

INSPECTION REPORT

FIRLE CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Firle

Lewes

LEA area: East Sussex

Unique reference number: 114525

Headteacher: Mrs. L. Mason

Reporting inspector: Mike Capper
23239

Dates of inspection: April 23rd – 25th 2002

Inspection number: 196118
Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	The Street, Firle, Lewes, East Sussex
Postcode:	BN8 6LF
Telephone number:	01273 858260
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. M. Rees
Date of previous inspection:	July 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mike Capper Registered inspector Original Inspector Number (OIN) 23239	Mathematics Art and Design Design and Technology Information and Communication Technology Religious Education French Foundation Stage	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
Peter Oldfield Lay inspector OIN 1112		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Alison Cartlidge Team inspector OIN 23609	English Science Geography History Physical Education Music Equal opportunities Special Educational Needs	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well are pupils taught? How good are curricular opportunities?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Firle CE Primary School is located on the edge of the South Downs in the village of Firle in East Sussex. Pupils come from the local and surrounding villages, and are admitted between the ages of 4 and 11. There are 80 pupils on roll, and they are taught in three mixed-age classes: a reception/Years 1 and 2 class, a Years 3 & 4 class, and a Years 5 & 6 class. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly similar to the national average. Pupils come from largely favourable home backgrounds. There are 18 pupils on the register of special educational needs, with one pupil having a statement of special educational needs. These figures are in line with national averages. Test results show that pupils' attainment on entering school is slightly above average. All pupils have English as their first language.

The school has a very high turnover of staff, with 7 teachers having left in the last three years. At the time of inspection, there were relatively new teaching arrangements in the reception/Years 1 and 2 class. The previously part-time teacher is now teaching the whole class, with the headteacher supporting Year 2 pupils for some literacy and numeracy lessons.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school has many strengths but also some important weaknesses that limit its effectiveness. Teaching is good in Years 3 to 6, and pupils achieve at least satisfactory standards in all subjects by the time they leave the school. Throughout the school, pupils develop positive attitudes towards learning. Teaching has recently improved in Years 1 and 2, but low expectations in the past mean that pupils in these year groups do not achieve as well as they should. The headteacher provides sound leadership but school development has been significantly hindered by the very high turnover of staff. The cost per pupil is broadly average for this size of school. Taking all these factors into account, the school currently provides unsatisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher provides high levels of pastoral care and there is a very strong caring ethos that is reflected in all aspects of school life.
- Standards are above average in art and design by the end of Year 2, and in reading, history and French by the end of Year 6.
- The good quality teaching in Years 3 to 6 helps pupils to learn well.
- Pupils are happy at school, behave well and are taught to care for each other whatever their needs or background.
- Pupils with special educational needs are given good quality additional support and make good progress.

What could be improved

- Pupils' progress in Years 1 and 2, where standards are too low in writing, mathematics, science, history, geography and design and technology.
- Provision for children in the reception year.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning.
- The retention of teaching staff.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made unsatisfactory progress since the last inspection in 1997. The very high staff turnover has affected the pace of change and the impact of developments. Nevertheless, there have been many improvements in provision in Years 3 to 6, which is where the most significant weaknesses were found at the time of the last inspection. Teaching is now better and standards have improved. The school recently won a 'School Achievement Award' for improved standards in tests at the end of Year 6. However, not enough attention has been paid to the needs of pupils in the reception year and Years 1 and 2. Standards have fallen in these year groups and there is now significant underachievement. The headteacher has a good understanding of what needs to be done to address these weaknesses, and there is a strong commitment from all members of staff and governors to improving the school. This means that, with the continued support of the local authority, the school is well placed to ensure the

necessary improvement.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

Results of National Curriculum tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 vary significantly from year to year because of the variations in the number of pupils with special educational needs in each year group.

Pupils' levels of achievement and the rate at which they learn new skills and understanding are not consistent across the school. Progress is best in Years 3 to 6 where the teaching is good and work is more closely matched to individual needs. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are not achieving as well as they should, with attainment below average in many subjects by the end of Year 2.

Children in the reception year are on target to exceed expectations for the end of the year in the 'early learning goal' of personal, social and emotional development, and to achieve expectations in mathematical, physical and creative development. In communication, language and literacy, children make sound progress in developing reading skills, but their progress in developing writing skills is unsatisfactory. In knowledge and understanding of the world, children's progress is satisfactory in aspects of the curriculum that are taught, but there are weaknesses in provision that make their attainment unsatisfactory overall.

By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is average in reading, below average in mathematics and science and well below average in writing. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is broadly average in English, mathematics and science. In English, standards in reading are above average. Nevertheless, their writing skills are less well developed, with spelling a particular weakness in pupils' written work.

By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is good in history and French. It is satisfactory in religious education, art and design, music, information and communication technology, design and technology, geography and physical education.

The school makes appropriate use of assessment data to help set targets for individual pupils in English and mathematics and for test results at the end of Year 6. These are realistically challenging and based on a good knowledge of the differing capabilities of various year groups.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils work hard and are enthusiastic in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils play together well and have a good understanding of the school's rules.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory overall. Relationships are good. Pupils are kind and considerate, showing very good levels of respect for each other's feelings. Pupils take responsibilities for some aspects of school life,

	though this could be developed further.
Attendance	Good. Attendance rates are above national averages.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching of the reception children is satisfactory overall. The biggest strength is the gentle and caring approach used when managing their behaviour, enabling them to remain happy and secure during a time of change. Personal, social and emotional development is taught effectively, and pupils become confident when working or speaking with others. However, planning does not always take sufficient account of the needs of the youngest children, and they often take part in the same activities as the older pupils in the class.

In Years 1 and 2, teaching is satisfactory overall, with examples of good teaching and one unsatisfactory lesson being observed. A scrutiny of pupils' previous work shows that expectations in the past have been too low and pupils have made unsatisfactory progress, particularly in developing and using their writing. However, there is clear evidence of recent improvements in the quality of teaching. Focused literacy and numeracy sessions for Year 2 pupils are starting to improve standards, but there are still too few opportunities for pupils to write purposefully or develop their spelling. In some lessons, too little account is taken of what pupils already know, which leads to a lack of challenge particularly for higher attaining pupils. Lessons in all subjects are sometimes padded out with time-filling activities, such as colouring-in sheets. This means that opportunities to extend learning are missed.

Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good overall. Teachers are very skilled in managing the behaviour of pupils by providing clear expectations at the same time as being relaxed and friendly. The very good relationships that have developed between pupils and teachers help pupils to learn well. Teachers' lesson planning shows clearly what pupils are expected to learn, and this is shared with pupils at the start and end of each lesson to involve them in their own learning. Activities are carefully chosen to interest the pupils, which means that they listen and concentrate well and learn quickly.

In Years 3 to 6, the teaching of numeracy and literacy is good. A special extended writing project is having a good impact on the planning and content of pupils' story writing. Teachers provide clear guidance on specific writing skills, and work produced is carefully analysed so that the pupils can improve further.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Unsatisfactory because of weaknesses in provision in the reception year and Years 1 and 2. There is a lack of balance in what is taught in these year groups, with insufficient time allowed for subjects such as history and geography. In Years 3 to 6, the curriculum is good. It meets the needs of pupils well and is broad and balanced.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants. Provision is well managed by the co-ordinator.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. There are very good procedures for promoting moral values. Assemblies are calm and reflective. Pupils are given good opportunities to understand human feelings and emotions through activities such as 'circle time'. Cultural development is satisfactory,

	although there are limited opportunities for pupils to learn about non-European cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are well cared for. Assessment procedures are not consistent across the school, and in Years 1 and 2 they provide too little information about what needs to be taught next.

The school has sound links with its parents. The headteacher and other members of staff value the partnership between school and home, and most parents are happy with the education provided by the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The effectiveness of the headteacher's work has been hindered by the extra workload caused by the very high staff turnover. Since the appointment of an acting assistant headteacher, there has been a stronger and more effective management team with the workload more equitably shared. Together, they have established a clear educational direction for the work of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors are very supportive and fulfil statutory duties. They are beginning to be more proactive in initiating change.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. The headteacher has a realistic programme for observing teachers at work. However, where weaknesses have been identified, effective action has not always been taken.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Budgeting is systematic and based on a clear understanding of the needs of the school. The school applies the principles of 'best value' to its work, for example by ensuring that competitive bids are sought for all large purchases.

Staffing levels are satisfactory. The good number of well-trained teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning throughout the school. All members of staff are given very good opportunities for professional development.

Accommodation is unsatisfactory. The school is unable to provide a full reception year curriculum because of a lack of space in the infants' classroom. Although a hard working caretaker keeps the building clean and tidy, the overall external décor of the school is shabby.

Resources are satisfactory overall, although there are some weaknesses in equipment for children in the reception year.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school. • Children are helped to become mature and responsible. • The quality of teaching. • Homework. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The high staff turnover. • Information on children's progress. • Extra-curricular provision. • Links with parents.

The inspection team agrees with most of the parents' positive and some of the negative views. The quality of teaching is good in Years 3 to 6 and there is evidence of recent improvement in Years 1 and 2. The high staff turnover has been beyond the school's control, but it has led to understandable concerns amongst parents. As a result, links with parents could be improved further. However, the inspection team finds that the information that parents are given about their children's progress is good, and the school provides a satisfactory range of after-school clubs for its size.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards of attainment have improved significantly in Years 3 to 6 since the last inspection, especially in science, geography, design and technology and information and communication technology (ICT). However, standards in Years 1 and 2 are lower than they were at the time of the last inspection in English, mathematics, geography and history.
2. Pupils' standards of attainment vary significantly from year to year because of the variations in the number of pupils with special educational needs in each year group. Nevertheless, inspection findings show that pupils' levels of achievement and the rate at which they learn new skills and understanding are not consistent across the school. It is best in Years 3 to 6, where the teaching is good and work is more closely matched to individual needs. In Years 1 and 2, progress is not as good as it should be, and by the end of Year 2 pupils are not achieving as well as they should, with attainment below average in many subjects. This is not a reflection on the current teaching in Years 1 and 2, which is now largely satisfactory. However, a scrutiny of pupils' previous work shows that there has been insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils, in particular, with the expectations of teachers being too low in the past. There are also weaknesses in the balance of the curriculum which have affected progress in subjects such as history and geography.
3. Children's attainment on starting school in the reception year varies from year to year but is slightly above average overall. Children in the reception year are on target to exceed expectations for the end of the reception year in the 'early learning goal' of personal, social and emotional development, and to achieve expectations in mathematical, physical and creative development. In communication, language and literacy, children make sound progress in developing reading and speaking and listening skills, but their progress in developing writing skills is unsatisfactory. In knowledge and understanding of the world, children's progress is satisfactory in aspects of the curriculum that are taught, but there are weaknesses in provision that make attainment unsatisfactory overall. Children's standards of attainment are lower than those found at the time of the last inspection in writing and knowledge and understanding of the world.
4. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is average in reading, below average in mathematics and science, and well below average in writing. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is broadly average in English, mathematics and science. In English, standards in reading are above average. Writing skills are less well developed, with spelling the most important weakness in pupils' written work.
5. The results of National Curriculum tests in 2001 for pupils at the end of Year 2 confirm that pupils are underachieving. In writing, pupils' attainment was well below average when compared with all schools and similar schools. In reading, attainment was below average when compared with all schools, and well below average when compared with similar schools. Only in mathematics was attainment broadly average when compared with all schools and similar schools. However, even in mathematics, the number of pupils achieving the higher level (Level 3) was below average although all pupils achieved the expected level (Level 2) in the tests.
6. National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 6 in 2001 show that pupils' attainment was well above average in English and above average in science when compared with all schools and with similar schools. In mathematics, pupils' attainment was below average when compared with all schools and with similar schools. The school acknowledges that this was an exceptional year group, with a higher than normal number of more able pupils. Inspection findings confirm that, with the exception of mathematics, attainment is not as high this year, although pupils are now making good progress in lessons. In mathematics, the current Year 6 is on target to achieve higher standards, with more pupils on target to achieve the expected level

(Level 4), although few pupils are likely to achieve the higher level (Level 5). Pupils are benefiting from good quality teaching, with good use being made of group and individual targets to help pupils improve.

