

# INSPECTION REPORT

**BRIDEKIRK DOVENBY CE PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

Cockermouth

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112270

Headteacher: Miss H K Tinnion

Reporting inspector: Mr W Goodall  
15127

Dates of inspection: 17 to 20 September 2001

Inspection number: 196239

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary  
School category: Voluntary Controlled  
Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years  
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Dovenby  
Cockermouth  
Cumbria

Postcode: CA13 0PG  
Telephone number: 01900 325935  
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Appropriate authority: The governing body  
at the above address

Name of chair of governors: Mr M Dixon

Date of previous inspection: 30 June 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
15127	W Goodall	Registered inspector	Art and design Design and technology Physical education Information and communication technology	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
11358	V Lamb	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
20007	T Neat	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Geography History Religious education Provision for pupils with special educational needs	How well are pupils taught? How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
1530	B Walker	Team inspector	English Music Equal opportunities Provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Bridekirk Dovenby is a small rural primary school situated between the Cumbrian villages of Bridekirk and Dovenby, close to the market town of Cockermouth. There are 100 pupils between the ages of four and eleven, of which 54 are boys and 46 are girls. The school has four classrooms and a hall. The juniors are taught in two small, very old rooms, but the recent extensions for the infants are more spacious. Admission numbers are now quite stable. The numbers of pupils starting each year is small, making statistical comparisons difficult, but the attainment of pupils starting school in recent years has been at or above the national average. Most have had experience of pre-school education. There are ten pupils on the school's register for special educational needs, and two with statements of special educational needs, both percentages are lower than the national average. Only one pupil claims free school meals, giving a proportion lower than that found nationally. There are no pupils from ethnic minorities or with English as an additional language. About half the pupils come from outside the immediate area, which was indicated to be relatively advantaged in the 1991 census. One of the four full-time teachers has had a long term absence and was taken ill again just before the inspection visit and a supply teacher was engaged for one of the infant classes. The part-time teacher left last term and could not be replaced in time for the inspection so the headteacher taught a full timetable during the visit.

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

This is an effective and happy school. Pupils achieve well and make appropriate progress overall, particularly in the junior classes. The attitude and behaviour of the pupils is very good, as is their social and cultural development. The senior management and governors provide good leadership despite difficult staffing and accommodation situations. Many areas of the school have improved since the previous inspection. The school provides good value for money. There have been effective strategies to promote educational inclusion and equal opportunities for all pupils.

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

- Pupils progress very quickly in the junior classes.
- The very positive attitudes, behaviour and personal development of all pupils.
- The provision for pupils' social and cultural development is very good.

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

- The monitoring and assessment of subjects other than the core of English, mathematics and science.
- Teaching and learning in information and communication technology (ICT) and its use in other subjects.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has improved in many areas since the previous inspection in 1997. The standards in the core subjects are at least as good as previously, and standards in art and design, music and physical education have improved in the junior classes. The quality of teaching is better than previously, especially in the juniors where nearly all lessons were good, very good or excellent. The school's leaders have responded positively to the last inspection report and have fully addressed the issues raised. They have tackled the problem of a difficult budget effectively and resolved the staffing and accommodation problems as they have arisen. The recently introduced guidance for the Reception Year, the Foundation Stage, has been incorporated well into teaching and organisation. Improvements have been made to the assessment procedures that enable the academic and personal development of each child to be tracked. However, these remain predominantly informal and rely on the memory of the teachers apart from in English, mathematics and science. The use of ICT across the curriculum has not developed as much as it should have since the previous inspection.

## 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				<i>Key</i>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	A*	A	B	D	excellent A*
mathematics	A	B	B	D	well above average A
science	A	A	C	D	above average B
					average C
					below average D
					well below average E

These figures relate to the pupils who were in Year 6 in 2000, when standards were generally good, but below that of pupils in schools with a similar proportion of free school meals. Those that took their National Curriculum tests in 2001 achieved higher standards, but they have not been made official in time to include them in this table. Pupils are presently achieving standards that are above those expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2, and they are also above expectations in the work seen in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6. The pattern of improvement from entry up to Year 6 has been steady, and similar to the national trends over the past three years. The year-on-year results in national tests and assessments vary according to the ability of the intake and the numbers of pupils with special educational needs. The school has set appropriate targets based on each pupil's potential, it has achieved them in the past and is on course to achieve them again. Work seen in lessons and folders was of a good standard, especially in art and design, music and physical education in the junior classes, but standards in ICT are low.



## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils like school and respond very well to the attitudes and values the school promotes.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good. Pupils co-operate, support one another and move around the school in an orderly way.
Personal development and relationships	The personal development of pupils is very good. They feel secure with their teachers and usually relate to each other well. Occasional lapses are dealt with by appropriate action.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils arrive at lessons on time and start their studies promptly.

These aspects of the school are commendable strengths. The pupils are happy and relaxed, behave well, and are keen to learn. This positive ethos makes a major contribution to the teaching and learning that takes place in the school.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good overall, being better in the juniors. In English and mathematics it is good, including the teaching of literacy and numeracy. No teaching observed during the inspection was less than satisfactory. The staff work together as a team, and all have high expectations of what pupils can do and how they should behave. The school meets the needs of all pupils, and their learning is very effective, apart from in ICT, where the teachers' knowledge and planning is weak, learning support staff and parents doing much of the work.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant apart from the provision for ICT, which does not contribute fully to the delivery of the other subjects. The planned curriculum does not cover all the strands of the National Curriculum for ICT.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Targets are set out in detail, which helps teachers to cater for their needs. There is no policy to support gifted and talented pupils yet.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There are no pupils in this category.

<b>Aspect (contd.)</b>	<b>Comment (contd.)</b>
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' spiritual and moral education is good, and for social and cultural it is very good. Overall provision is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes satisfactory action to ensure pupils' welfare and manage the child protection procedures. Class discussion time is used well to address issues of conflict, both between pupils and the wider world.

The school works well with the vast majority of parents, the teachers know the pupils and their families well and are familiar with the needs of each pupil. This contributes to the family atmosphere and positive ethos that supports learning.

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

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is led and managed well. The headteacher leads by example to overcome recent staffing problems and works well with key staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their responsibilities and provide challenge and support for the staff.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The monitoring of the core subjects is good, but in foundation subjects it is informal and does not provide enough written information to make secure assessments. Although the staff know the pupils well they need to record their assessments more systematically.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses its resources well. The accommodation problems have been discussed regularly to identify possible remedies, and staffing problems have not been allowed to affect the pupils' performance.

The school is managed effectively and well, and recent staffing problems have not been allowed to interfere with the smooth running of the school. The governors and senior managers are not yet fully involved in applying the principles of best value as they have not had sufficient financial information to make informed decisions until recently.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children enjoy coming to school.</li> <li>• The progress made by their children.</li> <li>• The high quality of teaching.</li> <li>• Confidence that the school will listen to their concerns.</li> <li>• The school's high expectations.</li> <li>• The leadership and management of the school.</li> <li>• How the school helps their children to become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of homework.</li> <li>• The information they receive concerning their children's progress.</li> <li>• How closely the school works with them.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agreed with the overwhelmingly positive views of parents. There were very few dissenting voices, but the school needs to take on board the concerns of the small number of parents who are unhappy with certain aspects because to them they are very important. The inspection team judged that the school does work well with most parents, and the amount of homework set was appropriate. The team reached the view that a good range of information is shared with parents, but in some areas such as the foundation subjects more could be done. The school integrates the pupils with special educational needs well and parents particularly value this aspect.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The inspection took place at the start of the autumn term. The team of four inspectors was in the school for a total of fourteen inspector days.
2. The results of the previous national tests and assessments were still provisional at the time of the inspection, and national comparisons had not been published officially. The 2001 results show a significant improvement in both Year 2 and Year 6.
3. The relatively small size of the group of pupils in each year means that the attainment of one or two of them can have a significant effect on the overall statistics. The analysis of pupils' performance and its comparison with national and similar schools' data should, therefore, be treated with care. There had been an extensive outbreak of foot and mouth disease in the area, but there is no evidence that this affected standards.
4. The children are assessed when they start in the reception class. The Cumbrian Baseline Assessment Tests are used and they indicate that all the children are above the average for that group of schools on entry. The observations of the performance of the children in the mornings that they are in class with the Year 1 pupils suggest that there are several very immature children who would not be above the national baseline and need close support from the teacher and her learning support staff. They are all likely to at least achieve the expected standards by the end of the Reception Year. The children are well on course to attain the national early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage, and some are on course to attain levels within the National Curriculum Programmes of Study for Key Stage 1. The progress of reception children through the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall, with some good progress evident in reading and early number work.
5. The results of national tests and assessments at the end of Year 2 in 2001 showed that 85% of pupils reached the level expected of pupils aged 7 (Level 2) in English, mathematics and science. This was a big improvement on the previous year's scores, which had indicated a very low standard when compared to schools in the same free school meals benchmark group, but are similar to the standards achieved in 1999. In 2001 the numbers reaching the higher Level 3 were very high in reading, (46%), but lower in writing, spelling, and science. In mathematics, 23% reached a Level 3. Girls had performed better than boys, and the pupils with special educational needs had reached an appropriate level. The school has set its priorities to raise standards in English and mathematics, and by focussing on improving the teaching and learning has seen standards rise this year.
6. Outcomes of the national tests and assessments at the end of Year 6 show a similar improvement. In 2000 the levels of achievement measured against schools with a similar proportion of free school meals was below that expected, but the pupils performed above the national average in English and mathematics, and around the average in science. However, the results in 2001 show that nearly all pupils achieved the expected Level 4, and that 35% reached the higher Level 5 in English, 41% in mathematics, and 59% in science. The pattern of improvement over the past three years has been steady, and even

in the year that pupils achieved their lowest scores, in 2000, they had progressed satisfactorily when compared to their attainment at the age of seven, which had been in line with expectations at that time.

