundation subjects. Nevertheless, there have been good improvements in the work of the co-ordinators. Overall, they have a good understanding of their subjects and work enthusiastically at managing them efficiently. They provide support, encouragement and have helped to ensure the consistency of approach of the curriculum through monitoring of planning and in many instances, pupils' work.

63. The management of special educational needs is satisfactory. A special needs policy is in place as well as good procedures, which contain all the appropriate detail, related to the (old) Code of Practice. The new arrangements are due to be implemented. The governor with responsibility is very well-informed. He speaks highly of the experienced special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) and her improved links with parents. Management of links with outside agencies is good. All learning support assistants have had training and some have formal accreditation to work with pupils with special educational needs, which helps them to offer effective support. The supportive, caring ethos of the school and its respect for the value of all individuals ensure that pupils with special educational needs have good opportunities to take part in all school activities. Pupils' records are well maintained and organised and provide a clear picture of pupils' progress. The school has productive and regular liaison with outside agencies, which are involved as appropriate in pupils' termly and annual reviews. Liaison with parents has improved and is regarded as good.
64. The governing body has developed its role since the previous inspection in 1997. It is effective and fulfils most of its statutory duties satisfactorily, including agreeing performance targets for the headteacher. There are however, minor omissions in the Annual Report to Parents. Governors fulfil their duty to be a critical friend of the school effectively and have a sound understanding of the strengths and priorities for development. Governors are properly involved in the work of the school both as members of various committees and as individuals properly undertaking their responsibilities. The governors fully support the headteacher in her vision for the school. They liaise closely with the school, use information given to them efficiently and monitor policies and developments effectively. Since the last inspection their monitoring procedures have improved and are now good.
65. The school has a good number of suitably qualified teachers with a range of experience to enable them to teach the curriculum. The school has created several new posts since the last inspection, such as a non-class based SENCO and music specialist. These appointments have made improvements to teaching and learning. All teaching and non-teaching staff feel 'part of the team' and relationships through the school are strong. Well-qualified and experienced learning support assistants work effectively alongside the teachers. The midday supervisors maintain a happy and orderly atmosphere at lunchtime. The school has an appropriate induction programme for newly qualified teachers.
66. The inspection of this school included a focused view of how effectively learning support assistants are managed and trained to contribute to the teaching and learning of literacy and mathematics. The overall effectiveness and management of the learning support assistants is very good and reflects the excellent working relationships and teamwork in the school. All learning support assistants are involved in the school's Performance Management procedures. They have opportunities to discuss their work with their line manager and take part in training, both within the school by joining the teaching staff and by attending external courses. They are very well trained and highly valued in the school and make a very effective contribution to the teaching and learning of literacy and numeracy.
67. The accommodation is generally satisfactory and allows the curriculum to be taught effectively. The school has made considerable improvements to the accommodation since the last inspection. It has dealt with the key issue of inadequate hatted classrooms and has built three new classrooms and created an ICT suite. The building is welcoming and is enhanced by colourful displays. It is in good decorative order and is well maintained. The caretaker and cleaner work hard to achieve good standards of cleanliness. The classrooms are generally of adequate size, but the Year 4 room is cramped and this limits opportunities for practical work. The library is accessible, but is situated in a corridor and is unsuitable for whole class activities in library skills. The outside play area for the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory as there is a no separate fenced area or covered area for outside play. This limits opportunities for all areas of learning but particularly physical and social development. The Key Stage 2 playground is rather small and there is no room for pupils to play games such as football or netball during breaks. The Key Stage 1 play area, quiet area, the playfields, orchard and environmental area provide good opportunities for physical education and play.

68. Overall, the range of equipment and material to support teaching is satisfactory. In ICT, English, science and mathematics the resources are good and have a positive impact on teaching and learning. There is a lack of large wheeled vehicles and climbing equipment for the Foundation Stage children and this limits opportunities for their physical and social development. This was the case in the previous inspection. In all other subjects resources are adequate.
69. Resources are carefully managed as are the additional funds to support pupils with special educational needs, who make good progress. The school uses the money available very carefully and very effectively to improve the standards pupils achieve. There is discussion between the headteacher and governors to formulate the budget and this is monitored initially by the headteacher and the governors.
70. The school employs a part-time bursar from the local education authority to monitor and administer the school's finances alongside the school secretary. They regularly report the school's financial position to the headteacher and governing body and use new technology well to support financial administration. Annual audits by the local education authority supplement a self-assessment procedure.
71. Specific grants are used effectively to support priorities effectively and are supplemented from the school budget. For example, the provision of new computer equipment has been partly supported by the use of 'National Grid for Learning' money and school money. There is good use made of the funding for pupils with special educational needs. The school targets expenditure according to the school improvement plan and governors apply best value principles in educational provision well. The school could develop these principles still further by applying a systematic, analytical approach to cost benefit analysis. This will assist the school's planned application for Investors in People status.
72. Given the slightly higher than average income the school receives, the good quality of education pupils receive which helps them to make good progress and achieve above average standards by eleven, the school gives good value for money. This is a very good improvement since the previous inspection when value for money was judged to be unsatisfactory.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

73. To improve the standards achieved, the quality of education provided and promote effective links with the parents, the governors, headteacher and staff should:
- i. ensure that the Foundation Stage curriculum is implemented fully in the Reception class by:
 - reviewing curriculum planning in the Reception class so that it is based on all areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum;
 - reviewing the way literacy and numeracy is taught in the first two terms of the year, particularly for the younger children;
 - providing further opportunities for creative development through increased opportunities for imaginative role play;
 - extending the 'Plan, Do and Review' sessions to ensure children have further opportunities for investigation, exploration and creativity and monitor the children's choices to ensure equality of opportunity within the different areas of learning; and
 - ensuring that the children in Reception receive their full entitlement to the physical area of learning by;
 - developing a secure outside area for outdoor play;
 - ensuring more opportunities are planned and assessed for children to work, play and exercise outdoors; and
 - providing suitable large equipment and storage, when financial resources allow.

(Paragraphs: 18, 30, 67, 68, 75, 77, 78, 79, 80, 82, 83 and 84)

- ii. improve communication with parents and carers by:
- keeping parents and carers fully informed about school policies and procedures;
 - ensuring information sent out from the school is regular and gives parents sufficient notice of events; and
 - reviewing the school's policies with regard to anti-social behaviour and the role of learning support assistants and parent helpers.

(Paragraphs: 50, 53, 54, 56 and 60)

In addition these minor issues should be addressed:

- provide greater opportunities for pupils to learn about the ethnic and cultural diversity of British society through the curriculum in subjects such as art and design and music;

(Paragraphs: 43, 120 and 143)

- review the arrangements for activities outside of the classroom in order that children do not miss parts of lessons.

