

INSPECTION REPORT

ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Crowborough

LEA area: East Sussex

Unique reference number: 114566

Headteacher: Mr R Brazier

Reporting inspector: S Tweddell
1709

Dates of inspection: 29 April – 2 May 2002

Inspection number: 196530

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Chapel Green Queens Road Crowborough East Sussex
Postcode:	TN6 2LB
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Hawes
Date of previous inspection:	July 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
1709	Sandra Tweddell	Registered inspector	History Art Music English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? Assessment How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9405	Josephine Philbey	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
2734	Paul Cosway	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Geography Foundation stage	
25384	Robert Bonner	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Design and technology Physical education Equal opportunities Special educational needs	The quality and range of the curriculum and other provision

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Mary's RC Primary school is situated in the centre of Crowborough, a small town near to Tunbridge Wells. Most pupils come from the local area, but as it is a church school, it takes pupils from a wide catchment area. Many parents work outside the town, many commuting to London. The school is of average size with 209 pupils on roll. Although there is an equal number of boys and girls, there are more girls than boys in Years 1 and 6 and significantly more boys in Years 2 and 3. The school takes in pupils in the year in which they are five. There are 30 children in the reception class; all were attending full time at the time of the inspection. Most pupils come from a white UK background and the small numbers from other ethnic groups are proficient in English. A smaller number of pupils than in most schools is entitled to free school meals. An average number of pupils is on the register of special educational needs and two have a statement of special educational need which is below average. Many of these pupils have specific learning difficulties. The attainment on entry is above average, but in some year groups is average in reading.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Mary's is an effective school with many strengths. The school is a family, founded on the teachings of the Catholic Church. Leadership and management are good overall. Pupils leave Year 6 with above average attainment in most subjects including English, and well above average attainment in mathematics and science. Achievement is good by the end of Year 6, but varies between subjects and year groups. Teaching is good overall. Taking into account the attainment on entry, the attainment on leaving, the quality of the provision and the cost per pupil, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Attainment is well above average at the end of Year 6 in speaking, listening, mathematics, science and history.
- Teaching is good.
- Behaviour is good overall. Many pupils behave very well and have very positive attitudes towards their work.
- Relationships are very good and pupils, including those with special educational needs, are cared for very well; the ethos is therefore very good.
- Children in the foundation stage receive very good provision.
- Pupils have a very good range of learning opportunities.
- The provision for personal development, including spiritual, social and moral development, is very good.
- Parents hold the school in high regard.

What could be improved

- Attainment in writing.
- The use of information from assessment to set work that challenges all pupils appropriately, especially higher attaining seven year olds in mathematics and science .
- Implementation of the management systems for reviewing the work of the school, particularly those to do with teaching and learning.

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 last inspected in July 1997 and has made good improvement in the areas that were identified as weaknesses. The school improvement planning cycle is comprehensive and involves parents, pupils, governors and staff. The new governing body plans its finances in the long term and has clear and appropriate priorities for its funds. Policies are reviewed and the governing body plays a role in the review. The planning of the curriculum has improved and teachers use the planning well. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved greatly. Lessons begin promptly and little time is wasted. The quality of teaching and learning has also improved significantly and classroom assistants make a good contribution to the learning of pupils. Teaching in the foundation stage has shown very good improvement. Each pupil has a record of achievement that records progress, although there is still scope for improvement in the way these are used to ensure that work is appropriately matched to pupils' learning needs. Subject co-ordinators are reviewing the work in their subjects. Health and safety procedures are

good and most legal requirements are met. The trend in performance has risen similarly to the national trend and although the school did not meet its targets last year, it is on line to do so this year.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key

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

Over the past three years, pupils in Year 6 have exceeded the national average in English, mathematics and science. There has been little difference in the attainment of boys and girls and the trend in performance has been similar to the national trend. The school won an achievement award for the progress of its pupils between 1997 and 2000. In 2001, performance fell and the school failed to reach its targets. Teachers carefully analysed the reasons for the weaker performance in 2001 and found that skills in writing had let pupils down. Also, higher attaining pupils failed to reach the higher levels of the test. Teachers readjusted the curriculum in the light of this and ensured that work was set to extend the learning of more able pupils. This has been successful and pupils' attainment in English at the end of Year 6 is above average and in science and mathematics is well above average. Standards of speaking and listening are well above average, in reading are above average and in writing are just above average. The achievement of higher attaining pupils is now satisfactory, and the achievement of lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs is generally good. Pupils from ethnic minority groups achieve as well as their peers, because the school treats all its pupils equally.

The attainment of seven year olds in reading has been well above average and above average for writing and mathematics. Performance fell in 2000 and the school established why this was so and tackled the problem. Attainment in 2001 improved as a result. In comparison with similar schools, attainment was well above average in reading and average in science and mathematics. Boys have done better in both reading and writing than girls. Inspectors found that by the end of the current Year 2, pupils make satisfactory progress and are attaining above average standards in most subjects, but only average standards in mathematics and science. Higher attaining pupils are sometimes not challenged by their work, as assessment is not used as well as it is with older pupils to set suitable work for them. No trend could be found to explain why boys sometimes do better than girls. Children in the foundation stage make good progress. All reach the early learning goals and many exceed them.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Most pupils enjoy their work and apply themselves well to it.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are courteous and friendly and they work well together. A very small number of pupils, mainly boys, sometimes lose concentration and misbehave, but this does not usually interfere with other pupils' learning.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils respect one another and often help one another. Very good relationships between pupils and all the adults who work in the school are a key factor in the very good ethos of the school.

Attendance	Good. Pupils attend regularly and on time.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is good overall, and teaching in the foundation stage is very good. The teaching of English is good across the school. Mathematics and science are taught satisfactorily overall in Key Stage 1, but the teaching is good in Year 1 and in Key Stage 2 literacy and numeracy are taught well. Teachers have a good understanding of the subjects they teach which they use well to extend the learning of most pupils. They manage pupils' behaviour well so that pupils can listen and learn. Relationships are very good so that pupils feel confident which helps them to learn well. Lessons are well planned and resources are used well. Most pupils show interest in their work and persevere when it becomes difficult. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well and receive sensitive support from their classroom assistants, enabling them to contribute to the lesson. There are some inconsistencies in teaching between year groups and subjects, which monitoring of teaching has not yet tackled successfully. The main inconsistency is in setting work that appropriately challenges higher attaining pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. There is a very wide range of extra-curricular provision. The arts have a high profile and extend opportunities for learning well.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Leadership is very good and pupils make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Provision for spiritual development is excellent. For social and moral development provision is very good and it is good for cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. The ethos of the school is one of valuing and caring for all who work in it.

Parents hold very positive views of the school and many regard the school as a family. Staff encourage pupils to attend regularly and punctually. Systems for assessing the progress that pupils make are good but the information is not used well to ensure that all pupils make the progress they should.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall. The headteacher gives very good leadership in setting the tone for the very good ethos of care and mutual respect that permeates the school. The senior management team and staff with responsibilities fulfil their roles well. Many of the systems for managing the school are good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Many governors are newly appointed. They involve themselves fully in the school and have good systems for reviewing the work of the school. They fulfil their role well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Many methods are now in place for this and much information is available. This is beginning to be used to see how well the school is performing.