7. By the time they leave the school almost all pupils are attaining standards higher than those expected for their age. The cohort that was calculated to be well below the average of similar schools when they were seven, in 2000, is now judged by the inspection team to be achieving well above expectations in Year 4.
8. The targets set by the school were based on an individual analysis of each pupils' potential. They are tracked and tested regularly to provide what the staff and governors believe are challenging targets for both Year 2 and Year 6. So far these have been met, and the school is on course to meet the 2002 targets.
9. Inspection findings show that overall attainment in English, mathematics and science is above average in both Year 2 and Year 6, and the pupils' progress is good. This confirms the results of the national tests and assessments in 2001, and is a big improvement on the 2000 results. The results each year depend on the performance of a small number of pupils. The staff are working very hard with them and show great expertise in their teaching, especially of literacy and numeracy.
10. In English pupils are doing particularly well in speaking, listening and reading. Pupils of all ages and abilities, including those with special educational needs, are able to develop these skills in a range of contexts. Literacy skills are developed effectively across the curriculum, through writing in a variety of formats, although extended writing is rare. Spelling and handwriting are satisfactory, with some very good presentation evident in history, geography and religious education. Pupils use their numeracy skills well in science, but some of the work on data handling is undemanding.
11. Most progress is made in Years 5 and 6. Pupils exceed the standards expected for their age in numeracy and all aspects of the mathematics curriculum. Boys and girls do equally well. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, but higher attainers in the infant classes are not being stretched to achieve more. In science the pupils do well in practical activities, although some lower attaining pupils in the infants find it difficult to cope with the worksheets and do not always make the progress they should.
12. Standards in ICT are below the level expected at the age of seven and eleven. Pupils are developing skills using a competence based scheme, but not applying these to their work in their subjects of the curriculum.
13. Pupils attain standards in religious education that are in line with those identified in the locally agreed syllabus. A strong feature of their learning is that they are actively encouraged to learn from religion, as well as learn about it.
14. Standards are high in the junior classes in art and design and physical education and very high in music. It is difficult to judge the standards in design and technology as no classes were observed, but in geography and history they are satisfactory.
15. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment and the targets for their Individual Education Plans (IEPs). They are identified early and their needs assessed effectively so that they can achieve their

potential. Gifted and talented pupils make good progress, but they are not specifically identified or supported. Boys and girls achieve appropriately, and all are making sufficient progress.

16. Pupils achieve well during their time in the school. Indications are that they arrive in Reception at or above the national average, and leave at the end of Year 6 at least above, and sometimes well above the level expected of them. They apply themselves to their work, and show concentration and enjoyment in equal measure.

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

17. Pupils like school and demonstrate very positive attitudes to their lessons and special events. They respond well to the attitudes and values that the school promotes. They relate well to each other and to adults. When given the opportunity, they display appropriate levels of independence and develop self-confidence and a good level of personal responsibility as they move through the school. Those chosen as monitors carry out a range of tasks to support preparations for lessons, clearing away and generally helping towards school routines. Older pupils help to support the youngest pupils when they start school by playing with them before lessons and in the playground and at lunchtime. The youngest pupils are well integrated into school life and are already showing positive attitudes to learning, their personal and social development is good. Monitors are proud to show that they can carry out their duties conscientiously. The vast majority of parents are satisfied that the school is helping their child become mature and responsible. A few individuals are relatively more challenging than others, but the school is aware of this, and it is taking appropriate action.
18. Pupils' behaviour throughout the school is very good and they work and play together well. In lessons boys, girls, and pupils of differing abilities, generally work together in a co-operative and friendly way, supporting one another and sharing materials when necessary. Pupils settle to their tasks well and are very attentive, concentrating effectively in group tasks as well as when working alone. They listen well and join in when necessary, offering sensible questions and suggestions. They work hard and persevere when work is particularly challenging, and respond well to instructions and guidance. Overall behaviour in lessons observed during the inspection was never less than good. Behaviour is very good, especially amongst younger pupils, when teachers ensure that they know what is expected. During assemblies pupils join in wholeheartedly. Most pupils are confident when speaking in class and those who are hesitant respond happily to teachers' encouragement. Pupils are well motivated to succeed and take pleasure in receiving recognition for their efforts. On the whole, pupils move in a very quiet and orderly way between areas when unsupervised, but are occasionally inappropriately boisterous. Care is necessary, for example, when boys go around the back of the school to the toilet at lunchtime, because the route is sloping and uneven underfoot. Pupils are polite and considerate towards each other, staff and visitors. In the dining room and playgrounds they talk with each other and adults in a friendly way and keep the school routines without fuss. No bullying was seen during the inspection. The school has not excluded any pupil in recent years. Parents are generally satisfied that behaviour in the school is good but a few express concern about unsatisfactory relationships between some pupils. During circle time, when pupils discuss issues formally, they are given the opportunity for sharing ideas on how to get along well together, and most demonstrate caring attitudes and are encouraged to put what they are learning into practice.

19. Behaviour in the playground is very good. Pupils meet here before school and are friendly towards one another. During playtimes and lunchtimes pupils organise themselves into pairs or mixed age and gender groups to play or chat. Large group games are a feature of playtimes and are very well managed by the pupils themselves. They make very good use of the ample play areas and equipment provided, both for energetic games and for passing the time quietly away from the more active pupils. The youngest pupils do not feel intimidated in this atmosphere.
20. Pupils' personal development is very good. Parents are sure that the school expects their child to work hard and achieve his or her best. Teaching and non-teaching staff have developed very good relationships with pupils and provide effective role models. Pupils feel secure with teachers and are able to approach them confidently and respectfully to show work and ask for help. For example, during literacy lessons, older pupils engaged in lively interactions with staff and everyone contributed eagerly. During music lessons pupils of all ages clearly enjoy taking part and followed their teacher's signals well. Pupils have a very good understanding of the impact of their actions on others. They take notice of each other, work co-operatively and show pleasure when they succeed. Pupils voluntarily help each other and demonstrate patience and tolerance.
21. Attendance is satisfactory and the rate of unauthorised absence is below the average for similar schools nationally. Pupils arrive at school on time so that sessions may start promptly. The school monitors attendance promptly and effectively.

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

22. The school has no nursery. Children joining the school are taught in a class that contains a mixture of Reception and Year 1 pupils. The older or more mature Year 1 pupils are in a class with those in Year 2. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are taught together and the remaining class is made up of pupils in Years 5 and 6. The inspection team did not see the school operating as it would normally. A part time teacher usually works for half the week, giving the headteacher some free time for her administrative duties. Instead, the headteacher taught her class throughout the inspection period. Also, the school has had to employ a supply teacher to cover long-term absence of a member of the infant teaching staff at short notice. Standards have been maintained, but long term development has had to be put on hold.
23. Overall the teaching is good, as it was at the time of the last inspection. For children under six and pupils in Years 1 and 2 it is satisfactory. Lessons for junior pupils are nearly all of good quality or better. The strength of the teaching is the main reason why pupils achieve effectively as they pass through the school. There were no unsatisfactory lessons seen, and nearly two thirds of the teaching was good or better.
24. The teaching has many strong features. The most significant of these is the skilful way in which most teachers manage their classes. This creates a purposeful atmosphere that is focussed on learning. The pupils respond readily to this by applying themselves well. The clear explanations given by teachers help to ensure that pupils gain skills, knowledge and understanding effectively. The teaching of junior pupils is usually done at a fairly lively pace. This helps pupils to learn at a good rate. This was clear in a mathematics lesson about money for pupils aged eight and nine. The teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy is carried out effectively in the early and infant years and is good in

the junior classes. A particular feature of some of the lessons for junior pupils is the very good example the teachers give when they read to the class in a lively, expressive and clear way. This helps the pupils to improve their own skills. Some teachers make extremely good use of the final part of the lesson to summarise the learning that has taken place.

25. Learning in the infant classes is satisfactory, and in junior classes it is good. Most pupils are very interested in lessons. This is partly because the teachers plan interesting activities. Generally, pupils concentrate well and try to work without assistance. However, they do not always work as hard on group tasks as they do whole class discussions. This slows their progress. Sometimes the teachers fail to notice this and do not take action to put things right, by, for example, asking the pupils to finish tasks as soon as possible, or in a given time limit.
26. Thirty-five teaching sessions were observed during the four days that the inspectors were at the school. Twenty-one were in the core subjects of English mathematics and science. The number of lessons seen in other subjects makes it difficult to make judgements on the standards of teaching in those specific areas but the overall sample does provide an overview of the teaching in the school as a whole.
27. The Foundation Stage comprises fourteen Reception children, all four-year-olds, who are taught in the same class as eight Year 1 pupils. The induction of new children to the Reception class includes a half-day attendance arrangement, which lasts for three weeks. The new four-year-olds were still at this stage at the time of the inspection. Most children attending the school have had some pre-school opportunities through attendance at play groups or nurseries. Children are admitted to the school in the term following their fourth birthday. Prior to their start, they visit the school with their parents as part of the induction programme, which also includes some home visits and some visits to the eight local nurseries by the reception class teacher. These arrangements help build children's confidence and establish good relationships and communication with all appropriate groups and the children's families. The teaching of their personal social and emotional development is the focus for this part of the year, and it is good. Other areas were not seen to any great depth, but the indications are that the teaching is at least satisfactory.
28. The quality of teaching in English is good in the infant classes and very good in the juniors. Very good teaching was seen in more than half the English lessons observed. In mathematics the quality of teaching is satisfactory in infant classes, and it is good in the juniors. Only one science lesson was seen in each key stage. These were satisfactory. The scrutiny of the work produced by pupils last year suggests that science teaching is at least satisfactory throughout the school. The good quality of the school's strategies for developing literacy and numeracy has a positive effect on the teaching of English and mathematics. This in turn improves the standards that pupils achieve.
29. Overall the quality of teaching that was seen in other lessons was good. There were too few lessons observed to make judgements about individual subjects apart from physical education, which was very good, and music, where the strategy of buying in an experienced expert has worked very well. Teaching in the subject was very good, with half being excellent. In all lessons across the curriculum none were seen that were unsatisfactory. The teaching of ICT is done by parents and helpers, this is at present an unsatisfactory situation.