(Paragraphs: 38 and 146)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

55

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

65

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	18	17	19	0	0	0
Percentage	2	32.5	31	34.5	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR-Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	200
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	16

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR-Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	33

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.2
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
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
		2001	10	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	8	10
	Girls	12	10	13
	Total	19	18	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (100)	78 (97)	100 (97)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	9	10
	Girls	10	11	13
	Total	16	20	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	70 (100)	87 (97)	100 (100)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	18	10

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	16	17
	Girls	10	7	10
	Total	26	23	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	93 (87)	82 (80)	96 (80)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	17	17
	Girls	9	9	10
	Total	26	26	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	93 (73)	93 (60)	96 (57)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	168
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR-Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.1
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR-Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	165

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	414553
Total expenditure	408425
Expenditure per pupil	2042
Balance brought forward from previous year	23644
Balance carried forward to next year	29752

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	200
Number of questionnaires returned	90

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	34	4	2	1
My child is making good progress in school.	43	39	7	2	9
Behaviour in the school is good.	46	47	4	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	45	14	6	2
The teaching is good.	41	46	8	2	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	26	36	23	12	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	21	17	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	47	43	6	1	3
The school works closely with parents.	25	39	22	13	1
The school is well led and managed.	37	38	14	6	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	46	4	2	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	50	42	1	1	6

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

74. The school admits children into the Reception class twice a year, in September and January. There are 14 children in the Reception class who are still four and have been in school since January and 16 older children, all of whom are already five. Positive links have been established with the parents through daily contact and a good induction programme prior to the children coming to school. Children are soon settled and get used to school routines. Many have had pre-school experience prior to starting school. When children enter the Reception class their attainment is broadly average and what is expected for children of their age. Children make satisfactory progress and, by the end of the Foundation Stage many have attained the early learning goals and are well prepared to start Year 1 work. At present there are no children in the Reception class on the register for special educational needs or any children for whom English is an additional language.
75. Provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. There are strengths in the teaching and provision in some areas of learning but there are also weaknesses. The curriculum is largely based on the National Curriculum instead of the Foundation Stage, which is recommended for children until the end of the Reception year. This is a weakness in the school's arrangements in implementing the Foundation Stage. There is coverage of each subject but little attention is taken to the detailed planning for each area of learning. There are no plans for children to learn in the outside environment and in this little improvement has been made since the previous inspection. Children make satisfactory progress in most areas of learning, but in personal, social and emotional development and some aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world, for example, ICT and science, they make good progress. This is due to good teaching. Very good teamwork between the teacher and the learning support assistants helps to create a safe, secure and stimulating environment, where some effective learning takes place. The school's arrangements for teaching literacy and numeracy are unsatisfactory overall. Children are taught for an hour, in two groups based mainly on age, by either the teacher or the learning support assistant. This means that not all of the children have the benefit of a whole-class introduction by the teacher. Some practical work takes place but in many of the lessons formal recording takes place with very little attention to the different needs of the children. Assessment arrangements are satisfactory. The information available, such as the entry data, is used appropriately to ensure children are set appropriate work in such subjects as reading and to identify those that need extra support.

Personal, social and emotional development

76. Children's personal, social and emotional development is given a high priority to good effect. Teaching is very effective in this area, which helps most children make good progress and, as a result, most are likely to reach the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage, with a considerable proportion exceeding the expectations. The management of children is very effective as all staff have high expectations of the children. This has a positive impact and consequently behaviour and attitudes to learning are good and children respond positively to instructions, although there is a very small minority that have to be checked more frequently to ensure they listen and behave appropriately. This usually happens when children are choosing and carrying out their own tasks, such as role-play. This is done unobtrusively by both the teachers and learning support assistants. There is strong promotion of personal development, with an emphasis on sitting quietly, taking turns and listening to instructions. This helps them to learn effectively, as in the ICT suite, when they listen carefully to what they need to do, carry out instructions and remember to log on and off correctly. They are confident, friendly and form very good relationships with adults and one another.
77. Adults encourage the children to be independent, however the formal timetable only gives children opportunities to select their activities and resources for a very short part of the day. During this

time – ‘Plan, Do and Review’, there is effective learning for many of the children. For example, a small group of children very quickly and efficiently organise their art and writing materials and use their imagination to create pictures and letters to friends. Because children’s choice of activities are not monitored some do not encounter the full range of activities on offer. Good opportunities exist for the children to play together, particularly in the role-play area, in the sand and with construction equipment. Most share and co-operate well, for example, when working in the art area. Children are expected to tidy up at the end of sessions, which they do well and get undressed and dressed for PE, most managing without help. Good routines are being developed that will help them later in Year 1.

Communication, language and literacy

78. On entry to school, children’s communication, language and literacy skills are broadly average although there is a little higher attainment. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall; this helps children make sound progress and learn effectively. By the end of the Foundation Stage, many will achieve the early learning goals, with a few reaching higher levels, particularly in reading, speaking and listening. Children enjoy looking at books and understand how books are organised. They are beginning to understand that print conveys meaning, where the title is and that an illustrator draws the pictures. The higher attaining children read simple text with good understanding and accuracy. Teaching of basic skills is satisfactory and children are given some opportunities to practise their skills but through a limited range of activities.
79. When teaching is good the teacher includes all children in a story-telling session. She creates anticipation and enjoyment as she sets the scene and gives children good opportunities to predict and participate, after which they are encouraged to write their own story. The teacher is skilful at encouraging all children to ‘have a go’ at their ‘own special writing’. All children attempt to write a story using words or symbols, with the higher attaining children beginning to write in simple sentences using a neat script. However, these good arrangements only take place for one session a week. The remaining sessions are based on the literacy hour and tend to be formal sessions even for the four-year-olds. As in the numeracy lessons, the children are mostly split into two groups dependent on their age and taught for the entire lesson either with the learning support assistant or the teacher. Limited attention is given to the learning needs of the children. They are given satisfactory opportunities to write in a variety of ways and encouraged to recognise and write their own name on their work. Good opportunities for speaking and listening are given when children discuss their work, for example in science when describing the texture of a variety of materials.

