

# INSPECTION REPORT

## UPTON JUNIOR SCHOOL

Poole

LEA area: Dorset

Unique reference number: 113681

Headteacher: Mrs A Allen

Reporting inspector: Mr D J Curtis  
20893

Dates of inspection: 17<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> September 2001

Inspection number: 196446

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	St Martin's Road Upton Poole Dorset
Postcode:	BH16 5NQ
Telephone number:	01202 622649
Fax number:	01202 621018
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs S Young
Date of previous inspection:	April 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr D J Curtis 20893	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Religious education History	How high are standards (the school's results and achievements)? How well are pupils taught?
Mrs H Barter 9052	Lay inspector		How high are standards (pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development)? How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with its parents?
Mrs E Kounnou 30810	Team inspector	English Art Design and technology Music Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Mr J Palethorpe 20671	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography Physical education Equal opportunities	How well is the school led and managed?
Mr M Barrand 17322	Team inspector		

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TWA Inspections Ltd  
5 Lakeside  
Werrington  
Peterborough  
PE4 6QZ

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Upton Junior School is situated to the west of the Borough of Poole in Dorset and takes pupils from the ages of 7 to 11 years. There are 394 pupils on roll in 12 classes, with 197 boys and 197 girls; this is an above average sized primary school. There are a small number of pupils from homes where English is not the first language. There are 125 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs; this is above the national average. There are four pupils with a statement of special educational need; this is below average. Twenty-four pupils are entitled to free school meals; this is below the national average. Standards on entry vary from year to year.

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

The school provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. However, its capacity to improve is currently restricted because of a breakdown in communication and trust within the senior management team. The leadership and management of the headteacher and deputy headteacher are impeded by some key staff who do not recognise their right to manage the school. Standards in English and mathematics, although average, are not high enough. In science, religious education and physical education, standards are good. The attitudes, behaviour and personal development of pupils are good and a strength of the school. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Standards in science, religious education and physical education are good.
- The attitudes, behaviour and personal development of pupils are good.
- The provision for and progress of pupils with special educational needs are good.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- The provision of extra-curricular activities is very good.
- The procedures for the care and welfare of pupils are good.

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

- The leadership and management of the senior management team, particularly in fulfilling its contractual roles and responsibilities.
- Standards in art and design and in design and technology and ensuring that National Curriculum requirements are met.
- Although average, standards in English and mathematics should be higher.
- Consistency in the use of assessment to plan pupils' future learning in all subjects.
- The leadership and co-ordination of English.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was previously inspected in April 1997. The school has made satisfactory progress in addressing the key issues from the previous inspection. The quality of teaching has improved and all pupils now take part in a daily act of collective worship. The school is now meeting the requirements of the National Curriculum for the teaching of information and communication technology, geography and mathematics, but it is still not meeting them in design and technology. The development of the use of assessment to inform pupils' future learning has been inconsistent; the good practice in mathematics and science is not evident in other subjects.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	B	A	C	E
Mathematics	B	B	D	E
Science	B	B	C	E

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

*Similar schools are those with up to 8 per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals.*

The school's results in 2000 reversed the previous trend of year-on-year improvement. However, 40 per cent of the Year 6 pupils in 2000 were on the school's register of special educational needs and this is a contributory factor. Although no national data is available for comparison, the school's results in 2001 show an increase in the percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 4 or above in English and science.

Current inspection findings judge standards in science to be above average, with those in English and mathematics average. In mathematics, standards have risen as the result of high quality teaching in Year 6. Improvement in science is the result of good teaching and effective management of the subject. Although average, standards in English and mathematics are not high enough because more-able pupils are not sufficiently challenged.

In information and communication technology, standards meet national expectations; they have improved since the previous inspection as a result of the school developing an 'ICT Suite', with pupils taught key skills in whole-class lessons. Standards in religious education exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus as a result of good teaching. Standards in physical education are good as a result of good teaching. In geography, history and music, standards meet expectations for pupils of this age. In art and design and in design and technology, standards are below expectations as a result of weaknesses in curriculum planning.

The school has met its targets in English, but not in mathematics. In both subjects, targets need to be more challenging.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good; pupils work hard in lessons and enjoy being in school. They show interest in their work and are keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good; pupils behave well in lessons and when moving around the school. At break and lunchtime, behaviour is good.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils relate well to each other, their teachers, the headteacher and all adults whom they meet, including learning support assistants and parent helpers. Pupils work well in pairs and in small groups, with many examples of boys and girls working together successfully.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

Pupils' attitudes to school and to their work in lessons are a strength of the school. During the inspection, in 95 per cent of lessons in Year 6 attitudes and behaviour were good or better.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	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 in lessons observed during the inspection was good and it has a significant impact on the good standards achieved in science, religious education and physical education. In addition, good teaching contributes successfully to pupils' positive attitudes and good behaviour in school. During the inspection, examples of very good teaching were seen in English, mathematics, science, religious education, history, music and physical education. Examples of good teaching were seen in most subjects.

Where teaching is good, teachers show good subject knowledge, which is passed on to pupils with interest and enthusiasm. Teachers make good use of resources to support pupils' learning, including learning support assistants and parent helpers. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good and teachers have high expectations of behaviour and of how well pupils should present their work. However, there are inconsistencies in the quality of teachers' marking and in planning. Planning does not consistently address the learning needs of all pupils, nor does it detail the skills, knowledge and understanding to be taught in lessons. As a result, pupils, especially the more able, are not always sufficiently challenged.

The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good, particularly in lessons where they are taught and/or supported by the co-ordinator for special educational needs.

The teaching of literacy is satisfactory overall; this judgement is based on all inspection evidence. Teachers use their time well in some lessons to teach key skills to small groups whilst other pupils work well independently. Pupils in these lessons are achieving very well. However, in too many literacy lessons pupils all work at the same activity with little idea of how long they have to complete the work.

The quality of teaching and learning in numeracy throughout the school during the inspection was good. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and teach the basic skills well. Most planning is thorough and meets the needs of the pupils.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Unsatisfactory; the school is not meeting the National Curriculum requirements for the teaching of art and design, and design and technology. The effectiveness of the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is unsatisfactory.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good; the co-ordinator for special educational needs provides effective support, which enables these pupils to make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good for spiritual, moral and social development, with satisfactory provision for cultural development. Effective provision makes a strong contribution to pupils' good attitudes, behaviour, personal development and relationships. Spiritual development is a strong feature of religious education lessons.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The day-to-day care and support of pupils are good, particularly in child protection and ensuring that pupils are happy and safe in school. However, the school is not consistently using the results of its assessments to plan pupils' future learning.

The school has a satisfactory partnership with its parents. Provision for extra-curricular activities is very good, with pupils having the opportunity to attend a wide range of sporting and musical activities. The school looks after its pupils well, particularly with regard to health and safety and their individual well-being. Good use is made of the local community, including local churches, to support pupils' learning.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Unsatisfactory. The headteacher, supported by the deputy headteacher, has a clear vision and a determination to lead the school forward, but is constrained in her work because some members of the senior management team do not recognise her responsibilities in leading and managing the school. There is a breakdown in trust and communication within the senior management team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil all of their statutory responsibilities. However, they do not have a sufficient long-term vision for the school because of the current problems with the management of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory; the school is spending too much time on internal conflicts within the senior management team, which mean that it is not evaluating its own performance sufficiently well.
The strategic use of resources	Good; the school uses its resources and additional funds/grants to support pupils' learning effectively.

The staffing, accommodation and resources in the school are adequate to support pupils' learning. The school applies satisfactorily the principles of best value.

## 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 like school.</li> <li>• Their children make good progress at school.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• The school has high expectations of its pupils.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of homework.</li> <li>• The information received about pupils' progress.</li> <li>• The school working more closely with parents.</li> <li>• The leadership and management of the school.</li> <li>• The provision of extra-curricular activities.</li> </ul>

Fourteen parents attended the meeting with the registered inspector before the inspection and 114 questionnaires were returned. Inspection findings support the positive views of parents. In relation to improvement, findings judge that the leadership and management of the school need to improve, particularly with some members of the senior management team, who need to accept the headteacher's responsibility to manage the school. Findings support the view that parents may not know how well their children are achieving in school. Inspection findings do not support the other areas identified for improvement; the provision for extra-curricular activities is very good.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

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

1. There is a variation from year to year in the standards achieved by pupils when they start school. In addition, standards on entry are affected by variations from year to year in the number of pupils who transfer from other schools.
2. The results of the 2000 National Curriculum assessments for pupils in Year 6 were average in English and science, but below average in mathematics. In comparison with those in similar schools<sup>1</sup> nationally, results were well below average in all three subjects. These results went against the trend of previous years, which showed year-on-year improvement above the national trend. In this particular year group, 40 per cent of pupils were on the school's register of special educational needs, which is a contributory factor. Trends indicate that girls achieved higher standards in English and science than boys; in mathematics there was no significant difference.
3. Although no national comparative data is available, the school's results for 2001 show an increase in the percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 4<sup>2</sup> and above in English and science. In mathematics, results were the same as in the previous year. The school exceeded its target in English, but not in mathematics.
4. Current inspection findings judge standards in English and mathematics to be average, with those in science above average. Improvement in mathematics is the result of the high quality teaching in Year 6. In science, improvement is the result of very good teaching and regular ongoing assessment of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. Inspection findings judge that, although average, standards in English and mathematics are not high enough because more-able pupils are not sufficiently challenged. In addition, in mathematics, where pupils are taught in sets (ability groups), there is insufficient planning to meet the differing learning needs of pupils within each set. Inspection findings judge that there is no significant variation between the standards achieved by boys and girls.
5. Standards in information and communication technology meet national expectations; this is an improvement since the previous inspection and is the result of the provision of an 'ICT Suite' and the very effective management of the subject. Standards in religious education are good and exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus as a result of good teaching and the imaginative use of resources to capture pupils' interest in the subject. Standards have improved since the previous inspection because of effective teaching and a well-planned curriculum.
6. Standards in physical education are good and exceed expectations for pupils of this age; this is an improvement since the previous inspection. In geography, history and music, standards meet expectations for pupils of this age. Standards have been maintained in geography and history, but have declined in music. In art and design and in design and technology, standards are not high enough and do not meet expectations for pupils of this age. In both subjects, standards have fallen since the previous inspection; there are weaknesses in curriculum planning which mean that pupils are not taught the key skills, knowledge and understanding required by the National Curriculum as they move up through the school.