7. Test data indicates that there are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls.
8. Standards of literacy and numeracy are unsatisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2, but satisfactory in the rest of the school. By the end of Year 6, pupils have good reading skills. They read confidently and develop positive attitudes towards books. Writing skills are particularly weak in Years 1 and 2. Spelling is poor and pupils lack confidence. In contrast, older pupils are benefiting enormously from the extra opportunities that they are being given to write for a range of purposes. This has improved their confidence, although spelling is still weak. Throughout the school, pupils listen well to teachers and other adults and develop appropriate speaking skills.
9. In numeracy, by the end of Year 2, pupils have a sound understanding of basic number concepts, but more able pupils are given very few opportunities to work with large numbers. Higher attaining pupils have only a limited understanding of place value. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a sound understanding of multiplication and division, and estimate accurately with numbers up to 1000. However, pupils sometimes lack confidence in applying their skills to practical situations.
10. Pupils' attainment is satisfactory in religious education, music, ICT, and physical education by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. However, standards are unsatisfactory in history, geography and design and technology by the end of Year 2, where insufficient time is allowed for the teaching of these subjects. Pupils make better progress in these subjects in Years 3 to 6 and achieve satisfactory standards in geography and design and technology by the end of Year 6.
11. In history, standards of attainment are good by the end of Year 6. Pupils benefit from good quality history teaching, which is marked by the teachers' great enthusiasm for the subject. Teaching is similarly strong in Years 1 and 2 in art and design, and standards of attainment in this subject are good by the end of Year 2. Standards of attainment in art and design are satisfactory by the end of Year 6.
12. In Years 5 and 6, pupils study French as an addition to the statutory curriculum. This is a recently revived initiative in the school, with lessons having restarted in the spring term. Since then pupils have made very good gains in knowledge and show an excellent attitude towards learning a new language.
13. Pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs receive good quality support from teaching assistants, and they make good progress overall. Individual education plans set clear targets for what pupils are expected to learn and this helps to ensure that pupils' needs are met. In contrast, the school does not always meet the academic needs of more able or gifted pupils because they are often given the same work as less capable classmates. This is most evident in Years 1 and 2, where there is a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils in some lessons.
14. The school makes appropriate use of assessment data to help set targets for individual pupils and for test results at the end of Year 6. These are realistically challenging and are based on a good knowledge of the differing capability of various year groups.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

15. The positive attitudes of pupils and their respect for others' feelings, values and beliefs are a strong feature of the school's work. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection.
16. As at the time of the last inspection, children settle well into the reception class. They behave well and have well-developed social skills. They are enthusiastic about school and try hard in all

their activities. They show respect for property, as well as care and concern for each other, and develop a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong. They play together amicably, waiting their turn patiently and concentrating hard when working. They share and look after resources without fuss. Times when children talk together are used effectively to encourage them to think about things that affect them and to talk about the needs of others.

17. Throughout the school, pupils have good attitudes overall towards learning. Pupils are keen to come to school and enjoy the work they are given. They work hard, showing great enthusiasm in most lessons. Teachers and teaching assistants are quick to praise, which encourages pupils to respond well to the work they are given. They are pleased to explain to visitors what they are doing in lessons. Pupils' positive attitudes are demonstrated by their willingness to undertake extra tasks as part of their work. For example, after a French lesson, several pupils made posters at home using the new words that they had learnt in the lesson.
18. Parents are satisfied with the behaviour of their children. Inspection findings show that it is good in classrooms and on the playground. Pupils play together well and have a good understanding of the school's rules. They know that they are expected to behave well at all times, and they generally achieve this. Pupils are well behaved at lunch-time, when a good variety of play activities is made available for them to share, and they show good manners when eating their food. There is no evidence of bullying and there have been no exclusions in the recent past.
19. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils form good relationships with each other and help each other in class. They are kind and considerate and show good respect for pupils from differing backgrounds. Pupils with differing needs are well integrated. Pupils support each other well, with older and younger pupils mixing well together. This is something that parents particularly like about the school. The inspection team agrees that it helps to make the school a friendly and happy place.
20. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall, with many good features. Teachers know the pupils very well and give them appropriate opportunities to take responsibility for aspects of classroom routines. Pupils take this responsibility very seriously. Pupils take an active part in discussions about important personal and social issues, with 'circle time' making a good contribution to personal development. It helps pupils to develop a very good understanding of the impact of their behaviour on others. However, pupils find it hard to work co-operatively when an adult does not support them. For example, in a physical education lesson in Years 5 and 6, pupils needed to organise themselves into small groups so that they could play a team game following the written instructions provided by the teacher. Those pupils who were not being directly supported by a member of staff found this task very difficult, wasting time arguing and falling out. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are not given sufficient opportunity to work independently, especially when writing. This means that they become over-reliant on adult help when they cannot spell a word, and is one of the reasons for the well below average attainment in writing in these year groups. Personal development is therefore an area for further improvement.
21. Pupils' attendance is good, with attendance rates above national averages. There is very little unauthorised absence. The punctuality of pupils is good, which means that little time is wasted at the start of each day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

22. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with good teaching in Years 3 to 6. There have been considerable improvements in teaching since the last inspection, when one lesson in five was unsatisfactory. There has been a very high turnover of teachers at the school, and all teachers have been responsible for their classes for less than a year. A few weeks before the inspection, the teaching arrangements for the reception/Years 1 and 2 class changed. The previous part-time support teacher is now teaching the whole class, with the headteacher supporting Year 2 pupils in some literacy and numeracy lessons. Most parents are happy with the quality of teaching at the moment, but they are very concerned about the impact of the high turnover of staff on their children's education.

23. Teaching of the reception children is satisfactory overall. The biggest strength is the gentle and caring approach used when managing their behaviour, enabling them to remain happy and secure during a time of change. Personal, social and emotional development is taught effectively so that pupils become confident when working or speaking with others. For example, in one lesson all children were given the opportunity to discuss times when they had been frightened. Teaching in other areas of learning is satisfactory overall. As at the time of the last inspection, there are good relationships between the teacher and the children. However, there are weaknesses in the way work for these children is planned, and they often take part in the same activities as the older pupils in the class. They have good opportunities to increase confidence in reading but not enough opportunities to write for a purpose.
24. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall, with examples of good teaching and one unsatisfactory lesson being observed. A scrutiny of pupils' previous work shows that expectations in the past have been too low and pupils have made unsatisfactory progress, particularly in developing and using their writing. The pace of work has been too slow and they have not learnt quickly enough. Under the new teaching arrangements, there is clear evidence of recent improvements in the quality of teaching. Focused literacy and numeracy sessions for Year 2 pupils are starting to improve standards. However, there are still too few opportunities for pupils to write or develop their spelling, and this is unsatisfactory. Teachers have good relationships with the pupils and are good at encouraging them to enjoy books and gain confidence in their reading.
25. In Years 1 and 2, art and design is taught well and the teacher shares her good subject knowledge effectively. This has a good impact on standards. For example, pupils made good quality clay pots following clear step-by-step guidance from the teacher. No lessons in science or design and technology were on the timetable during the inspection, but a scrutiny of work and teachers' planning shows that insufficient account is taken of what pupils already know, and this leads to a lack of challenge particularly for higher attaining pupils. Lessons in all subjects are sometimes padded out with time-filling activities such as colouring in sheets when planning has been insufficiently directed towards what pupils are expected to learn.
26. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good overall. Teachers are very skilled in managing the behaviour of pupils by providing clear expectations at the same time as being relaxed and friendly. The very good relationships that have developed between pupils and teachers help pupils to learn well. Teachers' lesson planning shows clearly what pupils are expected to learn, and this is shared with pupils at the start and end of each lesson to involve them in their own learning. Activities are carefully chosen to interest the pupils, which means that they listen and concentrate well and learn quickly in most lessons. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 learn about the structure of flowering plants by dissecting them to see for themselves how they are formed.
27. In Years 3 to 6, the teaching of numeracy and literacy is good. A special extended writing project is having a good impact on the planning and content of pupils' story writing. Teachers provide clear guidance on specific writing skills, and the work produced is carefully analysed so that pupils can be guided to improve further. Teaching in science is satisfactory overall, though pupils are given limited opportunities to devise their own investigations or record their findings in a variety of ways. There were no lessons in design and technology and geography during the inspection. A scrutiny of work indicates that these subjects are taught satisfactorily.
28. Personal, social and health education is taught well throughout the school. For example, teachers have identified a weakness in the way that pupils work collaboratively and so have provided good opportunities for pupils to improve these skills by setting tasks for them to complete in pairs or small groups.
29. The headteacher, special needs co-ordinator and teaching assistants provide effective support for small groups of pupils, particularly for older pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans are used effectively to provide specific support. Weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge identified at the time of the last inspection are no longer evident. However,

as at that time, information on what pupils already know is not always used to plan work that is suitably challenging, especially for higher attaining pupils.

30. No lessons in information and communication technology were on the timetable during the inspection. A scrutiny of work suggests that pupils are given good opportunities to use their skills in Years 3 to 6 but fewer opportunities in Years 1 and 2. Teachers now provide a suitable amount of homework, and most parents are happy with this provision, although some would like more homework for older pupils.