The strategic use of resources	Good. Funds are targeted well at priorities.
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The process leading to the formation of the school improvement plan is excellent. It is very thoughtful and involves pupils, parents, governors and staff. The accommodation is good and includes a swimming pool, used effectively to ensure high standards in swimming. The new ICT suite is supporting the development of high standards in ICT. Resources are satisfactory overall and the school has a staff with a wide range of experience and expertise. The principles of best value are applied satisfactorily.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The standards children attain and their progress. • The attitudes and values promoted by the school and the behaviour of pupils. • Teaching is good. • Children are expected to work hard. • Children like school and they are helped to become mature and responsible. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework that is given. • More information about how well their child is doing.

Parents are mainly very positive about the school, commenting especially about the approachability of the headteacher and staff. The inspection found that most of their views are justified. Homework is set regularly but not all parents are aware of how much their child is expected to do each day. The inspection does not concur with parents' views about the information parents receive about how well their child is doing as reports give good information and there are good opportunities to meet with teachers, although these are not always formalised.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Attainment over the past three years has risen in line with the national trend. Over the past three years, performance at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science has been above average. There has been little difference in the performance of boys and girls, although boys have done marginally better than girls in science. The school has too few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds to make any judgements about trends in their performance. In 2001, performance dropped significantly. Attainment in mathematics was average, but in science and English, it was below average. In comparison with similar schools, attainment was well below average in all three subjects.
2. The trend in performance for seven year olds over the past three years has been above the national average, although in writing, girls have performed at an average level. Boys have done much better than girls in reading and writing and slightly better in mathematics. In 2000, performance fell. The school successfully put measures into place to rectify this and in 2001, attainment in reading was well above average and was above average in writing and mathematics. Teacher assessment found attainment in science to be well above average.
3. Following the poor performance of Year 6 in 2001, staff analysed the results, and found that attainment in writing was the main problem and that the higher attaining pupils failed to reach the higher levels of the tests. The curriculum was changed, and teachers identified their more able pupils and put forward ideas for ensuring that the learning of these pupils was fully extended. These strategies have been successful and the inspection found that attainment in Year 6 is generally above average and that in English, mathematics and science, more able pupils are being appropriately challenged. Attainment in Year 2 is generally above average in most subjects, but is average in mathematics and science as more able pupils lack the depth of knowledge to enable them to reach the higher levels of the tests.
4. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress against the targets set within their individual education plans for literacy and numeracy as they are supported well by their teachers and their very effective classroom assistants. There is no difference in the achievement of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds as the school treats all its pupils equally well. The inspection could find no trend to explain why boys do better than girls by the time they are seven. If anything, the concentration of a few boys is poorer than that of most of the girls.
5. Achievement is satisfactory by the end of Year 2 and is good by the end of Year 6. It is improving as information from assessment is beginning to be used to set targets for pupils and to guide the planning of work. Sometimes, higher attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged; at other times, lower attaining pupils find the work too difficult and do not complete it.
6. Children in the foundation stage make good progress so that all reach the early learning goals and many exceed them. The provision in the foundation stage is very good, and children's personal, social and emotional development is also supported very well by the strong ethos of care for one another that permeates the whole school. Children are confident and relate well to adults and to other children. One example was in the assembly led entirely by children in the reception class and Year 1. The assembly was opened by the youngest child in the school, who spoke clearly and with great confidence, a tribute to the very high expectations of the two teachers of the younger classes. Children develop very good speaking and listening skills, they enjoy books and some read simple phrases and many write simple sentences. All children gain confidence with number and use mathematical language with understanding. Their knowledge and understanding of the world is good, supported by a range of interesting activities and their own enthusiasm for learning. Works of art are bold and imaginative. Children sing clearly and many tap a rhythm well. Their co-ordination is generally good. They move with awareness of others and control their movements well.
7. By the end of Year 6, attainment in speaking and listening is well above average and in reading is above average. Attainment in writing is just above average. In Year 2, attainment is above average, except for writing where it is average. Pupils use their skills of literacy well in other subjects, such

- as history where many in Year 6 write with empathy about people who lived in other times. They have well developed skills of research.
8. In mathematics, attainment is well above average at the end of Year 6 due to very good teaching which covers all areas of the curriculum equally well. By the age of seven, attainment is average as the more able pupils are not always challenged by their work. Pupils employ their skills of numeracy well, they estimate and measure in design and technology, they have a good understanding of scale and perspective in art and geography and they understand how to show information in the form of graphs and tables. Attainment in science is average by the age of seven and well above average by the end of Year 6. The reasons for the difference are the same as in mathematics.
 9. The picture in ICT is improving, so that, although attainment is average for both seven and eleven year olds, it is rising. The strength in ICT is in the use of the Internet and in pupils' understanding of how to control objects using technology. ICT is not used to help pupils to draft their ideas as part of the process of writing. All teachers have been trained and the new ICT suite, staffed by a person with expertise in the field of ICT, is a good asset. Skills of ICT are taught here so that there is progression in learning and pupils are encouraged to use these skills in other subjects. External technical support coming in weekly enables the staff to concentrate on teaching, rather than on fixing problems with the computer. These factors are the reason for the improvement in the achievement of the pupils.
 10. Pupils across the school achieve satisfactorily and attain average standards in design and technology, but this again is an improving picture as new subject guidance is helping to ensure that pupils have a wide range of experiences with design and that there is progression in their learning.
 11. Achievement in history and geography is good and pupils attain above average standards across the school. The attainment of higher attaining pupils in history is well above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils develop good skills of enquiry. In history, they are skilled at using primary and secondary sources to find out about the past and they use the Internet well. They have a good knowledge of events, people and places in the past. In geography, they understand about their environment and about how people in other countries live. They sometimes have a negative view of third world countries as they do not understand that technology is available and that industry and commerce take place. The Internet is not used to form links with people in other countries, for example email, although the co-ordinator is aware of this and is planning to take action. Links are about to be made with Africa through a teacher who is visiting Africa on an exchange programme next term.
 12. Attainment in art, music and physical education is above average at seven and eleven and pupils achieve highly. In art, the strength is in pupils' understanding of technique, colour and form, which they use with confidence to create imaginative works in both two and three dimensions. The strength comes because teachers appropriately encourage pupils not to be afraid to experiment with ideas. In music, strengths are in performance, particularly in singing. All pupils are given good opportunities to take part in musical activities, whatever their skill, which is a major factor in their high achievement. Their creativity is not as well developed as in art, as although they have a good understanding of how sounds combine to make music, their opportunities to create their own compositions are restricted. Strengths in physical education are in swimming, gymnastics and ball skills. Physical education has a high profile and the facilities are good, which leads to high standards.
 13. Since the last inspection, progress of pupils across the school has improved, including the progress of higher attaining pupils. However, some of these pupils still underachieve by the age of seven as do some lower attaining pupils, as the work does not consistently match their attainment.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Throughout the school most pupils' attitudes and personal development are very good and their behaviour is good. There is an extremely positive ethos to which the whole school community subscribes. There are very good relationships between the pupils and staff and the school has a general sense of warmth, care for one another and good order.

