

INSPECTION REPORT

KINGSFLEET PRIMARY SCHOOL

Felixstowe

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124627

Headteacher: Mr J Trotter

Reporting inspector: Mrs E W D Gill
17766

Dates of inspection: 27th to 30th May 2002

Inspection number: 195593

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Type of school: | Primary |
| School category: | Community |
| Age range of pupils: | 4 – 11 years |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| School address: | Ferry Road Felixstowe Suffolk |
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| Appropriate authority: | The Governing Body, Kingsfleet Primary School |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mrs D Buxton |
| Date of previous inspection: | May 1997 |

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| 17766 | Eira Gill | Registered inspector | English, geography, information and communication technology and English as an additional language | How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further? |
| 9092 | Ron Elam | 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? |
| 14596 | Tony Fiddian-Green | Team inspector | Mathematics, design and technology, physical education, religious education, special educational needs, equal opportunities | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? |
| 18083 | Judith Howell | Team inspector | Foundation Stage, science, art and design, music, history | |

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REPORT CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|-----------|
| PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT | 5 |
| Information about the school | |
| How good the school is | |
| What the school does well | |
| What could be improved | |
| How the school has improved since its last inspection | |
| Standards | |
| Pupils' attitudes and values | |
| Teaching and learning | |
| Other aspects of the school | |
| How well the school is led and managed | |
| Parents' and carers' views of the school | |
| | |
| PART B: COMMENTARY | |
| | |
| HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS? | 9 |
| The school's results and pupils' achievements | |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development | |
| | |
| HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT? | 11 |
| | |
| HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS? | 14 |
| | |
| HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS? | 16 |
| | |
| HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS? | 18 |
| | |
| HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED? | 19 |
| | |
| WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER? | 23 |
| | |
| PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS | 24 |
| | |
| PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES | 28 |

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Kingsfleet Primary School educates boys and girls aged between four and 11 years. There are 224 pupils on roll and this is about the same size as most primary schools. There are 33 children in one Reception class and one mixed Reception and Year 1 class attending full time. The school has 32 pupils on its register of special educational needs and this is a lower proportion than the national average. Two pupils have a statement of special educational need and this is below the national average. The school has a balanced number of boys and girls. However, in several classes, there is an imbalance in the number of girls and boys. About five per cent are from minority ethnic backgrounds and this is lower than in most schools. Seven pupils speak English as an additional language and are bilingual. The most common languages are French, Chinese and Gujarati. About four per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals and this is lower than the national average. During the last school year, four pupils entered the school other than at the usual time of first admission and two left it at times which were not those of the normal leaving or transfer for most pupils. This is a low rate of mobility. Attainment on entry is usually above average. However, this does vary and the attainment on entry of this year's group of Reception children is average with a wide band of ability.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Kingsfleet Primary School is an effective school and provides a good quality of education for its pupils. Standards in English and mathematics have improved since the national tests in 2001 and are now well above average. The high standards in science have been maintained. The quality of teaching is good overall in Years 1 – 6 with over a third of lessons being judged very good or excellent. In March 2000, the high standards attained over the previous years were recognised by the Secretary of State for Education and Employment and the school received an 'Achievement Award' from the department. The leadership and management of the school by the headteacher and senior management team are good. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils attain well above average standards in English, mathematics and science in Year 2 and Year 6 and well above average standards in music in Year 6.
- The high quality of the teaching in Years 1 to 6 has a positive impact on the pupils' learning.
- Good learning opportunities are provided for the pupils and provision is very good in information and communication technology and music.
- Good leadership and management from the headteacher and senior management team ensure a good team spirit among all staff and a strong focus on improvement.
- Provision for the pupils' moral and social education is very good and this contributes to their good behaviour and very good relationships.
- The school's partnership with parents is good and this has a significant effect on the pupils' attitudes to school, which are very good.
- Attendance is very good and well above the level of most schools nationally and reflects the good links with parents.

What could be improved

- The monitoring and support of teaching in the Reception class in order to raise standards.
- The quality of the resources and accommodation for the Reception class to improve the learning environment.
- Standards of attainment in physical education that are average when all other subjects are at least above average.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been good improvement since the school was inspected in May, 1997 and there is a good capacity for further improvement. The weaknesses identified at that time have been addressed successfully. Standards in English, mathematics, science and music have risen to a high level and the quality of teaching and learning has made very good improvement. These considerable improvements in standards and teaching are due to good leadership and a very tight focus on improving writing throughout the school as well as the introduction of good assessment procedures. The headteacher's influence as co-ordinator of the music curriculum has resulted in

high standards of attainment in music. There has been a significant improvement in the provision for information and communication technology due to the excellent skills and enthusiasm of the co-ordinator in installing the school's own Intranet system. The co-ordinators are aware of their important role in moving the school forward and most of them are good, or very good, managers of their subjects. The leadership and management of the headteacher and senior management team are now good.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

The school's results in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2001 declined from the previous years except in science where standards remained high. However, the attainment on entry of this particular group of pupils showed that their ability was average when based on the data provided by the Local Education Authority. Attainment on entry is usually above average but does vary. The school's trend for the last five years in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science is in line with the national trend. The inspection's findings are that standards are well above average in English and mathematics, including literacy and numeracy and well above average in science for the present group of Year 6 pupils. In all other subjects, standards are above average except in physical education where standards are average. The achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, those pupils with English as an additional language and those pupils deemed to be gifted and talented, is good in all subjects except for physical education where achievement is satisfactory. The targets set by the school for English and mathematics are challenging and the school is on course to meet them in both English and mathematics. Most of the present group of Reception children are on track to reach at least the expected levels for all areas of learning by the time that they reach statutory school age and to exceed expectations in their knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. In Year 2, current standards are high in English, mathematics and science and good in most other subjects. Pupils have maintained their good achievement in Year 2 for several years.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Attitudes to the school | Very good: pupils enjoy school and are very responsive. They are enthusiastic in most lessons, listen attentively and work hard. Concentration is good and most pupils can work hard over an extended period of time. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Good: the majority of pupils behave well and this supports the positive learning environment observed in most lessons. |
| Personal development and relationships | Very good: pupils are happy to show initiative and their personal responsibility in learning is good. They can operate independently and chat confidently to adults and to each other about their work or play. |
| Attendance | Very good: it is well above the level of most schools nationally. |

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

In Years 1 to 6, the quality of teaching and learning in English, including literacy, is very good overall while in Years 5 and 6, teaching is very good in information and communication technology and music. The teaching and learning in mathematics, including numeracy, and in most other subjects, are good. The major strengths are the teaching of the basic skills in English, mathematics, science and information technology as well as the management and control of the pupils that result in pupils making good, and sometimes, very good progress in lessons. Additional strengths in English are the very good methods used to teach writing that result in pupils having a better than expected knowledge of their own learning. Furthermore, the pupils in Years 5 and 6 are given a high challenge in several lessons that results in pupils making every effort both intellectually and creatively to produce work of a high quality. Most teachers use imaginative and well planned methods to inspire their pupils who respond well by showing a keen interest and independence in their learning. There are very few weaknesses but one that is common throughout the school is in physical education. There is a lack of attention given by the teachers to pupils appraising their own performance or that of other pupils in the class. This leads to a lack of understanding by pupils of their own achievement and standards are satisfactory, rather than good. In Year 3, the choice of dull textbooks to teach English resulted in several pupils not being engaged with the task and, in science, in the same class, a lack of organisational skills resulted in a high noise level so that little progress was made in the lesson. In the Reception class, expectations are not always high enough and there is not enough challenge for the pupils, particularly in writing and mathematics. Overall, the school meets the needs of all pupils well, including those children with special educational needs, those with English as an additional language and those pupils who are deemed gifted and talented.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | Good: the curriculum is enriched by a range of visits and visitors as well as a residential visit by the Year 6 pupils to North Wales. In most subjects, there is evidence of good coverage of the curriculum and there is very good provision for information and communication technology and music. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Good: arrangements to support pupils' learning are effective. Pupils' individual education plans are mostly well organised and contain appropriate targets for improvement, which are reviewed regularly. |
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language | Good: all the pupils are bilingual and have developed fluency in English. They have full access to the curriculum and achieve as well as other pupils. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Good overall. Provision for spiritual development is good whilst provision for the pupils' moral and social development is very good. This is having an impact on the ethos of the school and the good behaviour of pupils. There is sound provision for cultural development. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | Good: child protection procedures are secure and clearly understood by staff. The school has good procedures for assessing pupils' progress and there are also good procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress. |

The school's partnership with parents is good and significantly promotes the pupils' very good attitudes and good behaviour. Although extra-curricular activities are judged to be satisfactory overall, nevertheless, the range of sporting opportunities for pupils is limited.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | Good: the headteacher has a very clear vision for the school and is assisted effectively by the senior management team who carry out their responsibilities very effectively. This has a very good impact on improving the school and maintaining high standards. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | Sound: all governors support the school well but strategic development is not strong. The chair of the governing body is particularly effective. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | Good: there are good systems in place to track pupils' progress and the action taken to meet the school's targets is good. |
| The strategic use of resources | Good: the school development plan is linked well to the budget and the school makes best use of all grants and specific funding, for example, for the pupils with special educational needs. |

Staffing is good; accommodation is satisfactory overall with an excellent outdoor learning environment but poor accommodation for the Reception children. Resources are satisfactory overall but, in the Reception class, they are unsatisfactory. The school appropriately seeks best value for money.

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, they behave well and are making good progress. • Teaching is good. • The school is well led and managed. • They feel comfortable about asking questions if there is a problem. • They feel that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information they receive about the progress their children are making. • They would like to see the school working more closely with them. • They would like to see more extra-curricular activities and sporting opportunities. • Parents are not happy with the amount of homework. |

The inspection team agree with all the positive points raised by the parents. They have judged that the information parents receive about progress is satisfactory although there are weaknesses in the end of year reports. The team believes that the school does work closely with parents but, unusually, there is no formal meeting in the autumn term. Inspectors conclude that extra-curricular activities are satisfactory but that the sporting opportunities available to pupils are limited. The inspection team believe that homework is generally appropriate in Years 3 to 6 and good in Years 1 to 2.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The present group of Reception children entered the school with average levels of attainment and a wide range of ability. In the Reception year, most children are achieving satisfactorily and are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, physical development and in their personal, social and emotional development. However, insufficient attention is given to developing fully pupils' skills in writing and in the recording of their work in mathematics. In their knowledge and understanding of the world and in their creative development, most children are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals and their achievement is good due to the good teaching in these areas of learning. The children are confident and several take part in discussions. Most children enjoy listening to stories and they particularly love exploring all the activities both inside and outside the classroom.

2. The results of the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2001 showed that pupils attained well above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics in comparison with other schools nationally and that these high standards have been maintained for the last four years. Boys outperformed girls in reading and writing in the tests but there was no discernible difference during the inspection. The findings of the inspection are that, at the end of Year 2, the pupils reach well above average standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science. In all other subjects, pupils' attainment is above average except in religious education where attainment is average. No overall judgement can be made on standards of attainment in physical education in Year 2 because only one lesson was observed in dance. However, standards in this lesson were above average. The achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, those pupils with English as an additional language and those pupils deemed to be gifted and talented is good.

3. In the end of Year 6 national tests in 2001, standards of attainment declined from previous years in English and mathematics to average whereas, in the previous two years, attainment had been above average. However, in science, high standards have been maintained for the last four years. The attainment on entry of this particular group of Year 6 pupils showed that their ability was average based on the data provided by the Local Education Authority. The explanation for the pupils' very good achievement in science in 2001 is that the headteacher teaches the Year 6 pupils science and also organises after school extension lessons every week. The inspection's findings for the present group of Year 6 pupils are that standards are well above average in English including literacy, mathematics including numeracy, science and music. In all other subjects, standards of attainment are above average except in physical education where they are satisfactory. Achievement is good in all subjects, except physical education, for all pupils including those with special educational needs, those with English as an additional language and those pupils deemed to be gifted and talented. In physical education, achievement is satisfactory. The targets set by the school for English and mathematics are challenging and the school is on course to meet them in both English and mathematics.

4. The key strengths in the teaching of the English, mathematics, science and music are illustrated by the significant emphasis given to teaching the pupils the basic skills very thoroughly and consistently throughout the school. In English, for example, a major part of whole lessons may be devoted to teaching the pupils how to improve their writing by using interesting and powerful adjectives and appropriate connectives. The good planning and high expectations of the teachers ensure that the pupils learn the appropriate vocabulary of connectives, such as the 'time' connectives of 'finally', 'later on' and 'meanwhile'. In addition, pupils in Years 1 to 6 are taught to use a checklist of success criteria to ensure that they are making progress in their writing skills. In mathematics, the focus in most classes is on pupils learning to be 'mathematicians' by explaining their methods of mental

calculation quickly. The teachers give the pupils a high level of challenge and they are expected to think through their answers before they commit themselves. Very good

relationships ensure that all pupils are confident and not afraid to say they do not understand and this enables good progress to be made. In science, the headteacher's very good subject knowledge and high expectations in Year 6 ensure that all pupils respond very well and think scientifically. The regular extension lessons in science result in pupils who are very focused on science and they display a wide range of knowledge of the curriculum. In music, the headteacher's very good subject knowledge, as well as the very good support given by a well qualified assistant, result in pupils using a musical vocabulary confidently and being able to change their compositions by modifying the musical elements. In other subjects, particular strengths lie in the consistency of good teaching in most classes, very good links with information and communication technology and good planning. All of these strengths enable pupils to make good achievement in most subjects and to achieve very well in English, mathematics, science and music in Year 6. However, in physical education, where achievement is satisfactory, there are weaknesses in the planning of lessons when teachers do not include opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own performance.

5. There are several explanations for the improvement in standards from the last inspection. There has been a considerable emphasis on improving teachers' skills in English as well as the very successful implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies. The booster classes organised by the school for English and mathematics have supported those pupils well who might attain average standards. Furthermore, the additional literacy support given to pupils has improved standards generally. As well as those initiatives, the installation and teachers' effective use of the school's Intranet system have resulted in very good links across subject areas, for example, in English, geography and religious education in Year 6 and art and information and communication technology in Year 5. The headteacher's support of teachers in the teaching of science and music has improved the teachers' own knowledge in those subjects and resulted in higher standards. There is also improved curricular planning that has resulted in more focus on the key objectives in lessons for pupils to learn.

6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and reach appropriate standards for their previous attainment. Many attain standards that match national averages. Pupils who have special gifts and talents also make good progress when set against their previous attainment. Those pupils who speak English as an additional language are making good progress and are bilingual. The good knowledge that teachers and learning support assistants have of their pupils helps them to feel confident and secure. Parents are generally pleased with their children's rate of progress. Pupils' progress is more marked in literacy and numeracy because they receive support that is well matched to their needs.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Pupils' attitudes, personal development and relationships with each other and adults are strengths of the school and make very good contributions towards promoting their attainment and progress. Their behaviour overall is good. These judgements show an improvement on the findings at the time of the previous inspection and reflect the widespread views of parents. Parents state that their children enjoy school. The attendance of the pupils is also very good.

8. In the Foundation Stage, the children sit quietly and listen attentively when in whole class lessons. They join in with the group activities provided with enthusiasm and persist for extended periods of time at an activity. Their behaviour is good and all children have an awareness of the expectations set by the Reception class teacher. When working together, they co-operate well and support one another in their learning. Developing initiative and personal responsibility in learning is good. The children can operate independently within the classroom, are friendly and confidently exchange ideas with adults.