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

31. The school has an appropriate statutory curriculum in place, including the provision for religious education, and there are good learning opportunities for pupils in Years 3 to 6. However, there are weaknesses that make the curriculum unsatisfactory for children in the reception year and for pupils in Years 1 and 2.
32. In Years 3 to 6, there is a varied, well-planned and interesting curriculum. Commercial schemes of work form the basis for teachers' lesson planning, and a topic cycle ensures that work is not repeated. The school's strategies for literacy and numeracy are effective, with a recently started writing project having a good impact on raising attainment. The curriculum for pupils in Years 3 to 6 has improved since the last inspection when it lacked balance and was not well supported by schemes of work. The differing needs of pupils are met in the planning of most lessons.
33. As at the time of the last inspection, the curriculum for older pupils is enhanced by lessons in French. These have recently been restarted by the Years 5 and 6 teacher and help to prepare pupils for when they transfer to secondary school.
34. The curriculum for the reception year and Years 1 and 2 lacks balance. In Years 1 and 2, subjects such as history, geography and design and technology are covered superficially, limiting the breadth of knowledge gained. There are unclear plans in music to show what pupils are expected to learn in a given term, and the new teacher is devising the curriculum from week to week. The teacher is not well supported when planning lessons because of a lack of clear, medium-term planning or records about individual pupils' previous learning. As a result, planning does not take enough account of what pupils already know and the needs of higher attaining pupils are not being met. The timetable is not well thought out, resulting in several sessions that are too short to plan a meaningful lesson. At these times, activities often lack structure and purpose. The school's literacy strategy is unsatisfactory in supporting the development of writing. Whilst there are good opportunities for pupils to improve their reading, insufficient time is allowed for pupils to write in literacy lessons and at other times. Not enough attention is given to developing pupils' spelling. Literacy lessons do not take place every day, and sessions are often split into two parts so that learning is not immediately consolidated.
35. There are insufficient plans for reception children and they are not provided with a full curriculum based on the recommended areas of learning. A lack of space in the classroom and no easy access to an outdoor area restricts what children can be provided with, which in turn limits their opportunities to make purposeful choices in their learning and to have free access to good quality role play.
36. Throughout the school, personal, social and health education, including sex and drugs education, is promoted effectively, and specific lessons and assemblies have a good impact on improving pupils' behaviour and attitudes. There is a strong commitment towards enabling all pupils to take a full part in all the activities the school offers. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs, and they are well supported through the skilful help of teaching assistants and the special educational needs' teacher. Clearly focused individual education plans enable members of staff to meet the needs of these pupils well. The school has developed strong relationships with other schools in the area and makes effective use of the community to support learning, as at the time of the last inspection. For example, pupils have

good opportunities to attend educational visits and to take part in special events such as the mock 'war-time evacuation day'.

37. About half the parents would like more opportunities for pupils to learn outside lessons. Inspection findings are that, for its size, the school provides suitable arrangements for pupils, with clubs for music and sport being offered to pupils in Years 3 to 6.
38. The school's good provision for pupils' personal development has been maintained since the last inspection. The provision for pupils to develop spiritually is good. Calm and reflective assemblies include good opportunities for pupils to take part in worship. Pupils are given good opportunities to understand human feelings and emotions during specific lessons. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 shared their feelings about sad events in their lives, such as the death of a grandparent. Members of staff provide good role models for showing respect for the beliefs and feelings of others.
39. The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral development. The school has a very clear moral code that is promoted consistently by all members of staff. Stories shared with the whole class in literacy lessons often include a moral, and this is carefully discussed. For example, in one lesson in Year 2, the teacher shared a story that demonstrated effectively the importance of not being greedy. Religious education lessons often provide very good opportunities for pupils to consider moral dilemmas, such as how to deal with violence. The school is careful to provide equal opportunities to all its pupils and they have very good opportunities to discuss values of right and wrong. Parents are particularly pleased with the values their children are taught, and most feel that their children are helped to become mature and responsible as a result.
40. Pupils are given good support in developing socially. Members of staff encourage good behaviour successfully by having clear expectations and using praise effectively. Pupils come to the school from a wide catchment area and diverse backgrounds. There is a strong sense of everyone belonging to the school community and being equally valued. Pupils are taught to care for each other and develop good personal qualities of honesty and self-respect. There are good opportunities for pupils to share their worries with each other, to consider each other's strengths and to look at ways of improving the school. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 discussed ways of improving activities for playtimes.
41. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory. There are good opportunities for pupils to increase their knowledge of their own culture, and pupils in Years 5 and 6 have good opportunities to extend their knowledge of European culture in French lessons. Pupils learn about other faiths in religious education and resources from other cultures enrich some lessons. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to extend their knowledge of cultures outside Europe.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42. The school provides a safe and caring environment where all pupils receive good pastoral care. The school values all pupils whatever their background and gives them good levels of individual support. Good procedures are in place for ensuring pupils' welfare, and the high level of care that the school gives the pupils helps them to feel very happy and develop good levels of self-esteem.
43. Child protection procedures are good and the school ensures that health and safety is given a high priority. The headteacher is the designated person for child protection. She discharges these duties very well and has a good knowledge of the requirements. The school has appropriately trained first aiders. Good procedures are in place for dealing with minor injuries. Where 'head bumps' occur, the school sends a written note to parents. Minor accidents are recorded, although a small number of minor amendments are needed in the accident book to ensure that there is a more detailed record of the injuries sustained. Appropriate testing of fire-fighting and electrical equipment has been done. Fire drills are regularly carried out.

44. There are good procedures in place to promote and monitor attendance. Registers are well marked, although, as yet, the school has no computer-based system. Nevertheless, the school maintains full and accurate attendance statistics and ensures that all absences are explained. There is good liaison with the educational welfare services when a specific concern about a pupil's attendance arises.
45. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support. Appropriate contact is maintained with a good range of support agencies, including social services, the school nurse, dentist and behavioural services, to ensure that all pupils receive the additional support that they need.
46. The school procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour work well. The behaviour policy and number of adults in the school, coupled with the high profile of the headteacher, allow for good monitoring and supervision. Rules adopted by classes further underline the requirements. Teachers at the school are good role models. They have good relationships with the pupils, which raise pupils' understanding of what is expected. Very young children are settled into school life well.
47. Pupils of all ages play and work well together. They know that unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated. The pupils know each other well and are very supportive towards each other. As a consequence, behaviour is good and there were no incidents of oppressive behaviour seen during the inspection period.
48. Assessment and record keeping procedures are unsatisfactory because they are not consistent across the school. This is a very significant factor in a school with such a high turnover of staff, as new teachers rely on assessment information to help them decide what needs to be taught next. Assessment procedures are best in Years 3 to 6, where both teachers keep detailed records of what pupils have learnt. This provides good information and is used effectively to plan what needs to be taught next. In Years 3 to 6, assessment procedures are supported by good quality marking that identifies clearly to pupils what they need to do to improve. Teachers use this information to support the learning of individual pupils.
49. In the reception year, there are satisfactory procedures for assessing children's attainment and progress. Assessments are made when children start school, and this information is beginning to be used effectively to identify what individual children need to learn next. The teacher keeps appropriate records of children's progress and uses this information to ensure that activities largely build on children's previous learning. However, in Years 1 and 2, there is insufficient assessment data. This has meant that in subjects such as history, music and physical education the new teacher has not been sure about the skills that pupils have already been taught. This makes it difficult to match activities to needs.
50. The school makes effective use of National Curriculum tests and other assessments to measure progress through the school. The headteacher has developed effective tracking procedures to show progress from year to year. This provides detailed information, though the procedures have not been in place long enough to be a useful tool for analysing strengths and weaknesses in different year groups.
51. The procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are good. Teachers know the pupils and families well. Pupils' annual reports of progress include personal and social development comments based on a close knowledge of the pupils and the targets that have been set. There are opportunities provided in classes for pupils to talk about concerns and share these with other pupils and teachers. This helps teachers to monitor and respond to any personal concerns that may arise.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

52. The school has sound links with its parents. The headteacher and other members of staff value the partnership between school and home, and the majority of parents are happy with the

education provided by the school. Most parents feel welcomed into school. However, the school acknowledges that there are a number of vociferous parents who are less happy about the school's work. The school tries hard to respond to such concerns, holding additional meetings for parents or groups of parents when necessary.

53. Most of the parental concerns relate to the very high staff turnover in recent years. The inspection team investigated this issue thoroughly and agrees that it has had a negative impact on the work of the school in the last three years. Nevertheless, the high turnover of staff has been beyond the school's control. Teachers have left for a variety of personal reasons or for promotion, and the school has no influence over their decision to move on. The school has worked hard to lessen problems caused by staff leaving, although more could be done to improve assessment and record keeping procedures so that there is clear continuity in what pupils are taught.
54. The school provides good quality information for parents. There are parents' evenings to discuss progress each term and share targets that have been set for their children. Most parents find these meetings informative and helpful. The headteacher is happy to see parents on a daily basis to discuss any concerns. A number of parents expressed the view that the end-of-year written reports on their children's progress lacked detail. The inspection team does not agree with that opinion. Indeed, the reports give good information about the work undertaken at the school as well as a clear indication about teacher assessments and national testing levels. Parents are thus given good opportunities to find out about and discuss their children's progress.
55. Good quality newsletters are regularly sent to parents. These give a comprehensive indication of the life and work of the school and of future dates of interest to parents. Parents of new pupils starting school are given very good information in a separate brochure.
56. The governing body works hard to keep parents informed of its decisions and meets statutory requirements to publish minutes of its meetings. The date of the Annual Meeting of the Governing Body has recently been changed from the summer to the autumn term so that the written report can include all of the relevant data from the most recent end of key stage tests.
57. There is a very strong and successful 'Parent Teacher Association', which has raised very important funds for the school. This excellent group of parents is well supported and valued by the head teacher. Only a very small number of parents regularly help in classes. Some others indicated to the inspection team that they would like to do so, but they do not feel fully encouraged to do so by the school. The headteacher accepts that the school could be more pro-active in using parental volunteers, although the inspection team agrees with concerns about using parent helpers to hear children read. In a small school, this raises very important issues about confidentiality.
58. Teachers use homework effectively to support children in their learning. The school further encourages parents to help their children at home by giving them detailed information on what is to be taught in each term. There are also regular meetings about aspects of the curriculum, which parents find helpful.
59. Overall, although most parents like the work of the school, relationships could be developed further in order to strengthen the partnership with parents.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

60. The headteacher provides sound leadership for the work of the school. Since the last inspection, major issues concerning the quality of education in Key Stage 2 have been successfully addressed and standards of attainment for older pupils have risen. However, the necessary focus on rectifying these issues has meant that insufficient attention has been given

to monitoring teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 and, as a result, provision for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is not as good as it should be. Nevertheless, there is a balance of strengths and weaknesses in the leadership of the school.