15. Parents report that pupils are happy and eager to come to school. Their attitudes to learning are very positive especially when a teacher has high expectations. Most pupils want to achieve well and listen carefully to their teachers. All pupils, even the very youngest, enjoy answering questions posed in lessons and assemblies and they contribute well to classroom discussions. A good example of this was seen in a Year 3 literacy lesson where pupils were discussing the characters in a story and enthusiastically providing words to describe the character's feelings. Pupils are most polite to visitors. They never miss an opportunity to smile warmly and greet visitors in the corridors and classrooms. Parents are pleased with the school's family atmosphere and the values that their children acquire.
16. Pupils behave well and the behaviour of many is very good in lessons and around the school. Pupils know and follow the school rules. Most pupils are well-behaved in lessons and co-operate with their teachers to establish a positive environment in which they can work constructively. For example on inspection week the behaviour in a Year 6 outdoor games lesson was particularly impressive, considering the wet and windy conditions. In a few classes, there are a few pupils, mainly boys, who become inattentive and noisy particularly when teaching fails to capture and hold the interest of the pupils or when the introduction is over-long. All pupils behave well in assemblies, entering the hall quietly and waiting respectfully for the assembly to begin. They also behave politely whilst eating their lunches in the hall and tidy up and move into the playground in an orderly manner. Pupils play happily in the playground together and no oppressive behaviour or bullying was observed during the inspection. The school has had one fixed exclusion in the past year. This was appropriate as it was for exceptionally poor behaviour.
17. Pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes to school. They work hard and behave well in lessons. Other pupils give particularly good support to their peers with special educational needs celebrating their successes and taking trouble to include them in group activities. During one lunchtime for example, a boy with cerebral palsy thoroughly enjoyed playing a game with other pupils of throwing a ball through a hoop.
18. Relationships are very good; there is a high degree of friendship and harmony between pupils and they trust each other. Pupils co-operate well with each other. On many occasions they are asked to work in pairs or groups and this they do sensibly. Pupils enjoy the extra-curricular activities offered by the school and enthusiastically take part in the various sports and after school clubs, including the choir and orchestra. The pupils' personal development is very good. They have a clear sense of responsibility and when given tasks carry them out diligently. This strength was highlighted when inspectors interviewed the school council, who sensibly put forward their views on the running of the school.
19. Attendance rates throughout the school are good and above the national average. Unauthorised absence is below the national average. The majority of pupils arrive at school on time and lessons start promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. The last inspection found teaching to be variable with over half of the lessons being good or very good but in 20 per cent teaching was unsatisfactory. There has been a big improvement in the quality of teaching since then and although there is some variability, it is not as pronounced as five years ago. Teaching is good overall and many lessons are very good. The teaching of most subjects is good. The teaching of English is good overall, and much work has gone into improving the teaching of writing, although, as the school is aware, more needs to be done. In mathematics and science, teaching is good between Years 3 and 6 and is satisfactory at Key Stage 1, although there is a mix of good and satisfactory teaching. Literacy and numeracy are taught well. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. There is no difference in the teaching of the few pupils from minority ethnic groups, as the school treats all its pupils equally.
21. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers and classroom assistants work very well together in planning and supporting the learning of these pupils. Classroom assistants are well trained and know their pupils well. In one lesson, the support given to a pupil with a statement was excellent. The sensitivity, care and high expectations of the support teacher were exemplary and enabled the child to take a major part in a song involving role-play. The child

was enthusiastic and delighted with his performance and this contributed to the very good progress he made. In English and mathematics teachers plan work according to the underlying abilities of their pupils, teaching aspects identified with pupils' individual education plans. All staff show a great deal of care for their pupils and know them and their difficulties well. Pupils with special educational needs are positive in their response both to class work and to the work they undertake with the special needs support assistants. They work hard and collaborate well with their classmates. However, the planning of assignments that promote independence in learning for these pupils is not consistent. There is sometimes an over-reliance on the very good support provided by classroom assistants. This can impinge on the development of the pupils' independence or result in the work being too difficult and not being completed. The school is aware of this and is seeking to extend the proportion of tasks that pupils with special educational needs can complete unaided.

22. The progress of higher attaining pupils has improved this year as all teachers have identified their higher attaining pupils and are developing teaching methods to ensure that their attainment is as high as it should be. In some lessons, the work is not always suitable for higher or lower attaining pupils. The work in pupils' books showed that when the same task is set, lower attainers do not always finish it and so are at a disadvantage when they are asked to recall their previous learning. Sometimes, higher attaining pupils, particularly seven year olds in mathematics and science, are not always challenged by their work and so do not achieve highly. This happens more often in subjects other than English, where the recent work to raise attainment is having an impact, particularly in Year 6. Some teachers are more skilled than others in setting appropriate work, so there is inconsistency across the year groups, which the monitoring of teaching has not yet tackled.
23. The teaching of the foundation stage is very good. The adults work closely as a team and their interaction gives a very good model for children's personal development. The adults have high expectations of their children's work and behaviour, so children behave very well and work hard to attain high standards. Provision for all the areas of learning is very good.
24. The teaching in the rest of the school is good. Teachers have a good understanding of the subjects they teach, helped by subject guidance that is being adapted to suit the pupils. In many lessons there is good progression in learning because of the careful planning that comes from the guidance. In an art lesson with Year 3 pupils, the teacher drew on their previous learning about perspective and scale as preparation for producing a three dimensional picture of a scene from the classroom window. The good progression in the learning was seen in their first draft of the scene. In a Year 5 mathematics lesson, the teacher carefully linked pupils' previous learning of angles to learning about the relationship of degrees to right angles.
25. In many subjects, teachers use specialist language very well, so that pupils learn its meaning and therefore discuss their ideas with precision. Pupils in Year 2 spoke knowledgeably about *amenities* and *facilities* after the teacher had used the terminology in a lesson three days earlier.
26. Relationships in the classrooms are very good and teachers manage the behaviour of most pupils very well, so that pupils can listen and learn and also have the confidence to be tentative or to give a wrong answer without fear of being mocked. In an excellent example, a shy pupil in Year 1 with special educational needs had the confidence to answer a question about the language in fairy stories. He was extremely hesitant, but the teacher encouraged him and told the class to give him time. The rest of the class waited calmly and expectantly. After some thought, he responded that *trip, trip, trip* was a refrain in the story of the Billy Goats Gruff. For him, this was great achievement, which was enabled by the good ethos of the classroom. A few boys have poor skills of listening and concentration.
27. Most teachers have high expectations of their pupils and this is often seen in the questions that they ask. In a Year 4 history lesson, the teacher developed pupils' skills of enquiry by the questions she asked, encouraging them to reflect about why the Vikings chose to raid monasteries. They went on to seek information from a range of sources, including the Internet. In this lesson, work was different for the range of attainment in the class. Higher attaining pupils were challenged by their research and lower attaining pupils made good gains in their knowledge about the raids because the questions they were asked were ones they could tackle confidently. In music, the teacher's high expectations of their performance, seen in the expectation that pupils will open their mouths, stand up straight and breathe properly, results in singing of a very high quality.