9. Throughout the school the pupils' attitudes towards learning are very good. This includes those pupils with special educational needs. They usually concentrate well and show interest in what they are doing as was seen particularly in a Year 1 design and technology lesson making crêpes and using construction toys. They have the confidence to contribute their ideas as, for example, in a Year 5 history lesson discussing the differences between rich and poor people. Even the youngest pupils in the Reception class show enjoyment, listen attentively and follow instructions as was noticed during a dance lesson. In most classes, pupils settle quickly to group work in lessons and maintain their interest even when not being directly supported by adults in the classroom.

10. Pupils' social and moral development is good. The great majority behave well in the classroom, at play and lunch times. They are open, well mannered, polite to adults and to each other, courteous and welcoming to visitors. They move around the school in an orderly way even when not supervised. They wait patiently for other classes when going to and from their rooms for assemblies. They show respect for property; for example, they take care collecting and putting away instruments during music lessons. Nevertheless, in a very few lessons seen, such as a Year 3 literacy hour on road safety, they can be noisy and call out or chatter as the teacher has not established good routines amongst the class. Bullying or name-calling is rare if it occurs at all. No pupils were excluded in the past year.

11. Relationships between pupils and with adults are also very good and contribute to the quality of work in lessons. Pupils get on well with each other when playing games at break and lunch times. In the classroom, the youngest children respect each other's space when sitting close together on the carpet. Good co-operation was seen when Year 2 pupils were working in pairs and small groups in a science lesson about the life cycle of animals. Nevertheless, in some classes in the lower end of the school, a few pupils are still learning that they must put up their hands to answer questions. Reception class pupils listened respectfully to the contributions of others during a discussion on what they did during the weekend. Boys and girls work together very well when doing group work in the classroom and when playing at break and lunch times.

12. The pupils with special educational needs have very good attitudes to their learning. Most are willing to practise aspects that have been identified as part of their individual educational plans. Pupils listen well in whole-class teaching at the beginning of literacy and numeracy lessons and this forms the basis for much of their individual activities during the rest of the lesson. Their attitudes, when withdrawn for small group work, are very good. They concentrate well and respond to the assistants or special educational needs teacher to the best of their abilities.

13. The pupils' personal development is also very good. Their good spiritual development was demonstrated when Year 4 pupils became animated at the way sugar and salt dissolved during a science lesson. Year 2 and 3 pupils showed their regard for the feelings of others when they made considerate and respectful comments about each other's work during an art lesson making prints. During lessons, the pupils use their initiative, such as when Year 6 pupils showed they were able to investigate independently the habitats of insects by going into the grounds, looking at books or going to the computer suite to use the school's Intranet. Pupils show maturity when exercising responsibility. They take on many tasks both within the classroom and around the school. The pupils also benefit from collecting for charities during the year and meeting people in the community such as when the choir entertains people in a nursing home. Pupils are taught to respect each other and, through sound cultural provision, are aware of the need to maintain racial harmony.

14. Attendance is very good showing an improvement on that at the time of the previous inspection. In the last school year, it was over 96 per cent and well above the level of most schools nationally. It makes a significant contribution to the standards achieved by the pupils. Absences are usually due to the occasional illness or medical appointment, although a number of parents insist on taking their children on holiday in term time. There were no unauthorised absences. Pupils are very keen to come to school and it is unusual for any pupil to arrive late. Registration takes place commendably promptly at the start of the day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

15. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall in the Reception class and good overall in Years 1 to 6. One out of five lessons was judged to be satisfactory, two out of five lessons were judged to be good, a quarter of lessons were judged to be very good and six lessons were excellent. Two lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory – four per cent. This is an improvement from the last inspection when ten per cent of lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. The weakness in the last inspection, identified in Years 1 to 2, to sharpen the pace and focus of learning and match work closely to the needs of the pupils have been addressed fully. A significant improvement in this inspection is the 37 per cent of lessons judged to be very good or excellent compared to the last inspection figure of 15 per cent. There were some variations between year groups with more very good and excellent teaching observed in Years 1, 2, 5 and 6. The teaching in Year 6 was never less than good.

16. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning for children in the Reception class is satisfactory. The Reception class teacher knows the children well as individuals and has developed warm relationships with them. Consequently, the children feel happy and secure in school and have developed very good attitudes to learning. Planning for role-play activities is good. This is a significant improvement since the school's last inspection when provision for children to be involved in play and child-initiated activity was identified as a weakness. The teaching of formal aspects of literacy and mathematics is generally satisfactory. However, there are weaknesses in the lack of challenge for the more able children and in the low expectations of children's recorded work. The management of children is good and both the class teacher and nursery nurse provide caring support and guidance. They listen with interest to what the children have to say and, when working with them, demonstrate good skills in helping children to develop their language for communication. Planning for children in the Reception class is well matched to the recommended Early Learning Goals.

17. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers and learning support assistants plan effectively together to ensure that lesson activities match the targets on pupils' individual education plans. Most targets are clearly expressed and provide realistic stages of development. As a result, pupils make good progress, both in their grasp of basic skills, and in their confidence and positive attitudes to work. In most numeracy and literacy lessons, learning support assistants provide good support in the whole class sessions as well as in small group work, and they often work with individual pupils. This is a productive use of their time and makes a good contribution to individual pupils' progress. Teachers plan well for pupils who have special gifts and talents, and provide work and challenge that extends their learning well.

18. In Years 1 to 2, teaching was judged to be very good in English and good in all other subjects except for religious education where it was judged to be satisfactory. No judgement could be made on the quality of teaching in physical education in these year groups as only one lesson in dance was observed. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 is good overall. Teaching was judged to be very good in English and information and communication technology and good in all other subjects except for physical education where it was judged to be satisfactory.

19. There are several strengths of teaching and learning in Years 1 to 2 and no significant weaknesses. The quality of teaching ranged from excellent to satisfactory. In all the lessons observed, the planning was good and identified the learning objectives for each lesson. The use of 'mindmaps', when the pupils brainstorm a topic and identify what they know about it before and at the end of a unit of work, is a very effective tool for assessing the pupils' progress. As a result, the pupils have a good knowledge of their own learning. The reading home/school diaries of the pupils in these three classes show ongoing assessment of the pupils' reading skills and are a good method of communicating progress with the parents. The management of the pupils is very good and has an impact on the good pace in lessons and the range and quality of work the pupils produce. The teachers have good subject knowledge and this is particularly evident in the teaching of English where

there is an emphasis on improving the pupils' writing by concentrating on the use of connectives and adjectives. As a result, the teaching of basic skills has improved and has had an impact on standards that are now well above average. The teachers' high expectations offer a good challenge to the pupils and there is good liaison with the assistants before lessons begin so that no time is wasted and all pupils are confident and complete their work with understanding.

20. In Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching and learning ranged from excellent to unsatisfactory. However, only one lesson was unsatisfactory and five were excellent. The strengths of the teaching include all those attributed to Years 1 to 2 as well as a very high challenge offered to the Year 5 and 6 pupils in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology and music. In these subjects, the teachers showed an inspirational approach to, for example, the appreciation of poetry and music. They had excellent methods for teaching the pupils to understand the difference between the subtleties of literal and inferential questioning and ensured that their explanations in science and information and communication technology were logical and understood by the pupils. In addition, through their good planning, they ensured that there were good links between subjects such as information and communication technology, history and geography.

21. There are very few weaknesses in teaching. However, a common weakness in physical education lessons is that teachers do not include the aspect of evaluation by pupils of their own and other pupils' performance. None of the lessons observed contained this element and this lack of appraisal had an impact on the achievement of pupils that was satisfactory rather than good. In Year 3, planning included too many aspects of English in one lesson that failed to inspire the pupils. The teacher's choice of textbooks that most pupils worked from in the activities session was unimaginative and, although at least half the pupils worked studiously, several pupils were not engaged and were off task. In science, in the same year group, the planning again was weak and did not refer precisely to the activities organised by the teacher. A lack of organisational skills resulted in a high noise level and little progress was made in the lesson that was judged to be unsatisfactory.

22. The teachers' use of information and communication technology is good throughout the school. The suite is timetabled for most classes to visit twice during the week and, on these occasions, pupils either research the school's Intranet to find out more about specific aspects of subjects they are studying or engage in other activities that the teachers have planned to move their knowledge and understanding in information and communication technology forward. Most classes also have at least one computer that is networked to the systems in the suite and these are used regularly. All teachers make very good use of all the programs available. Some assistants are very knowledgeable and support the pupils well and there are good links with practically all other subjects. The school also has a video camera that was used during the inspection week to video lessons for future assessment as well as two digital cameras.

23. The teaching of literacy is very good overall. It was never less than satisfactory throughout the school and was excellent in three lessons. Most teachers manage the literacy hour with confidence and show that they have very secure knowledge. They teach the basic skills very well and pupils respond with confidence and know their own learning well. In addition, the focus over the last two years on improving writing skills by an emphasis on connectives, as well as using the success criteria for good writing with the pupils, has had a very positive effect on learning. The more recent introduction of the teaching of 'thinking skills' by the headteacher in a few classes has improved the pupils' logical thinking skills. In the lessons observed, it was clear that the pupils' speaking and listening skills as well as their knowledge of literal and inferential comprehension have moved forward considerably. The teaching of the additional literacy skills by the support assistants and the special educational needs co-ordinator is good and has improved the reading and writing skills of those pupils who need an extra boost. Pupils are given plenty of opportunities to practise their writing skills in other subjects, such as history and geography. Links with information and communication technology are very good.

24. The teaching of numeracy is good and teachers are very confident with the strategy. The three-part lesson is established effectively and lessons move with a good pace resulting in highly motivated pupils who work hard. The pupils in Year 6 are offered a very high challenge and respond well. The standard of their work is very high. Numeracy skills are used well in other subjects in the curriculum and pupils were observed measuring the ingredients for cooking in grams and millilitres. Other pupils were using their mathematical and scientific knowledge using the computers and evidence was seen of pupils measuring wood to make photograph frames in design and technology.

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

25. The quality and range of the curriculum provided by the school are good, and promote the aims of the school well. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements and includes all subjects of the National Curriculum, together with religious education. Pupils are offered a good range of opportunities. Policies and schemes of work are in place, or drafted, for all subjects, and each receives an appropriate amount of teaching time. This represents good improvement since the last inspection report, when some aspects of the allocated time for some subjects, and the overall time for teaching were criticised. Long-term and medium-term planning are both good and provide coverage of all the subjects of the National Curriculum programmes of study. Short-term planning for the weekly curriculum is satisfactory and this is an improvement from the last inspection. Most of these short-term plans provide for the key objectives that pupils are to learn.

26. The quality and range of learning opportunities for children in the Reception class are satisfactory. Planning is detailed; it follows the recommendations of the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage and is well supported by the Local Education Authority's guidelines. This is a considerable improvement since the school's last inspection when providing an appropriate curriculum for under-fives was a key issue for action. Plans are based around themes such as, 'Ourselves', and 'Dinosaurs' and, this term, the theme has been well linked to the Queen's Golden Jubilee. Planned provision for indoor and outdoor imaginative play is now sufficient both in range and frequency. However, insufficient attention is given to developing fully the children's writing skills to the level of their communication skills and the recording of their practical mathematics work is weak.

27. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented very well, and English and mathematics are appropriately resourced. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health development is good. Matters of health and sex education are taught as part of personal, social and health education and through some of the science curriculum. A good feature is that aspects of health and sex education are taught within the context of caring relationships. Pupils are taught about healthy lifestyles, particularly about food, exercise and personal hygiene. The provision for homework is satisfactory overall and good in Years 1 to 2.

28. Curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is good overall. There are good arrangements to support pupils' learning in literacy and numeracy in classes. In other subjects, extra support is given if appropriate although a support assistant is not always present. Support assistants work well with small groups of pupils in English and mathematics classes. Individual education plans are generally well organised and targets match the identified special educational needs. However, there are some that are not sharp or focused enough so that they are achievable and have appropriate time limits. Additionally, some do not include specific things for parents to do at home with their children. Targets focus on literacy, numeracy and some behavioural difficulties. The school does not yet use the new Code of Practice for special educational needs but training for the special educational needs co-ordinators is planned by the Local Education Authority for this summer. The new code will be introduced in September. The needs of the pupils who have statements of special educational need are met well and annual reviews provide a good focus for further improvement.

29. The aims of the school and their implementation show a very good commitment to equality of opportunity, and this is reflected in all aspects of school life. For example, the school compares and

analyses how well boys and girls perform in different subjects. Where differences are seen, suggestions for remedies and action are made. Pupils who are deemed to be gifted or talented are given every opportunity to shine in appropriate subjects of the curriculum.

30. All pupils have access to all the aspects of the curriculum and the older pupils have the opportunity of attending out-of-school activities. The school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities, although the provision for sporting activities is limited. Recently, girls' football has been provided after school but several parents at the meeting held before the inspection stated that they did not think that there were sufficient sporting opportunities within the extra-curricular provision. The findings of the inspection team agree with this criticism. Pupils, however, do have the opportunities provided by the physical education programme, and several are chosen to represent the school at local competitions such as the swimming gala or rounders tournament. However, there are no other sporting based activities, apart from table tennis and girls' football, for out of school time. Other extra-curricular activities are science, information and communication technology and table tennis for Year 6 pupils, drama and country dancing for the pupils in Year 5 and recorders for Year 3 pupils. For pupils in Years 4 to 6, there is the girls' football club and the school band. Several visiting teachers provide individual music lessons for pupils and the school band and choir perform at local residential homes on certain occasions during the year.

31. The curriculum is enhanced through a range of visits and visitors. For example, pupils visit museums such as Kentwell. The pupils in Year 6 go on a residential visit to North Wales, stopping off in Chester on the way, where they follow the history tour. Other pupils visit Colchester Castle, and Christchurch Manor. Visitors have talked to pupils about World War II, dental hygiene and a portable planetarium which was brought to the school for the pupils to explore. In addition, the members of the St. John's Ambulance group and the officers of the Fire Brigade visit the school.

32. There are good links with the wider community that help to contribute to pupils' learning. The choir and band perform at the church, a local nursing home and at a summer Proms concert. Pupils take part in other events such as the Felixstowe in Bloom and public speaking festivals. The school organises various activities where pupils meet other local schools such as a swimming gala, District sports day and chess competition. The pupils benefit from many visits to places of interest in the surrounding area such as a theatre, castle and a farm. Visitors include the fire brigade, police and a local artist. Parents enable the local community to use the school's swimming pool outside school hours during the summer.

33. Contacts with other educational institutions are good. The links with the adjoining nursery and the main secondary school result in pupils having few problems moving into the Reception class at the start of their time at the school or out of Year 6 when they are due to leave. The headteachers and subject co-ordinators of local schools meet regularly in a consortium.

34. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Pupils' spiritual development is good. It is enhanced by the appreciation of the natural world in science, and by work in religious education about worship and belonging to a faith. Pupils hear stories from the Bible, and some assemblies add references to Biblical stories such as one about Jonah and the whale when the theme was 'talents'. In English, in Year 6, pupils' spiritual development is enhanced by some literature such as the work they are doing on the poetry of Ted Hughes. Assemblies sometimes provide other opportunities for spiritual development, and there is always an opportunity to pray for those pupils who wish. Pupils enter assemblies quietly and are usually well behaved throughout the time. They sing the hymns, sometimes well, although the older pupils often do not join in. The singing of "Lord of the Dance" in one assembly was very good, and the headteacher adds to these occasions with very good musical accompaniment. There is a mainly Christian focus to assemblies. Pupils' pleasure and enjoyment of music lessons with a range of experiences given to them also add to spiritual development.