61. A major strength of the headteacher is the high level of pastoral care offered to members of staff and pupils. A very strong caring ethos pervades all aspects of school life. Pupils are encouraged to feel secure and valued. All members of staff are able to contribute to school life, and they are given very good opportunities for professional development. Teaching assistants speak very positively of the professional support that they have been given, including training designed specifically to extend their skills. Similarly, the most recently appointed teacher has received good support that has enabled her to quickly make a full contribution to the life of the school.
62. Over the last three years, the effectiveness of the headteacher's work has been hindered by the extra workload caused by the very high staff turnover. This has increased the headteacher's teaching load and has meant that a great deal of time has been taken up in finding new staff. School improvement has also been adversely affected. Although the improvement plan sets a clear agenda for development, its impact has been limited by the constant need to introduce new staff to school procedures. This inevitably slows the pace of change. The number of new staff also means that, in the recent past, has not been possible to have co-ordinators for the different curriculum areas. This has further added to the workload of the headteacher.
63. An acting assistant headteacher was appointed in the autumn term 2001. This has helped to improve the effectiveness of school management. Over the last year, the management workload has been more equitably shared, and the school has now established a strong management team consisting of the headteacher and the acting assistant headteacher. Together they have established a good educational direction to the work of the school. The assistant headteacher has had a very good impact on the work of the school in the 2 ½ terms she has been in post, providing good quality teaching for older pupils and setting high standards for planning and assessing learning.
64. There are important weaknesses in the monitoring of teaching and learning. The headteacher has a realistic programme for observing teachers at work. These observations have usefully picked up areas for development in teaching and learning, as well as identifying strengths throughout the school. However, where weaknesses have been identified, they have not been fully followed through and effective action has not always been taken. This refers particularly to weaknesses identified in Years 1 and 2 and is a major reason for the fall in standards in that key stage. Nevertheless, the monitoring that has taken place has enabled the headteacher to develop a good understanding of what needs to be done to improve provision in the infants' class. This, coupled with the strong commitment of all members of the staff, means that the school is well placed to ensure that the necessary improvements are made, as has already happened in Years 3 to 6.
65. The governing body makes a sound contribution to the work of the school and successfully fulfils all its statutory duties. The good relationship that exists between the chair of governors and headteacher means that improvement can be carefully and sensitively planned. The governing body is beginning to be pro-active in initiating change and taking responsibility for managing it. For example, the governing body is actively evaluating ways of ensuring that there is a less rapid turnover of staff by looking at ways of providing housing for young teachers. There are several useful working committees, all of which take an active management role. Governors regularly visit the school and take an active part in monitoring the work of the school, giving the headteacher good support in this area.
66. Financial planning is good. The school maintains a sensible contingency fund, which is to be used to maintain or improve present staffing levels. Budgeting is systematic and based on a good understanding of the needs of the school. Decisions are carefully made on the basis of, *'Will this help the school to improve?'*

67. The school successfully seeks additional funding from a range of sources, and these grants are used well so that they have a positive impact on learning. This is most noticeable in the good impact on standards of government money allocated to improve literacy and numeracy skills through 'booster classes' for older pupils. Regular small group sessions, taken by the headteacher and assistant headteacher, are a significant contributory factor to the good progress made by pupils in Year 6.
68. The school applies the principles of 'best value' to its work, for example by ensuring that competitive bids are sought for all large purchases. Parents and the local community make a significant contribution to the financial security of the school. The money they raise is spent well to improve resources. For example, money from a local trust fund was used to improve library resources.
69. Staffing levels are satisfactory, but school effectiveness is significantly affected by the very high staff turnover. There is a good number of teaching assistants, who make a good contribution to pupils' learning throughout the school. They are well trained and fully involved in all aspects of school life.
70. Accommodation is unsatisfactory and this has an important impact on the effectiveness of the school. The school is unable to provide a full reception year curriculum because of a lack of space in the infants' classroom. Although the hard working caretaker keeps the building clean and tidy, the external décor of the school is tatty. The mobile classrooms are shabby and the children's toilets are in urgent need of refurbishment. This was scheduled to start shortly after the inspection.
71. Resources are satisfactory overall, although there are some weaknesses in provision for children in the reception year. There is only a limited range of outdoor play resources, and few literacy and numeracy resources aimed specifically at younger children.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

To raise levels of achievement and improve provision the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- ◆ Raise standards in writing, mathematics, science, history, geography and design and technology at Key Stage 1 by:
 - Maintaining the improved standard of teaching and the higher expectations seen during the inspection;
 - Ensuring that there are effective assessment procedures in place so that work can be more closely matched to pupils' needs, including providing sufficient challenge in lessons for higher attaining pupils;
 - Planning a more balanced curriculum with more time allowed for work in history, geography and design and technology;
 - Giving pupils more opportunity to write purposefully;
 - Allowing more time for the teaching of spelling in literacy lessons and ensuring that there is a clear structure to the teaching of letter sounds and spelling patterns;
 - Encouraging younger children to attempt to spell words independently so that they do not become over-reliant on adult support when they are older;
 - Ensuring that time is used effectively so that there are less time-filling activities at the end of lessons.

(Paragraphs 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 24, 25, 34, 48, 49, 83, 97, 103, 104, 108, 111, 112, 119, 128, 129, 135, 136, 143, 145, 148, 152, 153, 155, 160, 161, 167, 176)

- ◆ Improve provision for children in the reception year by:
 - Ensuring that planning meets the needs of all children and takes full account of the recommended reception year curriculum;
 - Improving resources for physical development and in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development;
 - Considering strategies for making more effective use of staff and accommodation so that children are given more opportunities to select from a range of activities and to work outdoors.

(Paragraphs 3, 23, 34, 35, 71, 74, 75, 83, 86, 88, 89, 93, 95)

- ◆ Improve the monitoring of teaching and learning by:
 - Introducing a regular programme for monitoring the quality of teaching and standards of attainment in the different curriculum areas;
 - Identifying how areas of weakness are to be addressed and ensuring that improvements are monitored to measure their effectiveness.

(Paragraphs 60, 64, 127, 136, 144)

- ◆ Address the high turnover of teaching staff by working with the local authority to identify strategies for ensuring greater stability in staffing.

(Paragraphs 22, 48, 53, 65, 69)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

31

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

21

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	1	15	14	1	0	0
Percentage	0	3	48	46	3	0	0

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

80

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

9

Special educational needs

YR – Y6

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs

1

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

18

English as an additional language

No of pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language

0

Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of pupils

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

7

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

6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.5
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	10	4	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
	Total	12	10	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (85)	71 (85)	100 (92)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
	Total	13	14	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (85)	100 (92)	93 (100)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	7	4	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
	Total	9	7	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (67)	64 (56)	91 (78)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
	Total	8	7	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (67)	64 (63)	82 (67)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	81
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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)	4.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.1
Average class size	26.7

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	73

Financial information

Financial year	2001
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	£
Total income	214953
Total expenditure	224004
Expenditure per pupil	2516
Balance brought forward from previous year	16201
Balance carried forward to next year	7150

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	7
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6.6

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	81
Number of questionnaires returned	47

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	41	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	38	49	4	4	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	32	57	11	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	55	2	4	7
The teaching is good.	51	38	4	0	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	41	11	5	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	55	30	11	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	28	9	4	2
The school works closely with parents.	38	30	26	6	0
The school is well led and managed.	34	45	9	12	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	40	51	6	3	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	10	34	38	15	3

Other issues raised by parents

- Parents expressed a great deal of concern about the very high turnover of teaching staff. They feel that this has had a negative impact on their children's learning and the work of the school.

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

72. At the time of inspection, there were ten children in the foundation stage (the reception year) of their education. They are taught in the infants' class alongside pupils in Years 1 and 2. There were no children in the reception year identified as having special educational needs at the time of the inspection.
73. Children's attainment on starting school in the reception year varies from year to year but is slightly above average overall. Children in the reception year are on target to exceed expectations for the end of the reception year in the 'early learning goal' of personal, social and emotional development, and to achieve expectations in mathematical, physical and creative development. In communication, language and literacy, children make sound progress in developing reading, speaking and listening skills, but their progress in developing writing skills is unsatisfactory. In knowledge and understanding of the world, children's progress is satisfactory in those aspects of the curriculum that are taught but there are weaknesses in provision that make attainment unsatisfactory overall. Children's standards of attainment are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection.
74. Whilst children are making satisfactory progress overall, their learning is hindered by the unsatisfactory accommodation, which has a significant impact on the curriculum that the school is able to provide. There is a lack of space and limited access to outdoor activities. As a result, it is difficult to set up a full range of activities at any one time, and children get few opportunities to make choices about where they are going to work. Role-play activities are limited by the lack of space and the need to avoid distracting older pupils. The teacher works hard to compensate for the limitations of the accommodation, for example by ensuring that children get regular opportunities to work outside with a teaching assistant. However, it is not possible currently to teach a full early years' curriculum.
75. The limitations imposed by accommodation mean that the curriculum is unsatisfactory. Planning is not yet linked closely enough to the objectives and activities identified in the national 'early learning goals', which form a major part of the reception year curriculum. This has the greatest impact on the learning of less able children who would benefit from access to a wider range of practical and physical activities. The other important weakness in the curriculum is the over-use of time-filling activities towards the end of lessons.
76. Assessment of children's attainment and progress is satisfactory. Assessments are made when children start school, and this information is beginning to be used effectively to identify what individual children need to learn next. The teacher keeps appropriate records of children's progress, and uses this information in order to ensure activities largely build on children's previous learning.
77. There is good liaison between the school and home when children start school. Parents are welcomed into school at any time to discuss concerns, and new children spend time in the class before they are due to start. These activities help them to settle into school quickly.

Personal, social and emotional development

78. Children make good progress in this area of learning because of the good quality provision and teaching. The teacher has a calm, caring and patient manner with the children. Both the teacher and teaching assistant have a good knowledge of both the social and educational needs of individual children. Children's behaviour is well managed, with good use made of praise to develop self-esteem. Throughout all areas of the curriculum, members of staff ensure that children are given opportunities to work independently, to relate well to each other and to behave sensibly. 'Circle time' is used effectively to help children think about how their behaviour can affect others. As a result, children become confident and secure individuals.

79. Children are enthusiastic about school and try hard in all their activities. They show respect for property as well as care and concern for each other, and develop a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Children are often expected to help around the class and they happily tidy away at the end of an activity. As a result, levels of independence in the reception year are good.