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<sup>1</sup> Schools with up to ~~eight~~ 8 per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals.

<sup>2</sup> It is the national expectation that pupils should reach Level 4 or above by the age of 11 in the National Curriculum assessments for English, mathematics and science.

7. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress due to the very good support they receive in small groups, particularly when supported by the co-ordinator for special educational needs.
8. The school has demonstrated that it can meet its targets in English, although inspection evidence indicates that they could be more challenging. The school has not met its targets in mathematics, and evidence indicates that the targets for 2002 are particularly challenging.
9. The capacity that the school has to increase and/or meet its targets is restricted by current weaknesses and tensions within the senior management team, which mean that the school is not working as one in order to achieve its targets and to continue to raise standards. Until this weakness is addressed, the school will not move forward at the rate of which it is capable.

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

10. Since the last inspection, pupils have maintained the good attitudes and behaviour which lead them to make good progress in their personal development. They have good relationships with their teachers and get on well with each other. In the questionnaire returns, nearly all parents say that their children like coming to school and most feel that the school promotes mature and responsible attitudes and good behaviour. Parents say that pupils develop good levels of responsibility as they get older.
11. Pupils have good attitudes to school and are keen to be involved in tasks both in and out of the classroom. In lessons, they pay good attention to the teacher and are interested in their work. Most pupils have established working habits and show good levels of personal motivation to improve their work. This makes a significant contribution to their success and the progress that they make. Pupils' concentration and willingness to answer questions are a positive feature in many lessons. For example, pupils in Year 6 worked with sustained interest and were very well focused when working on fractions in a mathematics lesson. Pupils follow instructions well and develop independence and the confidence to learn. They respond very positively to challenges set for them; for example, when practising football skills in a physical education lesson. Although pupils manage to concentrate well, they sometimes flag towards the end of some lessons that are over an hour long.
12. Pupils' behaviour is good in response to the consistent expectations of staff and the school's policy to promote positive behaviour. In lessons, most pupils behave well all of the time, although some of the younger pupils - particularly boys - who are new to the school lack maturity and concentration and have not settled to school routines. Around the school, pupils are clear about the expected standards of behaviour and move sensibly around the main building and the mobile classrooms. Pupils are friendly and cheerful and talk willingly about their work and activities. In the playground, pupils play well together and share small equipment well. Although there are some small upsets, incidences of bullying or unpleasant behaviour only occasionally happen and none were observed during the inspection. There have been no exclusions from the school in the last year.
13. Pupils make good progress in terms of their personal development. They have good relationships with their teachers. Pupils say that boys and girls are equally included in all activities and that they get along well with each other. They are happy working in different pairs and groupings, and co-operate well with each other; for example, they share ideas and work collaboratively on circuits in science lessons. Pupils are developing sensitivity and respect for others' ideas and opinions. In religious education, they listen carefully in discussions and show empathy towards others who describe their 'special

gifts'. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility and carry out their tasks, such as register monitors and computer 'Wombles', sensibly. They enjoy being part of the 'house' system and take the earning of house points and the election of house captains seriously. In discussion, pupils say that they enjoy school and have many friends. They are positive about the range of extra-curricular activities on offer and say that teachers help them to learn and to grow up. They are clear about their personal targets, which they say help them to improve their work. However, these targets are relatively new and pupils have little opportunity to develop their self-evaluative skills, for example, by writing about their own academic progress and achievement in the end-of-year reports.

14. Overall, pupils' attendance at school is satisfactory. Since the last inspection, the levels of attendance have remained in line with the national trend, although they are just below the national expected minimum attendance level of 95 per cent. There is little unauthorised absence, but the school has identified an increase in the numbers of pupils who have holidays during term time and is monitoring the number of authorised absences closely. Most pupils arrive in time for registration and the start of school, and afternoon sessions start promptly. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

15. The previous inspection report judged the quality of teaching to be 'satisfactory overall and it was good or better in nearly half of the lessons seen'. Teaching was judged to be 'particularly good in lessons where pupils are set in ability groups, in mathematics and for reading and spelling'. Nine per cent of teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory and the reasons for this formed the first key issue for the school to include in its action plan. The issue required the school to 'improve the quality of teaching by:
- raising teachers' expectations, extending their knowledge and sharing existing knowledge and expertise of particular subjects;
  - monitoring the impact of teaching on pupils' attainment through direct observation;
  - evaluating teaching and learning in classrooms'.
16. Current inspection findings judge that this key issue has been addressed successfully. During the inspection, the quality of teaching observed was good and has a positive impact on the good standards achieved in science, religious education and physical education. In addition, it has a very positive impact on pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships. Of the lessons observed, 26 per cent were very good and included the teaching of the following subjects: English, mathematics, science, religious education, history, music and physical education. Good teaching was observed in 40 per cent of lessons and included English, mathematics, science, religious education, information and communication technology, art and design, geography, music and physical education, and 33 per cent satisfactory. One lesson (1 per cent) was judged unsatisfactory; this was in music.
17. Current inspection findings show a variation in the quality of teaching within the school, particularly in Year 5, where 47 per cent of teaching is good or better, as opposed to 77 per cent in Year 6, 73 per cent in Year 4 and 66 per cent in Year 3. As a result, the quality of pupils' learning and the standards achieved are not as high in Year 5 as in the other year groups.
18. Evidence of the quality of teaching beyond direct lesson observations, particularly through looking at pupils' previous work, indicates that there are inconsistencies in:
- the quality of teachers' marking, particularly in guiding pupils' forward in their learning;
  - the quality of planning, particularly in not addressing the skills, knowledge and understanding to be taught;
  - the quality of targets on individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs.

19. The quality of teaching of literacy based on all inspection evidence is satisfactory overall, as it was at the time of the last inspection. A number of good and very good literacy lessons were observed during the inspection, during which pupils were involved in the work, worked at a good pace and reviewed their learning at the end of the lesson. Teachers use their time well in some lessons to teach key skills to small groups whilst other pupils work well independently. Pupils in these lessons are achieving very well. However, in too many literacy lessons pupils all work at the same activity with little idea of how long they have to complete the work. There is no real sense of purpose in these lessons and, in many, the time for independent work is too short because the introduction to the lesson has overrun.
20. The quality of teaching and learning in numeracy throughout the school during the inspection was good. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and teach the basic skills well. Most planning is thorough and meets the needs of the pupils. Lesson objectives are clearly identified and shared with the pupils at the start of the lesson. There are some occasions when the needs of pupils, particularly those who are at the top end of each set, are not well met and the work does not challenge them sufficiently.
21. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well and as a result they are learning effectively. The co-ordinator for special educational needs teaches pupils very well in small groups in the room for special educational needs. Lessons for these small groups are very well targeted to pupils' needs, move at a good pace and keep pupils interested so that they learn very well. In lessons throughout the school, support staff provide good support, helping pupils to understand the lessons. However, teachers' planning, particularly in literacy and numeracy, does not spell out exactly how pupils will be helped to achieve their targets in every lesson. Consequently, some activities are not planned at the right level and learning in these lessons is not as effective.
22. Where teaching is good or very good, teachers show good subject knowledge, which they pass on to pupils with interest and enthusiasm. Explanation and demonstration skills are good, with teachers using displays, artefacts and the overhead projector to capture pupils' imagination. In a Year 6 science lesson, the teacher made very good use of a range of different sized balls to demonstrate the relationship between the Sun, the Moon and the Earth. Lesson introductions are challenging and teachers share the lesson aim with pupils. For example, in a Year 4 numeracy lesson the aim was 'To solve real life problems involving addition and to understand the vocabulary'. As a result, pupils understood the purpose of the lesson and worked exceptionally hard at solving their problems. Teachers use questions effectively and expect pupils to explain their thinking; for example, in a Year 4 numeracy lesson the teacher asked, "What sort of (mathematical) operation is this and how do you know?" As a result, pupils develop their mathematical understanding and apply their speaking and listening skills successfully.
23. Where teaching is strong, teachers manage the middle part of lessons effectively. Resources are readily available and pupils know that they should have their pens and rulers with them; this applies particularly to lessons where pupils are taught in sets and move to different classrooms. Pupils are set clear targets for their work; for example, "You have 20 minutes to complete this task". Teachers and learning support assistants work with groups effectively to develop pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding, with the result that good progress is made in lessons.
24. In the best lessons, the plenary or final part is used effectively to check pupils' understanding and they are asked whether or not they feel they have met the aim for the lesson. Pupils are expected to discuss and share their work with others; for example, in Year 4, by explaining to the rest of the class how they solved a mathematical problem. In

an information and communication technology lesson in Year 5, pupils used the computer linked to the overhead projector to demonstrate how to add backgrounds to their posters.