35. Pupils' good behaviour, and their very positive attitudes to their work are based on the school's very good provision for the moral development of pupils. Staff have very high expectations of pupils, and they provide very good role models for them. The school has a positive approach to the management of behaviour, with an emphasis on rewards whenever possible. Staff help pupils to develop an awareness of what is right and wrong. For example, in a Year 5 lesson of religious education, pupils were asked to give some of the attributes typifying a Christian. Pupils suggested being able to say sorry, and being able to forgive others. Year 6 pupils understand that some religions require a high moral code from their followers, such as Sikhs, who are asked to stand up for justice and what is right. In Year 2, pupils have considered why some actions are considered right and others wrong, in their personal, social and health education lessons. Moral issues are taught well, and pupils are very well behaved in and around the school. School rules are supplemented by high expectations for good work and behaviour. Lessons in games, in the physical education programme, help pupils to understand the need for rules and to respect them.

36. The school provides very well for pupils' social development. The opportunities for outings and the residential visit in Year 6 provide good social occasions where pupils learn to be part of the group representing the school. This sense of identity within a group is enhanced by such activities as the excellent band and the choir, especially in their public performances in local residential homes. There is a school council that provides the opportunity for some pupils to take further social responsibility. Relationships in the school are very good and adults and pupils demonstrate this in the generally good atmosphere in lessons. This, in turn, enables pupils to learn well. The very high levels of challenge in English, mathematics and science in Year 6 enable the pupils to take responsibility for their own learning and to achieve well. Social inclusion is handled well, and all pupils have equality of opportunity regarding the school's life and curriculum. This includes pupils who have special gifts and talents and those who have special educational needs.

37. Overall, there is satisfactory provision for pupils' cultural development. In areas of Western culture, such as music, art, drama and literature, provision is generally good or very good. Music is particularly strong, especially the band, with excellent input from the headteacher and the very well qualified teaching assistant who supports him. The individual instrumental music lessons and the other opportunities for making music also contribute well to this aspect. Art in the curriculum provides good opportunities to develop pupils' cultural awareness. Pupils have experience of different cultures, for example, in geography in their work on an Indian village. In art, music and religious education, they work with cultures other than Western or English ones, studying other faiths and practices. However, the overall findings about cultural development are affected by the lack of effective preparation of pupils for the multi-cultural society that is found in Britain. Very few multi-cultural models of successes are offered to pupils, for example, Nelson Mandela or any of the many British ethnic minority sports people, politicians and broadcasters of today.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. All staff in the school show appropriate concern for the needs of the pupils and provide good role models to encourage their development. Parents are pleased with the level of support in the school, seeing it as a caring community where the headteacher and all teachers are approachable if there are any problems. The procedures for monitoring pupils' academic performance and personal development and for providing educational and personal support and guidance are good.

39. Overall, the school has good procedures for child protection and for ensuring the welfare of the pupils and standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The headteacher is the designated officer for child protection and the school follows local procedures. The policy provides a reasonable outline of possible concerns and the staff have received guidance on how to deal with any situations that may arise. The provision for first aid is good with several trained staff, records kept of any treatment and contact with parents as appropriate. A health and safety policy is in place and one teacher has particular responsibility. She and the headteacher tour the school each half term to

identify any potential hazards. In addition, the school follows the Local Education Authority's guidelines for carrying out risk assessments throughout the school. Outside contractors regularly check the fire extinguishers, electrical items and physical education equipment. The teachers ensure that pupils are made aware of health and safety issues during lessons such as science, physical education and design and technology.

40. Children in the Reception class are well cared for and it is evident that they feel at ease. Assessment and record keeping procedures are satisfactory. Baseline assessment is carried out when the children enter the Reception class and the results of these are used to track the progress that individual children make. Each term, the children are assessed on their phonic knowledge, key word knowledge and specific numeracy objectives. Targets are set for each child in literacy and numeracy. Examples of each child's work are kept in an individual portfolio.

41. The monitoring and support of pupils' academic performance and personal development are good overall. This is similar to the judgements made in the school's last inspection. The school has effective systems in place for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics, science and music. In religious education and all other subjects of the National Curriculum, assessment procedures are satisfactory. However, in physical education the assessment scheme only identifies what pupils do well. Very soon after children enter the school they are assessed using the Local Education Authority's procedures designed for this age range of children. This information is used to identify any child who may need additional support and to start the process of tracking the progress of individual pupils as they move through the school. In the intervening period between the national tests in Year 2 and Year 6, the school routinely carries out reading, spelling and mathematics tests and uses these to analyse attainment levels and evidence of progress. In Years 4 and 5, the school also uses the non-statutory tests in English and mathematics. The results of all these tests provide the school with a judgement of the levels pupils are expected to achieve in the following year and to set the end of Key Stage 2 targets. In addition, the data is analysed to compare pupils' attainment and progress by gender and to identify those pupils who show evidence of high attainment as well as those who may require support in their learning. The information is held on the school's administrative computer.

42. In Key Stage 1, evidence of work is also kept for targeted pupils for three years to track their progress. Individual targets are set in numeracy and literacy for each pupil each term, but, although they are shared with parents, they are not displayed in the pupils' exercise books. Personal targets are also set if it is seen as being appropriate, but, in general, the pupils' personal development is monitored and assessed on an informal basis. Each pupil has a file that contains all assessments and end-of-year reports that is passed from class to class as they move through the school. In music, good use is made of video recordings of pupils' performance in lessons for class evaluations. End of unit assessments are carried out in science. The use of assessment to guide curricular planning is good. The process has now been improved and the evidence collected now provides a more precise insight into the development of each pupil to enable the teacher to plan activities that meet individual need in literacy and numeracy. Promising work is already in hand to encourage pupils to evaluate their own learning. For example, the school has introduced the idea of 'mindmaps' in science and geography that involves pupils in brainstorming their ideas of what they know at the beginning of a unit and repeating the process at the end. Consequently, the pupils know what they have learned and the teachers can see if there are any gaps in their knowledge and understanding. This approach is being extended to other subjects of the National Curriculum, such as history and religious education. The marking of pupils' work is regular and, in literacy, it is particularly valuable for developing pupils' learning.

43. The care and support of pupils with special educational needs are good. The teachers and learning support assistants know the pupils they work with well. The school ensures that pupils with educational needs have good opportunities to take part in all school activities and their contributions are recognised and fully appreciated. The procedures for the early identification of pupils with special

educational needs are good. The school has good procedures for tracking pupil's progress and effective arrangements are made for the regular review of their targets. The very great majority of individual education plans are good. However, in a very few cases, targets do not have a sharp enough focus and there is no time scale for achieving them. 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 that are involved, as appropriate, in pupils' termly and annual reviews.

44. The procedures for promoting discipline and good behaviour and for preventing any oppressive behaviour are good. The behaviour policy recognises the needs of the pupils and reflects the philosophy of the school. It clearly sets out the expectations of good behaviour, emphasising praise and encouragement. The lessons seen during the inspection showed that the staff consistently adopt this positive approach, supplemented if necessary with a warning for some pupils, a procedure well understood by the class. Overall, the good quality of the teaching provides pupils with work at the right level so that they are fully engaged and behaviour is not an issue for the great majority. The school has developed an understanding amongst pupils of the effect of their actions on others and this prevents any bullying. The pupils who show any sustained difficulty with behaviour are monitored well through the school's special educational needs system.

45. The procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good. The very good relationships between the pupils and the staff mean that the pupils want to come to school. The registers are now marked so that they comply with statutory requirements. Teachers and office staff ensure that parents supply a reason for their children's absence. However, the school does not telephone home on the first day of an unexplained absence.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46. Partnership with parents is good. In their responses to the questionnaire and at the meeting with the inspectors, parents showed that they are pleased with all that the school does. The inspection team supports all their positive comments that, overall, show an improvement since the time of the last inspection. Parents say that the school is well led and that the teaching is good. Their children like coming to school, behave well and make progress from the level of support they receive. The school expects them to work hard and helps them to become mature and responsible. They feel comfortable approaching the school with any questions. These reactions are similar to the comments made at the time of the previous inspection. Some parents are concerned about the range of activities outside lessons but the inspection team considered that the provision of clubs and activities is appropriate although agree with the parents about the limited amount of sporting facilities. Some doubts were expressed about the amount of homework but the inspectors concluded that the work the pupils are encouraged to do at home is generally appropriate and good in the infant classes. A few parents also feel they are not well informed about the progress of their children and feel that the school does not work closely with them. The inspectors conclude that a good range of information is provided but there are weaknesses in the end of year reports and with the lack of a formal meeting in the autumn term.

47. The school involves the parents of pupils who have special educational needs well. They receive copies of individual education plans and are invited to consultations when they can discuss their children's progress. Their views are sought and recorded for annual reviews of statements. Specific things for parents to do at home, thereby taking some ownership of the individual plans and perhaps helping to set future targets, are not included in individual education plans.

48. Induction procedures for children who are starting school are satisfactory. Parents are invited to attend an informal induction evening in the summer term before children enter the school to meet the staff and ask any questions. The school provides a useful booklet for parents who are asked to complete a pre-school profile booklet about their child, which provides the school with information about the child's interests and skills. Children are then invited to attend two induction mornings during the term before they enter school. Parents are welcomed into the Reception class and many parents

were seen supporting the children during the inspection. Liaison with the pre-school nursery on site is good but no visits are carried out to other pre-school providers.

49. The school has established good links with the parents and these contacts are effective. The quality of information provided by the school for parents is satisfactory overall. The headteacher sends newsletters home once or twice a term outlining the various activities that the pupils are involved in and these are supplemented with many letters on individual matters. Every term, class teachers send details of what they will be teaching their pupils. The prospectus and Annual Report to parents are attractively produced but omit a few of the details required by law. The end of the afternoon provides a good opportunity for parents to see the teachers. The inspectors saw several informal conversations taking place and it is very apparent that parents feel very welcome to come into the school. Almost all parents come to the formal meetings with teachers in the spring and summer terms to discuss their progress. However, the school not to have such a meeting in the autumn term. The annual report on progress is sent home in the summer term. This report provides an appropriate summary of what pupils know and can do in each subject together with targets to help the pupils to improve. Nevertheless, the reports seen were not necessarily specific to each pupil and a few reports for different pupils had exactly the same wording. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are appropriately involved in the setting and review of their individual education plans.

50. Parents' involvement with the school makes a good contribution to its work and to the attainment of the pupils. Pupils are happy in school and the great majority work hard and are keen to learn. These attitudes reflect the extent to which parents encourage their children to respect the school and education process. The termly letter on what is being taught and various leaflets on helping with reading enable parents to support their children at home. However, all classes do not use the homework diary consistently. The Kingsfleet school association is very supportive and arranges many fund raising and social events including some for the benefit of the pupils. A good number of parents come to help in the classroom on a regular basis especially in the lower end of the school. Many more are willing to help on trips out.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior management team provide the school with good leadership and management and this is an improvement since the last inspection. The headteacher delegates responsibilities well and most co-ordinators are good, and sometimes very good, managers of their subjects and this leads to good standards of attainment. The headteacher and the senior management team have responded well to the findings of the last inspection report and have addressed the areas of weakness identified within it. The governing body is very supportive and the Chair of Governors, in particular, has maintained her close and active relationship with the school since the last inspection. The headteacher has a very clear vision of the way the school should support pupils in their academic and social development. The vast majority of parents believe that the school is well led and managed.

52. The headteacher's vision is strongly based on the school's explicit aims and values that are reflected in the good ethos that is very evident throughout the school. There is a good commitment to teamwork and good relationships as well as equality of opportunity for all staff and pupils. The capacity to improve standards further is good. The headteacher has maintained his high profile in the school since the last inspection particularly in his role as a very good teacher of English, science and music where standards of attainment are well above average. He has high expectations of the pupils and has created a good environment for inclusion as well as the spiritual, moral and social development of the pupils. This results in pupils being well behaved and very enthusiastic about their school. Pupils are taught to respect each other and, through sound cultural provision, are aware of the need to maintain racial harmony.

53. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection and has addressed the weaknesses identified by that inspection successfully.

- The quality of teaching and learning has improved significantly.
- An appropriate curriculum has been provided for the children in the Reception class.
- The teaching time in Years 3 to 6 is now in line with the national recommendations.
- Teachers' short-term plans now identify what the pupils should learn.
- The school development plan is now comprehensive and is linked effectively with the budget.
- There are no major issues about non-compliance with statutory requirements. However, there are a very few minor omissions from the Annual Report to parents.

Further significant improvements, other than those identified in the last inspection, have been:

- The introduction of very focused marking of pupils' work.
- The introduction of an effective assessment strategy to track pupils' progress.
- There is now very good provision for information and communication technology.
- There is now very good provision in music and this has improved standards and has also enhanced the pupils' spiritual and social development.
- Those pupils who are gifted or talented in English, mathematics, art and music have the opportunity to improve their skills.

54. These initiatives have had a positive impact on improved standards of attainment in several subjects that are now well above average or above average.

55. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties well and is able to account for the performance of the school with the support of the headteacher. The headteacher finds this aspect of management most bureaucratically demanding. The governors have very clear systems for carrying out their role of pastoral responsibility for a class, membership of specific committees and effective terms of reference. Most governors attend the training sessions organised by the authority. Governors are very supportive of the school and attend all the social events as well as those evenings that are organised to inform parents about certain aspects of the curriculum, for example, the introduction of the numeracy hour. In addition, they all visit the school for curriculum events, such as the Artsweek arranged by the school last year.

56. The governing body meets on two occasions per term and has organised efficient committees for finance, curriculum, health and safety, personnel and a Hearing and Appeals Committee. The Chair of the Governing Body meets with the headteacher weekly and plays a prominent role within school. She carries out her responsibilities diligently, is a true 'critical friend' of the headteacher and has a very clear understanding of her role and a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The link governor for special educational needs plays an effective role in having an overview of the progress of the pupils with special educational needs as well as overseeing the budget. She reports back to the main governing body and raises any issues if necessary. There are also link governors for literacy and numeracy but they have not established effective contact with the co-ordinators of those subjects. However, the minutes of meetings give insufficient evidence that the governors, as a group, engage in sufficient strategic development planning. There is little reference to discussion of the priorities of the school improvement plan or any notes of actions that need to follow.

57. Monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance are good. Effective monitoring of teaching has taken place in Years 1 to 6 and has had an impact on improving the quality of teaching since the last inspection. However, limited monitoring and support have taken place in the Reception class and this has resulted in some weaknesses not being acted upon. The induction of new staff to the school is good; there is a very good staff handbook and the school has the potential to be an effective provider of initial teacher training. The governing body and headteacher have been effective in setting up appropriate performance management procedures. The policy is well established and understood by all staff and the headteacher has created good links between the priorities indicated in

the school development plan, the school budget and the teachers' professional development. All of the teachers have a target for improvement linked to one of the priorities in the development plan.

58. The school's priorities for development are very appropriate and the methods by which they are to be achieved, through the school's development plan, are also good. This is an improvement from the findings of the last report that recommended changes to the plan. The plan now includes all the priorities for strategic planning as well as costings that are strongly linked to the school budget. However, the success criteria listed are not always easily measurable. The effectiveness of the school's use of new technologies is good. The information and communication technology suite has a variety of assessment programs available for the teachers to track the progress of pupils, including those with special educational needs. The school uses email effectively as well as a video recorder and two digital cameras that are used efficiently in lessons to enrich the curriculum and aid assessment. The co-ordinator is just about to publish the school's website on the Internet.

59. The school makes good use of the information from standardised tests in Years 4 and 5 as well as the results of the national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 to review progress towards the priorities in the school development plan. The senior management team track the progress of pupils in different year groups in order to determine whether specific groups, such as boys and girls, need targeting. This information is used to inform future planning. In order to improve standards of attainment in writing, for example, success criteria for writing have been introduced to the pupils in Year 3 to 6 over the last two years to act as a self-assessment tool. The introduction of 'mindmaps' has also been very effective in ensuring that pupils know what they have learned. This initiative involves pupils brainstorming their ideas of what they know at the beginning of a unit and repeating the process at the end. In addition, there has been a strong focus on the use of connectives in the pupils' writing and this has had a significant impact on raising standards in writing that are now well above average in Years 1 to 6.