Mathematical development

80. When children enter the Reception classes, their attainment in mathematics is broadly average. The quality of teaching of mathematics and the provision for the development and awareness of mathematical language are satisfactory overall. The teachers have a sound knowledge and understanding of teaching mathematics. However, the arrangements for teaching and learning mathematics are not appropriate, particularly for the younger children. They spend nearly an hour working formally as a large group completing pages in workbooks after the initial introduction. This does not account for pupils’ individual needs sufficiently. The children make sound progress and most are likely to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. There is an imbalance between practical activities and work that is recorded, with too little time to explore mathematics practically in numeracy lessons and across the other areas of learning, both within the classroom and in the outside environment. Children are developing an understanding of shape, and older children recognise basic shapes and colours. The older children, when working with the teacher, have good opportunities to consolidate matching numerals with words and the number of objects. She directs the questioning well according to ability. However, following the effective introduction all children complete similar pages in their mathematics workbooks. Higher attaining children are capable of much more and not challenged - this was a comment in the previous inspection.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

81. Provision and teaching for children to develop some aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world around them are good overall. Children's learning is promoted very well in science and ICT and they make good progress and, by the end of the Foundation Stage, most are likely to achieve the early learning goals. Scientific concepts are developed when they explore the properties of materials, use good descriptive vocabulary and as a class sort the materials into 'squidgy' and 'not squidgy'. Some higher attaining pupils notice that some materials have both properties, such as pasta, as it depends whether it has been cooked or not. Particularly good skills teaching takes place in the ICT suite. Children work on computers and use a mouse to place items accurately on the screen and create their own pictures of faces using a graphics program.
82. Several activities are offered to children during the 'Plan, Do and Review' daily sessions which also include design and technology and science. This arrangement has good aspects in that children can make choices but takes place for only a short session each day. Children's choices are not monitored and consequently do not take full advantage of everything on offer. Children learn about the properties of sand when they pour from and fill containers but they do not always have the benefit of an adult extending their language and knowledge. However, when the teacher works with a group of children when they use construction kits they have good opportunities to develop their technological skills. Through discussion they modify their models and describe how they work. Children are learning about their own beliefs and values through religious education, for example when they paint pictures entitled 'God loves me when ... '.

Physical development

83. The quality of teaching in physical development is good overall. This is because teaching in the hall PE lessons are particularly good and helps children make good progress. Most are likely to attain the early learning goals in physical development by the end of the Foundation Stage. There are very good links with other areas of learning, particularly personal and social development. The children enter the hall appropriately, listening attentively and follow instructions. They are developing a good awareness of space when running and jumping in different directions and are careful of others. They try hard, enjoy their lesson and are keen to demonstrate their movements. The teacher gives them good opportunities to evaluate their own and others' performance and ensures they are aware of the effects of exercise. From photographic evidence, children have good opportunities to catch and throw balls and develop good hand-eye co-ordination. However, there are limited opportunities planned for outside activities for the children, particularly to promote physical activities in the outside area for all the children. There is a shortage of large play equipment and wheeled vehicles, space to store them and an area designated just for the Reception children. This was the situation in the last inspection. Dexterity is developed through the handling of objects when working in sand and water and using plasticine and painting. Children handle scissors, glue, pencils and brushes successfully and, from the time they start school, their writing, cutting and sticking skills develop satisfactorily.

Creative development

84. As in the last inspection standards and provision are mixed in creative development. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Children make sound progress and most are likely to attain the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Children learn about colour, pattern and texture in two- and three-dimensional representations. Children have satisfactory opportunities to mix their own colours and paint appropriate representations of themselves. Children enjoy creating pictures of animals and birds with a variety of materials including ribbons, feathers and buttons. They are developing good cutting and sticking skills. A few children regularly use the art equipment during 'Plan, Do and Review' and are developing good skills in fine pencil work. However, these opportunities for individual creativity are limited and not on offer for all children. Opportunities for role-play are limited. Children play in a well-resourced 'home corner' but with little direction and few opportunities to use their imagination in other situations. Children enjoy singing action songs and rhymes. They join in with enthusiasm with the teacher when she plays a guitar and know many of the words and actions of a number of songs and rhymes.

ENGLISH

85. The previous report indicated that standards in English were in line with the national average for seven and 11-year-olds. The school has made good progress in all aspects of English and standards have improved significantly and are still improving. Since 1997 standards have continued to rise for 11-year-olds. In the most recent National Curriculum tests in 2001, at the end of Key Stage 2, results were well above average, with strengths in reading. However, standards declined for seven-year-olds in 2001 due to a higher percentage of pupils with special educational needs in the class than is usual. Results in reading were in line with the national average and in writing they were below average. Standards are higher in the present Year 2 class and results are likely to be better than in 2001. These better results throughout the school are associated with the effective implementation and teaching of the National Literacy Strategy and a strong commitment to raising attainment in the school by staff and governors. There has been good monitoring of planning, teaching and learning, and assessment and tracking of pupils' progress, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching has improved and the majority of teaching observed was at least good with very good teaching in Years 3 and 6. There are good procedures for assessment and effective use is made of the information gathered to set school and individual literacy targets and these are shared well with the pupils.
86. Inspection findings from current and previous work show attainment in English to be in line with the national average by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6. Standards of speaking and listening in both the infants and juniors are good, so that by seven and 11 years of age, pupils achieve above the national average. Seven-year-olds read well and standards are above average; there is good progress in Years 3 to 6 and by the time pupils are 11 standards in reading are well above average. In writing, in Year 2, standards are broadly average. This is higher than in 2001 because there are fewer pupils with special educational needs in the year and a few more higher attaining pupils likely to attain the higher Level 3 in the National Curriculum tests. Writing in Year 6 is above average, with a significant proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 5. All pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, make good progress. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils for whom English is an additional language work equally well. They require no extra assistance in the acquisition of the English language and make equally good progress. Work is usually carefully matched to pupils' ability and where pupils carry out similar tasks lower attaining pupils are very effectively supported by learning support assistants. This ensures that all pupils, including higher attaining pupils, are well challenged as evident in some of the high quality teaching and learning.
87. Teachers provide pupils with good opportunities for speaking and listening. Pupils ask and answer questions, listen and respond to others and present their own ideas and opinions clearly. This was illustrated in a literacy lesson when Year 6 pupils nominated the work of another pupil. They evaluated work based on the poem 'If' with maturity, discussing conditional clauses well using correct terminology. High expectations and effective discipline ensure pupils listen attentively and build on each other's responses whilst waiting for their turn to speak. Some opportunities for role-play are offered to enhance speaking and listening skills, as in Year 5 when pupils organised themselves sensibly, rehearsed for 15 minutes and performed, with confidence, a section of the myth of 'Theseus and the Minotaur'. Teachers encourage pupils to use the correct terminology, not only in literacy, but in other subjects as well, as in a Year 4 lesson, when pupils used mathematical vocabulary well when discussing co-ordinates. From the start of school, speaking and listening are promoted well with a good emphasis on explaining their work. For example, in Year 1 pupils confidently explained the settings and characters, including the term 'royalty' and events when identifying elements in Fairy Tales.
88. Standards in reading are above average by the end of Year 2 and well above average by the end of Year 6. By seven years of age many pupils read accurately and fluently and by 11 are mature and confident readers. There is a good emphasis on reading and this enables pupils to explore and share books with enthusiasm. In the infants, younger pupils talk readily about illustrations, recall the main points of the story and describe the actions of characters with clarity. In infant classes basic reading skills are developed well, as pupils link letters with sounds and recall words by sight. In Year 1, pupils make good progress, with more confident readers starting to self-correct