25. Throughout the school, relationships between teachers and pupils are good and this has a positive impact on pupils' good behaviour and attitudes to learning. Teachers expect pupils to work independently on occasions, but also to work collaboratively in pairs or small groups; paired work is a strong feature within lessons in the 'ICT Suite'. Teachers set homework regularly and this makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning. Pupils know when homework should be returned and most complete it on time.
26. In lessons where teaching is satisfactory, the introduction is often too long, with the result that pupils lose interest. In addition, the length of some lessons, particularly before morning break, is too long, it is hard for pupils to maintain concentration, and progress is not as good as it should be.

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

27. The overall quality and range of opportunities for learning are unsatisfactory. This is because curriculum development has not kept pace with changes to the National Curriculum since the last inspection in 1997. As a result, the improvements needed then in design and technology have not been established throughout the school. Furthermore, art and design has not been reviewed thoroughly in line with new statutory requirements. Improvement has been made since the last inspection in the mathematics curriculum, which closely matches the recommendations of the National Numeracy Strategy in all year groups. In English, the National Literacy Strategy is used appropriately to guide the range of activities taught to each year group. However, there is a lack of clear detail in school planning for speaking and listening. Consequently, teachers do not give enough attention to teaching these important skills at the right level in each year group and pupils underachieve. School planning for the teaching of reading is also weak; for example, older and more-able pupils are not challenged to develop their reading skills further, and this limits their progress. In addition, there is not enough guidance for developing library skills. The development of literacy skills is not planned effectively across the curriculum, as in history and geography, where use of the library is incidental and not a key part of each topic. As a result, pupils' achievement in English is well below that of pupils in similar schools. The provision for information and communication technology has improved, particularly since the school completed its new 'ICT Suite'.
28. In art and design, and in design and technology, where the curriculum is unsatisfactory and does not meet statutory requirements, the school has not set out:
  - how pupils will cover all aspects of each of the National Curriculum subjects;
  - how pupils will develop their skills as they move through the school;
  - the level of attainment that is expected for each group of pupils;
  - how literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology skills will be developed in other subjects.
29. In music, the school has successfully introduced a suitable commercial scheme to guide teachers' planning. In design and technology, the very recent introduction of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) guidance in the subject is already improving the quality of pupils' work in Year 3. In science and religious education, the subject co-ordinators have worked hard to provide detailed guidance. As a result, in both of these subjects, pupils work at activities that are both challenging and interesting, and often exciting. The physical education curriculum is planned successfully and contributes to the good standards achieved.

30. Curriculum time is not always used effectively; for example, in Year 6 silent reading is organised for 15 minutes each day. There is no clear plan to ensure that pupils are developing their reading skills appropriately during this time. English and mathematics lessons timetabled before the morning break are often too long so that pupils lose concentration by the end. The good work that takes place in the special educational needs room results in pupils with special educational needs missing other lessons, for example music, geography and physical education. Although the timetable tries to ensure that pupils do not miss the same subjects each week, those in Year 6 working at additional English skills in the special educational needs room miss a third of music lessons.
31. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs. The co-ordinator for special educational needs (SENCO), with the support of the headteacher, has made a number of recent improvements. A small room has been completely refurbished to make an attractive environment for groups of pupils to work with either the co-ordinator or a support teacher. A software package has been purchased to improve the quality of pupils' individual education plans. However, pupils' learning goals are not yet precise enough. Currently, these are far too broad and not achievable for pupils in the short term. Pupils are often supported well by learning support assistants; this popular team provides patient and clear support for individual children and small groups in lessons. When pupils are withdrawn from lessons they receive support that is often very good. These lessons, taught by the co-ordinator, are meticulously planned to meet pupils' needs. However, throughout the school, teachers' daily and weekly planning, particularly in mathematics and English lessons, is not well matched to pupils' needs. There are no gifted and talented pupils identified. Consequently, too often lessons are not planned at the right level for all the pupils.
32. A very good range of extra-curricular activities is provided to broaden pupils' experiences. They have the chance to take part in a wide range of music clubs, concerts and festivals. Local residents provide a very popular tambourine club and peripatetic teachers provide tuition on a wide range of instruments. Teaching staff take guitar and recorder clubs and a choir sings at events in the local community. During the inspection, an inspirational voice coach from the English National Opera held a workshop for pupils in Years 3 and 4. The pupils were spellbound for much of this, quickly learning new songs and chants with no musical accompaniment. Later they were stamping around the playground during the morning break singing the chants again and again. For pupils who are not so keen on music, a computer club has been established, and there are also a maths club and a homework club. A large number of sports clubs take place and teams compete with other local schools. Visits are organised to support school topics and older pupils have the opportunity to take part in a residential visit. 'Booster' classes have already begun to help pupils in Year 6 improve their literacy and numeracy skills.
33. The provision for pupils' personal and social education is satisfactory. Education about misusing drugs and health education are planned in line with suitable school policies. House captains are elected by pupils in Year 6 and proudly wear their badges around the school. Assemblies are used appropriately for awarding house points and celebrating success, including certificates gained out of school hours. Pupils have opportunities to take responsibility for their learning in many classes. They frequently work together in groups or pairs and are trusted to work by themselves in some lessons. However, pupils have too few opportunities to use the library independently for research, and in some lessons they spend too long listening to teachers.
34. The school has good links with the local community and other local primary and secondary schools. For example, pupils from the secondary school visit to play Tudor musical instruments. The choir is active locally and has sung at a local bank. End-of-year concerts are well attended by parents and local sponsors contribute to sports kit.

The school is involved in fund-raising activities and presents poetry and music to Upton Library 'Coffee Mornings'. Local residents support in classes and pupils use the local environment for humanities; for example, they visit the 'Country Park'. The school hall has been used for district council meetings and a local trust donates money for prizes each year. Local church leaders regularly talk to pupils and take assembly, and the headteacher and pupils distribute harvest produce locally.

35. The school makes good provision for the development of spiritual awareness. Assemblies are a good start to the day, providing uplifting experiences and appropriate opportunities for reflection and prayer. The local vicar leads lively assemblies, producing broad smiles and enthusiastic responses. The wealth of music provision in clubs and individual lessons provokes much laughter and pride. In some lessons, pupils have fun, and in others they gasp with wonder as they learn. In Year 3, pupils were astounded that silver foil would conduct electricity and light up a bulb from a battery. In Year 4, pupils looked at their class teachers' christening robe and photographs with rapt attention. In Year 5, pupils learning about Islam in a religious education lesson talked about their own precious gifts, one child talking about her mother. In Year 6, pupils reading Macbeth were highly amused by Shakespeare's insulting language, savouring the words 'lily-livered' and 'fibbergibbet'.
36. Provision for pupils' moral development is good and permeates the life of the whole school. Pupils respect and take care of the school's resources and are trusted to work with them independently. Teachers are sensitive to pupils' feelings and have dealt well with the very disturbing world news this week, helping some pupils to discuss their concerns without upsetting others.
37. Provision for pupils' social development is good and evidence of this can be seen every day at lunchtimes. All around the playground, pupils have made notices, which tell everyone the sorts of games that can be played in each area. Pupils in Year 5 organise activities such as skipping and ball games, and are responsible for getting out equipment and helping each other. As a result, lunchtimes are happy and relaxed, with pupils playing together well. Most classes have monitors who quickly carry out their duties in organising resources. Pupils take some responsibility for their own learning, writing personal targets for themselves, which are displayed in some classrooms, and evaluating their progress towards them.
38. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. The school provides some useful opportunities for broad cultural studies; for example, visiting museums and galleries, and through literature, such as the works of Shakespeare. An African topic is repeated annually in Year 5, but studies only one African state. Religious education is used well to introduce pupils to different religious and cultural beliefs. However, there is too little curriculum planning in other subjects to ensure that pupils are aware of the wide diversity of cultural life in Great Britain and around the world.

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

39. Since the last inspection, the school has continued to provide all pupils with good standards of care and welfare. It monitors and supports pupils' personal development, behaviour and attendance well. However, although the educational and personal support and guidance provided for pupils are satisfactory, overall there are weaknesses in the way in which teachers use the results of their assessments of pupils' learning to plan work for pupils of all abilities in order to support their academic progress.
40. Most parents say that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible and, although some disagree, the majority feel that the school promotes good standards of behaviour. In the questionnaire, most parents say that they feel comfortable about



approaching the school with any questions or problems. Pupils say that they are looked after well and that they are all treated as equals.