28. Resources are used very well to develop pupils' knowledge skills and understanding and to motivate the pupils. In a Year 6 literacy lesson, the teacher helped the class to understand the complexities of the language needed to write persuasively by good overhead transparencies which helped to illustrate the points he was making. Individual whiteboards are used well to help pupils try out ideas and to enable the teacher to see quickly how pupils approach a task.
29. In many lessons, several of these features came together to create a very good lesson. In one, the teacher used questions very effectively to encourage pupils to look closely at a book they were reading as a class. She valued the answers of all pupils, discussing each answer seriously which gave all the confidence to try. When she picked up a misunderstanding by many pupils, she went back and taught the point again in a different way. She had very high expectations of the work and behaviour of the class. She encouraged them to evaluate their own work and to improve an aspect that they thought they were weak on. Finally, the work was adapted for the different levels of attainment in the class and lower attaining pupils were well supported by the classroom assistant. By the end of the lesson, all pupils had gained a deeper understanding of features of literature.
30. There are some weaknesses in teaching, but these are individual, rather than consistent across all teachers. In a few lessons, the pace is slow or the introduction goes on for too long, so that pupils lose interest. In a couple of lessons, the questions required a factual response only when a reflective answer would have extended the pupils' understanding of the subject. In a few lessons, the teacher did not allow pupils to make their own choices which restricted their learning. Pupils are becoming aware of what they need to do to improve by the targets that are beginning to be set in English and mathematics, but this is not consistent, and some pupils do not understand what the targets mean. The biggest inconsistency is in setting work to match the needs of the pupils in subjects other than English and mathematics, which some teachers do well, but others do not.
31. Senior management has much information about teaching which feeds the school improvement plan. This is not yet used rigorously to improve the overall consistency of teaching. There is much good practice in the school that could be drawn on.

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

32. The curriculum provided for the children in the reception class is very good. It is very well planned and managed and provides effective transition from the foundation stage to the National Curriculum. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 provides them with a good range of learning opportunities. It meets statutory requirements. There is good guidance for the teaching of all areas of the curriculum, which is an important improvement since the last inspection. Planning is good and ensures that pupils' learning is progressive and avoids unnecessary repeating of topics. There have been significant improvements in the provision of computers since the last inspection with the establishment of a computer suite. The curriculum is enriched through visits to museums and other places of interest, as well as by the school welcoming a number of visitors such as artists in residence and musicians.
33. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is good. Learning support assistants follow the individual education plans well. These are written jointly by the special needs co-ordinator, class teachers and classroom assistants and follow the same format. They focus on literacy, numeracy and personal development and are effective in guiding teachers' planning. The learning support assistants work very effectively with the pupils assigned to them as well as with those close by, promoting the full involvement of their pupils in group activities. However, sometimes tasks are not sufficiently adapted for pupils to be able to complete them without adult support. When pupils are withdrawn from class for specialist teaching by a special needs teacher, the work covered matches closely the essential elements of the tasks being learned by their classmates. This is a very good feature of the provision.
34. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been adapted well to suit the pupils' needs as in the additional 'booster' sessions to raise the standard of both higher and lower attaining pupils. Targets for literacy and numeracy are most common and they are reviewed on a regular basis. As a result of these reviews, pupils are moved to a higher or lower level of support. The school provides

effectively for the personal and social education of the pupils. It has well-designed policies and practices relating to drugs, health and sex education that are well matched to the aims and values of the school. The curriculum is socially inclusive and all pupils have equality of access. For example, during the inspection, girls were observed participating with the boys in an eight-a-side football tournament with boys. The school responds sensitively to the needs of pupils from different backgrounds and faiths and respects all ethnic minority cultural traditions.

35. The school provides a very good range of activities outside the school day. Pupils participate with other local schools in a very wide range of sporting activities including athletics, cricket, football, hockey, swimming and cross-country races. Other sporting activities available to pupils include gymnastics and orienteering. All of these are well attended and enjoyed by the pupils who take part. Pupils are taught to swim at the pool, which is owned by the school. This is a very good facility that is well used. There is a very strong commitment in the school to music and the arts, which is reflected in the number and range of clubs and activities that are available. The school is particularly vibrant with extra-curricular music. At different times of the year, many pupils participate in singing in the choir and perform on instruments. They take part in school and other local productions and festivals. Moreover, many pupils have the opportunity to learn one of a wide range of orchestral and other instruments. These extra activities make an important contribution to the sense of community in the school. Older pupils undertake residential visits to enrich their learning experiences. Pupils in Year 5, for example, recently visited the Isle of Wight where they conducted scientific experiments and studied the geology of the island. As part of curriculum planning, all classes are provided with opportunities to visit places of interest relevant to their studies in school. For example, pupils in Year 3 visit Lullingstone Roman Villa and pupils in Year 4 visit Hastings. Parents speak very highly of the range of activities that the school provides.
36. The local community makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning. The school has particularly strong links with the local parish church. This is promoted through the use of the church buildings for special services and as a resource for learning. The parish priest often teaches in the school. There are visits from the local arts, theatre and music groups, and the school has close contacts with the local library. Members of the fire brigade and the police force visit the school to talk to pupils about their work. During the inspection a doctor came to talk to the children in the reception class and they were able to listen to their heartbeat using a stethoscope. Elderly residents and parishioners visit the school when pupils are putting on plays and other performances. These contacts help to enrich the curriculum and make pupils aware of the wider world.
37. The school has good and constructive relations with partner institutions. These include other local primary schools for joint meetings and in-service training. Pupils from St Mary's compete with other local schools in a wide range of sporting activities. The school has good links with St Gregory's and Beacon High Schools and works hard to enable pupils to make a smooth transition to the next stage of their education. Pupils from St Mary's have participated in an inter-school technology competition at Beacon High School and also uses its swimming pool.

Personal development

38. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. The school operates as a caring community with a Catholic ethos and aims to provide experiences that encourage pupils to be caring, sharing and honest, to do their best, to pray and to be friendly and respectful. The school is very effective in fulfilling these aims.
39. The school's provision for spiritual development is excellent. It is promoted through the school's Christian ethos, which is evident in its assemblies and strong connections with the local church. Assemblies, together with the multi-faith curriculum, enable pupils to gain insights into values and beliefs of the principal faiths and provide opportunities to reflect about their personal experiences and explore relationships with others. All assemblies seen during the inspection were well planned and there were many opportunities for pupils to participate. For example, children in the reception class and pupils in Year 1 celebrated the passing of the seasons through music and dance. Assemblies and prayers at the end of the day provide pupils with opportunities to reflect on their personal experiences and consider the needs of others. Teachers plan lessons effectively to extend pupils' sense of wonder at the complexities of the natural world. One example was in Year 6 when

pupils expressed their amazement as they watched the effect of carbon dioxide being poured onto a candle flame.