their reading. Learning moves on well in Year 2, where pupils read with understanding in an accurate and fluent way. They talk readily about books they enjoy, know the difference between fiction and non-fiction books and understand the use of the index, contents and a glossary. Good systems are in place to encourage children to read with understanding and evaluate the books they have read. In Year 2, pupils complete an Independent Reading Record stating what they liked about the book and how they coped with the text. After pupils read their books, comprehension sheets are shared with parents and learning support assistants. This is good practice and encourages pupils to read with understanding and explain the characters and plot of the story.

89. By 11, the vast majority of pupils make choices of favourite author and compare style and genre. They bring their favourite books from home, recommend books they have enjoyed reading such as 'The Hobbit' and 'Harry Potter' and are very positive about their good reading skills. A higher attaining Year 6 pupil, reading a mystical story 'The Taggering', has a very good understanding of spoken language, which helps with reading at deeper levels of meaning. For example, she identifies the ancient language used and explains the meaning behind 'he never slew any creatures' stating that the character in the story was too gentle and caring. Throughout the key stage the average readers in the class are reading well. In Year 6, the average reader is reading at the higher Level 5 with good expression and able to tackle difficult vocabulary. There is a small minority of pupils with difficulties with their reading, but they too are making good progress. Often these pupils are supported very well by the learning support assistants who will hear them read for extra sessions. As in Key Stage 1, pupils write a summary of what has been read and in Year 6, the teacher adds a comment, which is good practice. There is effective communication in many of the contact books between home and school regarding reading as well as other homework. This relatively new system appears to be working well.
90. Inspection evidence indicates that attainment in writing is average by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6. However, presentation, including handwriting, is not as good as it should be in some classes. This is linked to variability in marking. Where there are very high expectations and marking is particularly supportive, pupils try their best and presentation is better, such as in Years 3 and 6. However, writing is quite often in pencil in the juniors, and pupils tend to join their handwriting quite late in Year 2. These weaknesses are not only affecting some of the quality of writing in literacy but also affect the written work in other subjects.
91. Pupils make good progress through Year 1 and this continues through Year 2. Teachers offer their pupils a good range of work within literacy. They encourage them to write in a variety of forms. In Year 1, higher attaining pupils retell some events in Fairy Tales using sentences with capital letters and full stops. Pupils in Year 2 use an appropriate reporting style when writing about polar bears, having extracted the information from non-fiction books and use imaginative vocabulary when writing poems about winter. Higher attaining pupils are forming their writing neatly and making appropriate attempts at spelling using their knowledge of sounds when writing their news, stories and poems. There is a wide range of ability in Year 2. The lower attaining pupils often need considerable support in writing, but have good ideas and understand the structure of sentences, although these are not always punctuated correctly. There is some good use of ICT in Year 2 to reinforce using the correct sounds when spelling a variety of words beginning with 'ch'. Very good support by the learning support assistant ensures that lower attaining pupils are helped with ICT skills in order that the literacy task is completed. The pupils are highly motivated and in another lesson match words to their antonym correctly.
92. By the end of Year 6 pupils have a very good understanding and recognise the importance of writing for different audiences within literacy. In addition, there is a good focus on different styles and genres. Evidence found included: letters, poems, instructions, book reviews, debates and play scripts. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, where there was a limited range of work offered. Good teaching of these aspects results in lively, thoughtful and interesting writing in literacy by the time pupils are in Year 6. This was illustrated by the very good work produced by all pupils in a lesson writing a parody on a literary text. Pupils wrote imaginative, humorous poems based on the poem 'If' by Rudyard Kipling.

93. Pupils in Year 3 make particularly good progress in literacy, particularly in writing. This is because they have very skilful teaching and very effective support from the learning support assistant. Teaching of basic skills is particularly good in Years 3 and 6. Through well-directed work on adjectives, pupils in Year 3 improve their knowledge of descriptive words which they later use in their written work. Very good skills teaching is a feature throughout the key stage and helps pupils make good progress. Stories about ancient cultures helps to inspire Year 3 pupils; they enjoy reading about 'The birth of the stars' - an Inca story. This leads to very good descriptive writing and pupils understanding that myths are anonymous stories shared by cultural groups of people often to explain natural phenomena. Teachers use good strategies to ensure their pupils learn how to tackle different styles of writing, as illustrated in a Year 4 lesson. Linked to their work on non-fiction texts pupils were required to write notes evaluating the usefulness of diagrams and content.
94. The quality of teaching is good overall with very good teaching in Years 3 and 6. The vast majority of lessons, including literacy and extended writing are well planned. Work is built on what most pupils can already do and this is supported by the good assessment within the lesson and over a period of time. However, there is some variability in the quality of marking. Where it is good, the teacher relates to what is going to be taught and pupils' individual targets and states not only what has been achieved but what the next steps in learning are. The school's very good procedures for behaviour management, which are consistently applied by all staff, mean that the management of pupils is very good. This aspect is considerably enhanced by the excellent relationships teachers have with pupils. Very good attention is given to including all pupils well in learning. The support given by the very well qualified learning support assistants is extremely good and a considerable strength of the school. This is especially so for lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. The learning support assistants help to explain things during introductions and pupils are encouraged to prepare their answers before answering in front of the whole class. This gives significant support to their self-esteem. Homework has been planned to support learning satisfactorily and matched to work in the classroom. For example, Year 6 pupils prepared work at home the previous evening in preparation for their work on conditional clauses.
95. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership for the subject. She, along with the headteacher, has monitored the effectiveness of teaching, learning and planning. The school has made good improvement in aspects of the subject and is in a powerful position to continue to improve the high standards pupils already achieve. Raising standards of writing has been identified as a priority on the school improvement plan and a detailed action plan to tackle this area has been put in place. The use of the school library needs evaluating in order to give pupils specific lessons in library skills. It is having a negative impact on pupils' learning. Pupils are developing skills with retrieving information in books, but few have regular use of the school's systems of classification. Many pupils use computers at home and school to search for information and so are developing their reading research skills well. By Year 6, pupils skim and scan and take notes effectively from information from web sites, as seen in a Year 4 lesson. ICT is used effectively to support and extend literacy in a variety of effective ways, including word processing stories, letters and poems, research and reinforcement work on sounds. Other subjects, such as science, contribute to pupils' skills in literacy when they discuss their work and record their findings and in history when they use their research skills to locate information.