41. There are satisfactory arrangements for ensuring the health and safety of pupils and staff. Procedures for assessing risks, carrying out checks of the school premises and ensuring pupils' well being has been reviewed are well understood by staff. Staff who are trained in first aid care well for pupils and have a good understanding of those pupils who have special medical needs. There are very good procedures in place for dealing with issues relating to child protection. The headteacher, as child protection co-ordinator, has given good priority to ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibility to report concerns and that they are kept up to date with current practice. There is good awareness of the responsibilities towards any 'looked after' pupils.
42. The school has good links with outside support agencies, particularly the educational welfare and school nursing service, and uses their support well in monitoring pupils' attendance and welfare and resolving difficulties that arise, for example bullying issues. Attendance procedures have improved since the last inspection and the school has put in place good systems for following up unexplained absences and for monitoring pupils with large numbers of authorised absences or term-time holidays.
43. There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' behaviour. The 'Good Behaviour Guide' for pupils and parents is based on the school's positive behaviour policy and is consistently reinforced throughout the school. Pupils are clear about what is expected of them and have a good understanding of their own class rules through the negotiation and agreement that take place at the beginning of term. The school has made good use of the 'Behaviour Support Service' to offer guidance for midday and learning support staff and to support those pupils who have specific behavioural difficulties. The school is aware of some significant behavioural problems amongst some of the pupils new to the school in Year 3 and staff are applying the behaviour policy well to help them begin to understand the school's expectations. Pupils say that staff take their concerns seriously when they are involved in conflict with others and that 'Circle Time'<sup>3</sup> helps them to talk about friendships and bullying.
44. Staff know the pupils well and support their personal development by helping them to make improvements in their behaviour and attitudes to their learning and to each other. The established system of house points, good work books and celebration assemblies is effective in recognising pupils' achievements, raising their self-esteem and encouraging them to do better. There is good reporting of pupils' personal and social development in their end-of-year reports, although pupils do not have the opportunity to assess their own achievements and progress against the personal targets that they have set for themselves.
45. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support. The school places a high priority on helping pupils who have difficulties, particularly in reading and writing. A larger number of pupils are identified for extra support than is common in most schools. Some of these pupils already read at an appropriate level and have been identified to improve their work habits.
46. Since the last inspection, the school has made satisfactory progress in developing its procedures for assessment. It has begun to analyse data from national tests to identify trends in achievement and to more closely monitor year groups of pupils, for example differences in the achievement of boys and girls. The school has now formalised the range of tests and assessments for English, mathematics and science in each year group

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<sup>3</sup> In these lessons, pupils sit in a circle and, through agreed rules, have the opportunity to speak and listen to each other talking about issues which touch them all.

to achieve consistency in the information collected in pupils' assessment files. However, while assessment procedures are satisfactory for religious education, formal assessment procedures for other subjects, and in particular information and communication technology, are only in the early stages of development.

47. The use that teachers make of the information gained from assessment is, however, unsatisfactory. It is not being used well enough to plan work and focus specifically on what pupils need to learn next. As a result, they make uneven progress and, overall, do not achieve well enough. In mathematics, for example, pupils are placed in 'set' teaching groups as a result of regular testing and analysis. Within the set, however, they are not always provided with work that is well matched to their abilities. The school has only recently introduced target setting in English. However, teachers are not using assessment in English well enough to devise targets that are specifically aimed at what each year, class and individual needs to learn next. As a result of inconsistencies in the way in which teachers assess pupils' progress and the insufficient focus on the development of specific subject skills, it is difficult for teachers to adequately monitor and support pupils' academic progress. Pupils' work is often not marked and annotated sufficiently to help them understand the levels at which they are working and what they need to do next to improve.

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

48. The quality of partnership that the school has with parents is satisfactory. As reported at the last inspection, most parents are pleased with what the school provides for their children and many are involved with their children's education. Parents are particularly positive about:
- the fact that their children like coming to school;
  - the high expectations that the school has of their children;
  - the good progress that their children make.
49. A significant minority of those parents who completed the questionnaire were critical of:
- the way the school is led and managed;
  - the range of activities provided outside lessons;
  - the way in which the school works closely with them;
  - the information that they receive about their children's progress;
  - the amount of homework that pupils receive.
50. The inspection team agrees that pupils are positive about school life and that this has a good impact on their attitudes towards work and their behaviour. There is good communication between teachers and parents on an individual basis. The provision and use of homework are good and pupils are provided with a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
51. Although most parents are supportive of the school, the inspection team acknowledges that a minority group of parents is dissatisfied with some areas of school life and, in particular, with the current management of the school. The inspection team finds that the leadership and management of the school are unsatisfactory because there is a breakdown in communication within the senior management team. Although this is a cause for concern, inspection findings are that all staff in the school continue to have good relationships with parents and try to work closely with them.
52. Overall, the quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory. There is good detail about the organisation and work of the school in its prospectus, and parents are kept well informed about events and activities in regular weekly newsletters. In response to parents' wishes to have more information about what is taught, each year group now produces termly curriculum letters, which encourage parents to support their children's

learning at home. There is good encouragement for parents to speak to teachers about their children's progress on an informal basis as well as at termly consultation meetings. Parents are invited to occasional curriculum workshops and to see new developments, such as the computer suite. Pupils' end-of-year reports are satisfactory, overall. In English, mathematics and science there is satisfactory information about what a pupil has been learning, and some strengths and weaknesses are identified. However, there is no identification of the levels at which pupils are working or any formal identification of targets for improvement. As a result, parents may not be aware that their children are not achieving as well as they might. Reporting of pupils' progress in other subjects is more variable in quality because there are few formal assessments in other subjects of the curriculum.

53. The home-school agreement demonstrates a satisfactory commitment to partnership. The school has begun to involve parents more in its development by consulting with them on homework issues and where they would like more curriculum information. There are regular invitations for parents to attend concerts, plays and sporting events. They are encouraged to hear their children read regularly and to support their homework activities by signing the newly introduced homework diaries. Parents are active in their support of the parent-teacher association and its fund-raising activities and some volunteer their support to the 'Grounds Improvement Team' initiative.
54. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are well informed about their children's progress. However, they are not sufficiently involved in reviewing their children's progress, or in setting their targets for future development. Parents do not sign the documentation the school draws up and individual education plans do not spell out how parents can help their children make progress.

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

55. The leadership and management of the headteacher and staff with management responsibilities are unsatisfactory. Whilst the headteacher, supported by the deputy headteacher, has a clear vision for the school, she is being impeded in her ambition to take the school forward by some unwilling and unco-operative staff, including members of the senior management team. Apart from impeding the school's capacity to improve, this dysfunction is having a detrimental effect on other members of staff. There has been a breakdown of trust and communication between the headteacher and the senior management team. This is partly because some senior managers do not recognise the headteacher's right to manage, partly because of a lack of understanding of roles and responsibilities, and partly because of a resistance to change, even when it is blatantly necessary or a statutory requirement. Not all teachers with management responsibilities are fulfilling their roles, making them less effective than they should be. Far too much time and energy are spent on issues concerning staff relationships and not enough on issues concerning raising pupils' attainment, and this is having a detrimental impact on the school's provision. A governor succinctly described the effects of the problems by saying, "We can't move forward unless everybody is moving in the same direction". It is difficult to compare these judgements with those of the previous inspection, as there is a different management team.
56. The parents' questionnaire indicated a level of dissatisfaction with the leadership and management of the school. Whilst some parents were correct in identifying a problem, they were incorrect in putting the blame on the headteacher, who is attempting to raise standards in the school, but is meeting resistance. Praise for the headteacher comes from a number of quarters, including the governors, one of whom described the school as having taken 'a quantum leap forward' since her arrival. Only 14 parents attended the parents' meeting and their views were not representative of the majority.

57. The school has a standard set of aims and a mission statement that refers to a 'happy, caring and stimulating learning environment'. Fortunately, the lack of happiness and care for each other which is evident amongst some teachers is not transmitted to pupils who are happy in the school and well cared for.
58. The governors have a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are aware of the current difficulties within the leadership and management of the school. Their response to the previous inspection was satisfactory and all issues were addressed. The headteacher produces detailed reports for the full governing body and regularly meets with the chair of governors. There are governors with specific responsibilities for literacy, numeracy and special educational needs. Curriculum co-ordinators report to the curriculum committee and sometimes to the whole governing body, as was the case with the developments in information and communication technology. Governors are paired with teachers to enable them to find out about the school, but many are unable to spare the time to visit regularly. Their roles are clearly defined and they ensure that the school meets statutory requirements. They are involved in strategic planning, although they are not looking far enough ahead, with the improvement plan only going as far as 2002, and they have yet to develop further their ability to relate the school budget to the school development plan. The governors also are spending too much time on the current management problems within the school, which is limiting the time they spend on developing a long-term vision for the school.
59. The headteacher has successfully introduced the required performance management system. The fact that, beforehand, teachers had not been monitored or observed whilst teaching by the headteacher caused some resentment and resistance. However, the system is going ahead and some teachers have received their training. So far, only the headteacher, deputy headteacher and co-ordinators of English, mathematics and science have monitored teaching, but plans are for all co-ordinators to monitor their own subject. Some targets are rather vague at the moment and there is still a way to go before they are sufficiently specific. The monitoring and analysis of standards are rigorous in mathematics and science, but far less effective in English. In mathematics and science, co-ordinators are carefully analysing strengths and weaknesses in their subject, and curriculum plans are modified in an attempt to eliminate the weaknesses and raise standards. Both these co-ordinators use assessment and performance data to set challenging targets.
60. Education priorities are supported through careful financial planning. The budget has gone from a deficit to a surplus since the new headteacher arrived. The surplus, although above the recommended level, is to be used for developing the vacant caretaker's bungalow for teaching purposes, which is thoroughly appropriate and is intended to have a clear benefit for pupils. 'Best value' principles are evident in all the school's spending and this is followed by an evaluation of the spending decisions. The administrative assistants operate very efficient systems, aided by the use of new technology. They provide the headteacher and governing body with up-to-date information and show that all the specific grants are used for the right purposes. The latest audit raised only three small recommendations, one of which was immediately rescinded as it went against the county's policy, with the other two being dealt with immediately. The school's priorities for development identified in the school development plan refer to raising standards, developing the breadth of the curriculum and promoting the work of the school. These are appropriate, although the lack of attention to developing staff trust and teamwork is a serious omission.
61. The co-ordinator for special educational needs provides good leadership and support for the school. Her influence can be seen in all classrooms through the high expectations she sets for managing the paperwork for individual children. The co-ordinator is well aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school's current provision and has already begun to

address them. For example, she is using a good software program to improve the targets that are written for each child, which she recognises are far too broad. The effective use of information and communication technology has enabled the co-ordinator to track the progress of all pupils as they move up or down the school's register of special educational needs. The co-ordinator gives more than the usual level of support to class teachers in managing the paperwork for pupils at the early stages of identification and support. She sets a very good example of classroom practice; the special educational needs room is a warm and inviting place to work in, both for adults and children. Resources are very well organised and of high quality.