40. The school's provision for moral development is very good. There is a strong Christian ethos to guide how everyone in the community behaves. School and class rules have been written with the full involvement of pupils and they follow them. From the earliest days in the reception class, children are encouraged to consider how their actions affect others. Values are fostered through the caring, supportive and very good relationships that exist between staff and pupils and the good example set by all those working in the school. Assemblies give strong support to the teaching of the principles that distinguish right from wrong, fostering such values as being a good friend and having respect for one another. There is a strong sense of care for one another which permeates the school. Pupils show courtesy to adults and speak politely to visitors.
41. The school's provision for social development is very good. There is a wide range of opportunities for pupils to work, play and pursue social activities. Positive relationships are successfully promoted and pupils are encouraged to show consideration and sensitivity for the needs of others in the school, in the local community and the parish and throughout the world. In most lessons, teachers provide opportunities for pupils to co-operate as they work in the classrooms. Good examples were seen in mathematics and science during investigations, and when working in groups in design and technology. Care is taken to ensure that those pupils who have special educational needs are fully integrated into the life of the school. Many pupils undertake duties in their classrooms and older pupils have specific responsibilities such as preparing the hall for assemblies. Social development is further enhanced through the wide range of extra-curricular activities the school provides, which includes trips to museums, theatres and a variety of outings including residential journeys to the Isle of Wight.
42. The school's provision for cultural development is good. Pupils are given a variety of opportunities to develop an appreciation of their own and others' cultural traditions in a number of curriculum areas. The school provides very good opportunities for pupils to develop an appreciation and knowledge of music and musicians in lessons and extra-curricular activities, including instrumental tuition, choir and orchestra. This provision is further enhanced by visiting musicians, and visits to the theatre and concerts. Book and poetry weeks, sometimes attended by poets, contribute well to pupils' appreciation of literature. Pupils study the work of artists, for example Chagall and William Morris and there are good examples displayed around the school of pupils learning skills of batik and pointillism. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection in providing further opportunities to develop pupils' awareness of the diversity and richness of other cultures. In a recent Africa Week, for example, pupils attended workshops where they learned about the art, music and literature of many peoples. A teacher is soon to visit Kenya on an exchange funded by the British Council and hopes to share her experiences with the pupils on her return. Although there is a small number of pupils from minority ethnic cultures. There are fewer examples, of the school exploring and celebrating the cultures of these pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

43. The school's mission statement sets out its commitment to value, love and care for children. The school has been most successful in providing a welcoming atmosphere for its pupils in a happy, safe and caring environment. This reflects the findings of the previous report. Pupils feel valued, confident and emotionally secure. The headteacher and his staff know the pupils well and are sensitive to their individual circumstances. Relationships between pupils and staff are very good. When difficulties arise pupils can, and in general do, turn to a member of staff of their choice for help and guidance. Lunchtime assistants are caring and supportive. On the week of inspection and at the pre-inspection meeting many parents were anxious to point out the high level of support offered to their children whilst at school.
44. The school's arrangements for ensuring pupils' welfare, health and safety and its procedures for child protection are very good overall. The designated person for child protection is fully trained and well aware of procedures that must be followed if a concern arises. She has also arranged training for all members of staff to make them aware of child protection issues. The school liaises effectively with outside agencies when necessary. There are appropriate policies to support health and safety. Pupils take part in cycling proficiency and class teachers instruct pupils on how to be

safe pedestrians. Great care is taken to ensure the medical well-being of the pupils, who know they will be well looked after if they should feel unwell or distressed. Visiting professionals monitor pupils' health. There are two qualified first-aiders available during the school day. In addition all support staff have had first aid training and the office staff are shortly to attend a further first-aid course. The school does not record all minor accidents. This has not yet caused any difficulty, but would be useful to avoid any potential problem. However, more severe injuries and incidents, including bumped heads, are methodically recorded and parents contacted if necessary.

45. The ways in which the staff encourage pupils to be well behaved through a positive approach to discipline are good. The school expects pupils to behave well and implements the rewards and sanctions fairly. Class rules are displayed in classrooms. Good behaviour and good work are praised and pupils rewarded with housepoints and teachers' awards. The coveted headteacher's award is given for outstanding achievement or behaviour; it is available to any pupil, who is publicly praised at assembly. When pupils' behaviour is unacceptable, appropriate procedures are used and parents are contacted if necessary. The school has a comprehensive anti-bullying policy. The headteacher and his staff are adamant that when an incident of bullying occurs it is dealt with immediately and effectively. Most parents and pupils agree that this is the case.
46. There are good procedures in place for monitoring attendance, absence and punctuality. The school has good methods for improving attendance and punctuality by making parents aware of their relevant responsibilities through both the prospectus and newsletters. Attendance is recorded accurately and registration is efficient. Most pupils are punctual; the names of late arrivals are noted and appropriate action is taken. The education welfare offices calls into school regularly to monitor attendance registers.
47. The provision for pupils with statements of special educational need is very good. Statutory requirements for each of these pupils are fully met. They make good progress in relation to their prior attainment, especially in literacy and numeracy sessions. Teaching and support staff have a very good awareness of the diverse needs of the children and provide very good support for pupils with special educational needs. The school aims for early identification of pupils who may need support. The information that is gained from tests that children undertake shortly after starting school is used effectively to identify those who need additional support. In subsequent years tests are used well to monitor pupils' progress and identify those who would benefit from additional lessons in English and mathematics. The pupils are happy in school, and are able to carry out the work given to them because of the support they receive.
48. The monitoring and support of pupils' personal development are very good and all pupils are well supported. Class teachers keep a close eye on pupils' personal development and records for each pupil are kept systematically. Each pupil has a comprehensive record of achievement folder. The school offers a variety of opportunities for pupils to take responsibility.
49. There are many good methods of assessing the work that the pupils do including individual records showing the progress that they make. As a result, there is a great deal of information about how pupils can improve their work, which is starting to be used with older pupils.
50. At the end of each year, pupils are assessed using standardised tests and voluntary national tests, which give an indication of the level they have reached in reading, writing, mathematics and science. This information has recently been recorded on their record of achievement. Before a pupil leaves a class at the end of the year, teachers assign a target for use by the teacher in the next class. These targets are reviewed throughout the year. Older pupils are now being given a personal target for English and mathematics. In a few cases, the pupil does not understand the significance of this target. Pupils are not told how they might achieve their target, but this is planned to happen shortly with the involvement of parents. Although the progress that pupils have made is evident on the recording sheet, the progress has not been analysed to see if it is appropriate or if there is a likelihood of underachievement.
51. Assessment in subjects other than English, mathematics and science is satisfactory. Attainment is regularly recorded using a simple, but appropriate sheet, which indicates how well pupils understand a range of tasks. In music, this system is not as well developed and the comments are more to do with pupils' approach to music, rather than their attainment. There is little assessment in art and it is minimal in physical education.

52. There are excellent examples of marking in which the teacher makes a detailed comment about the work and how it might be improved. This practice is inconsistent and there is no indication of how pupils might improve their work, although this happens in the lessons through discussion.
53. The good information from assessment is beginning to be used to raise standards. One example was in writing where assessment of pupils' work led to improvements in teaching and subsequently to increased attainment.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