60. The management of the provision for children in the Reception is generally satisfactory. However, there are areas of weakness in the monitoring and support of the provision. The previous Reception teacher and headteacher have provided good support to the Reception teacher to help her settle in and develop an understanding of the planned curriculum already in place. However, this has not been extended to regular monitoring and feedback of the work produced by the children to reveal the undemanding level of their recorded work. The quality of relationships within the Reception class is good and the teacher is very well supported by the nursery nurse. Although the indoor accommodation is sufficiently spacious to support children's learning, it is in poor repair and does not provide a stimulating well-maintained place for children to learn. The designated outdoor play area has to be reached by steps and has no covered area. Consequently, access and use are dependent on the weather. Resources for outdoor play and role-play activities are inadequate to meet the needs of young children. Many are old and shabby and much of the furniture and equipment are past repair. Neither are there sufficient resources to help develop children's knowledge of different cultures.

61. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides good leadership and management of provision. She has only two days in school each week and teaches small groups of pupils who need extra help as well as carrying out administrative work. The co-ordinator uses the school's tracking system to monitor pupils' progress. The school has not yet implemented the new Code of Practice for special educational needs. However, the local authority is providing training this term, so that the new Code of Practice can be implemented next term. There is a designated governor, who has a good involvement in the life of the school and visits the school to help and support. Funds allocated for pupils with special educational needs are used to good effect and the school makes a significant contribution from its own resources.

62. Financial management is satisfactory and the planning follows the school's educational aims and priorities. The governing body, guided by the headteacher, is involved in the formulation of each year's budget and co-ordinators identify money needed for their subject areas. In planning for its expenditure

in the current year the school has budgeted for a surplus of some nine per cent of its income. The norm for most schools is around three to five per cent but the governors have decided that money should be reserved for improvements to the accommodation. The school makes effective use of additional grants for pupils with special educational needs and other specific purposes. Teaching and support staff are used effectively.

63. The administrative officer provides good support for senior management and governors in monitoring expenditure. The office makes satisfactory use of new technology with computerised administrative and financial records and appropriate Internet connections. The systems in place enable the headteacher and governors to monitor spending closely. The recommendations in the last audit report have been put in place but, unusually, no audit has taken place during the past four years. Value for money is ensured when finding suppliers for both goods and services. Co-ordinators and teachers have control of their own budgets for resources in their subject areas and the classrooms.

64. There is a good match of teachers and support assistants to the curriculum. Most teachers are experienced and were trained in an appropriate phase. The school employs a good team of support staff, and a few are very knowledgeable about information and communication technology and music and can support the pupils and teachers very effectively. The assistants work well with the teachers and play a valuable role in supporting pupils' learning. This is having a positive impact on the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs.

65. The school has variable accommodation and is satisfactory overall. Although most classrooms are spacious with useful small areas, the layout of the school requires visitors and pupils to walk through classrooms to reach other classrooms and this is disruptive to learning. There is an excellent information and communication technology suite and this is used regularly and effectively. The children in the Reception class are housed in a temporary hut. This building is in a dilapidated state of repair, has an unpleasant odour and does not help the teacher to create an appropriate learning environment for the youngest children in the school. The outside environment is excellent with high quality play equipment, a beautiful Millennium garden that enhances the science curriculum and very good hard play areas. Resources are satisfactory overall with all subjects sufficiently equipped. Resources in information and communication technology are good but resources for the children in the Reception class are unsatisfactory.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

66. In order to raise standards, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- (1) **Raise standards of attainment in the Reception class by ensuring that:**
 - expectations of the standards in writing are raised;
 - the limited recording of children's work in mathematics is improved;
 - the current monitoring and support is more rigorous;(Paragraphs. 1, 16, 26, 57, 60, 67, 68, 72, 73, 74)

- (2) **Improve the quality of the resources and accommodation for the Reception class to improve the learning environment. ****
(Paragraphs. 60, 65, 67, 70, 76, 77)

- (3) **Improve standards in physical education by;**
 - including opportunities in lessons for the pupils to evaluate and improve their own and others' performance;
 - ensuring a sharper focus in lessons on the progression of skills;
 - reviewing the limited sporting opportunities offered in extra-curricular activities.(Paragraphs. 4, 18, 21, 30, 41, 46, 142, 143, 145, 146, 147)

** indicates that issue has already been partly identified in the school improvement plan

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

Include more opportunities in the curriculum for preparing pupils for living in a culturally diverse British society. (Paragraphs. 37, 91)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed | 51 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 26 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| | Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Number | 6 | 13 | 20 | 10 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Percentage | 12 | 25 | 39 | 20 | 4 | 0 | 0 |

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents almost 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) | 224 |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | 8 |
| Special educational needs | YR – Y6 |
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | 2 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 32 |
| English as an additional language | No of pupils |
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 7 |
| 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 | 2 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 4.0 |
| National comparative data | 5.6 |

Unauthorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 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 | 27 | 18 | 45 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 26 | 25 | 26 |
| | Girls | 17 | 18 | 17 |
| | Total | 43 | 43 | 43 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 96 (97) | 96 (97) | 96 (100) |
| | National | 84 (83) | 86 (84) | 91 (90) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 26 | 25 | 26 |
| | Girls | 17 | 16 | 17 |
| | Total | 43 | 41 | 43 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 96 (97) | 91 (90) | 96 (90) |
| | 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 | 19 | 24 | 43 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|----------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 13 | 15 | 18 |
| | Girls | 18 | 16 | 21 |
| | Total | 31 | 31 | 39 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 72 (94) | 72 (90) | 91 (100) |
| | National | 75 (75) | 71 (72) | 87 (85) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 12 | 18 | 17 |
| | Girls | 15 | 16 | 19 |
| | Total | 27 | 34 | 36 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 63 (81) | 79 (81) | 84 (90) |
| | 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 | 1 |
| Indian | 1 |
| Pakistani | 0 |
| Bangladeshi | 0 |
| Chinese | 2 |
| White | 184 |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 4 |

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

| | |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 10 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 22.4 |
| Average class size | 28 |

Education support staff: YR – Y6

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 6 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 148 |

Financial information

| | |
|--|---------|
| Financial year | 2001/02 |
| | £ |
| Total income | 530,812 |
| Total expenditure | 506,277 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 1956 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 26,587 |
| Balance carried forward next year | 51,122 |

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 | 1 |
| 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 | 226 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 75 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 60 | 32 | 5 | 3 | 0 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 52 | 41 | 3 | 3 | 1 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 39 | 49 | 9 | 1 | 1 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 35 | 44 | 12 | 7 | 3 |
| The teaching is good. | 60 | 31 | 3 | 4 | 3 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 39 | 35 | 19 | 8 | 0 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 54 | 34 | 8 | 4 | 0 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 57 | 39 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 33 | 40 | 19 | 8 | 0 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 49 | 40 | 5 | 1 | 4 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 35 | 54 | 8 | 1 | 1 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 27 | 31 | 16 | 14 | 12 |

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

67. There have been considerable changes in the provision for children in the Foundation Stage since the previous inspection. In the previous report, a key issue for action was to provide an appropriate curriculum for the Reception children that gives emphasis to talk, purposeful play and child-initiated activities. There has been a significant improvement in this aspect of the school's provision. However, there are some important areas of weakness, notably in the monitoring of the present provision, the lack of good quality resources and the accommodation that is in poor repair. The present Reception class teacher has been providing cover for maternity leave for the past school year but has now taken on the permanent position. The well-established day-to-day routines enable all children to feel secure, safe and grow in confidence.

68. Children are admitted to school during the year in which they become five, either part-time or full time, depending on when their fifth birthday occurs. Most of the children have already attended the pre-school nursery on the school site. The initial assessments conducted with these children showed that their attainment on entry is average overall. Children's attainment on entry does vary year on year and is usually above average. In the Reception year, most children are achieving satisfactorily and are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, physical development and in their personal, social and emotional development. Overall, in these areas of learning, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. However, insufficient attention is given to developing fully pupils' skills in writing and in the recording of their work in mathematics. In their knowledge and understanding of the world and in their creative development the quality of teaching and learning is good and most children are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals.

Personal, social and emotional development

69. Most children are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals in this area. This shows satisfactory achievement and reflects the sensitive teaching, where children are constantly encouraged to feel confident about what they can achieve. The children settle in well and quickly learn to share and take turns while at play or work. During whole class sessions children sit quietly, remember to take turns when speaking and learn to consider the feelings of others. For example, in a religious education lesson, the children listened carefully to the story of Zacchaeus and learned to recognise the feelings of others and share their own feelings through facial expressions of what it is like to be sad or happy. They are polite and remember to use conventional phrases such as 'excuse me' and 'thank you' and are beginning to consider the consequences of their actions for themselves. There are, however, a few children who show boisterous behaviour when they are not under the direct supervision of an adult. The children attend to their personal hygiene appropriately and most of them undress and dress themselves independently before and after their physical education lessons. The children enjoy learning, particularly when involved in role-play activities. They are eager to share what they have learned and talk confidently about what they are doing. All children settle quickly to the more structured activities, such as literacy and numeracy, and show ability to concentrate for long periods of time.

70. Personal and social development is well promoted in all areas of learning and the planning is good. All adults working with children in the Reception class treat each other and the children with courtesy and respect. This leads to trusting relationships and helps the children to develop an awareness of others. Snack time is used appropriately to develop the children's social skills as the adults sit and talk with them while they eat. The Reception teacher ensures there is sufficient time for the children to choose activities for themselves and to initiate their own ideas through play. However,

the range of resources available to support this aspect of children's learning is insufficient and there are few that provide children with the opportunity to experience differences in cultures other than their own.

Communication, language and literacy

71. Children enter school with above average attainment in this aspect of their learning. In particular, their communication skills are well developed and most children communicate well by speaking clearly and listening and responding with enjoyment. They are on course to exceed the recommended goals for communication and their achievement is satisfactory. Although most children are on course to meet the recommended Early Learning Goals for reading, their achievement in writing is unsatisfactory. Their language and communication skills are well developed and many children talk confidently about their own experiences and the things that interest them. All adults use talk to good effect and are good active listeners. In all the areas of learning, both the Reception teacher and nursery nurse talk to the children individually and in groups, to ensure that all children extend their vocabulary and have the ability to use their language and communication skills for a range of purposes. All adults show children that they value their efforts at communicating. The children sustain attentive listening and particularly enjoy listening to stories. Children know that print carries meaning and make relevant observations about the characters in the stories. Consistent strategies used by the teacher enable pupils to recognise and say the initial sounds of words. In the Reception year, most children recognise familiar words in simple texts and use their knowledge of sounds appropriately to help them read simple regular words. They confidently 'have a go' at writing and most children express themselves by making marks on paper. The more able children use a high frequency word list to help them with their writing and use their phonic knowledge to write a simple sentence such as, 'I went to mi mummys swimming pol'. However, the analysis of their written work showed that few children draw on their wide vocabulary as a basis for their independent writing.

72. Teaching is satisfactory overall in this area of learning. However, although the Reception teacher has appropriately adapted the National Literacy Strategy framework to meet the needs of most children in the class, it is not being used sufficiently well to challenge the children in their writing. A good understanding of phonics is developed through effective word, sentence and text level work using well-known stories and rhymes. Children are provided with a good range of activities to develop their use of language and imagination through role-play activities. For example, in the castle, children delight in acting out the roles such as that of a dragon who had eaten too much and was being very sick while the princess called upon a knight to bring some medicine. However, there was no evidence to suggest that children had the opportunity to use their imaginative ideas for their story writing.

Mathematical development

73. The attainment and achievement of children in mathematics are satisfactory and, in the Reception year, most children are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals. Most children can count beyond 20 when counting out loud. They have an idea of what numbers one to ten represent and are able to do some simple addition with guidance. They copy-write their numbers and, in the Reception year, most are beginning to record their numbers unaided, although they reverse some numbers. Most children develop an appropriate understanding of mathematical language and use words such as 'longer than' and 'shorter than' when making comparisons of length, as for instance when building with construction toys. However, there was very little work recorded in their mathematics books of any practical activities that they had experienced in relation to shape and measure. Work on display showed that the children have made simple repeating patterns of two colours by threading beads and painting caterpillars. In their early work, children are provided with an appropriate range of practical experiences, such as sorting and ordering games, shape puzzles and building with bricks. Many of the resources are old and shabby.

74. The more formal activities for mathematics are introduced to the children through the framework for teaching numeracy. However, there are areas of weakness in the teaching and learning

of this area of children's learning that relate to a lack of challenge in the activities set but, overall, teaching is satisfactory. For example, in a lesson on two-dimensional shapes, several children already knew the mathematical names for the shapes and were familiar with names for 'solid' three-dimensional shapes such as cubes, spheres and cuboids. The group tasks consisted of fairly limited activities of cutting out triangles from a shape to make pictures, making shapes with pegs and drawing circles around a template. Consequently, the children gained very little from this lesson.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

75. Children enter the Reception class with a good general knowledge, which the teacher builds on effectively and helps them to learn more about the world around them. The teaching and learning are good and most children are on course to exceed the expected standard in the Reception year. Activities are well planned and organised and are carefully linked between the recommended areas of learning and the curriculum subjects. Taking themes such as, 'Mini-beasts', 'The Golden Jubilee' and 'Dinosaurs', the activities are well planned to enable children to explore aspects of the environment and to relate the work to their own experiences. Discussion and imaginative play forms an important part of the work and children are encouraged to explore, investigate and discover for themselves through practical experiences. This is a considerable improvement since the school's last inspection when this was identified as a key issue for action. Good use is made of the school grounds to provide children with the opportunity to look for signs of growth throughout the year. They plant seeds and watch them grow and observe tadpoles turning into frogs.

76. The children develop a good understanding of the past as they study castles and use vocabulary such as, 'arrow slits' and 'drawbridge', to describe the features. They are developing a wider knowledge of their local community when they have the opportunity to visit the local shops, but there was little evidence of the children making simple maps. An appropriate range of construction toys and materials were provided for the children to explore and use their skills to make models. Their skills in design and technology develop well. For example, when making models of castles with recycled materials, they carefully cut boxes to create different shapes for the towers and joined them together skilfully with masking tape and glue. Good opportunities are provided for the children to cook and the children are very well supported by the nursery nurse. For example, as the children made jam tarts, the nursery nurse not only made the whole experience enjoyable but extended their understanding of the properties of the ingredients by asking questions such as, 'Why do we have to sieve the flour?' and 'Why do we need to put flour on the board as we roll out the pastry?' The children have an increasing understanding of modern technology and their work shows that they have been provided with a range of opportunities to develop their information and communication technology skills in literacy and art. Careful consideration has been given to supporting children and deepening their knowledge of a suitable range of beliefs and religions through religious education lessons. However, there are very few role-play resources that reflect a variety of different cultures.

Physical development.

77. Children are making satisfactory progress in developing physical control, mobility and awareness of space indoors and outdoors. Overall, most children are on course to attain the Early Learning Goals in their physical skills and their achievement is satisfactory. Children are able to use writing and drawing tools appropriately and competently pick up small items of equipment when engaged in play activities. Teaching fully maximises what the children can do in this aspect of their physical development. Although there is a designated outdoor play area for the children, the resources such as push and pull toys, wheeled toys and clambering equipment are inadequate. The children have regular opportunities to use the hall and field for physical education and dance lessons. In the hall, the children make good use of the space and learn to move in different ways. For example, in a dance lesson, based on the story of 'The very hungry caterpillar', the children learned to work at different levels by wriggling along the floor as caterpillars, jumping off on two feet and stretching up to pick a plum in a tree. Good teaching and learning in this lesson were due to the teachers' good management and

imaginative approach that kept all children involved and active. In a physical education lesson on the field, the children prepared for the school's Golden Jubilee celebrations by taking part in races that would have occurred at the time of the Queen's Silver Jubilee. For example, they ran with a potato balanced on a spoon and showed increasing control when using a range of small equipment in an obstacle race created by the teacher. Their skills in controlling a ball with their feet and when climbing through hoops are appropriate for their age. However, their attempts at throwing a beanbag into a container met with varying degrees of success.