62. Staffing is adequate for the number of pupils on roll and all teachers are suitably qualified, with a range of experience and expertise. Good use is made of staff expertise on a number of occasions during the week when teachers swap classes to use their strengths. There is a good professional development system for newly qualified teachers, which effectively helps them settle into the school and their career. Classroom assistants are well trained, and work very effectively with class teachers to support pupils' learning. Accommodation is adequate for the number of pupils, although some of the mobile classrooms are rather small for Year 6 pupils and when art or design and technology are being taught. The playgrounds are adequate for break-times and for physical education, and good use is made of the local recreation ground for games. There are sufficient resources available to enable teachers to teach their subjects, with good resources in science, information and communication technology, religious education, art, design and technology, and history, and for pupils with special educational needs.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

63. To raise standards and improve the quality of education the headteacher, staff and governors should:
- (1) as a matter of urgency, ensure that all members of the teaching staff and governors are made explicitly aware of the conditions of service and contractual responsibilities of class teachers, subject co-ordinators, the deputy headteacher and the headteacher; (paragraphs 9, 55-58)
  - (2) raise standards in art and design, and in design and technology, by ensuring that pupils are taught to the full requirements of the National Curriculum; (paragraphs 6, 27-28, 89-90, 94-95)
  - (3) raise standards in English and mathematics by ensuring that teachers' planning addresses the learning needs of all pupils, particularly the more able, with the emphasis on the skills, knowledge and understanding to be taught; (paragraphs 4, 8, 64-65, 67-68, 73-74)
  - (4) improve the use of the results of assessment in all subjects, using science and mathematics as an exemplar, to plan pupils' future learning, with a clear focus on the skills, knowledge and understanding to be taught; (paragraphs 39, 47)
  - (5) improve the leadership and co-ordination of English, particularly with regard to monitoring standards and assessing pupils' work more rigorously. (paragraphs 64, 72)

In addition the governing body may wish to include the following for possible inclusion in its action plan:

- improving the consistency of teachers' marking to ensure that it guides pupils forward in their learning; (paragraph 18)
- improving the targets in pupils' individual education plans; (paragraph 18)
- improving the quality of pupils' annual written reports to identify more clearly what pupils know, understand and can do. (paragraphs 13, 52)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	74
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	40

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	0	19	30	24	1	0	0
Percentage	0	26	40	33	1	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 one percentage point.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	394
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	24

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	125

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	17
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.5
National comparative data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
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 2 (Year 6)**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	51	47	98

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	37	36	46
	Girls	44	31	45
	Total	81	67	91
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	83 (77)	68 (67)	93 (85)
	National	N/A (75)	N/A (72)	N/A (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	33	35	43
	Girls	42	33	44
	Total	75	68	87
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	77 (73)	69 (55)	89 (70)
	National	N/A (70)	N/A (72)	N/A (79)

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



### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	388
Any other minority ethnic group	4

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Average class size	33

#### **Education support staff: Y3 – Y4**

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	140

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	7
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	8
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **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.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	663,771
Total expenditure	632,493
Expenditure per pupil	1,606
Balance brought forward from previous year	27,662
Balance carried forward to next year <sup>4</sup>	58,940

<sup>4</sup> The reasons for the budget surplus are explained in Section B under 'How well is the school led and managed?'

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 29%

Number of questionnaires sent out	394
Number of questionnaires returned	114

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	37	50	8	4	1
My child is making good progress in school.	29	57	11	3	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	25	59	12	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	20	56	18	5	1
The teaching is good.	39	47	8	3	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	21	50	18	10	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	39	41	8	11	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	41	50	9	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	25	38	27	7	3
The school is well led and managed.	26	37	13	19	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	25	56	11	4	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	12	48	24	9	7

## PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

### ENGLISH

64. Although pupils achieve average levels by the time they leave the school, standards are not high enough in English. When compared with those in similar schools, pupils achieve levels that are well below average. Over the last four years, teachers' assessments of pupils' achievement at the end of Year 6 have been consistently below pupils' actual test results, in some years by as much as 10 per cent. This indicates that teachers' expectations are too low and is reflected in some lessons and in pupils' work.
65. By the age of 11, standards in speaking and listening are below expectations and have fallen since the last inspection, when they were good. Pupils are not talking and listening with confidence in a range of contexts. There are not enough opportunities for them to develop their ideas thoughtfully and few discussions allow pupils to make enough contributions. There are three main reasons for this.
- Teachers talk for too long in the introductory and plenary parts of the literacy hour. As a result, pupils do not respond to each other's ideas well enough, or ask questions and make contributions freely.
  - Planning for the literacy hour and other subjects makes no reference to the speaking and listening skills that pupils are intended to develop in lessons. As a result, teachers have no clear focus for their teaching in this aspect.
  - There are no clear assessment records of pupils' attainment in speaking and listening skills, although they are in use in Years 3 and 4. As a result, opportunities for speaking and listening are not well matched to pupils' current levels of attainment.
66. There are some good examples in individual lessons, but these are isolated and not part of a clearly planned school policy to improve pupils' skills. In a Year 3 drama lesson, all pupils had a chance to speak to each other and some spoke to the whole class in role. This was a good opportunity for younger pupils to use a different tone of voice for speaking.
67. Most pupils have positive attitudes to reading and writing by the time they leave the school. However, the average standards achieved are too low and have not improved since the last inspection. In Year 6, pupils reading *Oliver Twist* and *David Copperfield* read unfamiliar words, for example 'porringer'. They use the context of the text to try to work out the meaning of these words, making good suggestions and referring to the text to explain their views. Nevertheless, pupils have significant gaps in their reading skills. They cannot talk with confidence about the different range of reading material available in the school fiction library, and their library skills are weak. Pupils have too few opportunities to use the library and other information sources for research. Weaknesses in teachers' planning result in pupils achieving less well than expected, because teachers do not make clear how pupils of different abilities will improve their reading skills in lessons. In too many lessons, pupils all work at the same activities, sometimes taking turns at each over a week. Reading tasks are not challenging enough for more-able pupils or matched to the targets identified for those with special educational needs. Literature activities and stories are given extra time in the timetable, but story time and silent reading frequently have no clearly stated aims for the lesson. Whilst pupils enjoy both of these activities, they are not improving their reading skills at a fast enough rate. In Year 3, one in five literacy lessons is used to watch a television programme and complete the follow-up activities; this is not an effective use of curriculum time and makes only a limited contribution to raising standards in reading. The last inspection identified a weakness in the amount of guidance pupils receive when choosing books to read at home. This has not been addressed and remains a concern.

68. Developing writing skills has been a high priority for the school. In addition to the literacy hour, 'Writers' Workshop' has been timetabled along with dictation, spelling and handwriting. Throughout the school, pupils' handwriting is good and they use a range of strategies for spelling. By Year 6, pupils use dictionaries with confidence and write at length with imagination and enthusiasm. Teachers' planning closely matches the National Literacy Strategy guidance in Years 4, 5 and 6. Consequently, pupils in these year groups write for a wide range of purposes. In Year 3, too many worksheets are used, limiting the number of opportunities for pupils to improve their writing skills. Many older pupils have had their poems published locally, and by Year 6 most pupils know how to set out a letter and write reports. There is an appropriate emphasis on teaching grammar and punctuation, and pupils improve their work by redrafting. Nevertheless, standards are not high enough when compared with those in similar schools. As with reading, this is largely due to weaknesses in teachers' planning, which does not focus specifically on developing skills at the right level for each group of pupils. More-able pupils are not set sufficiently challenging work to develop their skills; too often more-able pupils are simply given more work to do when they have finished. In addition, teachers' marking does not give pupils of all abilities enough information about how well they are doing and what they need to improve.
69. Teaching is satisfactory overall, as it was at the time of the last inspection. A number of good and very good literacy lessons were observed during the inspection, during which pupils were involved in the work, worked at a good pace and reviewed their learning at the end of the lesson. In one Year 5 class, pupils were engrossed in the lesson about a Japanese character, and the work that followed was very well matched to all pupils' needs. In Year 4, a shorter lesson moved along at a cracking pace so that all the work could be completed in the time. Pupils learned how to change a verb into the past tense and more-able pupils designed and created posters in pairs as a prompt for the rest of the class. Teachers use their time well in some lessons to teach key skills to small groups whilst other pupils work well independently. Pupils in these lessons are achieving very well. However, in too many literacy lessons pupils all work at the same activity with little idea how long they have to complete the work. There is no real sense of purpose in these lessons, and in many the time for independent work is too short because the introduction to the lesson has overrun. In some lessons, teachers do not use their time well; they circulate round the class rather than focussing their time teaching one group of pupils.
70. In other English lessons, setting pupils by ability for dictation, spelling and handwriting is effective, and the clear purpose to these lessons results in pupils learning well. Nevertheless, the lack of whole-school agreement on how aspects of these lessons will be taught limits the progress that pupils make. For example, dictation is taught differently in some classes and leaves pupils unsure of the system at the beginning of each year. Some story times at the end of the day are taught after pupils have collected their coats and bags. This sets low expectations for pupils, giving an impression that the working day has finished before the story begins. The most effective English lessons were for pupils with special educational needs, and were taught in small groups in the special educational needs room. The activities were well matched to pupils' needs and changed frequently to maintain their attention. Pupils in these lessons want to please the teacher and try hard to complete all the activities she sets them. They are rewarded with special stickers and glow with pride as the teacher sticks these into their books.
71. Literacy skills are not sufficiently well developed across the curriculum, mainly due to weaknesses in planning. Information and communication technology is not used consistently well enough to support English in classrooms, with the exception of small groups working in the special educational needs room and lessons taught in the 'ICT Suite'. Very little work is word-processed and pupils do not use information and communication technology often enough to research topics. Good provision is made for

hearing impaired pupils to work with their classmates. Pupils and staff are supportive so that all pupils with statements of special educational needs are included in lessons well.