54. Parents' views of the school are overwhelmingly positive and links between the school and the parents are very good. Parents hold the school in high regard. Those parents who attended the meeting and those who responded to the questionnaire were pleased with the attitudes and values promoted by the school and the way the school encourages their children to develop confidence. They also confirm that their children enjoy coming to school and parents are pleased with the progress their children make. They agree that discipline throughout the school is good and pupils are well behaved. These positive views are confirmed by the inspection.
55. The involvement of parents in the provision for special educational needs is good. Individual education plans are shared with parents, and pupils contribute to the review of their own targets and the setting of new ones. Parents with pupils who have statements of educational needs attend review meetings and are kept fully informed of all developments. All staff work very hard indeed and liaise well to provide what the pupils need. Those parents who commented in the parents' meeting were delighted at the support that their children receive and the progress they are making.
56. A few parents have minor concerns about the school's performance in two areas. These parents would like to know exactly the amount of homework that their children are expected to do each evening. They would also like more information on the progress that their children are making. The inspection finds that all pupils are given appropriate homework tasks each evening but not all parents receive detailed homework timetables. Information on pupils' progress is good. Parents have the opportunity to make appointments in the spring and autumn terms to see class teachers and discuss progress. Whilst there is no formal summer consultation evening, parents are invited to make an appointment, if they wish to discuss their child's annual report. These reports are clear and informative. They set out what the class has studied, tell parents what their children know, can do and understand and evaluate performance clearly in all the core subjects and, to a lesser extent, in other subjects. The report also outlines targets for the future. In this respect parents' concerns are unjustified.
57. The school recognises that liaison between home and school is most important and has maintained and improved the positive relationships and communications with parents outlined in the previous report. All parents interviewed agree that they are warmly welcomed into school at any time and that all members of staff are friendly and approachable. The school would like to see parents more involved in their children's work and target setting. Although parents are encouraged to help their children at home, the school reports that the level of parental involvement is not always high. There is evidence that parents' use of the homework books and diaries as a source of communication between home and school is variable.
58. The quality of information provided for parents is good. The school's prospectus and annual governors' report to parents are both welcoming and professional, and clearly written for parents and pupils to understand. The headteacher is constantly amending and updating the contents of the prospectus. He informs parents of these changes in the monthly newsletter, which also contains general school information and keeps parents informed about school activities and events. Parents' views of different aspects of school life, such as inclusion, are sought through questionnaires. The school ensures that parents are kept well aware of what their children are learning in the classrooms. Detailed fact sheets containing information on class work and current topics are sent to parents at the beginning of each term. The school is pleased with the support given to the recent numeracy evening, with over 40 parents in attendance.

59. Parents are actively encouraged to be involved in the life of the school. Staff and governors are grateful to the many parents who help in the school with reading, cookery, swimming and school visits. Grandparents have also contributed to the curriculum by coming into classes to talk about World War Two. Parents give their full support to school productions and concerts. They also join their children in school for special assemblies and masses. Evidence of this was seen in the week of inspection when a large number of parents attended an assembly. There is an active and enthusiastic parent teacher association, which raises substantial funds through various activities, such as the summer fair. This hard working committee has provided the school with much needed classroom resources and has contributed generously to the building improvements.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

60. The overall leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher has given very good leadership in setting and maintaining the ethos of the school, based upon mutual respect, valuing all who work in the school and care for one another. This special ethos is one of the reasons for the very good personal development of the pupils. The headteacher has a strong presence around the school and a quiet and compassionate approach to staff and pupils. The leadership style is one which involves all in making decisions. One example is the inclusion of staff, governors, parents and children in the drawing up of the school improvement plan. Social inclusion throughout the school is very good.
61. The senior management team meets regularly and they effectively support the headteacher. Subject co-ordinators have clear roles and responsibilities and they are meeting these well. There has been considerable improvement in this aspect of their work since the last inspection.
62. Management systems have developed well since the last inspection and many of the systems are good. A rolling programme has been established to review the provision of each subject in the curriculum and it is followed well by co-ordinators. They write a report of their observations and these are the focus of a staff meeting. Some, but not all, co-ordinators have observed teaching and have written a perceptive report. An example of this is art. The headteacher has recently reviewed the work of the classroom assistants, looking at the value for money that they give. Recently, teachers have been asked to identify higher attaining children in their classes and to put forward ideas for ensuring that they achieve as highly as possible. The impact of this work is yet to be seen.
63. Following two years when the school failed to reach its targets for eleven and seven year olds, staff undertook a thorough review of how this could be improved. This analysis was used to change the approach to teaching and the curriculum, particularly for English. The work was successful last year when seven year olds improved their performance. It has also been successful this year in Year 6, as attainment has improved, particularly that of the higher attainers.
64. The area that needs to develop now is the use of all this information to ensure that every pupil makes the progress he or she ought. There are pockets of underachievement in the school, particularly amongst seven year olds, due mainly to the inconsistency of the match of work to individual pupils. The management systems that have been established, coupled with the good information that is now coming through, put the school in a good position to raise attainment further.
65. Many governors have been appointed in the last two years. There is a good range of expertise on the governing body which is drawn on well. They have quickly come to terms with their role and are fulfilling all their statutory duties well. They have good systems for finding information about the school to support their role as a critical friend. They visit to a planned timetable and use a form to guide their observations. They receive a report on the school improvement plan at each governing body meeting. As a result, they know the school well and understand its strengths and its points for improvement.
66. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The special needs co-ordinator ensures that tackling the needs of pupils with special educational needs is a fundamental part of the school's approach. She receives good support from the headteacher and staff. Good communication is maintained between the learning support staff and the special needs co-ordinator through daily record books which note both the activities pupils have been

involved with and their responses to them. The school's liaison with outside agencies is effective. Good account is taken of equal opportunities and generally, staff and pupils are treated equally. Two policies for social inclusion have been drafted to go to governors, one concerns children and the other adults who work in the school.

67. Financial planning is good and the school seeks the best value in all its transactions. Governors are aware that there is the risk of continued deficit and are taking this into account in their planning. A five year plan is in place for the budget. Governors have members with good financial expertise and they use this well. Although not explicitly stated in their plan, governors look to see if their spending is raising attainment. One example is in the review of the effectiveness of classroom assistants, undertaken before more appointments are made. Another is the new ICT suite, which is contributing to rising standards in ICT. Grants, such as one to enclose the swimming pool, are used appropriately. The pool can be used for longer periods and is bringing in income as the community uses it in the late afternoon.
68. The process employed to reach the school improvement plan is excellent. It is a year long process, involving all staff, governors, parents and older pupils. The management systems used to reach the plan are good. Co-ordinators contribute through the results of their monitoring, from which they draw up an action plan for the subject. This feeds into the process of school improvement planning. Although there are many priorities, they are appropriate.
69. Staff are well qualified and there is a range of experience. Classroom assistants offer good support, particularly in the larger classes and for children with special educational needs. Staff regularly attend training. All teachers and the headteacher have appropriate targets set through performance management, and the process for reviewing these is satisfactory.
70. Accommodation is good and enables the curriculum to be taught effectively. The recent building works carried out within the school, including extensions to four classrooms, have improved the school environment so that it is a pleasant place for all to work. All classrooms are now in the main building and are bright and airy with good quality furnishings. Ramps are available for pupils who are disabled and need a wheelchair. Attractive displays give value to pupils' work. There is a good-sized hall, which is used extensively for assemblies, concerts, physical education lessons and serving meals at lunchtime. The school has a new computer suite which is being used well and is contributing to the improving standards of work. The library is situated in a corridor, which is not ideal. The school hopes that further improvements in the future will rectify this situation. The outside areas have been particularly well planned to provide a suitable area for the number on roll. At playtimes pupils can play games on the hard play area or sit quietly undercover at picnic tables. The school is fortunate to have a large field adjoining the school for games and lunchtime recreation. There is an excellent covered heated swimming pool for the use of pupils between the months of February and October. The building and grounds are well maintained thanks to the efforts of the site manager and his staff. Resources throughout the school are all satisfactory with the exception of music, physical education and ICT, which are good.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