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

30. The curriculum for pupils aged seven to eleven is broad, balanced and relevant. It contributes effectively to the standards that they achieve. It meets statutory requirements for teaching the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, except in relation to ICT at Key Stage 2. Here the school has decided to concentrate on developing the pupils' ICT skills using a commercial scheme that concentrates on the acquisition of competencies. This is a deliberate and planned strategy to ensure that all pupils can use these skills in their other subjects once the new co-ordinator for ICT has started and the staff have completed their training. In the meantime ICT is not used well to support teaching and learning across the curriculum. There are sufficient opportunities for pupils of all interests, aptitudes and special needs within the planned curriculum.
31. Well-established planning arrangements ensure that over a two-year period the teaching of pupils in the mixed-age group classes is based effectively on what has already been learned. Since the last inspection much work has been done to revise the curriculum to meet new national requirements. For example, good strategies have been implemented for teaching literacy and numeracy skills. These have played a significant role in helping to raise standards. The planning guidance issued by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) is used effectively as the basis for the teachers' medium-term planning in subjects other than English and mathematics. The school is in the process of adapting this guidance to create its own schemes of work. All staff have been fully involved in bringing about the improvements to the curriculum, and valuable visits have been made to other schools to help make the best decisions about, for instance, which text books to buy. However, teachers are not currently required to draw up short term or weekly plans except for the teaching of literacy and numeracy. This makes it difficult for the school to be sure that all pupils, especially higher attainers, are provided as consistently as possible with challenging learning opportunities.
32. The children in the Foundation Stage experience a satisfactory range and variety of opportunities in the six areas of learning. Last year's planning shows that themes and topics of interest to the children are selected and developed. These plans include a considerable range of opportunities for going out or meeting people. For example, the topic of "People Who Help Us" gave last year's Reception children valuable experiences in talking to and finding out about the work of lunchtime assistants and police. A topic about "Shops and Shopping" helped children to learn about the local area. The school has implemented a literacy and numeracy session each day to provide effective early learning in these two curriculum areas. This provision builds on and extends the learning evident in the assessments completed when they start school. Children with special educational needs are identified at an early stage and provided with support, appropriate activities and additional suitable resources. They make satisfactory progress overall and good progress as readers. Learning support staff and parent helpers are given clear guidance by the teacher on how to support children.
33. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage. Curriculum provision was not fully suitable for the age group; this was a key issue in the previous inspection report, and the school has given this matter appropriate attention. The Foundation Stage curriculum has been reviewed and is now constructed to reflect the national guidelines and to include all recommended areas of learning. The teacher in

charge has received suitable training for this development. Attainment at that time was at or above national expectations in all curriculum areas. This is still the case. The use of the baseline assessment and the analysis of results have been developed. Teachers know what pupils can do and can plan for what needs to be done next. There is some good progress in speaking and listening,

34. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The targets set for most of these pupils are set out in much detail. This helps teachers to cater more effectively for their needs. The school has not yet agreed its policy on providing for its most able pupils.
35. A good range of extracurricular activities, including residential trips to Llandudno and London, enriches the work of lessons. Pupils have had the benefit of working with an artist in residence, which has given them an invaluable experience of creating an original art work for exhibition, they also attend residential weekends and arts workshops.
36. The governing body has maintained its policy that sex education will not be part of the curriculum since the time of the last inspection. Some valuable personal, social and health education is provided, including teaching about the dangers of drug abuse. Although the school makes use of a set of books to form the basis of its teaching in this area, it has yet to decide its policy and to put in place a structured programme of work for this important area of learning. The teaching of citizenship is at an early stage of development.
37. The community makes a good contribution to the curriculum that pupils follow. For example, close involvement with the local church and clergy enhance assemblies, and visits from writers in the locality increase the pupils' appreciation of literature. The work done with other schools in the area has a very positive effect on both pupils and teachers. For example, local headteachers, subject co-ordinators and teachers meet regularly to share good practice. Pupils benefit directly from opportunities to join with the pupils from other schools in events such as music festivals and sports tournaments, reading and numeracy.
38. The school continues to be very successful in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Teachers are sensitive to pupils' needs and help them to deal with difficult situations and events that arise in their lives. Events organised to celebrate festivals or which focus on special moments, past and present, are effectively approached to help pupils' develop spiritual awareness. Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong. The application of the school rules by all staff ensures a good framework for the pupils' moral development, and overall the school's provision is good. Adults provide good role models by demonstrating values such as patience and tolerance, which are reflected in pupils' actions. Issues raised in class and during assemblies help pupils to gain an awareness of their actions on others and provide opportunities for them to share their views and reflect upon moral issues.
39. The schools' provision for social development is very good. The school encourages pupils to develop an understanding of living in a community and works hard at creating a community where everyone feels valued and respected. This is reflected in the very good relationships around the school. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility, for instance by developing self-discipline and working as monitors around school. Pupils of all ages

take part in fundraising events for charities and their own school funds. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in school activities. Circle time discussions help pupils to consider others' views and develop strategies for getting along together. In group work, pupils are confident to share ideas and help each other. The curriculum offers a wide range of activities to develop pupils' local knowledge and cultural awareness, and the school's provision is very good. The school successfully helps pupils learn about the diversity of life in other cultures, for example, by welcoming dancers from Japan to work with pupils and by organising visits to a Buddhist temple. Visits to local and national arts events are a feature that gives the pupils the opportunity to extend their cultural experiences beyond the locality.

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

40. The school ensures that the health, safety and protection of all its pupils is managed effectively. On the whole, parents are satisfied that they would feel comfortable about approaching the school with any concerns about their children. They generally feel that they are kept well informed about how their child is getting on at school and the vast majority of those who shared their views with inspectors report that their children like school. Teachers and learning support staff know pupils very well and are conscientious in establishing and maintaining very good relationships between adults and pupils and this encourages pupils to get on well with each other. Most parents are satisfied that staff remedy any concerns when informed about them. Arrangements for administering first aid and supporting pupils who need extra attention are good. However, although the school undertake a range of health and safety risk assessments these are not sufficiently rigorous to ensure that all risks are identified and responded to effectively. For example, there are potentially hazardous areas used by unsupervised pupils at key times each day.
41. Good procedures are established for providing pupils with personal support and guidance. Attendance is well monitored and teachers pay close attention to registering pupils at the beginning of each session and establishing valid reasons for any absences. The school contacts parents should there be concerns about frequent absence and has access to assistance from the Education Welfare Service should concerns persist.
42. The school's procedures to promote good behaviour are shared with parents and are generally successful in maintaining satisfactory behaviour in and out of lessons. Most parents are satisfied with the standard that the school achieves. The school's policy highlights a positive approach that emphasises well managed activities and expects staff to set good examples, providing praise and reward as deserved. A good feature of the school policy is the way in which graded misdemeanors and appropriate sanctions are identified. Staff praise and encourage achievements, inside and outside lessons, usually intervening quickly and constructively when pupils require guidance. The school procedures include building on established links with parents to work with them should a pupil display behaviour that requires additional support. The school is developing circle time sessions to provide formal opportunities for pupils to talk about what happens at school, how they feel about issues and to reinforce what is and is not acceptable. Non-teaching staff make a significant contribution to good behaviour and are supported by teaching staff at lunchtime. The dining hall in particular is managed in such a way that pupils are provided with good opportunities to develop social skills. The playgrounds are ample and provide a range of play surfaces and seating of which pupils make very good use but not all areas used by pupils are directly supervised at all times.