78. Good learning in this aspect is due the emphasis given to the direct teaching of skills in physical education lessons that maintains the children's interest and the methods used by the teacher to overcome the lack of suitable outdoor play equipment.

Creative development

79. The Reception teacher successfully promotes children's creative development through good teaching. In the Reception year, many children are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals. Children have many opportunities to experiment with texture, colour, shape and form. For instance, they have made three-dimensional models of insects using different materials, modelled with clay and, as part of their topic on dinosaurs, created imaginative scenes with a range of natural materials. The work on display shows the children have printed with fruit and vegetables and have used the computer to produce detailed pictures of mini-beasts. Role-play opportunities are carefully planned and all children respond enthusiastically in all the available activities. This is a real strength in their creative development. For instance, whether in the castle acting out the saving of a princess from the dragon, selling flowers in the garden centre or making a den in the outdoor play area, the children become completely engrossed in their roles and show great imagination. This is a considerable improvement since the school's previous inspection. However, the few resources that are available to support the children's ideas are, in general, old and there are very few that reflect a variety of different cultures. Children delight in singing songs with actions, such as, 'If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands', and sing well with expression.

ENGLISH

80. The inspection's findings are that standards of attainment in English are well above average in Year 2 and this is an improvement on the judgement made in the last inspection when standards in speaking, listening and reading were deemed to be above average and, in writing, average. The results of the national tests in reading and writing in 2001 were also well above average and the achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those pupils with English as an additional language, is good.

81. The inspection's findings are that standards of attainment in English are well above average at the end of Year 6 and this is an improvement from the last inspection when attainment was judged to be above average. The achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, those with English as an additional language and the pupils who are deemed to be gifted and talented, is good. In the national tests in 2001, pupils' attainment was average and this was a decline from the previous two years. However, the attainment on entry to the school of that particular group of pupils was judged to be average based on the data provided by the Local Education Authority. Boys proved to be more successful than girls in the national tests over the last three years but, during the inspection, no difference was apparent.

82. Improvement in English since the last inspection has been good. This is a result of good leadership from the headteacher, co-ordinator and other senior staff who have implemented a very good plan for development. The planning shows strong evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses in English and, in particular, the gap between reading and writing skills. The school has been very successful in improving the overall quality of teaching in English through very focused marking of the pupils' writing and also by introducing a consistent approach to the assessment of the pupils' work.

This very good practice follows attendance by the headteacher on a course organised by a well-known specialist of the teaching of English. He has ensured that all teachers have adopted this successful approach consistently throughout the school and this has had a considerable impact on standards. In addition, the headteacher has introduced and leads lessons in 'thinking skills' that develop very well the pupils' higher thinking skills in literal and inferential comprehension by discussion.

83. In speaking and listening, the findings of this inspection show that pupils attain well above average standards in Year 2 and Year 6. There has been further improvement in this aspect of English since the last inspection when standards were judged to be above average. Pupils can talk confidently and fluently in a range of situations and use accurate technical vocabulary in different subjects. The young pupils in a Year 1 'thinking skills' lesson were able to give reasons why a set of sequential cards should be placed in a particular order and, furthermore, were usually able to explain clearly their reasoning. In Year 2, pupils were able to use a wide range of vocabulary in discussion about what was happening to the small amounts of water they poured on to different surfaces outside the school building, such as the playground tarmac or the soil in the garden areas. In Year 3, pupils were able to recall the correct names for the source of a local river and they knew that the river changes its name when it becomes a 'tidal' river. In a Year 5 'thinking skills' lesson, excellent teaching methods ensured that most pupils listened very well to each other's explanations of their thinking about answers to questions posed by themselves. This task followed the teacher's reading of a philosophical story about, 'The Elixir of Life'. Their responses were fluent and thoughtful and showed a good use of sentence construction and a range of descriptive vocabulary. In Year 6, pupils' responses in a poetry lesson to questions by the teacher were very mature. Their explanations and interpretations of the difficult phrases within two Ted Hughes' poems were considered, sensitive and quietly reflective. Their knowledge of English specific vocabulary is very good. Most pupils can give the definitions of alliteration, imagery, personification, simile, metaphor and onomatopoeia and can use this vocabulary naturally within the lesson.

84. Standards in reading in Year 2 and Year 6 are well above average. Pupils have developed very positive attitudes towards reading. The younger pupils in Years 1 – 2 take home their books regularly and their parents contribute well to hearing them read. The teachers write very good observations of the pupils' progress in the homework books and parents often respond similarly. They are clearly proud of their children's progress. In discussion with the Year 2 pupils, it was clear that they had good recall of the stories they were reading, could all read fluently and with confidence and were able to explain what certain words meant. They showed understanding of the main points of the stories that related to their favourite characters. The pupils could explain why they had chosen specific books, for example, one pupil had chosen a book all about kites because it had a picture of the kite she had been given on the front cover. One of the pupils knew that a character in his book was French when he read, 'Give me zee bread'. In Years 3 – 6, the pupils enjoy reading and usually have a book at their side to read at odd moments at school. In discussion with Year 6 pupils, it was evident that all had a good grasp of different 'genre' and could use the word easily in conversation. Their choice of books covers a wide range and the boys, in particular, enjoy non-fiction books that are written in a humorous style such as, the 'Horrible Science' or 'Horrible Geography' series that are very informative and very funny. Most pupils understand that authors sometimes give their characters appropriate dialogue such as, 'ere's what really 'appened, gov'. They know that the words are said by a character who is using a specific dialect. One of the boys explained that it was, 'old London language'. They are very confident using the library and know exactly how to find books they are looking for in a specific subject.

85. Standards in writing in Year 2 and Year 6 are well above average. Year 2 pupils can write in a wide range of formats. Their anthology of poetry and other pieces of work showed that most pupils in the group enjoy their writing, particularly of funny poems that include unusual English usage. Pupils had written and illustrated sayings such as, 'You two are monkeys!' said by their teacher when they tied a girl's plaits to a chair. They had written serious poems about a lost spaceman, a diplodocus, the

effect of snow on the landscape and about waving at trains. In their story writing, pupils show that they can write at some length and begin their stories with an opening that interests the reader. Most pupils use appropriate punctuation including speech marks and their handwriting is very neat with all letters correctly positioned and joined. Their writing shows a secure grasp of the spelling of common and more unusual words. The spelling policy used consistently throughout the school is helpful as it ensures that pupils learn their spellings in a context. They are expected not only to learn their spellings but also to include them in an appropriate sentence. Most pupils know how to make sentences more interesting by introducing adjectives and descriptive phrases as well as using the more common connectives such as, 'because' and 'although'. Several pupils can also use time connectives, such as 'suddenly', 'after that', 'finally', 'next' and 'later'. In Year 6, pupils' writing is very mature. The pupils are travelling to North Wales later this term for their residential visit and have become familiar with the stories, history and geography of that region. Very good links between English, information and communication and geography have resulted in excellent poetry that shows pupils have a very secure grasp of simile, metaphor, alliteration and assonance. This is the first verse of just one of many excellent poems:

Welsh Mountain Dragon

*Swooping to the depths of the solitary mountain
Wings roaring over grassy plains
Ploughing deep into the rocky mound
Its fiery eyes gleam
Dancing and prancing as if it was a hurricane of silver scales
Gliding just under the surface
It roars and tears like a hungry beast*

86. The pupils write in a wide range of styles and their writing is varied and interesting. For example, they can write appropriately in a style intended for younger readers as well as writing more sophisticated stories with imaginative vocabulary and complex sentences organised into paragraphs. Pupils can write in the style of a sailor in the 15th Century writing from a ship a very long way from home. They include in their writing interesting and imaginative vocabulary and describe events that have taken place that may be amusing or sad. Pupils' use of connectives in their writing is particularly effective. Their use of information and communication technology to word process their poetry and writing is well designed and thoughtful.

87. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 – 6 is very good overall and is never less than satisfactory. This is a significant improvement from the findings of the last inspection when some teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory. There are many strengths in teaching that ensure that pupils make very good gains in their learning. In addition to the literacy strategy, other very effective strategies have been put into place. In particular, throughout the school, the pupils are taught how to use connectives using well-established procedures as well as being taught how to assess and check their own work by listing and checking the success criteria for good writing. Very good challenging questioning and high expectations throughout the school ensure that very good learning takes place. For example, in an excellent Year 1 lesson, high quality questioning skills from the teacher and the headteacher, who was supporting in this lesson, resulted in pupils' speaking, listening and reasoning skills moving forward significantly. In a very good Year 2 lesson, the teacher's very thorough approach to improving and reinforcing the pupils' skills in writing and the use of connectives resulted in most pupils improving very simple sentences with adjectives and connectives to develop an exciting storyline. Good planning in a Year 2 lesson on rhyme and rhythm in poetry ensured that most pupils were able to clap the rhythm without saying the words. In all three classes with Year 1 and 2 pupils, the teachers use excellent methods during the teaching of reading to ensure that the support assistants know the specific skills that are being targeted. This is one of the factors that drives the pupils' standards in reading forward.

88. Pupils in Year 3 behaved well during the opening session when the teacher read a Dick King-Smith story and they could recall well the main events in the story. However, due to the teacher's limited style of questioning in the following and plenary sessions, the pupils became restless and did not listen attentively. The activities given to the pupils in the lesson were mostly based on a commercially produced scheme and had no input from the teacher who supported one of the groups. The resources used by the teacher lacked imagination and the tasks were dull and failed to inspire the pupils. More than half of the pupils worked steadily and completed the exercises studiously but several lost interest and talked quietly to each other. In an excellent lesson in Year 5, very good methods of teaching ensured that the pupils were given very structured rules about their writing before they began the task. The headteacher, who played a supporting role in this lesson, used subject specific vocabulary, such as 'recount text' and 'genre', naturally in the opening session and wrote the success criteria suggested by the pupils on the whiteboard. As a result, the pupils were very secure in their writing skills, they knew what was expected, they had a secure knowledge of their own learning and the final writing scripts were of high quality.

89. The teaching of English in Year 6 is very good and the quality of challenge given to the pupils is outstanding. The teacher's very good methods cover a wide range of speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. For example, during the inspection week, pupils interviewed individual pupils from a younger class group identifying the type of story they would like to have written for them. The younger pupils will feature in the story that will be word-processed. Examples of such books from a previous Year 6 group were available in the work scrutiny. The binding, the word processing and the writing skills displayed showed very high standards. In the lesson observed, the teacher compared and contrasted two of Ted Hughes' poems in the series, 'What is the Truth?' The teacher's excellent questioning skills were sensitive and challenging. The pupils' quiet, reflective response showed that they were searching keenly for an appropriate answer to, for example, 'What does the poet mean when he describes the foal's eyes as dew-dusky?' One pupil suggested that the foal's eyes were not working properly as he was just new born. Some pupils were able to explain that the poet was using imagery in the line, 'Fondled by small draughts'. The pupils' attitudes to the lesson and their behaviour throughout were exemplary.

90. The national literacy strategy is used very effectively to promote pupils' learning and the support assistants play an important role in this success. The basic skills are taught very well. Good use is made of whole-class reading opportunities by sharing large books. There are examples of the teaching of literacy in other subjects. For example, in history, pupils write in descriptive and narrative form when they write accounts of how certain people in the past behaved as well as empathetic pieces of writing about the working conditions in Victorian times. In geography, pupils write poems about the mountains of Wales and there are excellent links with information and communication technology. Pupils regularly visit the suite to research and write in a variety of subjects. The regular visits to the suite ensure that pupils can word process their work or access stories or poetry on the school's website. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported in lessons by the well trained assistants. In addition, they are given effective concentrated support by the special educational needs co-ordinator using the additional literacy strategies and the pupils make good progress. Plenary sessions in English lessons are well used for reflection, to reinforce learning objectives and to further speaking and listening skills.

91. The co-ordinator of English is knowledgeable, enthusiastic and, as a member of the senior management team, is able to influence and support her colleagues through monitoring teaching in the classroom. Management of English is very good. Links with parents in English are good with consistent spelling homework sent home weekly and helpful leaflets are available to explain how parents can help their children to develop their reading skills. Assessment of pupils' progress by the school is very good in English and the self-assessment the pupils carry out at the end of a writing task is excellent. Although short-term planning is satisfactory overall and has improved since the last inspection, the school lacks a common format in English and this is not helpful to the co-ordinator when

she needs to identify the resources needed throughout the school. It is intended to address this weakness later in the year. The school has not given enough consideration to how to use books, writing, drama and visits to help prepare pupils for life in multicultural Britain. However, the choice of texts in literacy is having a very positive effect on pupils' spiritual, moral and social development.

MATHEMATICS

92. Pupils in Year 2 attain well above average standards in numeracy and all other areas of the mathematics curriculum. This finding represents a good improvement since the last inspection report. The results of the National Curriculum tests in 2001 reflect this judgement, and, when compared to all schools nationally and to similar schools, pupils' results were very high. The trend over the past three years has been markedly upwards, and the indications are that this trend will continue in the 2002 results. The achievement of all pupils, including those who have special educational needs and those with special gifts and talents is good.

93. The inspection's findings are that standards of attainment in mathematics are well above average in Year 6 and this is an improvement since the last report when standards were judged to be above average. The achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, pupils with English as an additional language and those deemed to be gifted and talented, is good. In the national tests in 2001, pupils' attainment was average and this was a decline from the previous three years. However, the attainment on entry to the school of that particular group of pupils was judged to be average based on the data provided by the Local Education Authority. Past results have shown a difference between the performance of boys and girls, although this was not apparent during the inspection. The school has analysed these differences fully and has produced findings that have given some answers as to why boys perform better than girls.

94. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall in Years 1 – 2. Teachers plan their work well, following the pattern of the National Numeracy Strategy. Lessons are well structured and begin briskly with a mental mathematics session, in which pupils are keen to offer their answers. Pupils behaved very well in all the lessons observed and they have a keen interest in mathematics. Teachers provide a good pace and plenty of challenge for pupils. In Year 1, pupils were encouraged to look for patterns in the number sequences they worked with. For example, they all said the sequence of counting in twos together, starting from zero and from one. Several pupils immediately noticed that, in the first case, all numbers were even, and they were odd in the second case. As they moved into group work, the teacher made sure that all examples of addition contained doubling somewhere in the problem. Teachers make sure that pupils know what the objectives of the lesson are, and share these well with them. In a very good Year 2 lesson, the teacher set out all they were to do and provided appropriate challenges for all levels of pupils' attainment. She had discussed the lesson fully beforehand with the support assistant who works with pupils needing extra help. As a result, all pupils were able to complete the work and were secure and confident.

95. Pupils solve problems in writing as well as by figures. They work with everyday familiar objects in their problems such as counting and adding up the number of tables and chairs in the room. They work on school events such as a supposed visit to the zoo and how many postcards will be needed. Higher attaining pupils are fully stretched and challenged, and those in Year 2 work confidently in thousands, hundreds, tens and units. Pupils know how to give change from five pounds; they understand fractions and some equivalent fractions; they know and count in ordinal numbers as well as cardinals and can deal with problems containing words such as 'eighth' or 'sixth'. The pupils understand right angles, and solve cryptic problems such as, "I am three-dimensional, I have one face and no vertices," and understand that this describes a sphere. Although they are not required in Year 2 to work on handling data, some pupils can do tallies and construct bar charts to present the data they are using.

96. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 – 6 is good overall with one lesson that was excellent. This is a good improvement since the last inspection report. Pupils in the lessons observed

in Years 4 – 6 responded very well to mathematics and this was due to the very good relationships established by teachers. In Year 6 they delight in the problems posed by the teacher and are clearly “young mathematicians”, and pleased to be so. Teachers ask them mental mathematics questions in the starter sessions but also ask them to explain their workings. This was well demonstrated in both Year 4 and Year 5 lessons. In a Year 4 opening session of the lesson, a higher attaining pupil answered a question almost immediately and surprised the teacher by his speed of logic. She gently said, “That was too quick for me, can you please explain for us all how you did it?” In Year 5, pupils came to the board and demonstrated their workings for the whole class to follow.

97. Challenge for pupils is generally good and some is excellent. All levels of ability are very well included in mathematics lessons. In an excellent Year 6 lesson, the class were learning about scatter graphs that is work well above an average level. Pupils were seeing how the graphs might help to find certain facts. The first volunteer to come to the board to explain the answer to a question posed by the teacher was a pupil who has special educational needs who explained his answer very successfully. Pupils work in all four operations, addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They work with fractions and percentages, find area and calculate capacity. Year 4 pupils were observed solving problems requiring mathematical logic, with a very high level of challenge for all pupils across a range of abilities. All of the tasks made them really think it through and work out all the possibilities before committing themselves to an answer. Pupils in Year 5 were starting long multiplication and they quickly picked up how to do this. In the group work, they were confident and able to solve the problems set by the teacher. The one or two who did not follow so well were not afraid to say so, and further help was planned. All pupils are learning to use mathematical vocabulary, and they use it well, clearly understanding what the terms mean.

98. Teachers are very confident with the National Numeracy Strategy and they apply it very effectively. Across the school, teachers show very good management of the whole classes and the groups and work is well matched to pupils’ needs. Lessons move with a good pace, and, consequently, pupils are very well motivated and work very well. Numeracy skills are appropriately used across the curriculum. Pupils measure the ingredients in cooking, and Year 1 pupils were seen making crêpes, measuring in grams and in millilitres. Others were using computers and applying their mathematical knowledge there. In science, Year 6 pupils have constructed block graphs about the temperatures scales they were working with, and others in Year 3 measured lengths of wood for their photograph frames. Pupils are used to working with computers, and they sometimes move to the computer suite to continue their mathematics work.

99. The co-ordinator leads mathematics very well, clearly understands what is required to maintain the steadily rising standards and has undertaken in-service training herself. There have been several initiatives since the last inspection and, in particular, the monitoring of teaching and learning and assessment of the pupils’ progress have both improved and are good. The school analyses all data from the National Curriculum tests, and areas that need more teaching and focus are identified well. Resources have been improved to match the needs of the curriculum and they are now good, enabling teachers to have access to the equipment they need. Links with parents are good in this subject and meetings have been held to inform parents of recent initiatives in mathematics. In addition, there is now a games library and parents choose mathematical games to take home for a short time. This is having a good impact on standards.

SCIENCE

100. The inspection’s findings are that, overall, standards in science are well above average in Years 2 and Year 6. This is an improvement on the standards reported for pupils in the school’s previous inspection when attainment was judged to be above average. The reason for the improvement is the improved monitoring of the strengths and weaknesses of teaching skills throughout the school. The findings of the inspection are, however, similar to the results of the 2001 national tests at Key Stage 2, which showed standards were also well above average. In the teacher assessments at Key Stage 1,

standards were above average overall at Level 2 and above but well above average at Level 3 and above. For the last three years, standards in science have been consistently well above average. The findings of the inspection are similar to these results and reflect the view of the school that pupils in the current Year 6 are on course to achieve high standards in this year's test. Achievement is good for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, those with English as an additional language and those who are gifted and talented. This inspection finds no significant difference in performance of boys and girls, both of whom achieve well above average standards.

101. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good overall with a number of strengths that have a very positive impact on pupils' learning in lessons. This is similar to the judgement made in the school's previous inspection when teaching was judged to be good or very good in both key stages, with some teaching that was less than satisfactory. One unsatisfactory lesson was observed during this inspection. In Year 6, science is taught by the headteacher, who, as the science co-ordinator, uses his excellent subject knowledge extremely well to challenge and extend pupils' scientific enquiry skills. Throughout the school, the strong emphasis given to the teaching of experimental and investigative science is particularly effective. Teachers' planning shows a good balance between investigations, factual learning and recording.

102. The analysis of pupils' work and the one lesson observed in Year 2 during the inspection indicated that the quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is good overall. The high expectations of the teachers are shown by the work that is well presented and developed sequentially. The work set is sufficiently challenging for all pupils, including the more able and the quantity of their recorded work is good. The pupils' work showed that many pupils in Year 2 have a good understanding of how to undertake experiments, make predictions and communicate ideas using appropriate scientific observations and diagrams. For example, in their work on changing materials, they used their knowledge of what makes ice melt to plan an investigation to establish that an ice cube will melt more quickly in the warmer parts of the school. They recognised that the test must be fair by using the same size ice cubes and observed them regularly over a period of time. They made a mathematical table for their observations and used the results to draw a conclusion. They know that materials often change when they are heated and recognise that some changes can be reversed and some cannot. In their work on forces they explored toy cars rolling down ramps, made predictions, measured the distance they travelled using standard units, recorded their results in table form and provided an explanation of how they made their comparison fair. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils were learning about the life cycles of different animals. The teacher's good methods and explanations ensured that the pupils' learning moved forward in this lesson and they carried out their own research effectively. The teacher used a range of good resources such as a short extract from a video of the life cycle of a salamander and textbooks and a computer game. She ensured that the pupils knew the learning objectives of the lesson. The teacher's good management ensured that all the pupils including those with special educational needs achieved well. Pupils were able to work together and discuss and develop their ideas. The teacher's friendly and quiet manner undoubtedly led to the good learning progress achieved by pupils of all abilities. The analysis of their work showed that the teacher had used a wide range of approaches to develop pupils' learning and also made it enjoyable. For example, as part of their work on mini-beasts, the pupils' produced a mini-beast safari travel guide.

103. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 4 and 5 is good overall. In Year 6, science is taught very effectively by the headteacher and this has an impact on the very high standards. His very secure subject knowledge and high expectations ensure that all pupils in Year 6 are challenged well and encouraged to think scientifically. This was well illustrated in the very good lesson observed based on the interdependence and adaptation of animals to different environments. The pupils' interest was captured immediately as they watched an extract from a video of how a beetle adapts to life in the Kalahari Desert. Following a very high quality discussion when the headteacher constantly asked questions to extend the pupils' understanding, they had the opportunity to explore three different habitats in the school grounds. By investigating and observing the animals found in the pond, trees and

amongst the grass, the pupils learned of how different animals are best suited to their environment. All pupils were inspired by the enthusiasm of their teacher and with the clear explanations and very good use of time spent outdoors all pupils learned to think and work as scientists.

104. In their previous work on animals, Year 6 pupils represented feeding relationships in food chains beginning with a green plant, and used keys to identify animals and plants. They show an increasing depth of factual knowledge and understanding of plants and how they reproduce. They know the names for parts of a flower such as stamen, style and stigma and describe the processes of pollination, germination and fertilisation with understanding. In their work with solids, liquids and gases, the pupils applied their knowledge and understanding well to investigate the changes that occur when materials are mixed and described how, in some cases, the new materials made are gases. The pupils have a secure knowledge of electricity and use symbols accurately to draw a parallel and series circuit.

105. In Years 4 and 5, pupils' investigative skills are well developed. They know how to plan their own investigation and carry it out in a methodical and organised way. They recognise the need for a fair test and draw on their scientific knowledge to explain their predictions and conclusions. In the lessons observed, the high expectations of the teachers were clearly evident in the challenging tasks and were illustrated by the intention that pupils were able to devise and carry out their own investigation. Their knowledge and understanding of separating materials developed well as they carried out their investigations on dissolving. In their previous work with materials, pupils in Year 4 show they have separated solids such as pasta, salt and sand by sieving and filtering. Where teaching was unsatisfactory in Year 3, the activities were not sufficiently focused and, consequently, the pupils lost interest in the lesson and became noisy and off task. The lack of pace and challenge in the lesson meant that the pupils did not build on their previous learning or make the progress of which they were capable. Pupils' previous work showed that they have used block and line graphs to record the results of their investigative work. Good use is made of information and communication technology throughout the school to extend the pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding.

106. Science is well supported by the local education authority scheme of work and the nationally recommended guidelines, which together provide very good guidance for the teaching of science. Assessment procedures are good and include end of unit assessments. A particularly good aspect is the use of 'mindmaps' that involves pupils in brainstorming their ideas of what they know at the beginning of a unit and repeating the process at end. Consequently, the pupils know what they have learned and the teachers can immediately discover if there are any gaps in their knowledge and understanding. Science is very well led by the headteacher, who is knowledgeable and very enthusiastic about science and has high expectations for pupils' learning. The school provides opportunities for pupils who are particularly gifted in the subject and those who show high levels of knowledge and understanding. For example, there is a science club and extension sessions for the high attaining pupils in Year 6. Good links with literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology were evident during the inspection. Learning resources for science are good and, in addition, the school has created a wildlife area with two ponds within the grounds to support the teaching of environmental science. The curriculum is further enriched by visits to places of interest and visitors invited into school, such as a science drama group and a Planetarium. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, for example, through the opportunity to work on investigations in groups and to explore and experience the excitement of finding out what may or may not happen when undertaking an investigation. Improvement since the last inspection is good overall. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 have risen and formal procedures for monitoring the strengths and weaknesses of practice have been improved.

ART AND DESIGN

107. In the school's last inspection, pupils' attainment in art was judged to reach national expectations. Since 1997, the school has raised its standards so that they are now above average by Year 2 and Year 6. Judgements in this inspection are based on classroom observations, analysis of

pupils' work, photographs, displays and discussions with pupils and teachers. Achievement for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is good. The school provides opportunities for pupils who have a particular talent in the subject to use their skills and knowledge at a high level.

108. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall in Years 1 and 2. Pupils get off to a good start in Year 1, where the teacher provides well planned opportunities for them to draw and paint, both what they see and what they imagine, using a wide range of materials and media. They examine the work of William Morris and experiment with colour and produce good quality watercolour pictures of flowers inspired by his designs. In Year 2, pupils examine the work of sculptors such as Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth and use clay skilfully to make their own sculptures based on the work, 'The Hole in the Middle'. In the good Year 2 lesson observed, strengths included skilful support and guidance given to pupils as they worked and this enabled them to explore a wide range of materials to produce a three-dimensional image based on features seen in local buildings. Pupils began by taking rubbings of patterns found around the school and used these as a stimulus for their work. In the lesson observed, pupils developed a relief tile based on the observations of the patterns. As a result of the good methods used by the teacher, the pupils worked imaginatively with materials such as corrugated card, string, and assorted fabrics to make a raised surface that showed good use of pattern, texture, shape and form. In both Year 1 and Year 2, the good emphasis on the teaching of techniques challenges pupils to attempt increasingly demanding tasks. In the Year 2/3 class the very good teaching results in pupils producing work that shows individual flair and imagination. In the lesson observed, the pupils used print-making techniques such as block prints and press prints to make a printed pattern with the purpose of adding the print to their work based on the theme of journeys. Their artwork showed bold and imaginative use of colour and shapes and, by using materials such as string, bubble wrap and corrugated card, they effectively introduced tactile elements to their completed work. This was a very good example of a well-planned series of lessons, which built progressively on pupils' knowledge and skills and enabled them to develop their own ideas.

109. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 3 to 6. An analysis of the pupils' work across all the year groups indicates that the teaching of a range of skills in art and design enables pupils to make good achievement in their learning and they attain high standards. Taking the theme, 'Take a Seat', pupils in Years 3 and 4 produced some exceptional work. The pupils adapted a school chair to construct a scale model chair by initially covering it with tissue paper and then cutting out cardboard attachments and securing them in place. Their designs for decorating the chairs were based on Aboriginal art and the finished examples showed very good use of colour, form and pattern that reflected their imaginative ideas. In their evaluations, pupils considered what they would change and what they had learned. The quality of work produced by pupils in Year 5 is also of a high standard. The Escher style paintings are examples of the pupils' skilful use of pencils and paint to design and create images in his style. The good teaching in this class of specific art and design skills has clearly enabled pupils to produce work of a high quality. Throughout the school, the range of work in three dimensions is well developed as a result of good teaching methods. In Year 6, the pupils used ideas of artists such as Turner and Constable to develop their own work. They used watercolour paints effectively to produce landscape, seascape and skyscape paintings that show a sense and mood of the places they will see when they visit Wales during their residential visit. Pupils throughout the school derive great enjoyment from their artwork and are justifiably proud of their work. Most teachers make effective use of sketchbooks to develop pupils' ideas and teach observational drawing skills. However, this was not so strong in Year 6 where the pupils' sketching skills were more variable.

110. The co-ordinator for art and design is knowledgeable, enthusiastic and provides good leadership for the subject. She has produced a detailed scheme that provides a good structure to the progressive development of pupils' skills. Improvement since the previous inspection is good, as at that time the curriculum plans did not support the methodical development of pupils' skills. It also suggested that art was being squeezed out of the curriculum. Art now enjoys a high profile in the school. For example, an arts week is held annually with an exhibition at the end and an artist has worked with the pupils to

produce some impressive larger than life size figures in the style of Giacometti, which are now a part of the school's Millennium garden. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and include all pupils sketching a seated person in their sketchbooks every year. Art is well integrated into many subjects across the curriculum. Good examples of this were seen in history and geography and particularly in incorporating information and communication technology in their art and design work. Resources are adequate to support the teaching and learning of each unit. The subject makes a very good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development, through for example, the opportunity to work co-operatively with others, explore the work of artists from other cultures, reflect on their significance and develop an appreciation of the many forms of art.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

111. During the inspection, it was possible to observe only two lessons of design and technology, one in Year 1 and one in Year 3 as some lessons were timetabled on days after the inspection had been completed. In addition, design and technology was not being taught in some classes this half-term as the subject alternates with art and design. Judgements are based on an analysis of pupils' work, teachers' planning documents, several discussions and scrutiny of a few products that pupils have made. These are on display around the school. Although no lessons were seen in Years 2 and 6, the indications are that standards are above average. The achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is good.

112. The quality of teaching and learning in the lessons observed was good. A very good lesson was observed in Year 1 when very good teaching methods ensured that the pupils were given a wide range of learning experiences. The pupils moved around four different activities: designing a party invitation using a graphics program in the information and communication technology suite, preparing and cooking crêpes, using large construction kits and preparing a fruit salad. The room was a hive of activity and pupils really enjoyed themselves throughout the afternoon. The table was set for those pupils who had prepared the crêpes and the menu was written in French for them. They spent time preparing very productively working with the teaching assistant, taking turns to read the recipe and measuring the flour in grams and the milk in millilitres. The pupils collected the ingredients, cracked the eggs and mixed all together showing a high degree of independence. Those pupils preparing fruit salad also used a simple recipe and followed instructions for peeling and slicing the fruit. The teacher wasted no opportunities to use the time for links to other subjects and pupils talked about seeds and pips from their science work when they cut up the melon. The teacher and assistant ensured that good care was taken over safety when peeling and slicing the fruit. Those pupils who worked on the computers used a special software program that helped them set out a Jubilee party invitation. They were able to use the drawing part of the software to create a colourful border on their invitation. Pupils were very confident using the computers and knew how to use them to their advantage when designing. Overall, this was a very good lesson with several good links across the curriculum and the opportunity to learn very well.