Communication, language and literacy

80. There is a good emphasis on developing children's language skills, with children taking part in regular literacy sessions with older pupils and a lot of time allowed for reading activities. This helps children to improve their reading skills at an appropriate rate, though their progress in writing is less secure.
81. Speaking and listening skills are well developed. Children are given suitable opportunities to take part in discussions and talk about their lives, so they become confident in talking to large or small groups as well as to individuals. For example, in a lesson about shapes, there was an interesting discussion about the different structures that had been built using 3-D shapes.
82. Reading skills are taught effectively, with elements of the literacy hour used appropriately to ensure that there is sufficient challenge for higher attaining children. Stories are read well, and children enjoy listening to them. Children respond appropriately to different types of stories, joining in with the teacher when they recognise a text. By the end of the reception year, most children are beginning to read simple texts and can talk accurately about the events in the story. They are developing knowledge of the sounds that letters make, and higher attaining children try to use this information to help them read unknown words. There is a clear structure to the teaching of reading skills, with appropriate use made of a commercial reading scheme.
83. The teaching of writing is unsatisfactory and there are important weaknesses in the development of skills. Children are given some opportunities to write freely in the classroom, for example when pretending to be librarians in the role-play area. However, there are insufficient opportunities for children to experiment with writing. Members of staff too readily write sentences for the children to copy under, and this does not help to develop children's confidence. Children are not encouraged to write purposefully and, as a result, they fail to develop a positive attitude to writing as a means of communication. In addition, on occasions children are given work that is unsuitable for them, partly because there is a lack of suitable reception year resources. Very few children are yet using recognisable words when they write for their own purposes, and the teacher does not give children enough support when they are writing independently.
84. Homework is carefully planned and makes a good contribution to children's learning, especially in the development of reading skills. Children regularly take reading books home, and this helps them to extend their skills.

Mathematical development

85. Children make sound progress in extending their mathematical skills and understanding. Many children recognise numbers to 10, with some higher attaining children recognising higher numbers. When working orally, higher attaining children can work out 'one more than' a given number. Children recognise and name common shapes, and are beginning to use appropriate mathematical language such as 'bigger than' and 'smaller than'.
86. The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory. Lesson planning often identifies expectations for children of differing prior attainment, so that children's needs are met well on the whole. There are suitable activities for less able children, and most are making at least sound progress. However, there is an occasional lack of challenge for the most able children in the class. This is most evident during group activities, and lessens the rate at which they learn new skills. Opportunities to extend learning are often missed at the end of lessons when children waste

time drawing or colouring in work sheets, rather than working on further mathematical activities.

87. There is a good emphasis to learning through practical activities. Mathematical concepts are often taught in interesting ways that involve the children and promote good learning. For example, children went on a 'shape walk' with the teaching assistant when they looked for different 2-D and 3-D shapes around the school. Members of staff had prepared well for this task, which was a worthwhile exercise that gave children the chance to extend their mathematical vocabulary and their knowledge of different shapes.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

88. Children's progress in this area of learning is satisfactory but is restricted by weaknesses in the curriculum and planning. The lack of space means that it is not possible to set out a full range of practical activities at any one time, and there is limited access to an outdoor work area. Most of the work in the infants' class is planned for Year 1 and Year 2 pupils rather than the reception year children. Thus, children study history topics like the 'Fire of London' and science topics such as 'Light', rather than being given the opportunity to learn important knowledge, skills and understanding in a practical way.
89. The lack of space restricts the number of first-hand experiences that can be available at any one time. For example, there are limited opportunities for exploration of sand and water, and children are only rarely able to work outside.
90. Teaching is satisfactory when specific skills are being taught. There is appropriate interaction on these occasions, and children are encouraged to think about what they are doing. This was seen to good effect in a lesson where children were learning about Judaism. Good use was made of resources and children began to appreciate that not all religions are the same.

Physical development

91. Children develop an appropriate range of physical skills. They are given some opportunities to work outside with the teaching assistant. On these occasions, children are able to work with a range of resources, such as small vehicles, sand, skipping ropes and hoops. Children use these sensibly, trying out different ideas and working together well. Higher attaining children skip confidently and show good balance and body control. Children build models using a range of techniques to stick things together and use available resources sensibly and safely.
92. Children's learning is also enhanced by regularly timetabled physical education lessons. The quality of teaching in the one lesson that was timetabled was satisfactory, with children able to practise and consolidate throwing skills whilst working alongside older pupils.
93. The curriculum for children's physical development is adversely affected by the limitations of the accommodation, although the school has worked hard to overcome these, for example by planning in a regular outdoor session each day. This means that children have some opportunity to work outside each day. Nevertheless, this is less than would normally be found in a reception class, because there is no direct access to a secure outside play area. There is not enough room in the classroom to set up a full range of physical activities, which means that opportunities to consolidate skills learnt outside are limited. Resources for the development of physical skills are limited. For example, there are few sit and ride toys and only a limited range of climbing equipment.

Creative development

94. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory and children make sound progress. For example, children enjoy singing, and join in with enthusiasm when making music in the classroom or in assembly.

95. However, learning is slowed in this area of the curriculum because the lack of space in the classroom means it is not possible to have a wide range of different creative activities readily available at all times. For example, children are given some opportunities for role-play, but there are fewer opportunities for this than normally found in a reception classroom.
96. Nevertheless, children develop good art skills and this is a strength in this area of learning. Children draw and paint confidently, with increasing control of a range of tools and materials, for example when using clay to make 'coil-pots'. Children benefit from the expertise of the teacher and the effective way that specific skills are taught. In the one lesson seen, the teacher gave clear instructions about how to use clay and gave children confidence by showing them what might go wrong. This meant that they were not afraid of making mistakes. The teacher made good use of examples of children's work to guide and inspire others to improve their own clay pots.

ENGLISH

97. Pupils' attainment is below average overall by the end of Year 2. Whilst attainment is broadly average in reading and meets national expectations in speaking and listening, pupils have well below average writing skills. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows that they have made insufficient progress in writing since they started school and have not achieved as well as they should. Progress has improved in the last few weeks with the change in teaching arrangements. Attainment and progress by the end of Year 2 are broadly the same as at the time of the last inspection when they were satisfactory in reading and below average in writing.
98. National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 2 have been below average overall in the last three years when compared with all schools. In 2001, reading results were below average and writing was well below average. When compared with similar schools, reading and writing were both well below average. As at the time of the last inspection, whilst most pupils attain the expected level (Level 2), few reach the higher level (Level 3). The school is aware that there has been a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils, especially in writing. Test results in reading have started to improve since 2000.
99. Overall, pupils' attainment is in line with national averages by the end of Year 6. Pupils' attainment is above average in reading and listening, average in speaking and below average in writing. The weakness in writing is mainly the lack of consistency in spelling. Pupils make satisfactory progress in English overall, with good progress having been made in writing since the introduction of a writing project last term. Attainment and progress by the end of Year 6 are broadly the same as at the time of the last inspection.
100. National Curriculum test results have been above average overall in the last three years when compared with all schools. In 2001, when there was a particularly good group of pupils, test results were well above average when compared with all and similar schools. Test information shows that these pupils made good progress from the time they took their Year 2 tests and met the targets set by the school. There are more pupils with special educational needs in the present Year 6, which is why attainment is not as high this year.
101. In speaking and listening, pupils in Year 2 are confident when answering the teacher's questions, and most listen carefully to instructions and follow them correctly. By the end of Year 6, most pupils state their opinions clearly and show interest in what others are saying.
102. All pupils in Year 2 enjoy reading and concentrate well when sharing books with each other or reading on their own. They are confident when discussing the content of stories they have read and are starting to use their knowledge of letter sounds to help them read unfamiliar words. Higher attaining pupils show a good understanding of the important parts of a story and can discuss strengths and weaknesses in the personalities of characters. However, some boys are slow to respond when pupils are reading together aloud. In Year 6, all pupils are at the level expected for their age, with a good number reading better than expected. All pupils are

enthusiastic about reading and have favourite authors or types of book. They read fluently with good expression and discuss confidently what they have read. Lower attaining pupils have limited skills in using their knowledge of letter sounds when reading unfamiliar words. Not all pupils are clear about how they would find a book in the non-fiction library.

103. By the end of Year 2, pupils do not form all the letters correctly and their spelling is weak. They lack confidence when attempting to spell words for themselves although their attempts are often plausible. In the past, they have not been expected to write enough in literacy lessons or in other subjects. Pupils do not write neatly or always complete their work, especially when it has been left unmarked for several days and expectations have not been sufficiently high. The work of higher attaining pupils is not consistently better than that of other pupils. Lower attaining pupils are starting to use some punctuation correctly, although the quality of their work is variable. Pupils in Year 6 are developing effective skills for planning an interesting piece of writing. Lower attaining pupils use direct speech well and make a good effort to make their writing interesting. They often have limited skills in spelling and grammar, sometimes changing from third to first person in the middle of their writing.
104. The quality of teaching during the inspection was good in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2. A scrutiny of pupils' previous work shows that there have been low expectations in the past and pupils have not made the progress they should in developing writing skills, particularly in Years 1 and 2. Throughout the school a particular strength is the good relationships that exist between members of staff and the pupils. Praise is used effectively to raise pupils' self-esteem and to increase their confidence. This means that pupils' behaviour is managed effectively, lessons are calm and relaxed and pupils are encouraged to develop good attitudes towards their work. Pupils are especially enthusiastic in Years 3 to 6 during special, extended writing sessions. At these times, they concentrate very well and try to do their very best work. The teachers provide good quality guidance to help them to focus clearly on the purpose of the lesson.
105. A change in teacher for pupils in Year 2 has resulted in an improvement in the quality of work being produced in the last few weeks. The teacher, who works with the pupils two mornings a week, engages their interest well by encouraging them to help with spellings when writing simple questions on the board and by asking effective questions about the plot and characters in the shared text. Sharing out parts of the text when reading aloud is used as another good strategy to ensure that all pupils concentrate well and take part. However, the teaching of writing has been unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2 over time, though the teaching of reading has been satisfactory.
106. In Years 3 to 6, good lesson planning shows clearly what pupils are expected to learn and this is successfully discussed with pupils at the start and end of each lesson. Individual targets are set for pupils throughout the school. These are more effectively used in Years 3 to 6 where teachers refer to them when marking pupils' work. This enables pupils to take some responsibility for developing their skills and knowledge, and has resulted in an improvement in the way pupils present their work. Teachers' marking in Years 1 and 2 lacks rigour and does not provide sufficient guidance for the teacher or pupils. Pupils with special educational needs have their literacy targets included in their individual education plans where appropriate. This means that support is focused on their greatest need. Teachers do not teach spelling patterns effectively and opportunities are missed to extend pupils' knowledge about how the sounds of groups of letters change. For example, the teacher did not explain to pupils in Year 2 why putting 'e' on the end of some words changes the vowel sound.
107. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection, when it was barely satisfactory with some unsatisfactory teaching. There was insufficient homework at the time of the last inspection. Parents are now happy with the provision of homework and this is appropriate for the pupils' needs.
108. The curriculum is broad and balanced for Years 3 to 6 but it lacks balance in Years 1 and 2 where there is too much emphasis on unstructured reading sessions. The school's strategy for

literacy is unsuccessful for these year groups because pupils spend too much time reading books without adult support, and this has an impact on their development of other skills in English and other subjects. In addition, there is too little challenge when they are learning to write, and spelling is not taught effectively. Literacy lessons do not take place every day and the sessions are split into two parts. This means that there can be a lack of continuity and learning is not immediately consolidated. The school's literacy strategy is successful for pupils in Years 3 to 6. An 'extended writing' project has had a particularly good impact on improving the way older pupils plan their writing and improve its quality so that it is interesting to read. Various specific teaching groups organised by teaching assistants, the special educational needs co-ordinator and the headteacher provide good support in increasing skills of pupils in Years 3 to 6. Carefully planned and delivered tasks provide pupils in these groups with effective, intensive support. Pupils are given good opportunities to write for a range of purposes in Years 3 to 6. The curriculum has improved since the last inspection when there was no scheme of work to support teachers' planning.