43. Overall, there are satisfactory procedures for child protection. Although the school has not yet produced its own comprehensive policy, locally agreed procedures are followed to provide guidance to staff in response to any concerns. Key members of staff have received appropriate training and the school maintains a good working relationship with outside agencies.
44. Pupils' personal development is enhanced by events such as celebration assemblies that highlight and reward significant achievements, and provide opportunities for pupils to focus on events in their own lives and the wider world. Pupils of all ages are given responsibilities in class to help with the setting out and clearing of resources. Older pupils take responsibility for a range of tasks that help with day-to-day routines. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to develop additional personal skills, for instance through taking responsibility for their own learning and using initiative in lessons and when producing special events. Older pupils show particular care and attention for the youngest pupils by playing with them when they arrive each morning and supporting them with routines at break and lunchtime. This makes a significant contribution to the personal development of all concerned, as the oldest pupils must decide when support is needed, and offer it appropriately, and the youngest have someone to engage with until they are settled within their own friendship groups. Pupils take part in sporting and music events with other local schools, which provide them with a wider range of contacts than is possible in their own small school. These, as well as a programme of events during the final year at school, assist pupils make a confident move to the next phase of education.
45. The assessment and monitoring of pupils' work and personal development is satisfactory overall. The teachers know their pupils well and are aware of how they are progressing, particularly the development of their personal skills. They are very effective in the formal assessing and recording of how well pupils are doing academically in the core subjects, but less so in others where ongoing assessment often relies on the teachers' memory of how well particular pupils are progressing. This needs to be linked to levels of attainment in each subject.
46. Children start school with a wide range of skills, and overall, their standards are higher than those typical of the age group. Language skills are particularly well developed. The teacher uses these and other ongoing assessments to check the progress and predict future learning levels in language and numeracy for each individual pupil. As a result the teacher is able to set tasks and match the appropriate challenge in these curriculum areas as the next stage of learning is planned for.
47. The school's arrangements for assessing the attainment of pupils aged seven and eleven meet statutory requirements. The school undertakes valuable work with partner schools to ensure that its teachers assess pupils' standards effectively in relation to the National Curriculum. As a result, such assessments are largely accurate. Since the time of the last inspection, satisfactory procedures have been put into place to assess the attainment and progress of pupils in English and mathematics. A new system has been agreed for doing this in science, but this is not yet fully established. Good quality arrangements are now helping teachers to start to identify suitable tasks in ICT. However, the school has made little progress in assessing pupils' standards in ICT or in setting up formal procedures for assessment in other subjects. The teachers know their pupils very well and overall, they use this information to adapt planning to meet their needs, especially in English and mathematics. The assessment of pupils with special educational needs conforms to

requirements and contributes effectively to the progress that they make. The teachers monitor attendance carefully and act quickly and effectively. There have been no exclusions in the school recently.

48. The school gives good quality support and advice to the pupils through regular feedback on performance in class, test results and predictions of achievement. The strong family atmosphere creates a supportive and co-operative ethos, which means that staff and pupils share the common goals of academic progress, personal development, good behaviour and regular attendance. These are implicitly understood rather than explicitly listed as individual targets in each area.
49. The school complies fully with the special educational needs Code of Practice. It has not yet received training in the new arrangements and at present is continuing with the existing Code. This is appropriate. The procedures being used are effective and consistent.
50. Gender and ability groups are analysed for different levels of achievement. Attendance data is reviewed and acted upon, and the procedures for exclusion are in place, although there have not been any in living memory.

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

51. Parents have very positive views of the school and staff and governors have established a range of good working links between school and home. Parents make very positive contributions to the work of the school. They find staff approachable and feel welcome in school. Most parents are happy that the school responds appropriately to their suggestions and concerns. Day-to-day communications between school and home are good and are appreciated by most parents.
52. Good quality information is provided for parents about the life of the school and the progress that their children make. The prospectus and annual report from governors provide parents with appropriate information about the school. It clearly states about the attitudes and values that the school aims to promote and includes a good range of information about school life, day-to-day procedures and the curriculum provided. Staff and pupils compile frequent newsletters to keep parents up to date about school events. Although a significant minority of parents do not feel sufficiently involved or well informed, the school is committed to working closely with all parents to resolve any difficulties. Opportunities are provided for parents to consult teachers and these meetings are well attended. Annual written reports provide parents with high quality information about their child's academic progress and personal development and identify some areas for further development that are particularly focussed in English and mathematics. Parents are invited to make an appointment to discuss the reports with the class teacher if they wish. Parents have shown their support for the work of the school by signing a Home School Agreement.
53. Parents are closely involved in the life of the school and make very significant contributions to the education offered. The school helps parents prepare their children for school by inviting them into school to meet staff and to see some of the activities provided. Parents generally are conscientious in hearing their children read and ensuring that set tasks are completed. Pupils record requirements in diaries which parents and teachers make good use of in order to support pupils, for instance with specific tasks or

exchanging messages. Most parents are satisfied with the work that children are expected to do at home, but some have concerns over the amount. Several parents and friends of the school help regularly in classrooms, with extracurricular activities, with special events and by sharing specific skills and knowledge. In particular, a group of parents provide weekly guidance to pupils in acquiring ICT skills and grandparents add an extra dimension to history lessons by recounting their personal experiences of life during World War II. The school benefits from the very hard work of an association of parents, teachers and friends who support the school in many ways, for instance by organising social and fundraising events that have provided significant extra resources.

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

54. The school is led and managed well. The headteacher leads by example, setting high standards for the pupils and her staff. She works very well with the governors and they have overcome the staffing and budget problems with careful planning and a lot of hard work. The strengths identified in the previous inspection report have been maintained. There is clear direction for the work of the school. Staff have had to take on extra co-ordinators' roles with the long term absence of one of the four teachers, but have done so willingly and effectively, reflecting the supportive ethos of the school.
55. The review of the school's aims is ongoing as new initiatives are taken on. Development planning is constantly reviewed to reflect this and the recent improvement in standards in core subjects can be attributed to the priorities the headteacher and other staff have identified. They understand the work that needs to be done to bring other areas, particularly ICT, up to this level, and have made appropriate plans to make it happen. This commitment to improvement is shared by all the staff and governors, and they have the capacity to succeed. The school's aims and values are evident in the positive relationships, its family atmosphere, and its commitment to equal opportunities for all.
56. All full-time staff have management responsibilities, but the majority of these are carried by the headteacher and senior teacher. It is hoped to share some of these out when the long term absence is resolved. At the moment the responsibilities are prioritised so that staff are not overburdened. The new ICT co-ordinator, who will start soon, has already visited the school and built on the training the staff are undergoing at the moment to incorporate ICT into their subject planning. All staff discuss issues as they arise and contribute to the management of the school.
57. The governing body fulfils its statutory requirements and provides challenge and support for the staff. An appropriate action plan following the previous inspection report was drawn up, and governors made sure that all key issues have been fully addressed. They monitor the work of the school regularly, and have designated responsibilities. The governors are aware of the challenges that face the school. Having resolved the ongoing budget problems, which were caused by lower numbers of pupils entering the school, they have set appropriate priorities and are attempting to resource them fully.
58. With the present staff shortage, the monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching in the non-core subjects is largely informal. This should be brought up to the standards of the core subjects where the information gathered from the national tests is supplemented by extensive monitoring of each pupil's progress to track their development. This is discussed regularly and openly to identify areas for improvement and staff development opportunities. One result of this has been the extensive training on

the use of ICT that all staff are now undertaking. The time and energy this training is taking up, and the staffing and accommodation problems the school has would make it inappropriate for the school to take on newly qualified teachers or initial teacher training students.

59. The governing body has effectively organised the appraisal, pay and performance management for staff, including the setting of the annual targets for the headteacher. Together with the staff they have identified appropriate priorities, set targets based on individual pupils' progress and taken the action necessary to achieve them. They have supported these by careful financial planning, which has overcome a deficit situation to put the school in a healthy financial situation. Pupils have benefited from this as the governors were able to supplement the government grant for computers and give extra resources to other areas of the curriculum. Financial control and administration is managed well by the support staff, monitored by the headteacher and governors, who use ICT effectively. The new management system is now giving better information to the governors to enable them to make financial decisions earlier, and monitor the use of specific grants more closely than previously. The application of best value to the school's use of resources is still developing, but the better financial information is now allowing the governors to consider their situation.
60. The staff are well qualified and experienced to manage and deliver the planned curriculum. Learning support staff work well with them and enhance the quality of the teaching and promote high standards, particularly those working with pupils with special educational needs.
61. The staffing situation has caused a lot of concern over the past year. Both infant teachers have had long term absences, one of which is not resolved as she recently had a relapse after intending to return to school for the inspection. The part-time teacher moved on, and a replacement could not be found to start until half term. This meant that a supply teacher had to step in to take one class, and the headteacher teach full time. The rest of the staff have worked hard to overcome any problems that could have arisen, and the supply teacher has fitted in admirably and reinforces the positive learning ethos of the school.
62. The accommodation limits the range of teaching that can be delivered. Two of the classrooms, used at present by the infants are good teaching spaces, but the other two, used by the juniors, are small and very old, with inadequate space for literacy and numeracy work or for any practical activities. Access to the toilets is through one room, and neither has adequate storage or space for resources. Changing the classes in them has been considered, but the spaces would be even more limiting for infants. The hall is a good space, but is used as a dining room and gymnasium as well as a teaching space for music, physical education and assemblies.
63. The school has no library space, having converted the tiny lobby area into a computer room, so books are stored in each classroom for reference and library work. This limits opportunities for raising literacy, personal study, and encouraging pupils to read for pleasure and information. Resources for ICT are now adequate, but have to be used with parents or volunteers as only four pupils can fit in the space allocated. There are very good outside areas which provide stimulating places for pupils to play and exercise. These include a football pitch, hard surfaced area with markings for play and games, and

an extensive range of outdoor apparatus provided by the parents. There is no separate area for younger pupils.