72. Standards in the school do not reflect the high proportion of curriculum time given to teaching English. Pupils' achievement is much worse than expected mainly due to poor leadership by the co-ordinator, who has not carried out an evaluation of the school's performance in English and is largely unaware of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. A whole-school approach to teaching and learning has not been established and the recommendations from the last inspection to improve the quality of teaching have not been addressed in English. As a result, examples of good practice are not used consistently to benefit all pupils equally.
- In this subject: -
- No action has been taken to raise teachers' expectations so that teachers' assessments match pupils' test results more closely.
  - No rigorous monitoring of teaching has been documented. As a result, the co-ordinator is unaware of the weaknesses in teaching and has no plans to address these.
  - No rigorous monitoring of pupils' work has been completed. As a result, the co-ordinator has not identified where standards could be improved.
  - No rigorous monitoring of teachers' planning takes place, so that the reuse of short term planning year after year has gone unchecked. These plans drawn up for different groups of pupils do not reflect the needs of pupils in the current year groups. Planning does not match the needs of different ability groups, particularly the more able.
  - The 'Action Plan' is of poor quality and does not make raising standards the key priority or set out how success will be measured.
  - Insufficient analysis of pupils' achievement has been carried out. Consequently, the co-ordinator was unaware that standards are well below those of similar schools, both locally and nationally. Pupils' achievement through the school has not been sufficiently tracked, so that insufficient information is available to show the rate of progress that pupils make in each year group.
  - Individual targets have not been set for literacy in all classes in line with school policy. As a result, pupils do not know how to improve their literacy skills.
73. These considerable shortcomings need to be addressed if standards are to rise sufficiently. There are strengths to build on, including some very good teaching. Pupils in the school are well behaved and keen to learn; they have positive attitudes to reading and present their work neatly. Staffing levels are high, making the task of leading improvement in the subject manageable. In addition to the co-ordinator, there is a keen new co-ordinator for the library and a librarian. Time has been allocated for work to be completed and has increased this year because the deputy headteacher currently has no class and is able to release other staff.

## **MATHEMATICS**

74. By the end of Year 6, pupils attain the standards expected for their ages in numeracy and all areas of mathematics. This is a similar judgement to that of the last inspection. Pupils are taught in sets according to ability for mathematics. However, teachers sometimes do not expect enough of the pupils at the top end of their set, causing some underachievement. This means that standards are still not as high as they should be. There are no marked differences between the performance of girls and boys. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress. All pupils are included in the mathematics programme and all get equality of opportunity.
75. Pupils in Year 6 last year left the school with standards in mathematics below expectations. They started at Upton Junior School with below average standards at the end of Key Stage 1, so progress has been satisfactory. Pupils' progress through the school fluctuated, being at its best in Year 6, but much poorer in Years 4 and 5.

76. Most pupils are competent with number calculations, although division is less secure than the other operations. However, when pupils need to find out which operation to use from written problems associated with money or measures, particularly when more than one step is required, they are less competent. Appropriate attention to mental calculation is developing speedy recall of number facts, including multiplication tables, halving and doubling, and decimals and fractions. Most pupils have a satisfactory understanding of shape and identify correctly a range of two- and three-dimensional shapes, although constructing a given shape to specific measurements is less secure. When handling data, pupils represent discrete data by use of graphs and charts, although they do not employ information and communication technology sufficiently. Good attention is paid to correct mathematical language, and most pupils understand terms such as 'mean', 'median' and 'mode', but are less confident with solving problems using data.
77. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school during the inspection was good. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and teach the basic skills well. Most planning is thorough and meets the needs of the pupils. Lesson objectives are clearly identified and shared with the pupils at the start of the lesson. There are some occasions when the pupils' needs are not well met, particularly those who are at the top end of each set, and the work does not challenge them sufficiently. Planning is less effective when it is taken directly from a scheme of work rather than being geared specifically to the needs of the pupils in the set, as occurs sometimes in Year 5. Pupils are very well managed, with good organisation and control, allowing them to get on with their work without disruption. Resources are well prepared and well used, giving pupils plenty of practical experiences, which aid their learning. Lessons are often brisk, keeping pupils well motivated. They respond well to this and work with enthusiasm. Sometimes there is too much teacher talking and insufficient pupil activity, and on these occasions pupils get fidgety and inattentive, thus limiting their progress. The start of lessons, which is intended to be at a brisk pace to sharpen and develop mental and oral skills, is sometimes too pedestrian and does not involve all pupils. Homework is set regularly and complements the work done in class. Many homework sheets have useful information on the bottom enabling parents to understand what is expected. Whilst most teachers use some computer programs, pupils do not have enough opportunities to use information and communication technology to support their work in number, handling data, shape, space, and problem solving. For example, their work on data handling shows little evidence of using a computer program to present data in a variety of forms, interpret the data, draw conclusions and explain the results.
78. The school uses a variety of tests to ascertain pupils' level of attainment and to identify strengths and weaknesses. Results are used well in planning work that challenges the pupils, except, on occasions, the more-able pupils in each set. Effective records are sent on to the next year groups and are used to aid planning. Day-to-day marking is inconsistent. Much is very good, with praise, encouragement and comments that help pupils to improve their standards. Other marking is less helpful, or not done.
79. The management of mathematics is good and the subject co-ordinator is having a positive effect on standards of teaching and learning. He samples work in books, monitors plans and observes lessons, but further work in these areas would be beneficial. Of particular value is the rigorous analysis of pupils' work in tests. This enables teachers to address weaknesses that have become apparent. Evidence suggests that this is effective and the school is well placed to achieve better results. Demonstration lessons by the co-ordinator and the mathematics advisory teacher are setting good examples and leading to constructive discussions, both helping to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

## SCIENCE

80. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average as a result of a high proportion of good and very good teaching. In addition, the decision to teach all of the National Curriculum requirements by the end of Year 5 and to use Year 6 as a 'revision year' is having a positive impact on standards. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. There is no variation in the standards achieved by boys and girls. Standards have improved since the previous inspection, where they were judged to be 'in line with national averages'. Improvement is the result of good teaching and the effective management of the subject.
81. Pupils use their literacy skills successfully when recording their investigations and experiments, although in some lessons teachers do not remind pupils of the importance of, for example, using dictionaries to help with spellings. Numeracy skills are used effectively, particularly in drawing graphs to show the results of experiments. There are some good examples of pupils using computers successfully to create graphs, but the use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning is underdeveloped. However, the co-ordinator is aware of this and, together with her colleague with responsibility for information and communication technology, plans to address this issue through in-service training.
82. Progress in investigative and experimental science is good. In Year 4, pupils carry out a good investigation into 'How can we make our shadows bigger?' and use their numeracy skills successfully in recording their results. By Year 6, pupils know and explain confidently the terms, 'fair test', 'variables', 'hypotheses' and 'prediction'. They use this knowledge when they carry out a good investigation into thermal insulators. Literacy skills are used successfully in recording the findings of the experiment using charts, tables and diagrams.
83. In the study of life processes and living things, progress is good. By Year 4, pupils show a good knowledge of seed dispersal and the life cycle of plants, for example a poppy. They use keys accurately to identify leaves. By Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of habitats and food chains; they know and explain clearly 'germination' and 'photosynthesis'. They draw and label accurately the main organs of a flowering plant.
84. In their work on materials and their properties, pupils make good progress. They accurately classify materials into gases, liquids and solids. They understand and explain that when materials are heated or cooled there is reversible or irreversible change. They know how to separate materials, for example by filtering, and understand that some solids will dissolve in water and others will not.
85. Pupils make good progress in their understanding of physical processes. By Year 4, pupils explain why we have day and night. They know that light travels in straight lines and explain the terms 'transparent', 'translucent' and 'opaque'. Pupils understand how sounds are made and how they can be changed. By Year 6, pupils show a good knowledge and understanding of magnetism and electricity, including insulators and conductors. They explain gravity and forces and know that forces can be balanced or unbalanced. Pupils explain why we have seasons and understand the phases of the moon.
86. As a result of good teaching, pupils enjoy science and are very keen to learn. In lessons, they are enthusiastic in answering questions and contributing to discussions. The standard of their written work, including the presentation of charts, diagrams, tables and graphs, is of a very high standard. Pupils work well together in lessons, particularly when carrying out investigations.