109. There are satisfactory procedures for monitoring pupils' attainment and progress. However, the information collected has not been used to identify weaknesses in teaching in Years 1 and 2.
110. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' moral development, with stories being chosen that encourage pupils to discuss important moral issues. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 considered how to deal with a bully. Resources for the subject have improved since the last inspection and are now satisfactory. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology to support learning in the subject. Specific funding has been used effectively to improve attainment in Years 3 to 6. Improvements in writing for Years 3 to 6 and reading for Years 1 and 2 have been successfully developed as part of the school's development plan. The school has started to work on the priority of making more effective use of the library. However, not enough progress has been made on developing the subject since the last inspection.

MATHEMATICS

111. Pupils' attainment is below average by the end of Year 2 and broadly average by the end of Year 6. Standards of attainment by the end of Year 2 have fallen since the last inspection, and pupils are not achieving as well as they should, given their attainment on entry.
112. Pupils' progress is variable across the school. It is best in Years 3 to 6, where the teaching is good and work is more closely matched to individual needs. In Years 1 and 2, progress over time has been unsatisfactory, although current teaching arrangements mean that needs are now being met more effectively. Nevertheless, a scrutiny of pupils' previous work shows that there has been a lack of challenge in some lessons, with pupils often doing the same activity whatever their prior attainment. This has a negative impact on the progress of higher attaining pupils in particular.
113. National Curriculum test results for pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 vary from year to year because of the small size of year groups and variations in the numbers of pupils with special educational needs.
114. In 2001, test results at the end of Year 2 showed average standards when compared with all schools and with similar schools. In 2001, all pupils achieved at least Level 2, but the number of pupils achieving Level 3 was below average. Inspection findings show that this year fewer pupils in Year 2 are likely to achieve Level 2, and there are again very few pupils working at Level 3 in lessons.
115. National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 6 in 2001 show that pupils' attainment was below average when compared with all schools and with similar schools. The current Year 6 is on target to achieve higher standards, with more pupils on target to achieve the expected Level 4, although few pupils are working at the higher Level 5. Pupils are benefiting from good quality teaching, with good use being made of group and individual targets to help pupils improve. Most

pupils have made satisfactory progress over time, although, as at the time of the last inspection, some opportunities to extend the learning of higher attaining pupils are missed in lessons.

116. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a sound understanding of basic number concepts. They count forwards and back in ones, twos and fives, and add and subtract using numbers up to at least one hundred. More able pupils are given very few opportunities to work with larger numbers than this. When handling money, most pupils add together small sums using pence and solve simple shopping problems. Pupils can halve shapes and numbers, and sort objects into sets according to colour, shape and size. They measure accurately using everyday objects, and are developing an awareness of the need for 'standardised' units of measure. Higher attaining pupils have only a limited understanding of place value.
117. By the end of Year 6, pupils have begun to work confidently with larger numbers. They have a sound understanding of multiplication and division, and estimate accurately with numbers up to 1000. Higher attaining pupils accurately identify the value of different digits in large numbers over 1000. Pupils recognise equivalence in fractions and ratios, and tell the time accurately. They correctly identify different 3-D shapes, as well as understanding rotational and reflective symmetry. They accurately calculate the perimeter of regular shapes and use terms like ratio and proportion to solve problems.
118. Pupils have weaker skills in using and applying their mathematical knowledge. This aspect of attainment is less well developed than other parts of the curriculum, especially in Years 1 and 2, where there is little evidence of pupils being able to apply what they have learnt to investigations or problem solving. Older pupils are more confident about working out calculations in their heads, but even by Year 6, they still find it difficult to work out which strategy they need to use to solve a problem. This is a weakness of attainment that is most apparent when a problem requires more than one calculation to be made.
119. The quality of teaching is now satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, but a scrutiny of pupils' previous work shows that there have been weaknesses in teaching in the past that have adversely affected pupils' learning. Until recently, teachers' expectations were too low. Work has not been matched closely enough to the needs of individual pupils, with work either lacking challenge for higher attaining pupils or being too difficult for lower attaining pupils. This led to work being unfinished or completed inaccurately. In addition, pupils were not successfully encouraged to present their work neatly enough. These weaknesses are less apparent under current teaching arrangements, which had only been in place for two weeks at the time of the inspection. Experienced teachers are now teaching Years 1 and 2 pupils separately for part of the week, and individual needs are being met more effectively as a result. Work is more carefully planned, with a good balance between practical activities and written recording of work. Pupils are responding well to these stimuli. They are enthusiastic and behave well, showing good attitudes towards learning. This was seen to good effect in a lesson about the properties of different shapes, where pupils co-operated well in a game that involved identifying various shapes. However, there does remain a weakness in the use of time, with pupils being given time-filling activities at the end of lessons, rather than being encouraged to extend their learning. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, early finishers drew or coloured pictures rather than working on an additional mathematical activity. This means that opportunities to extend the learning of higher attaining pupils, in particular, are missed.
120. In Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching is good. There have been some important improvements in teaching over the last three years, and this is having a good impact on standards. Teachers are now giving far greater emphasis to teaching mental mathematics skills, and they are assessing learning more accurately. Teachers plan lessons carefully, using the format recommended by the numeracy strategy and often identifying expectations for different groups of pupils. In a good oral mathematics lesson in Years 5 and 6, the teacher set a range of challenges which met the needs of more able and less able pupils. Questioning was used effectively and individuals were well supported. Where pupils made mistakes, for example in not being certain how to identify the strategy needed to solve a problem, the teacher used these difficulties effectively to help extend the skills of all pupils.

121. In Years 3 to 6, teachers use assessment information effectively to help them decide what to teach next. They have a good knowledge of pupils' strengths and weaknesses, and, in Years 5 and 6 in particular, are working hard to fill in gaps in pupils' knowledge before they undertake statutory testing at the end of Year 6. Teachers make effective use of praise, ask suitable questions to ensure that pupils understand, and make appropriate use of a review session at the end of lessons to share and reinforce what has been learnt. Behaviour is managed effectively and pupils behave well in lessons. Teachers are enthusiastic and resource lessons well. As a result, pupils are well motivated and keen to learn.
122. Teachers give pupils appropriate opportunities to use their numeracy skills in subjects other than mathematics. They measure in science and count in physical education lessons. Pupils are given appropriate opportunities to use ICT to support their learning, for example, by using data-handling programmes to present data in different ways.
123. Work is regularly marked, and this is most effective where teachers add written comments to identify how pupils could improve. This is most evident in Years 3 to 6. In Years 1 and 2, marking rarely identifies areas for improvement, with praise given even when not merited by the quality of work. This is indicative of the low expectations that have been a weakness of teaching in the past.
124. Teaching assistants are used very effectively throughout the school to support lower attaining pupils or those who have been identified as having special educational needs. This helps them to make at least satisfactory progress.
125. The curriculum is broad and balanced, and the numeracy strategy is firmly embedded in school practice. A commercial scheme is used to good effect to support teachers when they are planning work.
126. There are satisfactory procedures for monitoring pupils' attainment and progress, and teachers often use this information effectively to decide what needs to be taught next. The school makes effective use of National Curriculum tests and other assessments to measure progress throughout the school.
127. In the past year, the school has begun to make greater use of test data to identify strengths and weaknesses of pupils' attainment in the subject and to show progress over time. This is good practice that will help the school to identify where progress is uneven. However, the high turnover of staff means that there is no member of staff directly responsible for monitoring mathematics. At the moment, this is one of many additional responsibilities taken on by the headteacher and it means that the data cannot realistically be analysed in the detail that it deserves.

SCIENCE

128. Pupils' attainment is below average by the end of Year 2 and broadly average by the end of Year 6. In both key stages, few pupils are working at a level that is higher than that expected for their ages.
129. In Years 1 and 2, low expectations over time have led to standards being lower than they should be, with higher attaining pupils, in particular, not being sufficiently challenged by the work that they have been given. At the end of Year 2, pupils have a basic knowledge of the difference between living and non-living things and can name various sources of light.
130. By the end of Year 6, pupils make sensible observations when carrying out tests, understand the meaning of a 'fair test' and show a breadth of knowledge. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. However, a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils means that they do not progress as well as they should, especially in developing investigative skills and using their knowledge to explain what they have discovered.

Attainment and progress have improved in Years 3 to 6 since the time of the last inspection when they were unsatisfactory throughout the school. However, there are still weaknesses in the achievement of higher attaining pupils.

131. Overall, National Curriculum test results have been below average by the end of Year 6 when averaged out over the last three years. However, in 2001, when there was a particularly good year group, results were above average. These pupils made good progress from the time they were assessed at the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 2 in the same year, an average number of pupils attained the expected Level 2, but a well below average number attained the higher Level 3.
132. No lessons were on the timetable in Years 1 and 2 during the inspection. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows that expectations for these year groups are too low and teachers give pupils insufficient opportunities to write about what they have learnt. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6, with an example of a good lesson seen in Years 3 and 4. In the good lesson, pupils were given good opportunities to predict what might happen during an interesting investigation into how water is transported in a plant stem.
133. Clear lesson planning in Years 3 to 6 shows what pupils are expected to learn, and questioning is used effectively to revise what they have already learnt. The purpose of each lesson is explained to the pupils so that they can be more involved in their own learning and resources are used effectively to make learning meaningful. Teachers have a satisfactory knowledge of the subject. This is an improvement since the last inspection when subject knowledge was judged to be unsatisfactory. Pupils are managed efficiently and they listen carefully and behave well in lessons. They are encouraged to use the correct scientific terms when appropriate. Pupils with special educational needs are given effective support, enabling them to work meaningfully at their own pace. However, there is insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils in many lessons when all pupils complete similar work and have limited opportunities to use their own ideas and methods of recording. Teachers do not ask pupils to explain their findings sufficiently.
134. There was no overall judgement on the quality of teaching at the time of the last inspection, due to little teaching having taken place. However, some teaching was described as being poor.
135. There is a satisfactory broad and balanced curriculum for science. A commercial scheme provides a suitable basis for planning. The curriculum has improved since the last inspection when there was insufficient emphasis on science and no scheme of work to support teachers' planning. Nevertheless, there are still limited opportunities for pupils to carry out their own investigations or write detailed findings. There are appropriate examples of information and communication technology (ICT) being used to support learning. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 used the computer to show data they had collected about the popularity of pet foods. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to use their numeracy and ICT skills. For example, pupils in Year 4 measure the circumference of heads to see if there is a link between age and head size, and read scales when measuring force. Younger pupils compare shoe sizes by drawing a graph. Literacy skills are less well developed because pupils often copy statements based on their findings rather than writing in their own words. Investigative science teaching has been appropriately identified as a priority for the school development plan.
136. There are appropriate tests and assessments for pupils in Years 2 to 6 to show progress over time. Older pupils write about what they already know at the start of a new topic and complete an assessment at the end of the topic to show the progress they have made. Nevertheless, not enough use is made of information gathered from tests to plan work that meets the differing needs of the pupils. There has been insufficient monitoring of teaching and learning to help identify weaknesses.