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

64. In order to improve the school further, and raise standards even higher, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:
- i. Develop procedures for the monitoring and evaluating of pupils' performance across the curriculum to support pupils' learning as happens so effectively in the core subjects.  
*(see paragraphs 45, 47, 58)*
  - ii. Develop the use of ICT to support teaching and learning across the curriculum, as already prioritised in the school's planning.  
*(see paragraphs 12, 29, 30)*
- Other minor issues:
- iii. The governors should also consider making risk assessments more rigorous and acting upon their reports immediately.  
*(see paragraphs 40, 42)*



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	33
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	48

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	10	9	12	0	0	0
Percentage	6	30	27	36	0	0	0

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

#### **Pupils on the school's roll**

	Nursery	YR-Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	100
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	1

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Special educational needs**

	Nursery	YR-Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	10

#### **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	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

## Attendance

### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.9
National comparative data	5.2

### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	11	8	19

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	7	7
	Girls	7	7	7
	Total	14	14	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (85)	74 (92)	74 (92)
	National	83 (92)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	9	7
	Girls	7	7	7
	Total	14	16	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (92)	84 (100)	74 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year (ie 1999).

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	9	6	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	9	8
	Girls	6	4	5
	Total	14	13	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	93 (85)	87 (69)	87 (92)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	8	9
	Girls	6	4	5
	Total	15	12	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100 (85)	80 (69)	93 (92)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year (ie 1999).

**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	86
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)	4.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.2
Average class size	25

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

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	39

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000 - 2001
	£
Total income	208651
Total expenditure	203824
Expenditure per pupil	1888
Balance brought forward from previous year	-3928
Balance carried forward to next year	899

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.0
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0.5
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0.5

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	100
Number of questionnaires returned	56

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	52	41	7	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	48	48	2	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	38	57	4	2	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	41	20	4	0
The teaching is good.	55	38	4	4	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	46	11	5	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	30	7	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	55	43	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	34	48	14	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	38	55	5	2	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	44	44	5	2	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	48	43	9	0	0

### Summary of parents' and carers' responses

65. Almost all parents were very supportive of the teachers, but a minority felt that their child was not part of the extended family of the school because of some conflict that had arisen. Those with children with special educational needs gave particular praise to the way their child had been integrated into the school.

### Other issues raised by parents

66. One or two responses raised an issue of bullying, the inspectors looked at this and considered that procedures had been followed, and although the situation was not resolved, the appropriate action was being taken.

## **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**

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

67. Children's personal, social and emotional development was given a high priority at the time of the inspection because of their recent entry into school. The half-day attendance for the first three weeks gives children a chance to adjust to the new surroundings and staff at a measured pace. Pupils leave their parent or carer with little or no fuss, although some parents choose to stay for a few minutes to settle their child down. The classroom routines and the learning experiences are geared towards ensuring that children are helped with toileting arrangements and the pattern of the activities, although they do not at this stage attend assemblies with the rest of the pupils. Children stay to lunch at this time, so their awareness of the whole school develops, and their knowledge of wider routines increases. Older pupils make a good contribution, as they help to monitor the safety of these younger children in the playground and help them to play with their peers. This arrangement works very well. Activities provided in class give children opportunities to make choices, work with other children and with different members of staff, work independently and express ideas. For example, when they select materials for their collage they are able to choose from a range of materials and decorations; when stories are read to them the majority are happy to make relevant comments. Children learn to concentrate for longer periods and to be at ease in their new surroundings. They can identify their own pegs and name tags, understand some of the rules and routines, while some quickly show confidence in selecting tasks or showing independence in their personal hygiene procedures. Almost all showed confidence in relationships with adults at the time of the inspection.
68. Teaching for the support of children's personal, social and emotional development is good. The staff interact and intervene frequently, to ensure positive and effective learning. This has a positive impact on children's attitudes towards other people and learning. Staff are good role models, thanking them for their ideas and their hard work, and treating them with respect. This helps children to start to recognise that other people have needs, and even at this early stage in the term all children stopped to listen to the teacher when asked, and there were children who waited for a turn to play with a piece of equipment or helped to clear up at the end of a busy session. Adults, including visiting parents, provide short periods of direct teaching and sessions where interesting activities are provided to encourage making choices and social play. Consequently, children are developing good attitudes to work. Standards are similar to those at the time of the previous inspection, and pupils are on course to at least achieve the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development by the end of the Reception Year.

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

69. Children in the Reception group are confident in speaking to adults in class. They respond to comments and question from the staff and parent helpers, make comments about the story or the activities and make their personal needs known. Some initiate conversations and a few ask questions. They enjoy stories and listen well, giving good attention to the teacher and following the story-line with understanding. During an observed story session, children expressed confidently that lions are from Africa, and

showed interest in new vocabulary and its meaning. Many children joined in with familiar phrases during the story of the lion hunt. These well-developed skills of speaking and listening are well supported and extended by the activities provided. Children learn to recognise their names, while those who are ready for further challenge are helped to begin to form letters. Records show that previous groups of Reception children make effective progress as readers, learn key words and make good progress to suitable stages in the reading scheme.

70. Teaching of communication, language and literacy is mainly related to oracy at this stage in the term, and is satisfactory. Children are given good opportunities and some stimulating contexts to express their ideas. All adults listen to children and give them time to respond. Adults are sensitive to children's needs, and recognise when concentration is waning, offering a change of activity in such cases. Resources are selected with care to provide some familiarity and some new challenges. Work from previous Reception class groups shows that children learn letter formation and develop early writing skills satisfactorily. Their work with the Year 1 pupils in the same class means that their work links well with the National Literacy Strategy. Children are in line to at least achieve the early learning goals in language and literacy, and the majority will exceed them in speaking and listening by the end of the Reception Year.

### **Mathematical development**

71. Little mathematical work was seen during the inspection, other than attention to positional words, near/far, and comparative sizes, large/small, but planning showed attention to matching objects, counting and recognition of numerals, and linked well to the National Numeracy Strategy. Previous work showed that higher and average attaining children last year learned to write numbers effectively and progressed to simple adding below ten, with some elements of recording being completed by each child. Other planned work showed attention to shopping, coins and comparing shapes, lengths, widths and weights in practical settings.
72. This provision for teaching is satisfactory; all planning shows that groups of children are helped at appropriate levels, planning is identified in relation to effective assessments and all adults who lead mathematical activities are given clear guidance about the expected learning from the class teacher. Many mathematical opportunities are provided in topic work, and where suitable, in more formal activities later in the year. There are suitable resources to support these plans. Previous work shows that children of all abilities make satisfactory progress and are in line to meet the early learning goals for mathematical development by the end of the Reception Year, with some children beginning to work at early National Curriculum levels in numeracy.

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

73. Already the children show curiosity and interest in all that is around them. They show interest in the story characters and the places where animals live. They take interest in what the children from the next class say about the Jewish New Year, and look forward to tasting the honey and apple which the Year 1 and 2 pupils tell them is linked with these celebrations. Previous work and planning shows that children in Reception go on visits and talk to people in many contexts. They enjoy scientific work and keep a record of what they have done. This involves sorting shiny items from dull items early in the year, and comparing old and new kitchens later. Work shows that some investigations are

carried out, such as the use of wheeled toys in the classroom and outdoors, to identify differences and give early experience of the effects of friction. Lower attaining children draw the results of floating and sinking experiments. Teaching is satisfactory in this area of provision. The teacher builds the activities into the topic planning with care and gives written guidance to other staff and classroom helpers. All adults help children to make a suitable record of their experiences. Recent developments in ICT help the current group of Reception children to develop mouse skills to point out and select from on-screen options. Assessments are not used to support development in this area, but children receive a wide range of experience and challenge in which all can learn and grow. Children are in line to meet the early learning goals in this area of the Foundation Stage provision by the end of the Reception Year.

### **Physical development**

74. No formal teaching involving physical development was seen during the inspection. Outdoor playtime takes place with the other pupils, and additional sessions are planned for in the hall and outdoors. Children who were seen in the playground at playtimes and lunchtimes were supervised overall by staff, and additionally given help by their older pupil “buddies”. These arrangements support the children in being active and safe. Planned sessions for the hall included physical themes related to stretching and curling, which help children to learn to understand their bodies. Other plans included extensions to stories such as the “Lion Hunt” and “Bear Hunt” classroom work, which extend children’s imagination and give them a lively context for movement and drama. This provision for physical activity is satisfactory. This limited evidence suggests that children are in line to meet the early learning goals for physical education by the end of the Reception Year. Which is similar to the standards found in the last inspection.

### **Creative development**

75. Creative activities seen during the inspection included the collection of themed items by children, who discussed this need with their parents and brought personal items from home for a display. This was followed up by planned work in class of a themed collage based on colour. Children talked about their choices of materials and decoration with the adult in charge, and arranged their selections, sometimes with assistance, fixing them down with glue. Previous work from Reception children last year showed progression in drawing through challenges such as drawing their hand, and later drawing a fire engine seen from the side. Planning for teaching shows attention to use of colour through the work of a range of artists, with examples from Mondrian’s work being used to help children to see how colours might be used together. This teaching and planning is satisfactory. The topics are used to help children to observe and consider detail, as well as to talk about what they see around them. Small group work and individual work assists in giving children sufficient time and support to fulfil activities successfully. All children are given opportunities to select materials and express ideas. Standards are satisfactory, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Children are in line to meet the early learning goals for creative development by the end of the Reception Year.