MATHEMATICS

96. The previous inspection found that standards at both key stages were in line with national averages, with a larger proportion than average at Key Stage 1 reaching the higher Level 3. The quality of teaching overall was said to have been unsatisfactory, with expectations of pupils too low.
97. Standards pupils achieve and the quality of teaching have improved throughout the school. Several reasons account for the good improvement. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, together with the emphasis of the school on raising attainment, has led to a direct and positive influence upon the learning and resulted in higher standards throughout the school. This was evident in the well above average standards pupils achieved in the 2001 National Curriculum tests at the end of Years 2 and 6.

98. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils achieve above the national average at seven and 11 years of age. The proportion reaching higher levels of attainment in Years 2 and 6 was well above average. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and of girls.
99. Available evidence during the inspection suggests that the majority of pupils enter Key Stage 1 with mathematical skills broadly in line with those expected for pupils of this age. Good progress is made during Years 1 and 2 so that at seven, standards are above the national average, particularly at the higher levels. Between Years 3 and 6 good progress is maintained and at 11 pupils continue to achieve above the national average. In the last inspection progress throughout the school was unsatisfactory. It has improved and teachers effectively build on the skills pupils have previously learnt in the last class.
100. The significant proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels is a good indication that higher attaining pupils have better opportunities and are suitably challenged in their mathematics than at the time of the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make at least good progress in lessons, with learning support assistants very effectively supporting them. Careful explanations and close working with the teacher when planning and evaluating work, ensure pupils are taught in small steps very well. This was evident in a Year 3 lesson when pupils learnt how to use fractions successfully using a range of practical activities. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests all pupils achieved at least Level 2 in the Key Stage 1 tests. In the Key Stage 2 tests only a few achieved the lower Level 3, with most achieving the average Level 4 and above. This signifies good support for those pupils with special educational needs and helps them to learn well.
101. The school places considerable emphasis upon mathematics and there is proper attention to the development of sound understanding of mathematical principles. By the end of Year 2 most pupils divide by numbers up to ten, count to 100 and use a variety of mental calculation strategies. They can mentally add and subtract numbers to ten and beyond. A large number understand place value and use multiplication tables with confidence. They use standard measures of weight, capacity and time with good understanding. Pupils collect and interpret data and use a variety of graphical representations to do this, for example as they compile a tally chart of their favourite places.
102. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress and by Year 6 use skills learned in new situations, for example, in one lesson pupils successfully partitioned shapes to calculate their area using long multiplication. Pupils check their own work and understand concepts of volume, shape, percentages and fractions above the level expected of their age. Most can articulate their thinking and any problems encountered. This is because teachers encourage pupils to evaluate their own work which helps them to extend their thinking in mathematics. For example, one pupil in Year 6 knew of an alternative strategy for calculating the area of a shape. She described how the irregular shape could be changed into a rectangle and the area calculated, rather than calculating the area by partitioning the shape into three parts.
103. The introductory sessions are used well to reinforce mental mathematics. All classes use key words in sessions to highlight mathematical vocabulary. There is good use of ICT to support learning. Year 2 pupils used a mathematics program to reinforce work undertaken in the previous sessions with cubes. Clocks were used in one lesson to reinforce the concept of analogue time that helped children to quickly make progress.
104. Throughout the school the response of pupils to mathematics is good. At both key stages pupils enjoy the subject and they work together well. They work hard sustaining concentration, persevere to overcome problems and are keen to discuss their work. Teachers encourage them 'to have a go'. This is particularly effective in the introductory oral sessions and has instilled great confidence in pupils.
105. The quality of teaching has improved and is good overall at both key stages. Lessons are planned using the National Numeracy Strategy. Plans set out lesson objectives clearly and are effectively shared with pupils at the start of lessons and revisited at the end of lessons. Where teaching is

very good, planning and teaching identifies different tasks closely matched to the ability of the pupils. The mathematical expertise of the teachers and the organisation combine to enable pupils to make good progress. This was clearly illustrated in a Year 4 lesson when the teacher carefully explained the use of co-ordinates. She demonstrated how to use a grid on the overhead projector, leading pupils to confidently use co-ordinates by the end of the lesson. The quality of marking is satisfactory overall. Examples of very good practice were seen where teachers made comments that enabled pupils to know what they had to do next to improve. Unsatisfactory marking just involved ticking work. Homework set in numeracy reinforces or extends concepts in lessons satisfactorily.

106. A good range of assessments assists the school in monitoring pupils' progress. Some analysis of National Curriculum test data has taken place and the co-ordinator for mathematics identifies areas where pupils make insufficient progress. Teachers know their pupils well and this enables them to monitor progress effectively. Good practice in setting targets in mathematics is evident in some classes, however this is not yet fully embedded throughout the school.
107. The co-ordinator provides very good, clear leadership. She has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning by a system of monitoring teaching through observation on a rolling programme. Monitoring of work samples and planning also takes place and appropriate feedback is given to teachers. A budget for mathematics is administered by the co-ordinator and a good range of resources have been purchased including ICT software, which has helped to strengthen the links between mathematics and ICT. Numeracy skills are developed effectively in other subjects, for example in geography when pupils construct graphs and when they measure their materials in art and design.

SCIENCE

108. Overall, standards in science are above those expected for seven and 11-year-olds. This is a very good improvement at both key stages compared to the school's previous Ofsted inspection over four years ago. At that time attainment for seven-year-olds was judged to be unsatisfactory and for 11-year-olds, the test results were well below average. Inspection findings differ from the results of the 2001 Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests, which showed that standards were close to the national average.
109. Trends over time for Key Stage 2 pupils show there was a slight downward trend to 2000 when standards were less than average, then a dramatic rise in 2001 when standards were about average. Teacher assessment at the end of Year 2 showed pupils' attainment to be very high in comparison to national expectations, this is because all pupils achieved at least the average Level 2. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs are supported well, make good progress and achieve standards that are good compared with their previous attainment. No significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls was observed. Standards seen in lessons matched those seen in the work scrutiny.
110. In the school's previous inspection, teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory overall. The quality of teaching and learning is now good at both key stages, which has resulted in higher standards and good progress by pupils of all abilities. Teachers are confident in their understanding of the investigative aspects of the subject and planning shows a good balance between investigations, factual learning and recording. All pupils enjoy science, in particular the practical aspects of the subject and now experience the full range of the curriculum.
111. Pupils in Year 2 understand the importance of a balanced diet and the need for exercise in order to keep healthy and how humans and animals change as they grow. They are able to make a circuit and know that the insertion of a switch will make or break the circuit. Pupils have a good understanding of different types of materials and the purposes for which they are used. Their observation and investigative skills develop well. With teacher support they plan and carry out investigations such as testing which materials melt or change when heated. They predict the outcome, have an understanding of a fair test and reach a conclusion from their own-recorded data.