ART AND DESIGN

137. Pupils' attainment is satisfactory by the end of Year 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress over time. By the end of Year 2, pupils'

attainment is above average. Pupils in Year 2 make well formed clay pots by pinching or coiling clay, and use space and colour boldly when painting in the style of Cézanne. Younger pupils use techniques they have learnt to make their own interesting patterns without support from an adult. Pupils in Year 6, are starting to use shading to good effect in their drawings of buildings but have limited skills in mixing pale colours when using paint. Attainment and progress have remained the same as at the time of the last inspection by the end of Year 6, with improved standards by the end of Year 2.

138. The quality of teaching is good. Throughout the school, teachers manage lessons effectively and pupils behave well and enjoy working with a good range of materials and techniques. They are given clear guidance on skills such as rolling and moulding clay, enabling them to become confident when working with various materials. The teacher in Years 1 and 2 helps pupils to gain knowledge and skills quickly by sharing her good subject knowledge and by pointing out possible pitfalls when using particular techniques. Good examples of pupils' work are shared to encourage and inspire others. At the time of the last inspection, there was no overall judgement on the quality of teaching, although an art expert with good subject knowledge was employed once a week.
139. A commercial scheme of work provides a satisfactory basis for teachers' lesson planning. Effective links are made with other subjects in Years 3 to 6. For example, pupils studied designs on Greek urns and other artefacts during a history topic. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable about the subject and uses information collected by monitoring work displayed around the school to help identify the school's strengths and weaknesses in attainment and provision.
140. There are unsatisfactory procedures for assessing how pupils' skills and knowledge are developing during the year, and teaching and learning are not being monitored. However, the co-ordinator has started to put together useful portfolios for each topic showing a cross-section of finished work. Information and communication technology is used to store digital photographs of some of the pupils' work and to generate patterns and designs.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

141. No lessons were on the timetable during the inspection and, as at the time of the last inspection, there was insufficient evidence to form a judgement on the quality of teaching. A scrutiny of pupils' previous work indicates that attainment is in line with national expectations by the end of Year 6. Older pupils designed and made attractive 'magic' wands to sell and planned and evaluated simple shelters. Whilst their plans are not always practicable, their evaluations show a sensible analysis of what does not work well and how it could be improved.
142. Pupils in Year 4 use appropriate skills when cutting and joining paper to make pop-up books. They evaluate the effectiveness of commercial products and consider the appropriateness of different materials for a given task. For example, they understand that glass provides suitable protection for a picture in a frame. However, some of their own designs are not made carefully and show limited information about the intended sizes.
143. There is very little evidence of work in Years 1 and 2. Younger pupils have constructed models by joining various reclaimed materials and made their own books by sewing and gluing paper and card. There is no evidence of their planning or evaluating their work. At the time of the last inspection, attainment and progress were unsatisfactory throughout the school.
144. The curriculum is broad and balanced in Years 3 to 6 but unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2. There is a new scheme of work to support teachers' planning, although there are no plans to show what pupils in Years 1 and 2 are expected to learn each term. As at the time of the last inspection, there are few records to show how pupils have progressed and this is unsatisfactory. Older pupils use information and communication technology appropriately to design greetings' cards and to help write evaluations. Improving teaching in design and technology is a priority in the school development plan, but there has been no recent monitoring of teaching and learning.

GEOGRAPHY

145. Only one lesson in Years 3 and 4 was timetabled during the inspection. Judgements on attainment and progress have been made by scrutinising pupils' work and looking at teachers' planning.
146. Pupils' attainment is below national expectations by the end of Year 2. Standards of attainment have fallen in Years 1 and 2, and pupils do not achieve as well as they should because of limitations in the curriculum. Until very recently there was very little recorded work in geography in these year groups, and the limited amount of time allocated to the teaching of the subject has meant that topics have been studied only superficially. Although the current Year 2 teacher is working hard to fill the gaps in the pupils' knowledge, this has not yet made up for deficiencies in learning over time.
147. By the end of Year 2, pupils have only a limited knowledge of where they live and how it differs from other locations. There is very little evidence of pupils developing even basic mapping skills, and no recorded evidence of pupils having studied their locality in any detail. The Year 1/2 class has a teddy bear, which goes on journeys around the world, often sending postcards or being photographed to show the countries he has visited. This helps pupils in Years 1 and 2 to learn some basic facts about life in other countries.
148. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is broadly in line with national expectations. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. Since then the curriculum has been developed by the introduction of a scheme of work. Pupils now have a better understanding of the difference between contrasting locations within the United Kingdom. They can describe some of the features of their own village and know how it differs from larger settlements. A detailed study on the topic of water helps pupils to learn why water is so important and how its availability affects the way that we live. Pupils know that different countries have different climates and they are beginning to develop an understanding of what life is like in other countries. They identify on maps the countries in the United Kingdom and continents in the world. However, there is no evidence of more advanced mapping skills being developed nor of detailed studies of locations outside the United Kingdom. These are areas that need to be developed further.
149. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2. However, a scrutiny of pupils' previous work shows that skills have not been developed quickly enough, and there is little evidence of written work in the subject.
150. In the one lesson timetabled in Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching was satisfactory. The teacher had planned an interesting activity that built effectively on pupils' previous learning. Pupils worked conscientiously at collecting data about noise pollution and were encouraged to use a good range of geographical skills. Behaviour was well managed and the teacher had good expectations about what pupils should achieve. However, the pace of learning was slower than it could have been because the written task was not sufficiently focused. This meant that, despite the many good features of the lesson, pupils made satisfactory rather than good progress.
151. Teachers' planning indicates that good use is made of local resources and visits. There are also good planned opportunities for links between geography, numeracy and information and communication technology through the production of graphs and by research on the internet about different locations.
152. Since the last inspection, the school has improved the quality of planning to ensure that skills are learnt progressively. Good use is made of a nationally recommended scheme of work to support teachers in their planning. Geography is taught regularly, but not enough time is allowed for the study of different topics for them to be covered in sufficient detail. This means that, overall, the curriculum lacks breadth and balance, especially in Years 1 and 2, where progress is unsatisfactory.

153. Teachers keep their own records of pupils' attainment and progress, and this arrangement works well in Years 3 to 6 where records are more detailed. However, there is no consistent approach to record keeping across the school and this means that the new teacher in Years 1 and 2 has little information on what has been achieved to help her decide what needs to be taught next. This is an important weakness in assessment procedures, given the high turnover of teaching staff.
154. Work in geography makes only a limited contribution to pupils' cultural development. Although pupils are given some opportunities to extend their knowledge of the world and its peoples, the lack of detail in this work means that some opportunities for cultural development are missed.

HISTORY

155. Pupils' attainment is below national expectations by the end of Year 2. Standards in Years 1 and 2 are not as high as at the time of the last inspection because topics have been studied only superficially. This fall can be largely explained by the lack of teaching time allowed for the subject, which means that pupils are not achieving as well as they should. There is very little evidence of pupils in Years 1 and 2 using their literacy skills in history lessons. Indeed, with the exception of work completed recently by the new teacher, the school was able to provide only a few examples of recorded work in the subject from the previous two terms. For example, following a study of the 'Fire of London', pupils' work folders contained only two pieces of written work, neither of which showed any detailed understanding of the events surrounding the fire.
156. In contrast, pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress so that their attainment is above national expectations by the end of Year 6. They develop a good factual knowledge throughout the school and are confident in using historical sources to find information for themselves. Pupils benefit from good quality teaching, which has helped them to learn well and develop a very positive attitude toward the subject. In Years 3 and 4, pupils have undertaken a detailed study of Ancient Egypt. They explain clearly why the River Nile was so important to the development of the civilisation and accurately describe different features of life at that time.
157. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have a good knowledge of life during World War 2, and how society has developed since then. They understand the impact of the war on everyday lives and explain how different groups contributed to the war effort. Pupils write with empathy about what life was like for children during the war, for example describing what it felt like to be an evacuee living in a strange place far from home. Pupils develop good research skills, using a range of sources such as the internet, books and pictures to find out about life in the past. Pupils have recently used the internet to research the speeches of Winston Churchill. Similarly, pupils look carefully at various artefacts, many of which they bring in themselves from home, to find out about what life was like when their parents were children.
158. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2. However, pupils are now producing more written work than they did in the recent past. This should help to raise standards quickly, as well as giving pupils opportunities to write purposefully.
159. The quality of teaching is good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers plan carefully and provide activities to meet the needs of pupils with differing prior attainment. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons, and the work they are given is appropriate to their needs. The enthusiasm of teachers and their clear love for the subject ensures that all pupils are involved and motivated by the work they are given. Teachers make very good use of resources, including a selection of computer programmes. For example, in their studies of the 1960s, pupils were able to listen to clips of children's television programmes from the era. Pupils are given many opportunities to write purposefully in history lessons, which makes a good contribution to the development of their literacy skills.
160. Teachers keep their own records of pupils' attainment and progress. These provide sufficient

information in Years 3 to 6 to help ensure that pupils' skills are developed systematically. This is not the case in Years 1 to 2, where the lack of records make it difficult for the new teacher to decide what needs to be taught next.