## ENGLISH

76. Nine English lessons were observed, taught by all four teachers. In addition work in folders and on display was examined and the inspectors talked to the pupils about their work. The national test results from 2001 were a big improvement on those from the year before which indicated that although pupils were performing above the national average, they were below that expected nationally in similar schools, but the relatively small number of pupils taking the tests make comparisons unreliable.
77. Inspection findings show overall attainment in English to be above average at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. Overall progress in English is good. Attainment in speaking, listening and reading is good overall, and progress in these aspects of English is good. Attainment in writing is average and progress in writing is satisfactory.
78. Standards of speaking and listening seen during the inspection were above the national expectation at both key stages. Progress in speaking and listening is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Pupils of all ages and abilities, including those with special educational needs, are given good opportunities to develop these skills in many contexts, using a growing range of vocabulary and speaking with increased confidence and skill as they move through the year groups. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, including the Year 1 pupils who are taught with the Reception children, talk about the stories they hear in their English activities. They discuss the values of other cultures and religions in their religious education lessons and tell other pupils what they have learned. These younger pupils have good listening skills, which are extended by the range of opportunities presented in school. They ask questions about their work, and use the names and sounds of letters as they discuss word-building. Pupils with special educational needs show equal skill in talking with support staff about activities, stories or word-building techniques. Year 2 pupils enjoy offering their opinions and in one lesson seen they were quick to explain the expressions on the characters' faces when they explored the illustrations in the story of '*Mr Magnolia*'.
79. In Key Stage 2 pupils respond to a varied range of challenges to support speaking and listening. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 discussed the use of commas and exemplified how reading is affected by the position of commas in text. They discussed characters in a play and gave examples of text changes from indirect to direct speech during whole class discussion. Most progress was seen in Years 5 and 6, where expectations were very high and very good opportunities were offered. For example, in one lesson, pupils discussed techniques for summarising complex text. This task demanded the use of special vocabulary related to adjectives, adverbs and conjunctions. Pupils used these terms accurately and confidently. Very high attainment was observed in another lesson; pupils had been challenged to work at home in order to present topical issues to the class and to respond to questions and comments from other pupils. Two boys gave clear and detailed information gathered from a number of newspapers, and addressed each question and comment with thoughtful analysis of the range of facts and opinions collected, confidently leading whole class debate about issues of the day.
80. Pupils throughout the school enjoy reading and achieve good standards. Attainment in reading is above average at both key stages, and progress in reading is good throughout the school. Pupils make a good start in the early years, learning key words and basic letter sounds. This is extended well as they move through Key Stage 1, learning to use these sounds to build unfamiliar words. They learn to observe the punctuation to add

meaning to the text. As a result, confident, fluent reading, which shows expression and understanding is evident by Year 2. Pupils in this age group could read their '*Mr Magnolia*' book with confidence, addressing the text with interest and enthusiasm. All younger pupils learn word lists of appropriate levels of challenge, which are recorded in their individual reading records. They know and understand terms such as 'author', 'title' and 'illustrator'. Pupils in Key Stage 2 read with growing confidence and fluency. They show eagerness in reading to the class, read play character parts with enthusiasm and show good knowledge of authors and styles. By the age of eleven, pupils enjoy a wide range of books and reading and are confident about selecting information from a range of texts. They extend their personal reading through homework and researching for topic presentations to the class. The small numbers of pupils who experience reading difficulties are very well supported so they make good progress. Some sensitive support is offered to these pupils. For example, in a class of Year 3 and 4 pupils, lower attaining pupils were given appropriate parts in the play-reading in class and in guided reading activities. As a result they enjoyed success as public readers and participated fully in all aspects of the lesson.

81. Standards in writing at both key stages are in line with levels expected for seven and eleven-year-olds. By the age of seven pupils use appropriate structure to convey meaning. Higher attaining pupils spell most words correctly and include some relevant detail, using capital letters and full stops to show their sentences. Average attaining pupils are beginning to show empathy with characters they write about. Lower attaining pupils are rightly helped to develop enthusiasm for writing, using a suitable vocabulary range, but work seen shows less progress in spelling and handwriting.
82. By the age of eleven pupils are using their literacy skills effectively to construct writing in a satisfactory variety of formats, including abstract poems and story analysis in English and factual writing for other subjects of the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs receive support and are able to maintain steady progress at suitable individual rates. Most pieces of writing by pupils of all abilities are of average level for the age group, with only a few showing above average attainment. Writing related to literacy exercises is a common feature of the work seen in Years 5 and 6, with pupils showing high levels of competence in using their learning well in isolated exercises, but working less effectively when applying this knowledge to extended writing. There is little writing at length and pupils have too few opportunities to use their research skills to produce longer and informed pieces of writing. Some of the work seen lower in the key stage shows progress to be erratic at times and not fully secure for higher attaining pupils, who need extension work to consolidate their learning. These factors limit opportunities for pupils, particularly the higher attainers to reach high standards in their writing and to become fully independent writers. Standards of spelling and handwriting are satisfactory overall across the key stage, with some examples of good presentation in which pupils show pride in their efforts. Punctuation work shows satisfactory progress; some pupils demonstrate understanding of apostrophes and quotation marks. There is only limited evidence of word-processing skills being developed or used in English work.
83. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teaching and learning in English are good in Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2, and very good in upper Key Stage 2. Very good teaching was seen in more than half of all English observations across the school, and in all the lessons seen in upper Key Stage 2. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. In this small school there are two age groups in every class and teachers organise and manage their pupils and the provision for learning English very well. Lesson plans are detailed

and they set out most of the teachers' objectives clearly, although some writing objectives are unspecific. Lessons based on the National Literacy Strategy, move at a good pace and provide pupils with an interesting range of activities. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good and good work habits are established. Pupils respond well to the effective management and organisation of learning by settling quickly to their tasks, participating with enthusiasm and working with concentration. This has a positive impact on their progress in learning English, especially in literacy skills; reading, speaking and listening. The teachers' high expectations in these areas mean that pupils are challenged in their learning. Teachers have a very good understanding of how to teach and extend discussion skills and reading. They do so systematically so that pupils grow in confidence and independence. Teachers' subject knowledge related to writing development is less well developed, but plans are in hand for dealing with this.

84. The teachers know the pupils well and make good use of information collected about their progress as readers. They use this information well to ensure that pupils are appropriately challenged in subsequent lessons. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, giving useful praise, encouragement, guidance and comments. However, not enough of these comments show pupils where they have to put in extra effort to overcome evident weaknesses. The school uses regular tests and is developing the analysis of test data to track pupils' progress which enables teachers to plan effectively to raise standards.
85. The English curriculum is good. It includes full attention to the National Literacy Strategy, which is implemented well to meet the needs of the mixed age classes. The curriculum for English is enriched by the very good range of reading provision and attention to books and authors, including some visits to hear authors talk about their work. These opportunities promote a love of reading throughout the school. Pupils develop good vocabulary and become knowledgeable about use of the printed word in their research work. Reading is used in many contexts across the curriculum in all classes. Shared texts, research projects and reading across the curriculum are clear features throughout the school, which in turn influence the high standards of speaking and listening. The curriculum meets the statutory requirements and adds significantly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through research, group work, drama, stories, visits and discussions.
86. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory overall. There is currently a valuable high priority given in the development plan related to developing writing more effectively for all pupils. This will involve teachers in attending various in-service events, some of which are in partnership with other local schools. The resources for writing are being further extended. There has been little monitoring in class to consider classroom standards, but some opportunities are being arranged in the near future. The loss of the school library to become a computer room is being overcome by careful management of the class libraries, but the provision needs to be kept under review.
87. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Trends in national test results have developed in line with those nationally, and recent results show further improved outcomes in reading and spelling at both key stages. The school has implemented a daily literacy session and has clearly identified its strategy for improving writing across the school.

## **MATHEMATICS**

88. Ten lessons were observed in mathematics, taught by all four teachers. In addition the inspectors spoke to pupils, examined the work in progress and in folders, and reviewed previous classes' work.
89. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 exceed the standards expected for their ages in numeracy and all aspects of the mathematics curriculum (number, algebra, space, shape and measures, and data handling). The 2000 national test results show a different picture – standards for seven-year-olds were well below those in similar schools, and eleven-year-olds' standards, although above national averages, were below those of similar schools. However, more pupils had special educational needs in those cohorts than in the present groups. The relatively small number of pupils taking the tests makes year-on-year comparisons of standards unreliable. Inspection evidence shows that teachers of seven-year-olds do not always expect enough of higher attaining pupils who underachieve.
90. There are no serious differences in the performance of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they are supported well in their learning.
91. By the age of seven, pupils can solve number problems using their knowledge of time and money, but do not always apply their skills to new challenges, for example, when numbers are included in diagrams. They show better than expected skills when they work with shapes; for example, in their work on right angles. However, they do not do enough to investigate other properties such as the number of sides. Eleven-year-olds show a clear understanding of place value and present their results in an organised, intelligible way, but do not use words to express formulae or describe number patterns. They do some good quality work on shapes and measures, including using symbols to show equal sides in geometrical drawings. They do not, however, have an appropriately developed knowledge of the terms associated with handling data.
92. The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Nearly all the teaching seen in Years 3 to 6 was of good quality. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen during the inspection. The analysis of pupils' work showed that the teachers of Years 1 and 2 placed a suitable emphasis on number work, but did not consistently demand enough of the more able. Also the use of tables, charts and graphs is neglected. In Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 there is a good, balanced coverage of the mathematics curriculum, but some of the work done on handling data, especially information about swimming recorded as bar charts, is undemanding.
93. In the best lessons, teachers started off at a good pace and pupils were drawn into the activities and showed very good levels of interest. Basic number skills were taught well with clear explanations and good questioning. Appropriate tasks were set to meet the needs of different groups, including those with special educational needs, as in a lesson for Years 5 and 6 about using pencil and paper methods for multiplying. In this good teaching, the final part of the lesson is used well to summarise and assess learning. This was one of the good features of a lesson about money for Years 3 and 4. Where the teaching is less effective, the tasks are not matched well to the needs of different groups. Generally, pupils behave very well and try hard, but the speed at which they work on group tasks is not as fast as it could be. The teachers do not always take steps, such as asking pupils to finish as soon as possible or setting time limits, to help them increase the pace.