87. Teaching is good overall, with a significant amount of very good teaching observed in Year 6 during the inspection. Teachers have good subject knowledge and the decision in Year 6 to teach to individual strengths is having a positive impact on standards. For example, one teacher teaches 'Light' to all three 'sets', another teaches 'Sound' and the third teaches 'The Earth and beyond'. Across the school, very good use is made of the results of assessing pupils' learning at the end of each unit of work. Gaps in knowledge are identified, which informs future planning. In lessons, resources are used effectively to support pupils' learning; for example, in Year 6 a range of different sized balls was used to explain the 'Solar System' and the relationship between the Earth, Moon and Sun. In Year 4, a video was used successfully to introduce pupils to 'day and night'. The teacher made good use of the video by stopping it at various points to challenge pupils' understanding and knowledge. In addition, the video made a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual development as they were enthralled by the Aborigine story of how the Earth and Moon were created.
88. The subject is managed effectively by an enthusiastic and dedicated co-ordinator; this has a positive impact on standards. A significant strength of her work is the thorough and detailed analysis of the results of the National Curriculum assessments. For example, she identified that, '83% of children knew that sound was caused by vibrations but many still don't understand how sounds can be made louder (54%)'. This level of detail means that gaps in pupils' understanding can be addressed in teachers' future planning. Resources are good and used effectively to support pupils' learning.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

89. Standards in art and design are too low and do not meet national expectations. They have fallen considerably since the last inspection, when the standard of work seen was good. Standards are not as high now because curriculum planning does not match the requirements of the National Curriculum in art and design, and teachers' planning does not show what skills pupils will develop in lessons.
90. The standard of work seen in Year 6 at the end of the last academic year is higher than standards seen in the rest of the school, but is still not high enough. Pupils in Year 6 completed some high quality work, for example, in collage and observational drawing. However, the range of work covered does not allow pupils to achieve the standards that are expected by the age of 11; for example, there is little three-dimensional work. The school has a good policy of using sketchbooks throughout the school. Nonetheless the quality of work in these books is very variable and reflects the limited range of work seen around the school. Pupils are not developing skills, for example in drawing, as they progress through the school. Photographic evidence shows that pupils produce bright and imaginative work for displays, but do not develop their skills in painting and collage as they do so. For example, pupils in Year 4 paint all the brightly coloured paintings of flowers in a vase displayed in the hall with the same colour palette. Pupils in Year 6 work in batik and weaving and their use of using purple tones is effective, but it does not build on work of the same quality in Years 3, 4 and 5 using red, yellow and blue tones.
91. The teaching of art is unsatisfactory because it does not provide suitable opportunities for pupils to work at an appropriate level. This is clear from an analysis of pupils' work and teachers' planning in the subject for the whole of the last academic year. Nevertheless, some good art lessons were observed during the inspection. In Year 6, pupils are at the beginning of a topic on learning how to create a portrait. The lesson seen was well planned, teaching pupils the specific skills of drawing eyes and noses. Pupils will develop these and other skills over the next few weeks before finally completing a portrait using their new skills. Pupils in this lesson were absorbed in the



work and many found it challenging. The teacher gave good, clear instructions, modelling how to draw, so that by the end of the lesson the majority of pupils had made good progress. In Year 3, pupils were happily involved in designing and making Roman mosaics, following the teacher's clear instructions well and using their imagination freely in their designs.

92. Information and communication technology is not used effectively to support art. Pupils with special educational needs are included and supported in art lessons throughout the school. However, some timetabling of support in small groups means that pupils with special educational needs miss art lessons.
93. The school is well placed to make improvements in art over the coming year. A keen and enthusiastic new co-ordinator has been appointed who recognises the need to review the curriculum as a matter of urgency. The previous outdated curriculum is based on activities to be taught rather than on skills and does not help teachers to plan which skills to develop in each year group. A useful action plan has already been drawn up outlining the areas that should be improved. The plan reflects the higher expectations that are needed to raise standards in the subject.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

94. Standards in design and technology are too low and do not meet national expectations. They have fallen since the last inspection, when the standard of work seen was 'about average'. A key issue in the last inspection report was to develop the curriculum in design and technology so that the National Curriculum is taught in sufficient depth. Standards are not as high now as they were 1997 because this development was not done effectively. Curriculum planning has not kept pace with changes to the National Curriculum and does not match the requirements for design and technology. As a result, standards have fallen further.
95. Teaching is unsatisfactory overall because pupils of all abilities are not completing sufficient work. Teachers' planning is weak because it does not provide enough detail to show which skills pupils will learn or practise in lessons. This is clear from an analysis of pupils' work and teachers' planning from the whole of the last academic year. Very little work is recorded and there are a few sketches in sketchbooks. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to design thoroughly by recording the materials and techniques they plan to use for their models. Very little evaluation of pupils' work is completed; there is no recorded evidence of this being done by pupils or staff. Pupils in Year 6 talk about a windmill project they completed in Year 4, describing the process of design and evaluation. A few photographs are available to show a little work, but these are not dated, assessed or labelled with the year group. There is no planning from pupils or staff to accompany the photographs. There is no evidence that information and communication technology has been used effectively in this subject. Opportunities to develop literacy skills are missed through the lack of planning designs. Overall, it is clear that pupils' experience of design and technology is unsatisfactory.
96. Very few lessons were observed during the inspection, but it is clear that improvements have begun. An efficient co-ordinator has been appointed recently, who has drawn up a strong action plan for bringing about improvements in the subject. She has made an interim review of the curriculum and used the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidance in the subject as the basis for all school planning. Resources have been reorganised and updated, and a system for pupils to record the various stages of their work on a large grid has been introduced. Pupils in Year 3 using this sound strategy are designing and making photograph frames of good quality. In Year 5, pupils have only limited skills and previous knowledge and this affects the quality of their work. Nevertheless, they are making sound progress in learning how mechanisms in simple

toys work. Consequently, the school is well placed to bring about the necessary changes and raise teachers' expectations of what pupils should achieve in this subject.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

97. The last time the school was inspected, standards in geography and history were judged to be 'in line with national averages'. All issues raised by the last inspection have been addressed and standards at the end of Year 6 are similar to what can be expected nationally. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in their learning, and boys and girls achieve equally well.
98. Evidence from the previous school year shows that pupils have done some good work on contrasting localities. They have used geographical enquiry and skills to collect and present information about Upton, which they have sent to a school in Coventry. They have received similar information from Coventry and have produced tables to show similarities and differences. Good use of literacy skills was evident, including letter writing, but there is little evidence of pupils' use of information and communication technology, for example, to present the information they have collected. Geographical enquiry is developed further when pupils study Gambia. They have a sound knowledge and understanding of such topics as land use and economic activities, and of how the lives of children in Gambia differ from their own. Most pupils use maps and globes appropriately to locate geographical features, such as mountains and rivers. They understand scale and produce their own maps of their journey to school, using conventional signs and symbols. Most pupils handle four- and six-figure grid references, where numeracy skills are used well.
99. In history, pupils in Year 4 show a satisfactory understanding of life in Ancient Egypt. They write good factual accounts of the gods and goddesses, and sequence accurately the process of embalming. In Year 6, in the study of the Tudors, pupils write interesting accounts of the Spanish Armada from the perspective of people on both sides of the battle. When writing in the style of a newspaper, pupils give satisfactory evidence of their understanding of day-to-day life for the rich and poor in Tudor times. In the study of the Victorians, pupils, through the use of photographs, make good comparisons between Victorian schools and their own schooling today. They show a satisfactory understanding of key figures, including Queen Victoria and Florence Nightingale. There is some evidence of the use of information and communication technology, particularly in Year 6, where pupils use a multi-media presentation to show the results of their historical enquiry into life in Victorian times.
100. Teaching in geography and history is satisfactory, with some good aspects. Planning indicates coverage of the National Curriculum and appropriate progression through the school. However, planning usually indicates the activity to be undertaken, but does not adequately identify the skills the pupils are to develop. The variety of tasks is limited and there is little matching of work for pupils of different abilities. However, pupils with special educational needs are well supported in class and make good progress, although their presentation of work is often untidy. Marking is inconsistent throughout the school, with some being unsatisfactory. Some work is unmarked and there are too few written comments to help pupils improve. In the better lessons, challenging investigative activities are used to stimulate and motivate pupils, such as the Year 4 lesson where pupils were using globes, atlases and maps to investigate weather conditions for possible holidays. In lessons like this, pupils work enthusiastically and make good progress.
101. No monitoring of teaching in geography and history has taken place and there is only limited use of assessment, although development in both these areas is planned for the future. There are sufficient resources to deliver the curriculum, although they become stretched when all classes are studying the same topic at the same time.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