161. The curriculum is broad and balanced in Years 3 to 6. However, in Years 1 and 2, insufficient time is allowed for the subject, with the result that topics are not covered in sufficient depth. This has a negative impact on pupils' learning.
162. Good use is made of visits and visitors to make learning enjoyable and purposeful. For example, amongst recent activities was an 'Evacuation day' when pupils and other members of the school community dressed up and prepared to be evacuated to another location because of the war against Germany. This day really helped to bring the subject alive to pupils and made a very valuable contribution to their understanding of life during World War 2.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

163. During the inspection, the school's ICT resources were used on only a small number of occasions in lessons in Years 1 and 2. Judgements on attainment in these years have been made by observing available ICT activities, looking at previous work and scrutinising teachers' planning.
164. Pupils' standards of attainment are broadly in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve standards appropriate to their prior attainment and make sound progress in developing basic skills. Standards of attainment are higher than they were at the time of the last inspection, when they were unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6. There have been significant improvements since that time. The school has improved resources, developed teacher confidence and introduced a suitable scheme of work to support pupils' learning. This has had a positive impact on standards, with pupils achieving well in some areas of the curriculum.
165. By the end of Year 2, pupils are becoming familiar with the layout of a keyboard and they type simple texts. They successfully play a range of language and mathematical games using the keyboard and mouse, and draw simple pictures using an art programme. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a wider range of skills. When word-processing, they change font-type, colour and size of their text, and present their work in a way that is attractive to an audience. They understand how computers can be used to present information in different ways. Pupils successfully use clip-art to make their writing interesting or to produce greeting cards and invitations. They produce graphs showing their favourite breakfast cereals, using simple data-handling programmes.
166. Throughout the school, pupils have a sound knowledge of the many applications of ICT and understand that it involves more than just working on the computer. They understand that the internet can be used to find information, and they do this confidently. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 used the internet to find information about the speeches of Winston Churchill. Pupils take photographs using a digital camera and are beginning to use e-mail as an everyday form of communication, for example in writing to pupils in other schools.
167. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the quality of teaching. A scrutiny of teachers' planning indicates that the use of ICT is built into most curriculum areas, with specific time allowed for the teaching of new skills. However, this was not evident during the week of inspection in Years 1 and 2, where computers were used only infrequently to support learning. In contrast, computers were used extensively in Years 3 to 6 in a range of subjects, such as history, literacy, art and design and mathematics. In these year groups, pupils are given good opportunities to practice and consolidate skills. This helps to make learning purposeful and ensures that pupils develop an understanding of the various applications of ICT.
168. The school has a satisfactory range of resources. The purchase of new hardware and software has considerably improved the profile of the subject throughout the school, and pupils are

benefiting from these new resources. They include a number of laptops, which are used by groups of pupils to support their learning. This was seen to good effect in a literacy lesson, where lower attaining pupils were drafting their writing on a laptop. This freed the pupils from the mechanics of handwriting and meant that they were able to concentrate on improving the content and quality of their story writing, which was the intended focus of the lesson.

169. The curriculum is broad and balanced, with assessment procedures that are satisfactory overall. They are best in Years 3 and 4, where detailed records show what pupils have achieved in the different aspects of the curriculum. Records in Years 1 and 2 show coverage of the curriculum but do not identify levels of attainment. This means that the new teacher has limited information on what has already been learnt to help her decide what needs to be taught next. This is a significant weakness in assessment practice that affects learning in Years 1 and 2.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES (FRENCH)

170. Although not part of the statutory curriculum, pupils in Years 5 and 6 study French. This is a recently revived initiative in the school, with lessons starting in the spring term. Since then pupils have made very good gains in knowledge. Most importantly, pupils show an excellent attitude towards learning a different language. They answer to their names in French when the register is taken, and can recognise and respond to greetings. Pupils can count in French and know the names of the months of the year. They respond confidently to questions such as 'Quel age as-tu?'
171. The quality of teaching is very good. The teacher is very enthusiastic and knowledgeable, and has very high expectations of what pupils should say in French. There is a very good focus on the development of both oral and written skills. Activities are practical and fun, and are directly related to the pupils' own experiences. This makes learning purposeful and helps to keep pupils motivated. For example, they learn the names of different sports and then write simple sentences, in French, saying which sports they like or do not like. Pupils carried out this task enthusiastically, with some even completing an additional task at home as part of a voluntary piece of homework. All pupils, including those who have special educational needs, are successfully encouraged to participate in activities, with teaching assistants giving good support where appropriate.
172. The teaching of French makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development and prepares them well for transfer to secondary school.

MUSIC

173. No lessons were on the timetable in Years 5 and 6 during the inspection, which means that it is not possible to judge standards by the end of Year 6.
174. Pupils' standards of attainment are broadly in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 4. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in learning a range of skills. Attainment and progress are broadly the same as at the time of the last inspection.
175. Pupils in Year 2 know the names of several percussion instruments, can keep a steady beat by following the teacher's lead and can alter the dynamics of their playing, showing good control. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 know the difference between a rhythm and a steady beat, and sing in tune unaccompanied. Throughout the school, pupils listen carefully to pre-recorded music and sing sweetly. However, some older pupils do not join in during whole-school singing sessions.
176. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with an example of good teaching in Years 3 and 4 when the teacher's good subject knowledge was used to provide effective support as pupils devised their own rhythm patterns. In Years 1 and 2, various musical games are used well to increase pupils' interest. For example, pupils enjoyed guessing the 'mystery' instrument played behind a screen and joining in with the 'pass the teddy' singing game. Most pupils behave

sensibly in lessons, although some find it difficult to co-operate when passing an object or when agreeing a rhythm pattern to perform. Pupils with special educational needs are given appropriate support in lessons. The quality of teaching is similar to that found at the time of the last inspection.

177. There is a satisfactory curriculum that is supported by an appropriate scheme of work. At the time of the inspection, planning had not been passed on to the new teacher in Years 1 and 2, which meant that there are unsatisfactory arrangements in the medium-term for these age groups. A new music club is well supported by older girls and boys who enjoy the fun activities and the good quality training in improving singing. Music from other cultures is used effectively in Years 3 and 4, broadening pupils' knowledge and understanding of cultural differences. For example, an African song involving passing stones to the beat reinforced learning effectively. Some pupils have the opportunity to further increase their knowledge by learning to play the violin. As at the time of the last inspection, there are no formal assessment procedures for the subject, and this means that pupils' progress is not monitored closely or frequently enough.
178. Information and communication technology is used to support learning in the subject. For example, the teacher in Years 3 and 4 used a DVD to show pupils a performance by a contemporary percussion group. Pupils have suitable opportunities for performing in public in concerts and services at the church.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

179. During the inspection, only outdoor games' lessons were timetabled. This means that it is not possible to judge attainment in all aspects of the physical education curriculum.
180. In games, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress throughout the school. Standards are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection.
181. By the end of Year 2, pupils move confidently in different ways, showing an appropriate awareness of space. They follow instructions carefully by changing direction, and are beginning to show an awareness of the impact of exercise on their bodies. However, throwing and catching skills are less well developed, with many pupils in Year 2 unable to catch a ball that has been thrown a short distance.
182. By the end of Year 6, pupils have improved their catching and throwing skills, showing good control when playing simple ball games. They are beginning to develop an understanding of the rules of games such as rounders. They encourage each other well when playing games, but still find it difficult work together co-operatively. For example in the Years 5 and 6 games lesson, the teacher expected pupils to organise themselves into teams and then follow prompt-sheets to start an activity that involved using throwing and hitting skills. Several groups of pupils were unable to do this without adult support, and some time was wasted arguing and falling out.
183. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers are enthusiastic and plan lessons carefully. Activities are fun and engage the pupils. They are keen to take part in lessons, trying hard and behaving well most of the time, although occasionally some pupils become over-excited by the sudden availability of open spaces. This was most noticeable in the Years 1 and 2 lesson, where some pupils did not behave sensibly and wasted time running around the field that they were using for the first time since last summer. In Years 5 and 6, a good feature of teaching is the focus that is given to encouraging pupils to work together co-operatively. The teacher has identified this as a weakness in pupils' personal skills and development, and plans activities that mean that pupils must work together if they are to complete tasks. Teaching assistants give good support, often to pupils with special educational needs. This enables them to take a full part in all activities up to their physical capabilities.
184. The curriculum is broad and balanced, with a suitable scheme of work to guide teachers' lesson planning. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 are able to learn to swim at a local leisure centre in the

summer term.

185. There is no whole-school procedure for monitoring and recording pupils' progress over time. Although some teachers keep their own notes on what pupils have learnt, this practice is not consistent throughout the school. This means that when a new teacher takes over a class, as has recently happened in Years 1 and 2, there is insufficient information for the teacher to know what has been learnt and what needs to be taught next. This has a negative impact on learning and leads to progress being less secure in Years 1 and 2 than in the rest of the school.
186. The school offers an appropriate range of after-school clubs, as well as opportunities to take part in competitions against other schools. There are football and netball clubs in winter, and tennis and cricket clubs run by local coaches were starting shortly after the inspection had finished. Pupils report that they enjoy annual sports' days and they take part in competitive football matches against other local schools.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

187. Pupils' attainment is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make broadly satisfactory progress. Attainment and progress are similar to that found at the time of the last inspection. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a clear understanding of the significance of symbolism used by Jews when celebrating 'Shabbat', know various stories from the Bible and discuss worthwhile issues such as 'Who is special?' and 'What makes me sad?' Pupils in Year 6 understand various aspects of Hinduism and explore how violence is dealt with in different cultures. Pupils give good reasons why people might do wrong and show respect for the beliefs and opinions of others.
188. The quality of teaching was variable at the time of the last inspection and this meant that pupils' progress was uneven. This is no longer the case, with the quality of teaching being satisfactory overall. There was an example of good teaching in Years 3 and 4 when an interesting variety of purposeful activities maintained the pupils' interest effectively. Throughout the school, teachers show good knowledge of the subject and support pupils with special educational needs effectively. Teachers show sensitivity towards pupils' ideas and beliefs by using praise effectively, and they enable pupils to share their views frankly. Pupils have a very good attitude towards the subject in Years 3 and 4. The purpose of each lesson is made clear to them, and probing questions encourage them to think hard and to concentrate. In Years 1 and 2, the teacher uses resources effectively to add interest and meaning to lessons. For example, pupils enjoyed touching and trying on a prayer shawl and skullcap, which gave them a good opportunity to learn about the importance of respecting precious items from another faith. However, younger pupils quickly lose concentration because the lessons take place immediately after another quiet sitting-down activity. This means that the sharing of the teacher's good subject knowledge is less effective than it might be and pupils do not produce their best work. There is too much reliance on completing work sheets and colouring in pictures at the expense of extending pupils' writing skills.
189. There is a satisfactorily broad and balanced curriculum. A commercial scheme of work and the local agreed syllabus provide an appropriate basis for teachers' lesson planning. However, in Years 1 and 2 festivals from other faiths are not always celebrated at an appropriate time of year. For example, the Jewish festival 'Sukkoth' is studied in the spring term. As at the time of the last inspection, there are no formal assessment procedures to monitor pupils' progress, and this is unsatisfactory. The subject makes a very good contribution towards pupils' moral development. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 discussed the qualities Jesus showed his disciples, such as 'forgiveness', and they described the qualities they look for when choosing their own friends.
190. The co-ordinator is collecting together an appropriate collection of good quality resources to support learning in each topic. Pupils have regular opportunities to visit the local Anglican Church, including festivals and local events such as the 'palm procession' and mock baptisms. Effective use is made of resources outside the school to enhance learning. For example, pupils

enjoyed taking part in a modern version of the Easter story led by visiting actors.