94. Since the last inspection teachers have implemented the National Numeracy Strategy well. Most tell pupils what is to be learned at the beginning of the lesson, and conduct the oral and mental activities in a lively way. As a result pupils show good facility in this kind of work and are keen to improve. Overall, the teachers manage their classes well during the main activities of the lessons, although sometimes not enough praise is used to encourage quiet working and consideration for others in Years 1 and 2.
95. Throughout the school, pupils' ability to use ICT to improve their mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding is poorly developed. This is because there is not enough suitable software and teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to do this work. Pupils make appropriate use of mathematics to assist their learning in other subjects. For example, older pupils carry out calculations in science lessons. Sometimes teachers make too much use of printed worksheets. This reduces pupils' opportunities to develop independence and detracts from the promotion of literacy skills.
96. Since the last inspection, teachers have begun to use assessment effectively to judge and record pupils' progress. They make informal assessments and carry out mental tests, and those associated with the commercial scheme of work used throughout the school. Non-statutory tests are carried out effectively to track progress year by year and this helps to improve standards by giving teachers clear information about the progress of their pupils. Good practice is developing in setting individual targets for improvement in agreement with each pupil.
97. The school has made clear improvements since it was last inspected. The mathematics curriculum has been reviewed and the role of the co-ordinator in monitoring is now more effective to support and inform teachers and help them improve the standards in the subject.

## **SCIENCE**

98. The inspectors were able to observe only two lessons in science, but also scrutinised previous work and folders and talked to the pupils about what they had done.
99. Pupils at both seven and eleven achieve levels above those expected of their age groups. The results of the statutory assessments and national tests in 2000 indicated that the standards of seven-year-olds at that time were well below average and eleven-year-olds broadly in line with the national average, but below average compared to similar schools. However, the small number of pupils taking the tests each year makes comparisons between different groups unreliable.
100. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress. Overall, pupils achieve satisfactory standards. However, lower attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not always make the progress they should.
101. Pupils aged seven carry out good quality work on electricity. For example, they understand the function of a switch in breaking a circuit. They recognise the similarities between living things, but do not make a class database with information they collect. At eleven, pupils understand the relationship between vibration and sounds, and make appropriate predictions in experiments on dissolving. They record their work neatly, but few suggest ways of improving it.

102. Only one lesson was seen in each key stage, but the scrutiny of pupils' past work indicates that the quality of teaching and learning is at least satisfactory. The two lessons observed were of satisfactory quality. The analysis of pupils' work shows that teachers provide a good range of experiences, giving balanced coverage of the programme of work. Much of the learning appears to be based appropriately on giving pupils practical experience. At the moment the extent to which teachers provide tasks to match the learning needs of different attainment groups varies. The use of a commercially produced scheme of work acts as a valuable source of ideas, especially for teachers who lack confidence in this subject. However, there is evidence that some may rely too heavily on this source and use it uncritically. For example, in Years 1 and 2, printed worksheets are given to pupils of lower ability and they find these too difficult.
103. Good quality questioning and suitably chosen tasks were strengths in the limited amount of teaching observed. In a lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6, about dissolving, the very productive opportunities for developing speaking and listening skills and the good revision of earlier learning, ensured that pupils could build their knowledge and understanding effectively.
104. Satisfactory improvements have been made since the last inspection. The school has adopted the Local Education Authority's system for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, but its use is not yet fully established. The co-ordinators role in raising standards has become more effective, especially in monitoring. However, the observation of classroom practice and checking on the standards that pupils attain is not yet as systematic as it needs to be, which is holding back the raising of standards.
105. The work in science makes a good contribution to the development of pupils' literacy skills, especially in report writing. It promotes skills of numeracy effectively through opportunities to carry out calculations in experiments. However, pupils get few chances to use computers as part of their science work.

## **ART AND DESIGN AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

106. Only one art and design lesson was observed during the inspection, and no design and technology lessons were planned during the week. The two subjects share a timetable slot and are taught in blocks of time over the year. They are often planned together, especially in the infants.
107. The art and design lesson seen was not typical in that it was the Year 1 pupils who are timetabled with the Reception class having a revision of their painting techniques in the afternoon when the Reception children, who only attended in the mornings, had gone home. This did not provide sufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about the teaching of art and design. The staff, together with the co-ordinator, have decided that they do not have the resources or the expertise to follow the QCA schemes of work for art and design, although they do follow them for design and technology. They develop their own plans from a commercial scheme, and concentrate on each teachers' strengths and preferences. The teaching is therefore limited and does not allow pupils to achieve in all the areas of the National Curriculum for art and design at this stage. The future plans to develop the full curriculum over each key stage are satisfactory, but need more detail.

108. The scrutiny of infant pupils' previous work on display and in folders confirmed the inspectors' judgements that the standards achieved by the infant classes was close to that expected for their age, which was also the case in the previous inspection. Standards of work in the junior classes have improved in that they are now above that expected nationally, the work is exciting and well executed. There is extensive research into the texture of Van Gogh's painting in Years 3 and 4, which follows on from a study of colour in expressionist painting. This work is of a high standard, and the monochrome paintings were very well done. In Year 6 they are studying the work of Lowry, and talk with enthusiasm about their previous work in art and design. They also talk with interest about their work in design and technology, although they do not always recognise it as such, assuming that stitchwork is art, and not being sure where food technology fits in.
109. The use of an artist in residence, linked to Andy Goldsworthy's sheepfolds project, was supported by external agencies such as the Arts Council and produced an excellent felt hanging. The Year 6 pupils involved created images that were brought together by the artist and were exhibited locally. This initiative, together with the regular visits to local galleries and occasional ones to London provide pupils with a rich cultural experience. This is enhanced by the good range of resources for art and design that the school possesses, although their use is limited by the lack of space for junior classes to undertake practical activities. Design and technology resources are adequate to deliver the planned curriculum, but the same limitations apply. Although the long term planning provides for pupils to experience a wide range of art and design techniques and materials, the emphasis in the schemes of work is on two-dimensional work, particularly painting. More consideration needs to be given to how pupils can access the full range of the National Curriculum for art and design, and for design and technology, over each key stage, and involve the use of ICT in both subjects.
110. Sketchbooks are now used in junior classes and this gives pupils an opportunity to develop work and teachers to monitor progress over a period of time. The recording of achievement is informal and pupils are only really assessed at the end of a year when the report is completed. This is inadequate. Teachers need to identify how well each pupil is achieving and what level they are likely to reach so that they can achieve their full potential. In design and technology, pupils assess their own work at the end of each project, but again the ongoing teacher assessment is informal and needs to be related more systematically to the National Curriculum levels.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

111. Overall, standards in these subjects at ages seven and eleven are broadly in line with those expected nationally, and pupils achieve appropriately. This was also the case at the time of the last inspection. The work seen in history at Key Stage 2 during the current inspection was of good quality.
112. Pupils at both key stages know a good deal about the local area. For example, in geography, seven-year-olds complete maps of the locality and observe the traffic associated with the school. Friends of the school visit to provide oral history about times past for the juniors. Pupils of different ages also find out about other parts of the world. For instance, those in Years 1 and 2 look at artwork from the Mayan civilisation. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 make a detailed geographical study of St Lucia. However, seven-year-olds do not record their views of features of the locality in geography, nor do they write sufficiently about the major historical events and important people. Analysis of last

year's work shows that pupils aged eleven gain a great deal of factual knowledge of, for example, Drake's voyages, but do not deal enough with how the past is represented and interpreted. In geography, the foot and mouth crisis led to much of their planned programme, involving field work, being curtailed.

113. Too few lessons of geography were seen to make a reliable judgement of the quality of teaching. The same was true of history in Years 1 and 2. The scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' past work suggests that in both subjects teaching is satisfactory. The lessons in history for pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 were good. The most significant strengths of the teaching were the good attention was paid to the importance of evidence, and that lesson planning promoted learning well. In the lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6 about the life in Britain since the World War II the teacher provided good opportunities for pupils to increase their awareness of cultural matters, including immigration.
114. Features of the teaching that are common to both these areas of the curriculum, include the good links made with other subjects. For instance, those between history and design and technology – pupils made tortillas as part of their study of Mexican history. Although a good lesson for Years 3 and 4 was seen, in which pupils used ICT as part of their study of the Ancient Greeks, teachers do not usually make enough use of computers to assist pupils' learning in geography and history. Overall, teachers use opportunities effectively in both subjects to develop pupils' literacy skills. For example, Year 6 pupils get the chance to undertake empathetic writing about the American Indians' views of the early settlers. However, opportunities are missed to improve numeracy skills, when, for example, the distances travelled by explorers are not recorded and used.
115. Pupils' very good behaviour, positive attitudes and good listening skills combine to make them effective learners in these subjects.
116. Since the last inspection, the programmes of work for both subjects have been revised successfully to take account of the national planning guidance issued by the QCA, but too little progress has been made in implementing procedures for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

117. No lessons were observed that were specifically ICT. It is not therefore possible to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching in this subject. Pupils are withdrawn from lessons on a regular basis to study a commercial scheme with parents or volunteers, and two of these were observed, one with a parent and one with the school secretary. One history lesson included pupils working on a computer at the back of the room. Pupils spent time talking to inspectors, discussed their computing skills, and previous work was examined where there was an ICT component.
118. The school has recently invested in new computers, supplementing the government grant with its own funds. Most computers are in classrooms, but four are set up in what was the library. All have printers, there is a digital camera, and internet access but no scanner yet. Internet access is managed using a secure 'firewall' to prevent unsuitable sites being accessed. The lack of space in the junior classrooms and the computer room makes work difficult. The software programs being used with the parents are complex office ones, which provide too many options for pupils on the small screen. This slows down the responses, particularly of those pupils who have little experience of using a mouse. The



screens need to be customised to take out superfluous icons, or educational software used instead.