112. In Years 3 to 6 pupils' investigative skills and scientific knowledge and understanding are developed further and all pupils make good progress in their learning due to the overall good teaching. They are beginning to understand the structure and function of the heart and know that it beats faster during exercise. Through investigations pupils gain an understanding of balanced and unbalanced forces. They know that water freezes or boils at a given temperature; that during heating or cooling materials can change and that these changes may be reversible or irreversible.
113. Teaching in three out of four lessons seen in Years 3 to 6 was at least good with a considerable number of strengths that have a positive impact on pupils' learning. In all lessons the standard of questioning is high and teachers' clear explanations and good use of time spent in discussion motivates all pupils and ensures that they learn to think as scientists. Management of pupils is always good and often very good and the content of the lesson is pitched at an appropriately challenging level. All pupils carry out the same work but pupils of lesser ability and those with special educational needs are supported well within the classroom situation, either by the teacher or learning support assistant and make good progress. The strength of the teaching of science and its impact on learning were well illustrated in a very good lesson in the Year 3 class, based on an investigation into the behaviour of magnets. The high expectations of the teacher in terms of method, presentation and behaviour were clearly evident. Higher attaining pupils were able to discuss how they would set up their own investigation. The level of interest was high for all pupils and maintained by allowing them to explore and undertake the investigation for themselves through a very good range of related activities. The enthusiasm and enjoyment by pupils was evident by their sense of awe and wonder and gasps of delight when they discovered the strengths of magnets and the force exerted on a string of paperclips. The teacher maintained a brisk pace ensuring that scientific vocabulary was well understood and, as the lesson came to its conclusion, by asking pupils to tell her about something they did not know before, to which all pupils were eager to respond.
114. Throughout Years 1 to 6 teachers challenge pupils' thinking by the use of good questioning techniques and this encourages pupils to think hard about what they are doing and to take an active part in their learning. The work of famous scientists such as Pasteur and Jenner are also included within appropriate topics to good effect. As a result pupils make good gains in all aspects of the science curriculum. Teachers make good links with a range of other subjects such as literacy, mathematics, ICT and design and technology.
115. The co-ordinator has worked hard, with much success, to raise the profile and standards in the subject and provides very good leadership. Since the last inspection a scheme of work has been introduced based on the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) national guidelines that ensures continuity and progression in the subject. The content of each topic is continually reviewed and modified appropriately in the light of experience. Assessment procedures are good, take place at the end of each topic and pupils' work is levelled. National test results are analysed to identify areas of weakness in pupils' knowledge and understanding so that the scheme of work can be adjusted accordingly to make pupils' knowledge and understanding more secure.
116. Good links have been made with outside businesses, which have contributed to the very good range of resources available. Many pupils take part in the British Association Young Scientist awards and have achieved both Silver and Gold awards. Two pupils won a trip to Cheddar Gorge in the Young Engineers' competition. These links have helped to further encourage and raise pupils' interest in the subject. The school has also been successful in obtaining grants to improve the outdoor areas. Parents are encouraged to come into school to see science in action during Science Week. Visits to places such as Legoland, The Royal Observatory and the Planetarium, as well as visits by theatre groups, support and enrich the curriculum further.

ART AND DESIGN

117. The attainment in art and design of seven-year-olds and 11-year-olds is in line with that expected for their age. This is an improvement since the last inspection when pupils were attaining

standards that were below average. This is a good achievement for the school considering the focus on raising standards in the core subjects.

118. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress throughout the school, as they express their ideas through a range of different experiences in art and design. They have regular access to textiles, paint, pencils, pastels and learn how to mix colours, and from an early age apply paint with care. A satisfactory range of work has been produced this year in both two- and three-dimensions. There are appropriate links with other subjects. For example, as part of the topic about plants in science, pupils in Year 1 used mono-printing techniques to create pictures of flowers and in Year 3 Tudor roses were made in clay. There are good links with literacy and numeracy. Year 6 created imaginative hats for fictional characters and wrote about their work and in a Year 4 lesson, pupils ensured that material was cut out accurately to make their cushions fit together neatly.
119. Teaching in art and design is satisfactory overall although some good teaching was observed in Year 4. When teaching art and design teachers are more confident than in the previous inspection. They give pupils good opportunities to undertake new experiences and experiment with different ideas. For example in Year 4, pupils had to adapt a chair for a chosen character such as the 'Pied Piper' and 'Willy Wonka'. Very good co-operation of pupils in mixed ability groups ensured they all had good opportunities to try out their ideas. They were enthusiastic and discussed their ideas with maturity. Teachers have better subject knowledge and understanding due to the implementation of national guidance and training. Learning support assistants offer good expertise and work very well with the children. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their work and make improvements with good attention to the finished work such as their chairs. Pupils gain self-esteem and confidence as they proudly share their work and thoughts about art and design. Appropriate use is made of day-to-day assessment to plan subsequent work and a system is being developed to assess pupils' skills and progress over time.
120. The co-ordinator is fairly new in post, but has enthusiasm to continue the improvements. A satisfactory art and design curriculum is in place which is broad and balanced, as well as now being better planned to give pupils experience of different techniques and media, including working with three-dimensional material, such as clay. It builds satisfactorily on pupils' previous knowledge and skills and so they make sound progress in their learning as they move through the school. Sketchbooks are being developed throughout the school. Recent developments in the teaching of ICT supports work in art and design appropriately as Year 2 pupils use a digital camera to take photographs of the environment when studying landscape paintings by Constable. A graphics program was used to support work in Year 5 when pupils drew in the style of Matisse and recreated pictures of 'The Snail'.
121. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and social development, through interesting displays of pupils' work based on the work of other artists. For example, in Year 2 observational drawings and designs were formed into patterns based on the work of William Morris. Social development is promoted well in the development of pride in pupils' achievement as well as encouraging good co-operative work. Some attention to art and design from non-western cultures is given, such as the work based on patterns and symmetrical designs from Indian printed textiles and Islamic tiles in Year 3, but this is an area less well developed and represented in the school. The displays of pupils' artwork are valued and enhance the learning environment in the school. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

122. The last inspection stated that standards in design and technology were in need of improvement. There has been very good progress since the last inspection report leading to a raising in the level of attainment of pupils. Despite limited teaching time being allocated to the subject, design and technology is firmly established with knowledge and skills taught progressively and systematically throughout the school.
123. Pupils at seven and 11-years-of-age achieve levels of knowledge and skills in design and technology appropriate for their age. Pupils are able to select from a satisfactory range of

materials when designing and making products and proper consideration is given to the purpose of each item and to the subsequent design and construction. The quality of learning is good and given the time constraint, all pupils make satisfactory progress.