102. By the end of Year 6, standards meet national expectations; this is an improvement since the previous inspection, where standards were judged to be 'below the national average'. Standards have improved as a result of the school creating an 'ICT Suite' through the use of its NGfL (National Grid for Learning) funding and through the impressive work of the enthusiastic and hardworking co-ordinator. Progress for pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory and boys and girls achieve equally well. In lessons, pupils with computers at home are very supportive of those who do not have them. Currently, pupils have insufficient opportunities to apply the skills taught in lessons in the 'ICT Suite' when using computers in the classroom; teachers' planning does not include sufficient opportunities for this. However, the co-ordinator is aware of this issue and plans to address it through the NOF (New Opportunities Fund) training for teachers, which starts this term.
103. When given the opportunity, pupils apply their literacy skills successfully, particularly when word-processing stories or editing a piece of text which contains spelling and punctuation errors. Numeracy skills are applied successfully, particularly in science, where pupils use computers to create graphs to show the results of experiments and investigations. The use of computers to support learning in other subjects is satisfactory. In history, for example, pupils investigate and present information on the Victorians; in music, pupils use software to compose tunes.
104. By Year 4, pupils know how to edit text when word-processing. They understand how to change fonts, font sizes and colours. They apply their word-processing skills successfully when writing accounts of life in Ancient Egypt. Pupils use a graphics program to create imaginative posters. In Year 5, pupils combine text and 'clip-art' imaginatively to produce 'newspaper front pages'. In Year 6, pupils apply their literacy skills accurately, particularly spelling and punctuation, when they word-process stories of factual accounts, for example of the 'Upton Olympics'. Pupils show good, developing skills in the use of multi-media presentations, for example into the life of the Victorians. They know how to 'log on' to the school's network and are confident in loading programs and saving their work to file. They are confident in accessing the 'Internet'. The school's 'Internet Access' policy is displayed in the 'ICT Suite' and in all classrooms; pupils have signed to say that they agree to abide by it.
105. In lessons observed, pupils showed good application and concentration in their work. Pupils usually work in pairs and the school's use of 'Driver' and 'Navigator' means that they take it in turns fairly to operate the mouse (Driver) and to give instructions (Navigator). They are confident in experimenting; for example, in changing backgrounds and borders when designing a poster to show the rules needed in a swimming pool. Progress in lessons is good because pupils enjoy learning. However, there are insufficient planned opportunities for pupils to extend their learning back in their own classrooms.
106. Teaching is satisfactory, with some good features. Currently, teachers have not received their NOF training, although this is about to start. However, teachers are enthusiastic and use the 'ICT Suite' to good effect to develop pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. They make good use of the computer linked to an overhead projector (OHP) to explain and demonstrate key skills, including asking pupils to come and show, for example, how to change a font colour. Pupils are supported effectively in lessons and teachers are confident in using the expertise of pupils, particularly of those with computers at home, to support learning in lessons. At present, teachers do not provide sufficient planned opportunities for pupils to use the computers in classrooms to extend or apply their learning. During the inspection many of the classroom computers were not

used despite being turned on, some having no screensavers, which causes 'wear and tear' on monitors.

107. The subject is effectively led and managed by an enthusiastic, hard working and dedicated co-ordinator. She has a very clear vision for the development of the subject and contributes significantly to the improvement in standards. A detailed policy is in place together with a scheme of work to identify the knowledge, skills and understanding to be taught as pupils move up through the school. As co-ordinator she is going to lead the NOF training, which means that it can be specifically geared to the needs of the teachers and the school. A strong focus of this will be to further develop the use of computers, particularly those in classrooms, to support pupils' learning in all subjects. Resources are good and pupils' learning is enhanced by the effective use of the 'ICT Suite'. Assessment is at the early stages of development, but is being addressed by the co-ordinator.

## MUSIC

108. Standards in music meet expectations for pupils of this age, but are not as high as they were at the time of the last inspection. The fall in standards is mainly due to teachers' lack of confidence in teaching music. This was identified at the time of the last inspection. At that time, some teachers were not secure in their knowledge of the subject. The headteacher took responsibility for this subject herself after the music specialist left the school to take up another post. A wise decision was made to buy a detailed commercial scheme of work, accompanied by a wide range of taped resources. This has enabled staff who lack confidence in teaching music to begin to teach their classes the skills that are required in each year group. The headteacher ensured that a substantial amount of staff training was booked. For example, an English National Opera voice coach has already begun working with staff and pupils, raising confidence, improving skills and introducing fun to her workshops.
109. In addition, a very wide range of extra-curricular activities is provided for pupils throughout the school. There are music clubs for choir, tambourines, guitars and recorders. Peripatetic teachers provide tuition for a wide range of instruments. There is a clear commitment in the school to providing a wealth of musical experiences for pupils. As a result, the school is well placed to improve teachers' subject knowledge, raise expectations and pupils' standards.
110. No examples of the use of information and communication technology for music were observed during the inspection, but curriculum planning indicates suitable opportunities to use software to compose music. Pupils with special educational needs are included in the music clubs and workshops; they thoroughly enjoy music lessons. However, the timetabling of additional English support in music lessons for Year 6 results in a few pupils missing about a third of music lessons.
111. Teaching is satisfactory overall, the weakness in planning evident from the last academic year having been addressed. Teachers are identifying the skills that will be taught and lessons are planned appropriately so that pupils have enough opportunities to take part in musical activities at the right level. Pupils in Year 6 learn to sing a round after first warming up their voices rigorously and enjoyably. They review their knowledge of discords, harmonies and a basic scale during the lessons. Very good teaching ensures that all pupils take part and are given very clear directions. The teachers' very high expectations result in pupils achieving very well. They are delighted with their own performance at the end of the lesson. In Year 5, pupils tackle the challenging topic of metre with great enjoyment, working conscientiously in groups to compose their own raps using poetry. In Year 4, pupils improve their understanding of tempo with a range of enjoyable games and tunes. In the very small minority of lessons where teaching was less than satisfactory, weak management of pupils' behaviour combined with a lack of

experience in teaching music resulted in pupils losing interest in the lesson. In most cases, pupils are well behaved in music lessons and very keen to learn. They use instruments with care and sing with gusto. The popular tambourine club produces many broad grins, and the exciting voice workshop held pupils in Years 3 and 4 spellbound for 30 minutes.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

112. By the end of Year 6, standards in physical education are good and exceed those expected nationally, particularly in games and dance. This is an improvement on standards since the last inspection, and has come about through teachers' greater knowledge and understanding of the subject, leading to improved teaching and learning. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and there is no variation in the standards achieved by boys and girls.
113. In games, pupils develop their striking and fielding skills well. They work enthusiastically at the practices they are given, such as in the Year 4 lesson on football skills, where they responded well to all the challenges and made very good progress. Pupils were encouraged to think about what they needed to do to improve. In dance, pupils show good control of their movements and use their imagination well to create their dance routines, such as in the *Mission Impossible* theme in Year 6. In gymnastics, pupils perform travelling and balancing movements with appropriate control. They are beginning to link their movements into sequences. No swimming or athletic activities were observed. Records indicate that approximately 15 per cent of pupils leave the school unable to reach National Curriculum requirements in swimming. All pupils are included in physical education lessons and pupils who have limited physical skills are well supported and encouraged.
114. Teaching in physical education is good. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject, particularly in games and dance. This has been brought about by attendance at courses and by having visitors into school, such as a dancer, to lead lessons, watched by teachers. Whilst all lessons begin with a warm-up, they rarely include both aerobic and stretching routines, and there is no information given or any discussion about why they are doing it. Opportunities are missed to explain why the warm-up is of value to their health and well-being. Planning is sound and clear learning objectives are established. In gymnastics, insufficient attention is given to pupils transporting the equipment themselves. Whilst it is accepted that sometimes the size of the apparatus and the time available place restrictions on what can be achieved, pupils in Year 5 had gymnastic mats put out for them, which is totally unnecessary.
115. Good attention is given to health and safety and all pupils change into appropriate clothing. An issue raised by parents related to facilities for boys and girls to change separately. This has been successfully addressed in Year 6, but further thought should now be given to Year 5.
116. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has made a good start with managing the subject. He has rewritten the scheme of work, which is broad and covers all the required areas of the National Curriculum. No time has yet been made available for monitoring teaching. Physical education and sport in general are a strength of the school. There are a good number of after-school activities, which enable pupils to develop their skills further and to compete against other schools. There are sufficient resources available, with some good quality equipment for games.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

117. By the end of Year 6, standards are good and exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, where standards were judged to be 'satisfactory'. Improvement is the result of consistently good teaching and a well-planned curriculum. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning. Boys and girls achieve equally well, including their contributions to discussions. The subject makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual development.
118. Pupils use and apply their speaking and listening skills successfully in the subject; for example, in Year 4 when talking to their classmates about significant events in their lives. Pupils spoke clearly and confidently about events, such as being a bridesmaid or a pageboy at a wedding. Literacy skills are applied successfully when pupils write in the subject, although teachers are inconsistent in reminding pupils to think about using the skills of spelling and punctuation, including the use of dictionaries.
119. By Year 4, pupils show a good understanding of the key Christian ceremonies, particularly of Christenings and weddings. Literacy skills are used effectively, for example, in the use of speech marks in retelling the 'Nativity Story' or in sequencing correctly the story of 'Jonah and the Whale'. Pupils show a good knowledge of the differences between the 'Creation Story' of Christians and Muslims. In their study of Judaism, pupils show a good understanding of 'Bar Mitzvah'. By Year 6, pupils have a good knowledge of festivals, for example Hanukkah and the Epiphany. They show good understanding of the life and work of Jesus, including parables he told and the events of the Resurrection. Pupils have a good knowledge of Islam, including the significance of the five pillars of Islam.
120. In lessons, pupils show interest and enthusiasm. In a Year 4 lesson on 'Christenings', pupils' spiritual development was enhanced as they sat enthralled looking at their teacher's photographs of her daughter's Christening and the Christening robe she wore. As a result, the next day many pupils brought in photographs of their own Christening and/or other special events in their lives, which they were keen to share with each other, their teachers and the inspection team.
121. Teaching is good and contributes significantly to the standards achieved. Teachers show good subject knowledge, which they pass on to pupils with interest and enthusiasm. In lessons, teachers make good use of artefacts and displays to widen pupils' understanding, for example in a Year 6 lesson on the Jewish festival of Purim. In this lesson, the teacher used an imaginative display to capture pupils' interest and followed this up by allowing them to play a 'Purim Game', which increased their knowledge and understanding of this festival. Pupils are encouraged to take part in discussions and teachers ensure that boys and girls contribute equally; this has a positive impact on speaking and listening skills.
122. The subject is managed effectively by the dedicated co-ordinator. Assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding is satisfactory. There is a good range of resources, including religious artefacts, which make a positive contribution to pupils' learning.