71. In order to raise attainment, particularly that of seven year olds, and ensure that all pupils achieve as highly as they should, the headteacher, governors and staff should:
 - a) Continue to raise attainment in writing by teaching pupils how to draft, revise and edit their work; (paragraphs 7, 20, 97, 98, 100, 102, 104, 109, 155)
 - b) Use the information from assessment to monitor the progress that pupils make and plan teaching that ensures that work is matched to the learning needs of each pupil, especially higher attaining seven year olds in mathematics and science; (paragraphs 3, 8, 13, 20, 22, 30, 34, 50, 52, 111, 119, 120, 123, 127, 134, 150, 162, 170)
 - c) Use the information from the review of the school's work to ensure that teachers draw on the best practice of each other. (paragraphs 12, 30, 31, 51, 63, 65, 115, 116, 126, 139, 145)

Other areas that governors should consider in their action plan are:

1. improve marking so it indicates how pupils might improve their work; (paragraphs 53, 146)
2. ensure that parents know what homework is given; (paragraph 59)
3. consider how to motivate all boys so that their attention does not wander. (paragraphs 4, 16, 115, 124, 160)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	45
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	15	18	8	0	0	0
Percentage	9	33	40	18	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		209
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		14

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		23

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	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.9
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	18	12	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	17	18
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	29	29	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (85)	97 (91)	100 (82)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	18	18
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	29	30	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (85)	100 (79)	100 (97)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	20	27	47

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	16	19
	Girls	22	20	27
	Total	36	36	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (89)	77 (80)	98 (89)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	9	19
	Girls	24	13	27
	Total	38	22	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (94)	88 (94)	98 (100)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	3
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	204
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.6
Average class size	29.9

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	190

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	552,427
Total expenditure	566,770
Expenditure per pupil	2711
Balance brought forward from previous year	6241
Balance carried forward to next year	-8102

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.4
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	239
Number of questionnaires returned	73

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	73	23	1	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	60	34	5	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	47	51	1	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	55	14	1	3
The teaching is good.	55	41	3	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	44	18	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	23	7	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	36	0	1	0
The school works closely with parents.	47	44	10	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	59	34	0	1	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	63	30	1	1	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	62	27	4	0	7

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

72. Children enter the reception class at the age of four. Well-structured lessons and play activities figure largely in the provision of work for children in the reception class. They learn well because learning is fun and the teacher makes it enjoyable for them. Learning is closely structured and monitored. Whole class teaching sessions begin in the reception class and elements of the national numeracy and literacy strategies are introduced early. This works very well, largely because of the undoubted talents of the teacher, and children make very good progress.
73. Since the last inspection, the provision for the young children in the foundation stage has improved. At that time, provision was good and children made good progress. Provision is now very good. The curriculum takes due account of the new requirements for children in the reception year and the school provides a very good range of activities across the six areas of learning. Children who have special educational needs are supported well, and higher attaining children achieve appropriately because the work is planned satisfactorily for them. At the time of the last inspection, the teaching was satisfactory overall. It is now very good overall and sometimes excellent. The very good policies and systems ensure a very good quality of education for these young children. The teacher works very well with adult helpers, planning their work very effectively, to provide a stimulating and exciting range of activities. As a result, the children learn well, because they are engrossed and fully involved in the tasks they are set. All the adults have an excellent relationship with the children, basing their approach on that modelled by the teacher, and they in turn are eager to co-operate and do what their teachers ask. They respond well to questions and want to do well in all activities to please the adults, whom they regard as their friends.
74. The assessment and recording policies are effective. Whilst in reception, the teacher and the classroom assistant carefully monitor each child's progress and carry out assessments in accordance with the school policy. The high quality of provision in reception ensures that the children transfer to Year 1 with skills that are above expectations for children of their age.

Personal, social and emotional development

75. Children enter the nursery or reception classes with skills that are similar to those found nationally in personal, social and emotional development. Provision in this area of learning is very good so that by the end of the foundation stage, all children achieve the early learning goals and most exceed them.
76. Teaching in this area of learning is very good. No opportunity to promote personal or social development is missed and the teacher creates a learning environment in which the expectations are high. The children are expected to behave very well; to be courteous, polite and considerate at all times. All adults are very skilled in encouraging children to join in, and the less confident children learn to work and play with others. All adults' high expectations of behaviour develop children's awareness of boundaries and of how to behave with others. They respond well to adults and to other children, learning to co-operate and work as part of a group. Excellent relationships quickly develop between children and between children and their teachers.
77. Many of the children are happy working alone with a minimum of adult help. This was particularly noticeable when they were using the computer. There are times when small groups of children work alone, with no direct adult supervision. They do so happily and responsibly, showing a good level of concentration and independence. They treat each other courteously and rarely argue. Children are encouraged to take responsibility. By the end of the foundation stage, children carry out simple errands, deliver oral messages accurately and tidy away after work. They carry out these tasks briskly and confidently.
78. By the end of the foundation stage, they understand about being part of a family and part of the school community. The most confident make excellent contributions to whole school assemblies, speaking clearly and confidently as they share their work with their friends across the school. They show that they are aware of their value in the community and confident in school. Through the year,

opportunities for understanding other cultures and beliefs are given, and their understanding of community is being extended to include an understanding of our multicultural and multi-faith society.

Communication, language and literacy

79. By the end of the reception year, all children, except some of those with special educational needs, achieve the early learning goals relating to speaking and listening, writing and reading. Teaching across this area of learning is excellent. This ensures that children are well placed to tackle the challenges of the literacy hour when they begin Year 1, as aspects of it are introduced early into the foundation stage. Attainment in speaking and listening is above average by the time the children are five, and many reach above average levels in reading and writing.
80. From their earliest days in school, children are encouraged to give opinions and to answer their friends. The teacher involves children very well in class discussions. They share their news and as they do so, the teacher ensures that they pronounce words correctly and that they use a good range of vocabulary. All children concentrate well when listening to others or to stories, responding appropriately. During a story telling session, the teacher skilfully asked questions to develop their understanding of character and motive, and taught them to think ahead in the story to predict what might happen next. Thus, their involvement in and understanding of stories are greatly increased. She gives clear instructions, taking good account of the level of children's understanding. The children follow these simple instructions accurately. By the end of the foundation stage, the majority of children can express their thoughts and feelings using vocabulary that is more sophisticated than is usually found. Children listen well to the teacher – as do the adult helpers – because she makes learning so enjoyable and interesting.
81. Opportunities to develop the early skills related to reading are good. Stories are a regular feature of the day and large print books are well used to focus children's attention on the text. There is a strong emphasis in these sessions on the enjoyment of reading, with humour and involvement a very positive feature. A reminder about sounds and the reading of frequently used words are natural and regular parts of every activity and provide a secure basis for early reading. An excellent literacy session was observed in which the teacher made a whole class game out of constructing words with the 'sh' sound in them. The children were making rapid progress in word building and phonics as they came to the front to write the words they had thought of - *splash* or *crash*, for example – and wrote them out with the help of the teacher and their friends. All children read regularly to an adult. Books are sent home so that parents can support this element of children's learning. By the end of the foundation stage, children read from the books in the class confidently. All achieve the early learning goals related to reading, and many exceed them.
82. Many children come into reception able to make recognisable marks relating to their own name. From the outset, children are taught the single letter sounds and how to write them, and are encouraged to write whenever the opportunity arises. The teaching of writing is good. Skills develop at a good rate so that when they enter Year 1, all children, including those with special educational needs, understand that words make sentences to give specific information and many can write simple sentences of their own. Several children wrote without adult help about the life cycle of the butterfly, showing a good command of vocabulary and sentence structure. Almost all of the children, apart from a very few with special educational needs, attain the early learning goals in writing by the end of reception year and most exceed them.