124. Teaching is good overall and some very good teaching was observed during the inspection at both key stages. The lesson in Year 2 that was observed was very good. The teacher had carefully planned and resourced a puppet-making lesson. Pupils had designed their puppet and were making it by stitching. Pupils accepted that they had to work to a demanding specification. This extended their design skills producing good ideas, frequent evaluation and excitement at the eventual outcome. Adults insisted on correct technical vocabulary and enabled the lesson to proceed at a fast pace.
125. All teachers plan work using appropriate objectives about what is to be taught, which are shared with the pupils in the lesson. Pupils use self-assessment sheets and their attitudes to the subject are good. They are interested and motivated in their work and discuss it with enthusiasm.
126. In Year 3 pupils were preparing to design and make a nutritious snack meal. Clear evaluation enabled them to make decisions about their product. They were able to make informed choices about the design and preparation of their snack based upon taste, client requirement and the look of the product. In Year 5, pupils successfully made bread and biscuits as part of the food technology unit.
127. The school has adopted national guidance (QCA) to help teachers' planning. The co-ordinator monitors planning and has led in-service training to support teaching. Developments have rightly been identified by the co-ordinator as developing independence, particularly in design work. The co-ordinator provides good leadership to the subject. The school is currently bidding to receive a grant to develop design and technology and other subjects. There are plans to develop Computer Aided Design software. Extra-curricular clubs supplement the curriculum well, for example cross-stitch for Years 2, 3 and 4 and a Textiles club for Years 5 and 6, which enhance learning opportunities.

GEOGRAPHY

128. By the end of Years 2 and 6 pupils reach standards similar to national expectations. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall for seven-year-olds and good for 11-year-olds. Pupils of all abilities make sound progress with those who have special educational needs often making good progress due to the good support they receive. There are no differences in the attainment of boys and girls. Since the last inspection average standards have been maintained.
129. The evidence indicates that the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at Key Stage 1. By the end of Year 2 pupils' geographical skills have developed appropriately for their age. They draw simple plans and use simple maps to identify features in the area surrounding the school. They use secondary sources of information to study the physical characteristics and human features of an island in Scotland at a level that is typical for their ages. There are satisfactory links with mathematics and ICT as pupils compile a tally of their favourite place and use a computer program to represent their findings in the form of a graph.
130. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and often good. All pupils often make good progress in the development of their geographical skills and all aspects of the curriculum are given satisfactory coverage. Pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of places and contrast and compare the features of coastal and inland settlements. By 11 years of age their mapping skills have developed appropriately and they have an understanding of the use of keys, grids and scale and use a compass to plan a simple route through a village from one landmark to another. In Year 6, they are able to contrast and compare the sizes and population of countries in the European Union as well as identify the human and physical features of a number of countries, including France. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good in this lesson and the teacher has good subject knowledge and keeps up the pace of the lesson, changing activities when appropriate to add variety. This retains pupils' interest and concentration and ensures effective learning.

131. The scheme of work is based on QCA national guidance recommendations, and has been adapted to suit the needs of the school. Mostly, all pupils undertake the same work and sometimes lessons are not sufficiently adapted to suit the needs of pupils of differing abilities and this affects the rate of progress of all ability groups. Assessment has been identified as an area for improvement but this has not yet become firmly established. Consequently lessons do not always build on pupils' prior knowledge. Geography is taught in half-termly or termly blocks, alternating with history. Where pupils undertake a full term's work in the subject, learning is more effective. A further review of the time allocation, organisation and planning would improve continuity, depth and progression and ultimately raise attainment in geography. Satisfactory use is made of visits to enrich the curriculum.

HISTORY

132. Standards of attainment are in line with the levels expected nationally for seven and 11-year-olds. During the inspection, it was only possible to observe the teaching of history in Years 3 and 5. Judgements are based on this evidence, an analysis of pupils' work in all years, discussions with Year 6 pupils about their work and an examination of the school's planning. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress in their development of important historical skills. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when progress was unsatisfactory overall.
133. Discussions with Year 6 pupils indicate that they have an understanding of chronology and know that the past can be divided into different periods of time and have a sound knowledge of how it is represented. Pupils recall aspects of the life and times of the Romans, Celts, Vikings, Tudors and Victorians well. There is particularly good coverage of the Tudor and Victorian periods.
134. Although the number of lessons seen was limited, evidence indicates that teaching is at least satisfactory or better. This is an improvement since the last inspection when teaching was unsatisfactory overall. In a Year 3 lesson that focused on the lifestyle of the rich during Tudor times, the teacher displays very good subject knowledge. Her enthusiasm for the subject sustains pupils' interest and concentration, which makes learning effective. Pupils are made very well aware of what is to be learnt in the lesson and builds effectively on work undertaken previously. They listen intently, not only to the teacher but also to another pupil's very well written account of the life of poor people studied during a previous lesson. The teacher and the learning support assistant work very well together, not only supporting pupils with special education needs but also making very good use of resources. Clear explanations are provided of the function of various kitchen artefacts introduced. This makes the subject come alive for pupils. They ask sensible questions and their enjoyment is obvious. Consequently they behave very well and their attitudes to the subject are good and they make good progress in the lesson.
135. Since the last inspection the school has introduced the QCA national guidance as a scheme of work and is adapting this to suit the needs of the school. Consequently pupils' historical skills have improved and all areas of the curriculum are now given adequate coverage. There are good cross-curricular links, particularly with literacy and geography. Good use is made of resources such as census forms and old maps of Rochester. The school's improvement plan identifies areas for development such as increasing the range of artefacts and CD-ROMs as well as improving ICT opportunities. The curriculum is enriched by visits to places of interest in nearby Rochester, such as the Guildhall Museum, the castle and Madam Tussaud's. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' social and cultural development. At the present time the school is without a co-ordinator and the headteacher is temporarily overseeing the subject until a new person is appointed.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

136. Raising the level of attainment in ICT at the end of both key stages was a key issue in the previous inspection report. Pupils made unsatisfactory progress, consequently standards were below those

expected of pupils of a similar age. There has been a very good improvement in standards since then.