113. The quality of teaching and learning in Year 3 was good. The pupils were observed working with fabrics in a project that involved making a mouse that will be linked to pneumatics so that the mouse moves in and out of a box designed for it. Pupils have already designed and made the boxes and were observed using a template to cut out the mouse shape and sew it together. Good emphasis was given to safety issues at all times especially over scissors and the needles that were especially produced for the age of the pupils. All pupils were engaged productively in this work, including those who have special educational needs and those who have special talents. The pupils showed a good degree of independence when choosing materials and making their product and were only supported if really stuck. Good evaluation was carried out in the last session of the lesson when the whole class came together. In the good discussion led by the teacher, pupils thought that some of the fabrics they had chosen were too tough for cutting easily and that they would choose thinner ones next time. One

or two discovered that they had the template the wrong way round. In this way, they learned how to evaluate their own work and how to make improvements.

114. The analysis of the school's planning and the scrutiny of pupils' work show that they are given a wide range of products and mechanisms to design and make. The pupils in Year 1 have made hinges and a slider mechanism. They have folded fabrics and card and used glue and other ways of joining. Pupils have gained an understanding of the various surfaces they encounter such as crispy, smooth, soft and rough. Sock puppets were designed and made by Year 2 pupils and they discussed the clothes that keep them warm in winter. They have made some good cardboard 'mice' with cotton reel "motors" in them. The pupils in Year 3 made photograph frames and there are several displayed effectively. The frames are well finished and have given pupils opportunities to measure, cut and glue. In a written evaluation, one pupil said that the next time he made a photograph frame he would think of a better method for ensuring that it stood up firmly. Year 4 pupils take design specification a stage further. Pupils made a torch and knew that it needed to follow specifications such as, the torch must work consistently, be attractive and have a proper switch. The evaluations completed by the pupils were good and they made comments such as, "It was hard to cut the board," and, "It does not look good because I did not cut it out right". Most pupils clearly understand the need for evaluating and are becoming 'designers'. In the Year 5 curriculum, there are some very good links with art and their work on Escher. The pupils examined some of his pictures and made attractive three-dimensional models of some of the buildings, colouring them in his style. The pupils in Year 6 have made fairground models and used cams successfully as part of the mechanism. The pupils' evaluation was very good and they have evaluated each other's work as well as their own. "The cutting out was good and it worked well," "Scruffy but at least it is standing," were two of the comments they made on their own work. A friend valued another piece of work at nine out of ten.

115. There is no manager for this subject but in September there will be a changeover of responsibilities when the subject will have a co-ordinator. The school's planning enables pupils to experience a good range of materials, tools and fixings, and provides a helpful framework for staff when they plan their lessons. Teaching includes an appropriate emphasis on design and the strength of teaching is the regard paid to the evaluation aspect of the subject. Resources are good and enable teachers to plan a range of activities well thus giving pupils the chance to achieve appropriately. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' social development when they need to collaborate when working together on tasks.

GEOGRAPHY

116. The inspection's findings are that standards of attainment in Years 2 and 6 are above average and the achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, is good. This is an improvement from the previous inspection when standards were judged to be in line with expectations. An explanation for this improvement is because of the introduction of 'mindmaps' in the school where the pupils brainstorm what they know about a topic at the beginning and end of a unit of work. This system has enabled the teachers to assess clearly what the children know and do not know.

117. The work scrutiny for Year 1 showed a photographic record of the pupils visiting different locations in Felixstowe with the fictitious 'Barnaby Bear'. The pupils visited the docks and the beach, looked from afar at the now derelict pier and the leisure centre and visited the Tourist Information Office. The pupils helped Barnaby to buy and write a postcard to his mother. The particular feature they enjoyed looking at were the houseboats moored on the river. The pupils thought it would be good fun to live on those as a few had some strange looking pottery people looking through the windows. The pupils in Year 2 have studied St Lucia in some depth. A class book of their work showed their secure grasp of the weather conditions in different locations around the world. Most pupils have learned that the weather in St Lucia is hot with frequent stormy weather that causes flooding. They

know that it is very cold in the Polar regions and that winter is very long. There is good coverage of the curriculum in Years 1 - 2.

118. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 – 2 is good. At the beginning of a Year 2 lesson, the teacher gave the pupils the opportunity of reinforcing their knowledge of river features by answering questions. They were quick to tell her that, in their study of the Rivers Orwell and Gipping, they had learned that the source of a river is where it starts, that the estuary is where it empties into the sea and that the River Gipping becomes the River Orwell. The higher attaining pupils know that the River Orwell becomes a tidal river as it approaches the sea. The task in the lesson as part of the 'Rivers' unit of work was to explore water evaporation by predicting on which surfaces a small amount would just lie or would be absorbed. The teacher's very good organisation ensured that all pupils behaved very well and enjoyed carrying out the task with the resources provided. The pupils were very independent as they collected the water and additional resources and excitedly went outside to find the appropriate surfaces to pour their water. There are good links with information and communication technology in this year group and pupils have researched the Internet at home to find out more information about rivers to add to their collection of work.

119. The work scrutiny for Years 3 – 6 showed a good range of topics and above average attainment. Younger pupils have studied early settlements and the reason why people settled in certain locations. They have learned that the ferry at Felixstowe was probably established because there was water in the river to use for cooking and that there was plenty of wood for fires to keep warm. The pupils have looked carefully at local maps and have described how to get to one location from another. They have learned that the colour of the roads change depending upon their importance. Pupils have learned mapping skills and have included good keys on their maps to indicate a variety of locations and features. In Year 4, pupils were researching the newspaper to discover where the events were being held locally to celebrate the Golden Jubilee. A few pupils were able to give directions on an Ordnance Survey map to find the Showground in Ipswich. They have studied how people live in a village in India and have discovered how the children in the village sometimes do not go to school and have to walk a long way to collect water. They are able to locate India on a map of the world. In Year 6, the pupils have covered a very wide range in the geography curriculum. Older pupils have studied and visited the town of Bury St Edmunds. The teacher ensured that good links were made with history in this study and the pupils used information and communication technology to research the reasons for early settlement as well as the town's central location in East Anglia. The pupils' work on Bury St Edmunds was carried out in depth and was marked well. Assessment of the pupils' knowledge was good. The teacher has used the current conflict over Kashmir to discover the location of India and Pakistan.

120. The indications are that the quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 – 6 is good. This judgement has been made based on the scrutiny of a good coverage of work during the year, displays, planning documents and a discussion with the co-ordinator. Good lessons were observed in the class with both Year 2 and 3 pupils and in Year 6. In the Year 6 lesson, a very good opening session with good questioning skills showed that the pupils have learned an extensive vocabulary of mountain features, such as glacier, peak, ridge and gorge. Several pupils can give succinct definitions of these features. A very brief extract from a film was shown illustrating these features and demonstrating, with good models, the movement of land masses, how earthquakes occur and how mountains are formed. The teacher, using good methods, demonstrated how fold mountains are formed using a thick cloth on a table. Following this, the pupils moved into two groups both involved in independent research. One group moved into the information and communication technology suite and quickly accessed 'mountains' on the school's Intranet system. Their task was to take notes of the key facts of certain types of mountains, such as the Himalayas, Alps, Rockies and Andes. The pupils' skills in this part of the lesson were very good. They were capable of taking short, pithy notes; their information and communication skills are very good and no time was wasted. In the classroom, the pupils were able to locate the mountain ranges or chains they found in their atlases using the index

intelligently. With the support of the teacher, they drew symbols on an A4 map of the world to indicate the four ranges of mountains. This was not easy as some pupils found it difficult to identify where exactly the mountains were on the small, blank map. However, using good teaching methods of comparing the shape of the coast and nearby countries, the teacher succeeded in showing the pupils how to locate the mountains correctly.

121. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the subject. She has written an action plan for the next year that shows what needs to be achieved in the subject. Although she has no time to monitor the progress of the subject in the classroom, she supports her colleagues through informal discussion and by looking at displays and sampling pupils' books. Assessment in this subject is good with pupils writing down at the beginning of the unit of work what they know about, for example, rivers. At the conclusion of the unit, the teachers ask the pupils to repeat this activity to discover what they have learned or not understood. In Year 6, there is more formal assessment with written questions for the pupils to answer. This has a good impact on standards. Resources are satisfactory although more resources are needed for practical investigative work. There are good links in this subject with English, information and communication technology and history as well as the residential visit to North Wales of the Year 6 pupils. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have developed spiritually as a result of writing sensitive poetry following the reading of a story of family life in Snowdonia as well as studying photographs of the landscape of the mountains. Morally, they develop from considering the impact of their own and others' actions, such as dropping litter in the environment. Socially, pupils are constantly talking about their research and discoveries and work together collaboratively. Culturally, they find out about the different traditions and activities of families in poor countries.

HISTORY

122. During the inspection, it was possible to observe only one lesson in history in Year 5. Judgements are based on the analysis of pupils' work, discussions with pupils and on the school's planning. Indications are that standards are above average by Year 2 and Year 6. The judgement is similar to that made by the school's previous inspection at Key Stage 2, but shows that standards have improved at Key Stage 1 and this is probably because of the wide range of work that is well planned by the teachers. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, achieve well in this subject. There are no differences in the attainment of boys and girls.

123. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is good. An analysis of the pupils' work indicates that the teaching of history enables pupils to attain above average standards. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, achieve well. They have learned about famous people and events and understand from familiar objects, such as toys and vehicles, how some things have changed over time while other things have remained the same. They have a good knowledge of the Great Fire of London and understand how the fire started and how it got out of control. The pupils' written work shows that they have compared this event with the way that fires are fought today. They know that the fire took place in 1666 and place events of that week in chronological order. Their knowledge of famous people in history is well developed. For example, through their work on the Great Fire of London, they have learned that Samuel Pepys saw the fire and that he wrote about it in his diary. The pupils have written about the life and work of Florence Nightingale and have considered how she would have felt when seeing the conditions the soldiers had to endure in the hospitals.

124. No lessons were seen in Year 6 but the scrutiny of pupils' work and the lesson seen in Year 5 indicate that the quality of teaching and learning is predominantly good. By the time they leave the school, pupils have an increasing depth of factual knowledge and understanding of Ancient Egypt, Tudor times, life in Victorian Britain and how life has changed in Britain since 1948. They have a gained a good insight into the way that people lived at different periods and the important events that

shaped their lives. In their study of Britain since 1948, pupils in Year 6 identify how the key features of life were different then from those of today. They have written in depth of living conditions in tenements and the shortage of housing. Good use is made of materials from local sources, such as the transport system in Ipswich, and the pupils have written reports of how transport has changed from the trolley buses to railways and now to the use of cars. They produced a line graph to show the increase in the number of cars on the road from 1930 to 1990. In Year 4, as part of their study on what it was like for children in the Second World War, the pupils acquired a wide range and depth of historical knowledge and understanding of events such as, evacuation, rationing and how people helped one another. Teachers are confident in teaching the subject, introduce pupils to the appropriate vocabulary and focus well on historical skills. They present the work in a way that pupils enjoy and which encourages them to work hard.

125. Strengths in the teaching of history and its effect on learning were evident in the Year 5 lesson observed about the difference between rich and poor people in Tudor times. The teacher skilfully introduced pupils to what life was like in England in that period for the very rich people and what it was like for most of the people who were poor. The teacher's skilful questioning helped pupils to use extracts from text books, pictures and reference books to gather information in preparation for a presentation to the class. In this way, pupils saw what they could deduce from the evidence and compared the differences between the working and living conditions of people. The teaching motivated the pupils, who applied themselves well and showed genuine interest in their work. From the work on display and in discussion with pupils, it is clear that they have a secure understanding of the power of Henry VIII and his reasons for the dissolution of the monasteries. There were good links in this unit of work with information and communication technology when pupils researched the school's Intranet system for first hand information.

126. A good policy supports the teaching of history and the school makes good use of the units of work in the national scheme. The co-ordinator, who is a subject specialist, has a clear overview of pupils' learning and provides good leadership. Good links are made with pupils' work in other subjects, such as geography, art, dance and literacy when pupils develop their skills in research and analysis of information. A particularly good example of links with dance was observed in Year 2 when the pupils created a dance sequence using red and yellow coloured ribbons of material to show the effect of the Great Fire of London. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. Resources for teaching history are good and are supplemented by the school's library service. Curricular provision is enriched by visits including Kentwell Hall, Colchester Castle and Ipswich Museum. In Year 6, the pupils' residential visit provides a focus for their history studies through the invasion of Wales. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, for example, through their understanding of the legacy of ancient civilisations to modern society and discussions about the morality of actions carried out in the past.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

127. Provision for information and communication technology is very good. The inspection's findings are that standards of attainment in Year 2 and Year 6 are above average and the achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, is good. There is no difference between the achievement of boys and girls. This is an improvement from the last inspection when attainment was judged to be average. In Year 2, most pupils in the group are very confident when using the machines in the computer suite. They log-on and close down the computers, manipulate screen icons using the mouse, use the 'drag and drop' features of a program and instruct things to happen on the screen. They are able to find letters and numbers on the keyboard and can use the infill brush tool to create colour patterns. The scrutiny of work showed evidence of pupils collecting information and putting it in a database. Pupils have word processed their poems and other pieces of writing using different fonts and colours. They have also used a program to

help plan different layouts for the classrooms as well as using branching databases and have written text in speech bubbles to create a story line on a picture.

128. In Year 6, most pupils are very confident and have good skills. This is because, since the last inspection, the school has ensured that pupils have frequent access to the computers and that the teachers have good subject knowledge. The work scrutiny showed that pupils in Year 6 have created multimedia packages with musical accompaniment to link with their history studies. They collated and used spreadsheets to chart their science work on forces as well as cataloguing the school's collection of carol sheets. Spreadsheets have also been used to explore number patterns by changing the values of specific numbers. Pupils have used a music explorer program to compose music designed for background for the school website pages. All pupils are very familiar with the school's own Intranet system created by the co-ordinator and frequently use it to download or research information to accompany, for example, their work in history and geography. The scrutiny for Year 4 pupils showed better than expected attainment in their work on branching databases, spreadsheets, the use of graphic art programs linked to the art curriculum and using an encyclopaedia program to collect and manipulate information about badgers. Within this research, the pupils also showed good skills of cut and paste techniques.

129. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 – 2 is good. In a Year 1 lesson, a very good demonstration by the teacher helped the pupils to understand exactly how to access the program and prepare invitations to a party to celebrate the Golden Jubilee. The teacher's very good knowledge of information and communication technology ensured that a brisk pace was kept and the pupils quickly began to produce invitations using their word-processing skills and use of clipart graphics. In a Year 2 lesson, when information and communication technology was linked to music, the headteacher, who was supporting the teacher, began the lesson in the hall giving pupils concrete experience of pitch. Using a tambour and the song, 'Twinkle, twinkle, little star', he instructed the pupils to use their hands and bodies to show how the pitch changed from low to high. These good methods ensured that most pupils were able to show physically how the pitch changed. The group then moved to the suite where the pupils experimented with the program, 'Music Explorer', to compose music showing a wave pattern on the screen. In the lesson, good use of time and support from the teachers ensured that all pupils had created a wavy pattern and were able to use their skills to demonstrate to the group the music they had composed.

130. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 5 and 6 is very good and this is an improvement from the previous inspection when teaching was judged to be good. Very good subject knowledge and a brisk introduction to the lesson by the Year 5 teacher ensured that a good pace was kept up throughout the lesson. The lesson was linked with art and the teacher used the Escher pictures in a graphics package to give the pupils experience of combining and manipulating an object on the screen to create complex overlapping patterns. This program was new to this group of pupils but most of them quickly began to understand how to use the specific icons and tools to enlarge, reduce, rotate and layer their pattern. In very good and sometimes excellent lessons in Year 6, the teacher ensured that very good links with geography and religious education moved the pupils' information and communication technology skills forward very well. For example, in a very good religious education lesson, half the pupils moved into the suite to research the school's Intranet system to discover more about Judaism. The very high quality information and detail available for the pupils ensured that very good learning and reinforcement of the key beliefs of Judaism took place. Similarly, in a geography lesson, half of the group worked in the suite with the knowledgeable support assistant who ensured that all pupils worked quickly and productively to access information about mountains throughout the world. In this lesson, the pupils showed very good skills of making notes about the key facts they were researching.

131. In an excellent Year 6 lesson, the teacher's skills and knowledge ensured that, in the lesson, most pupils learned the complex procedures for turning on lights on a photograph of a Pelican crossing

on the screen. The excellent explanations and instructions had a very positive impact on learning. Most pupils were able to write a procedure to check two inputs and an output event to control the length of time the lights were switched on. Several pupils grasped the analogy of a light sensor triggering off events to the program they were writing.

132. Boys and girls have very good attitudes towards the subject and the same confidence and interest. They are very eager to learn new skills and are happy to experiment and learn from their mistakes. They work very well together in pairs or on their own. Year 6 pupils who attend the after-school club show a mature attitude to their work in composing and give each other a critique of the melodies created. They are very capable of self-assessment.

133. The quality of the suite and the ratio of computers to pupils are better than the national picture. The school also has two digital cameras and a video camera and there was plenty of evidence in several subjects to show that these are well used. The co-ordinator, who is also the deputy headteacher, is very skilled and has been very effective in installing the school's excellent Intranet system with very little help from outside agencies. Training has begun for the staff but most teachers and support assistants are already knowledgeable and very capable of teaching the subject well. The co-ordinator is almost ready to install the school's website on the Internet using the programs already available on the Intranet system. This will improve even further the good links with parents. The co-ordinator is given non-contact time to monitor the progress the pupils are making and to support the teachers. The contribution the subject makes to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. For example, the links with religious education described above, the ethical issues the pupils will learn about when they explore their own Intranet systems, the collaborative work pupils undertake by composing the melodies to back up the school's website and the different cultures the pupils discover when researching all contribute well to the pupils' personal development. The co-ordinator is trialling assessment of the pupils' progress with his own group of pupils but this has yet to have an impact. However, in the close confines of the suite, all teachers find assessment of pupils comparatively simple and know exactly the very few pupils who may experience problems although this is, of course, informal.

MUSIC

134. The inspection's findings are that standards of attainment in Year 2 are above average. The previous inspection made no overall judgement about attainment in music at Key Stage 1. By the end Year 6, pupils' attainment is well above average. This is good achievement for all pupils including those with special educational needs. This represents an improvement since the school's last inspection when standards were above average. There is now additional access to learning music for pupils through the high number of visiting music teachers. In addition, the headteacher teaches a large number of pupils in the school band. Pupils throughout the school enjoy their music and pupils with special educational needs take a full part in all activities. The school caters extremely well for those pupils who have a talent in this subject and provide a wide range of opportunities for pupils to achieve at a high level.

135. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good, with one lesson in Year 6 taken by the headteacher that was exceptional. No music lessons were observed in the Year 1 or Year 2 class. However, in the lesson observed in the class with Year 2 and Year 3 pupils, the quality of teaching and learning was good. The lesson was well planned and presented with clear explanations of what the pupils were expected to learn. The good use of questioning and emphasis given to the vocabulary of music stimulated pupils' thinking and ensured that they used and understood terms such as tempo and dynamics when answering questions. Year 2 pupils in this lesson responded well to this challenge and took full part in changing their compositions by modifying the volume and tempo. They explored and confidently expressed their ideas using correct musical language. Overall, the singing of Year 1 and Year 2 pupils in assemblies show that they are developing good control of pitch, dynamics and rhythm.

136. In a good Year 3 lesson, pupils and the teacher benefited from the expertise and support of the well-qualified teaching assistant. The lesson based on Ancient Egyptians was characterised by a sense of fun that allowed all pupils to participate at their own level. Their response was good as they moved into groups to compose and develop their musical ideas with the intention of achieving a particular effect that was relevant to the theme of the lesson. They used a wide variety of instruments imaginatively to create particular effects such as, planning the building of the pyramids, pushing the rocks along and combining sounds to represent the hieroglyphics. After presenting their compositions to the class, their final group performances were recorded on video and were used well by the teacher in the lesson for pupils to appraise the work of others. The teacher placed the emphasis on pupils' comments being positive and constructive. The main weakness in this lesson was an element of silliness that crept in, and became difficult to contain, when the pupils watched one another on the video at the end of the lesson. However, the lesson engaged the pupils and they made good gains in their composing skills. Overall, lessons are well prepared with a broad range of musical activities that are suitably challenging.

137. Pupils in Year 6 benefit by being taught music by the headteacher, who has the subject knowledge and expertise to challenge and extend pupils' learning. In the one lesson observed the teaching and learning of music were exemplary. The lesson was led with a high level of expertise that inspired the pupils to improve their performance and achieve high standards. Taking the theme, 'Swinging' the headteacher successfully developed the pupils' understanding of syncopation while at the same time promoted a great deal of enjoyment in the lesson. The pupils learnt to indicate syncopated rhythm with actions and to sing in a syncopated style when singing a song from the musical, 'Bugsy Malone'. A recording of an African chant was introduced to the pupils, which they sang with fluency, using a call and response structure. In the lesson, pupils were 'swinging' and singing in tune with a well-developed sense of syncopated rhythm. Good use was made of a video recording of pupils' previous compositions for them to appraise one another's performance. The quality of learning in this lesson was increased because the pupils enjoy music and their interest enables them to make the best use of the opportunities provided by the headteacher. Many pupils read and perform from notations.

138. The headteacher provides very effective leadership through his knowledge and enthusiasm. The subject is well supported by a variety of commercial schemes and back up materials to guide and help teachers in the teaching of music. The school also benefits from the support and expertise of a teaching assistant who works with teachers in Years 2/3, 3 and 4 in music lessons. Pupils have the opportunity to join a choir and the school band, take recorder lessons and receive musical tuition from a wide range of visiting specialist teachers. During the inspection, the school band was heard practising for the end of year school's prom concert. This was quite inspirational for the listener as they played music that ranged from 'Moon River' to Elgar's 'Pomp and Circumstance'. The school band also plays in a range of venues such as the church, the Salvation Army and at senior citizens' homes. The curriculum is enriched by the performance of live musicians who are invited into the school to play for the pupils. This makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school is well resourced with a variety of instruments that include a good range of ethnic instruments. Information and communication technology makes an important contribution to music, through the use of video cameras and computers to compose music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

139. It is not possible to make a judgement about standards of attainment and teaching in physical education in Year 2 as only one lesson in dance was observed. However, pupils' standards of attainment in dance in this lesson were above average.

140. The inspection's findings are that standards of attainment in Year 6 are average and the achievement of all pupils including those with special educational needs and those pupils who have special talents for physical activity is satisfactory. There are no differences in the standards of boys

and girls and all pupils have equal access to the activities. These judgments represent a decline in standards in Year 3 - 6 since the last inspection, when attainment in some lessons was above average. However, in both inspections, there was only a limited sample of observations.

141. In the Year 2 lesson on dance, standards of attainment were above average and the quality of teaching was very good. The pupils moved successfully at different levels, twisting, running, creeping and crouching to represent the spread of fire. There were very good links in this lesson to their work in history and the Great Fire of London. The teacher's methods were very good and the resources she introduced of red and yellow fabrics to represent the rippling of the fire proved to be very effective and added to the pupils' enjoyment and understanding of the swift movement of fire. The teacher's very good encouragement ensured that the pupils' creativity and interpretation of the music was developed very well in this lesson and the pupils moved responsively to the music and the story. Their response in the lesson was better than expected for pupils of their age.

142. The pupils in a Year 3 lesson were observed learning bat and ball skills in preparation for later games. During the lesson, most pupils made some progress in their development of their skills by hitting the ball off a tee set up off the ground. Several higher attaining pupils, who have a natural ability, were able to make very good strikes and hit the ball a long way. Several, however, could not connect with the ball often. The following 'game' session in groups of four was less successful, and did not develop the pupils' skills further.

143. The older pupils in Year 5 were observed practising their tennis skills. They bounced, hit and generally learned to control the ball with the racquet. Most pupils understood that in order to control the ball over such short distances they needed to hit it relatively softly. They worked well in pairs and tried to use a circle of rope on the ground as a focus for directing their striking. The pupils had to hit the ball into the circle of rope and their partners had to return it after only one bounce. Many pupils found this very difficult and only a few pairs were successful.

144. The pupils in Year 6 were practising interval running, slow and fast, adding appropriate technique and using their arms to good effect. They began to learn sprint starts and a few were successful. However, several pupils did not understand that they derived no drive off a straight leg and so slowed their start considerably.

145. The quality of teaching and learning in the lessons observed in Years 3 – 6 was satisfactory overall. All the teachers paid attention to health and safety issues and provided a time of warm-up for pupils at the beginning of lessons. A few teachers asked pupils to demonstrate activities but mostly this activity was centred around the teachers. An area of weakness in teaching is the lack of evaluation by pupils of their own and other pupils' performance. None of the lessons observed contained this element and this had an impact on the achievement of pupils that was satisfactory rather than good.

146. There is a lack of rigour about planning for the appraisal of pupils' performance in the overall school planning documents for physical education. This is reflected in the limited range of sporting activities offered as out-of-school clubs. The planning and teaching of skills are covered by the schemes of work adequately but there is insufficient notice taken in lessons of the idea of progression for pupils; that is, working up to a better performance in throwing, catching and striking, after some coaching. This was apparent in the lessons for the older pupils in Years 4 - 6, when pupils moved straight into striking small balls with no coaching beforehand. Planning documents show that the subject covers aspects of athletics, dance and games. The school has its own pool, and swimming takes place either locally or in the school pool in the summer. By the time they leave the school, most pupils are able to swim at least a short distance using recognisable strokes.

147. The management of the subject is adequate, but the assessment scheme only identifies what pupils do well. The school has a good playing field and adequate room in the hall. Resources are good and enable teachers to plan games and activities with enough apparatus for all their pupils. Pupils

clearly enjoy physical education, are well behaved and work hard. They respond quickly to teachers' instructions and listen carefully. The use of information and communication technology in the physical education curriculum is limited. The subject contributes positively to the pupils' social development when they work collaboratively together in pairs or groups.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

148. During the inspection, only three lessons were observed in religious education in Years 1, 5 and 6. The inspection's findings are based on those observations, the analysis of pupils' work, the scrutiny of planning and discussions with the co-ordinator. The indications are that standards of attainment are meeting the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus in Year 2 and exceeding them in Year 6. Achievement is satisfactory for pupils in Year 2, including those with special educational needs and those pupils with English as an additional language whilst achievement is good in Year 6 for all pupils. This is an improvement from the findings of the last inspection when attainment was judged to be in line with expectations. Assemblies occasionally enhance religious education with Biblical stories such as Jonah and the Whale.

149. The work scrutiny showed that, in Year 2, pupils have made Easter cards and know the story of Easter. They understand how we recognise and use the seasons such as the daffodils in spring, or barbecues in the summer. The pupils relate this to special times such as birthdays, Christmas and bonfire night. They listen to Bible stories such as Jairus' daughter, and are encouraged to try to understand the girl's feelings. Some of the words they used in their writing, such as, 'petrified', 'lonely', 'sad', and 'grateful', showed their good understanding. Year 2 pupils have looked at rules in religion, and in their lives. The pupils found several religious rules, cut them out and pasted them in their books and wrote about the school's lunchtime rules in comparison. When the pupils considered their own identity, they made personal shields with pictures of the things that they like on them, to identify themselves.

150. The quality of teaching and learning in the Year 1 lesson observed was satisfactory. The pupils had visited the local church during the week before the inspection and had written prayers of thanks for parts of their everyday lives such as food, eyesight, friends and animals. In the lesson, the teacher encouraged the pupils to talk about their prayers and the hymns they sing in school. They knew that 'amen' means, 'I agree'. As a result of a good choice of video by the teacher, the pupils were very attentive watching the film of worship in church and they knew the special vocabulary for things they had seen during their visit such as pulpit, font and lectern. The pupils also knew what each object is used for and talked confidently about baptism in the font and what happens during a church service. One pupil said, 'The Bible is the book that tells us all about God and Jesus', as the pupils were looking at photographs of their recent visit. They could recall the embroidered kneelers well.

151. The analysis of pupils' work in Years 3 – 6 shows that they have an appropriate knowledge of Bible stories and key characters such as Abraham, Isaac, Joseph and Moses. Pupils have completed details about symbolism in the early Church, in today's Church, and in other world religions. For example, they understand the Om symbol for Hindus, and the Alpha and Omega sign for Christians. Good links are made with English when pupils consider literal and figurative meanings of sayings such as, 'He has green fingers'. or, 'He was a rough diamond'. They recognise some of the milestones in their lives such as birth, moving house, going to secondary school and taking GCSE examinations. Pupils know facts about Sikhism, the five pillars of Islam, and some of the Christian calendar such as Advent, Shrove Tuesday and Pentecost. In the Year 6 lesson observed during the inspection, pupils' attainment was above average. This was very largely due to the excellent resources available on the school's intranet system as well as the high level of challenge presented to them.

152. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 – 6 is good and has been maintained since the last inspection. In the Year 5 lesson, the teacher's good methods and use of interesting resources ensured that the pupils' attitudes to the lesson were consistently enthusiastic and interested. Good learning took place as pupils watched a video that emphasised how a refugee family found peace in

this country because they belonged to a church and felt part of a family. There was a good link in this part of the lesson to the life of Jesus with friends sharing, saying sorry and praying together. The teacher's imaginative methods of asking pupils to write in speech bubbles as if they were artefacts, such as a lectern, resulted in some direct speech that showed their understanding of this aspect of religious education. For example, 'I am important because I let people stand on me to make speeches.' During a discussion about death and funerals, several pupils related this aspect of the subject well to their previous work in history on the Vikings and the Egyptians and their practices.

153. The quality of teaching and learning in the Year 6 lesson observed was very good and had an impact on the above average standards attained by the pupils. This lesson was taken by the headteacher who made a very brisk, informative introduction about Shabbat. The pupils were shown a video about the Jewish meal on Shabbat and featured a Scottish Jewish family with the emphasis on, 'The family that eats together stays together'. Good artefacts were used in the lesson to link with objects seen in the video. The teacher's very good explanations linked this meal to 'The Last Supper'. A very good method of assessing the pupils' knowledge was to arrange 'interviews' between pupils with questions asked about what they had learned in the lesson about Shabbat and other aspects of Judaism. There were very good links with information and communication technology when several pupils researched the school's excellent Intranet to discover more facts and information to enhance their knowledge. This raised the pupils' knowledge and understanding to above average.

154. The co-ordinator has been in post for only eight months but is enthusiastic and eager to improve the subject. She has monitored lessons in Years 1 – 2. The school uses the Local Education Authority's helpful schemes of work and lesson plans. These follow the agreed syllabus carefully. Resources for the subject are good and the school's Intranet is an excellent resource for other faiths. Religious objects and the video library enhance the subject well and enable pupils to learn more about the topics they are studying. Liaison with the local church is good and pupils make frequent visits. There are satisfactory methods of assessing pupils' progress in the subject. The subject makes a good contribution towards pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, the pupils learn about worship in their visits to the church, study a variety of world religions and understand how rules and expectations of behaviour affect our everyday lives.