119. Overall standards are lower than that indicated in the previous report. They are not following the National Curriculum for ICT, and the application of ICT across subjects is weak. Pupils' skills are being developed systematically as they move through the school, and their progress is recorded and monitored well, but the scheme being used is based on short tests of pupils' ability to follow instructions and there are few opportunities for them to relate these skills to their subjects. This means that pupils cannot use ICT independently, for example, when they exchange information or control events they have to rely on the teacher setting things up for them. The older juniors are competent at word processing, having produced a school newspaper and handbook on the local church last year, using the digital camera to capture images and then using desktop publishing software. Two Year 4 pupils used the internet well to research web sites for information about the Olympics in history lesson. Younger pupils occasionally use the computers to compose poetry and stories, and some freehand drawing is in their folders. Special educational needs pupils progress well and are fully included in all lessons.
120. The staff have started to access the government training to improve their competence and awareness of the benefits of using ICT in their classrooms. They have not found it very useful yet, but the new co-ordinator, who starts soon, has plans to support individual staff and address their needs. The temporary co-ordinator is managing the situation well. The headteacher and governors have established their priorities to improve ICT and have planned the development of training and resources to meet them. They recognise that ICT is a weakness despite the large investment so far, with pupils achieving below the expectation for their age.

## MUSIC

121. All four classes were observed in their music lessons. Pupils attain levels well above the national expectations at both Year 2 and Year 6. Progress is good; pupils, including those with special educational needs, acquire and use musical skills at a good, and often very good rate. There is no difference between the attainment of boys and girls, who all do well and give very good effort to music work.
122. Lessons include pupils of all abilities: all show very positive attitudes to the subject, and gain pleasure and enjoyment from their efforts. The current findings are a clear improvement on the findings of the last inspection, when music standards for Year 2 were not judged, while in Year 6 the progress was satisfactory and standards were in line with national expectations.
123. Pupils in the infants enjoy responding to the teacher by singing names and rhythms. They follow signals well and play instruments, with Year 1 pupils following and responding to signals for loud, soft and stop, and Year 2 pupils creatively using their instruments to invent and select sound combinations to suit the words of a new song. All the infants sing with clarity and enthusiasm, using pitch and pace well to reflect the words. All can sing and play and follow the guidance from the leader to produce a quickly improving performance, reaching good standards at an impressive rate. Some know and use special vocabulary such as 'conductor' and 'directions'. Pupils of all abilities make effective suggestions when ideas are being shared. All play a part and contribute to the whole,

showing eagerness and understanding as they rise to the challenge of the tasks. Their behaviour and concentration are good throughout lessons.

124. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 work hard at developing understanding of pulse, pitch, tempo and rhythm. When developing the words and supportive music to '*One Man Went to Mow*', they learn to pick out and then play the beat and the tempo effectively, supporting both elements through different instruments. They create a sequence of sounds to suit the words of the song and work well in unison to achieve a good performance in a very short time, building on earlier work and sharing the musical responsibilities. In Years 5 and 6, pupils quickly and successfully sing well in two then four parts, without accompaniment. They maintain the round and improve their performance, with everyone putting in effort and enthusiasm. They use tuned and untuned percussion instruments to add to the corporate performance, with every pupil being in charge of an instrument and a part. Pupils rise to these challenges very well, and show very good attitudes, with improvement in relation to the teacher's guidance on timing, pitch and rhythm occurring at a rapid rate. Older pupils' understanding and subject knowledge are supported by discussion of sharp notes, phrases, sequences, ostinato patterns and the use of notation. Higher attainers and pupils with special educational needs are all challenged appropriately by these expectations.
125. Teaching is very good overall, with half the teaching seen being excellent. The teaching is provided by a well-qualified teacher who is employed to teach only music for the whole school. Lessons are very well planned, with clear and achievable musical objectives and high expectations. They are backed up by very good subject knowledge and clear attention to continuity of learning. The use of resources is very effective and efficient. There is good partnership with the class teachers, who stay in the music lesson for their class, assist by giving support to individual pupils where needed and joining in with activities. They carry out some follow-up activities back in the classroom and overall, gain subject knowledge and expertise through this effective staff development approach. Pupils are given every opportunity to be creative and thoughtful, making a good contribution to lesson outcomes, with no loss of efficiency. Inclusion has received very good attention for all age groups, so that those with special educational needs, those with prior musical knowledge, and those who are average in their understanding and performance skills are all given suitable parts in the overall development and performance and are continually involved, showing enjoyment, understanding and enthusiasm.
126. The curriculum is very good. All classes receive an appropriate range of activities which covers listening, appraising, performing and composing. Creative elements are used to encourage pupils to contribute ideas of their own. The lessons are supported by a good range of instruments, some of which are from world cultures. Songs are chosen to reflect a wide range of cultures, interests and increasing challenge for older pupils. Additional music is provided through clubs, individual music lessons, the playing of recorded music in assemblies, consideration of composers, music follow-up work in classrooms, performances and music open days for parents. The annual whole school performance is taught and directed by the class teachers, with support from the specialist music teacher. The music curriculum makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and supports their creativity and expression in many ways. Pupils of all ages and abilities work in social groups, learning to support each other as they work in both large and small groups to understand and improve their performances. They become confident by performing in public for other pupils or for their parents.

127. The co-ordination of music is very good. It is carried out through guidance from the specialist music teacher, who suggests which new instruments and resources to purchase and who provides the comprehensive and effective policy. Communication with the headteacher and the in-school co-ordinator is very good. A member of staff supports continuity of music across the school. Good communication between these people ensures that the needs of music provision in the school are given appropriate attention, priority and funding as needed, although no ICT is yet included. In the four years since the last inspection the employment of the specialist teacher has been implemented and extended, and the time allocation increased so that the present very good provision and standards have been achieved. Improvement since that time has been good.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

128. Two lessons in physical education were observed, both in junior classes. Because of the practical nature of this subject this means that it was not possible to make secure judgements about the quality of teaching or the standards achieved in the infants.

129. In the physical education lessons seen in the junior classes the standards of achievement are good, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. The teachers are preparing the pupils well and addressing the National Curriculum for physical education confidently. Pupils are progressing very well, and make good use of the opportunities they are given to use their creativity and imagination in physical activity. Pupils are enthusiastic and take a full part in planning and developing their activities.

130. The teaching of physical education is very good. There is a clear structure for teachers to follow in the planning and schemes of work, and the Top Play and Top Sport initiatives funded through the Sports Council have been introduced and teachers trained to deliver them. Pupils are involved in all aspects of the National Curriculum for physical education, including swimming and outdoor and adventurous activities, and they do not just acquire skills, but develop a knowledge and understanding of fitness and health and an appreciation of tactics and ideas. Warm-up and warm-down activities are organised appropriately, and pupils are suitably challenged in the tasks they are set. Teachers are actively involved in the lessons, moving around and praising pupils to motivate them to improve. The teachers know their classes well, and what individuals are achieving, but assessment is informal and needs to be more closely linked to the levels that pupils are attaining rather than their enthusiasm and attitude. Without this teachers cannot ensure that pupils achieve the highest possible standards for their ability.

131. All pupils have equal access to the whole physical education curriculum. The provision of extracurricular activities is appropriate, parents and volunteers help a lot with running clubs, and there is an orienteering course around the grounds. Pupils have access to clubs and events in the locality, although several of them involve a charge as professional coaches are used.

132. The accommodation and resources for physical education are good, the hall is an adequate space for gymnastic activities and dance, but its use is limited as it is also a dining room, classroom and assembly hall, and several music and other resources are stored in there. The field is spacious and has a football pitch and several wooden structures for play provided by the parents. The hard surfaced areas are marked out for

games, and there is an extensive range of large and small apparatus for all aspects of physical education, which have an adequate storage space.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

133. At both seven and eleven pupils attain standards that are in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. A strong feature of their learning is that they are actively encouraged not only to learn about religion, but also to learn from it.
134. Pupils aged seven recognise special places, events and people. They are able to relate their own experience of journeys to those made by Jesus with his family. They understand what a pilgrimage is. They know that festivals are a part of more than one religion. At eleven, pupils know about a number of religions, such as Judaism and Buddhism. They also learn about different denominations within the Christian tradition when they study the Anglican churches and Quaker meeting houses. They show awareness of the need for care and concern for others, when they discuss 'The Golden Rule' of treating others as we would like them to treat us.
135. Although the school makes proper provision for teaching religious education, it was not possible to observe any lessons during the inspection. The scrutiny of pupils' past work and teachers' planning indicates that lessons are taught effectively throughout the school. Year 6 pupils have used digital cameras and desktop publishing software to create a guide to the church, which is well researched and laid out.
136. Links with the community significantly enhance the progress that pupils make in religious education. The close association the school has with the local church and the visits made by the clergy increase pupils' knowledge and spiritual awareness. The visits made to different places of worship, including a Buddhist temple and a Catholic church also contribute strongly. So does the school's involvement in the local religious education teachers' support group.
137. Since the last inspection, the programme of study has been reviewed successfully, the co-ordinator has monitored lessons in all classes and learning resources have been improved.