137. Standards are satisfactory overall for both seven and 11-year-olds. However, standards at the end of both Years 2 and 6 are satisfactory in modelling and control and above that expected nationally in communication and information retrieval. Pupils in Year 2 display good competence in basic mouse and keyboard control and good word processing skills. Pupils select options from a menu and use programs confidently. They have used a programmable toy and work was evident in pupils' books and wall displays. Cross-curricular links with other subjects for example, geography and mathematics are good and enable ICT skills to be practised whilst developing other subjects. A Year 2 class, for example, used the ICT suite in English. They opened a shared documents folder and dragged 'ch' words and dropped them into their work using a mouse skilfully. They then edited their work competently using good ICT skills. Pupils were keen and highly motivated as a result and made good progress in the lesson, not only in ICT but also in literacy.
138. In Years 3 to 6, pupils access all elements of work including computing and amending databases in Years 3 and 5 and using spreadsheets and providing multimedia displays in Year 6. Pupils edit work, use different programs competently and undertake new work with confidence. In Year 6 pupils were able to demonstrate their multimedia presentations about themselves well, which included imported pictures, edited text and formatting.
139. The co-ordinator offers very good leadership and sets a clear direction for the subject, together with the headteacher and ICT governor. This has led to a very good improvement. The co-ordinator has undertaken training from the local education authority (LEA) and the computer company supplying the school's machines. She has arranged training for colleagues, most recently spending a training day looking at assessment in ICT. All staff have undertaken New Opportunities Fund training to increase expertise, which has given them greater confidence to teach the subject. The quality of teaching ICT is now good.
140. The school has promoted ICT well using a substantial investment from the school budget in addition to the National Grid for Learning grants. This has enabled hardware to be replaced and a new ICT suite to be established. Other hardware and software have been purchased. In addition to these improvements a well-structured programme is in place which describes what should be taught and when. The school has adopted national guidance (QCA) schemes of work and units have been allocated to year groups. This has enabled teachers to plan effectively, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. Alongside this, assessment of pupils' skills in ICT is being introduced against levels in the National Curriculum. A direct result of these initiatives is that the majority of pupils are making good progress as they move through the school.

MUSIC

141. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, at seven and 11-years-of-age make satisfactory progress and attain average standards for their age. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when attainment at the end of Year 2 was below national expectations and at the end of Year 6 it was well below expectations. Due to the arrangement of the timetable, it was not possible to observe the breadth of curriculum offered to pupils during the inspection, so judgements are based on planning, lessons observed and discussions with pupils and teachers.
142. In both the infants and juniors singing is satisfactory. In assembly and hymn practice all pupils sing in unison with clear diction and control of pitch and tempo. They make sound progress and by the end of Year 6 they have also gained a sense of phrase and musical expression. The school does not make the best use of opportunities to use music more widely in the everyday curriculum and this is a weakness. As an example, pupils sing in assemblies but appropriate musical composition is not used to create a spiritual atmosphere or to enhance pupils' general knowledge of well-known composers.
143. Standards in composing and performing are satisfactory. In the Year 2 lesson the quality of teaching was good and built well onto previous learning. This enabled all groups to successfully

perform their composed pieces with enjoyment and enthusiasm and then evaluate each group's contributions. The quality of provision for music in Years 3 to 6 has greatly improved since the appointment of a music specialist. It was not possible to see any teaching in the key stage, but scrutiny of teachers' planning indicates that each area of the curriculum is covered appropriately. There is some music from other cultures, such as that accompanying Garba dancing originating from North-West India, but this area of the music curriculum is more limited.

144. All pupils participate in annual concerts, performing as individual classes, singing and playing a variety of tuned and untuned instruments. At Christmas all pupils take part in either the Nativity or Carol Service. Year 6 pupils participate in their own end of year production such as "Alice in Wonderland. Visitors to school such as "Rhythm Attack" enhance the curriculum and provide more "hands-on" experiences through a variety of workshops.
145. There has been some improvement in provision since the last inspection. A music co-ordinator has been appointed and she has introduced a scheme of work for Key Stage 1, which now makes music a more practical subject. Key Stage 2 follow the scheme introduced by the qualified musician, covering all curriculum requirements. A few teachers play musical instruments and have appropriate subject knowledge although the amount of teacher expertise in the subject is limited and is an area for improvement. Overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory. The range of resources has been improved but there is still a need for a wider range of better quality classroom instruments.
146. An increasing number of pupils participate in private piano and guitar lessons that take place not only at lunchtime but also during lesson times. This causes disruption to lessons, adversely affects the continuity and progression of pupils' learning in many subjects and reduces the required curriculum time for these pupils. It also limits the opportunity for other pupils to enhance their musical skills during the school day to those who can afford to pay and this is unsatisfactory.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

147. The previous inspection indicated that pupils' attainment was about average and that they made satisfactory progress. This has been maintained and pupils currently reach satisfactory standards by the end of Years 2 and 6. All elements of PE are taught through the year but there was an emphasis on gymnastics and dance during the inspection. Swimming is undertaken with Years 5 and 6. There is a small amount of games, athletics and outdoor activities that take place during the summer term.
148. A large part of the one hour per week in the younger classes is taken up with changing, resulting in the period of teaching being reduced substantially. Depth of coverage of aspects of PE is therefore difficult, preventing any significant impact on the raising of attainment. The teacher's subject knowledge was good and therefore she was able to use pupils as good examples to demonstrate what was required.
149. At Key Stage 1, one lesson in Year 2 was observed. In this the teaching was very good and children were devising and refining a dance sequence. Pupils were attentive and able to develop a series of linked movements. This culminated in a more complex dance routine.
150. Overall the quality of teaching PE is good. In very good lessons teachers could point out why particular movements were good to encourage others. This good subject knowledge assisted pupils when they evaluated their own and others' performances. Where lessons were only satisfactory pupils did not have sufficient guidance to improve performance and were not able to evaluate performance.
151. At Key Stage 2 pupils are enthusiastic and displayed good attitudes and behaviour. Lessons were well planned with clear learning objectives that were shared with pupils. Overall the standard was satisfactory. In the very good lesson observed pupils were active for most of the hour and were provided with a lesson that had pace and challenge. In all lessons pupils co-operated and worked together well thus enhancing their social development.

152. Standards overall are satisfactory in gymnastics and dance. It was not possible to observe lessons in games, athletics or outdoor adventurous activities. Standards in swimming are good because pupils mostly exceed the Year 6 target of being able to swim 25 metres. Certificates are awarded to recognise achievement.
153. A number of extra-curricular activities support the PE curriculum very well. They are enjoyed and valued by a large number of pupils. Teams in netball and football take part in inter-schools tournaments. Clubs are open to all pupils dependent on age criteria. Satisfactory resources are enhanced by additional equipment supplied by sporting promoters. There is satisfactory co-ordination of the subject. The co-ordinator has begun to assess the support needed to promote teaching and learning more effectively.