Mathematical development

83. By the end of the foundation stage, attainment is above average. Children have experienced a full range of mathematical activities, including counting, matching, comparing and shape-work. The majority of children, apart from those with special educational needs, achieve the early learning goals, as a result of the good teaching. Activities are relevant to the children's age and experience.
84. Teaching is very good and concentrates on counting, ordering and using numbers. As well as activities focused specifically on mathematics, the teacher provides a range of opportunities in other tasks and the everyday routines of school. Most children are able to match numbers to objects, and identify the biggest, the middle-sized and the smallest objects in a group. By the end of the foundation stage, a few higher attaining children exceed the early learning goals: they count far

beyond 10, some to 100, and can do simple addition. When a doctor visited the class, most demonstrated good mathematical skills, counting on a blood pressure monitor scale, confidently, in 20s.

85. Teachers provide appropriate activities to enhance children's knowledge of shapes and patterns. By the end of the foundation stage, the higher attaining children recognise squares, circles and triangles and all name simple three-dimensional shapes using correct words like 'cube'. These children can identify these shapes successfully when recognising and copying simple patterns. The majority of children recognise mathematical language such as *circle and square, small and large* and *tall and short*. The higher attainers can identify more complex shapes, such as an octagon.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

86. Across this wide area of learning, all children reach the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. In aspects related to ICT, many children exceed the early learning goals.
87. Teaching is good overall, with good teaching in the aspect relating to early skills in ICT and good teaching, leading to a good level of understanding, in science. In finding out about the past and the world around them, the teacher uses a good range of resources to help the children to recognise how things change over time. In ICT, the children can switch the computer on and off correctly, know the names of different parts, such as the keyboard, can use paint programs successfully and control a robot. They grow beans from seed and can explain what seeds need in order to grow successfully. They play and experiment with water and sand.
88. The children have access to a wide range of resources, and enjoy playing with construction kits. The imaginative play area, a hospital corner at the time of the inspection, enables them to learn about the world around them. A doctor came in to work with them and they listened to heartbeats using the specialist equipment he introduced to them and gained a real understanding of his role.

Physical development

89. Teaching and learning in this area are good and all children attain the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Many exceed them.
90. Adults have high expectations about children using space well and regularly remind them about taking care. Children move around the classroom with due regard to others. They line up well, without bumping into others and walk very sensibly when returning to class from the hall or play area. In physical education lessons, they show good body control and use space well, walking or running with due regard for the comfort and safety of others. Around half can throw a beanbag with reasonable accuracy and half can catch a beanbag if it is thrown to them well. Not all found it easy to throw underhand and some had little sense of direction when throwing. Standards of swimming are very good. The excellent provision for swimming at the school, along with the enthusiasm of the children and the skills of the teacher and her many volunteer assistants, ensure that the children make remarkably good progress in developing their confidence and skills in the water.
91. The children are given an appropriate range of opportunities and resources to develop control of their hands. In painting, drawing and writing tasks, provision of small tools like brushes and pencils ensures that control is developing well. When building with construction kits, children lock pieces together skilfully and adapt and change their constructions with care.

Creative development

92. Children develop above average skills in their creative development. All reach at least the early learning goals by the time they are five. There is a rich range of activities to promote the children's creative development, and in lessons good advice and intervention from adults ensure this area is well taught. Teaching is very good, sometimes excellent.
93. There are many good opportunities for the children to explore different media. They embroider and learn to thread their safe, plastic needles themselves. They have opportunities to draw and paint. In lessons, they discuss colours and the vast majority of children identify the primary colours

accurately. Stimulating and very attractive classroom displays show a very good range of examples produced by children at the end of the foundation stage. They have produced excellent wallpaper designs, based on flowers. They have made attractive clay tiles, again with a flower design, to share with children in Kenya. The care with which work is displayed demonstrates to the children that their work is valued.

94. There are strengths in music, especially singing. Children sing strongly and very well, with great enjoyment, using their bodies as well as their voices to bring the songs to life. The teaching of music is excellent. Drama is included well into singing sessions to make them even more meaningful – as well as great fun – and children join in appropriately for their age. They are tuneful and confident singers. Regular opportunities to play instruments and listen to music are evident in planning. They recognise and can play unpitched percussion, keeping time well. Music is taught well, by a specialist music teacher supported skilfully by the reception teacher.
95. The leadership and management of the foundation stage are excellent. The teacher is very experienced and organises support assistants and volunteer helpers extremely well to ensure that the children gain an education of a high quality. The planning and resourcing of the area are very good. Overall, there has been good improvement since the time of the last report. Pupils' attainment has remained high and the quality of teaching, which was satisfactory, has improved significantly.

ENGLISH

96. Overall standards for pupils by the age of seven in English are currently just above average. They are above average in speaking, listening and reading skills. However, they are more variable in writing, being much closer to the national average overall, with slightly more pupils than average attaining the higher level, Level 3. These standards represent satisfactory achievement for most pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve satisfactorily. There are no significant differences in attainment between boys and girls.
97. The national tests for eleven year olds in 2001 indicated that pupils were below the national average in English. This followed two years in which pupils had attained results well above the national average. The finding of the inspection is that there has been an improvement in standards because of improved teaching and that attainment is back to above average at the age of eleven. Attainment in reading is above average and in speaking and listening is well above average. Attainment in writing is close to average.
98. By the age of seven, pupils develop good speaking and listening skills. The majority of pupils speak clearly, confidently and articulately, either in response to questioning, when venturing their own opinions, or when reading aloud. This was evident, for example, in a Year 2 lesson in which pupils read confidently when sharing their class poem and discussed synonyms well, speaking clearly and usually in full sentences. They also speak clearly, confidently and articulately in front of an audience. They demonstrated this in the Year 1 assembly and in the whole school assembly, when they explained how they had won their headteacher awards. Pupils also develop good, and in some cases very good, reading skills. Pupils enjoy reading. Although lower attaining pupils read with limited expression, many pupils read fluently and accurately for their age, and talk willingly about their reading - for example, about plot and characterisation. These skills are developed from the reception class onwards. They also recognise the different qualities of fiction and non-fiction and know how to look up information in dictionaries and other sources.
99. Pupils' writing skills are more variable in quality. Pupils use a good range of writing by the age of seven. They increase their technical skills through handwriting and spelling exercises. Pupils also make good progress in developing research skills, using non-fiction books to compile information and use it to enhance their written work. They also make good progress in learning to structure their writing better, using a range of beginnings and endings. However, there is insufficient emphasis on extended writing and the improvement of writing skills by learning and using drafting skills. This means that most pupils attain Level 2 standards in their written work, but relatively few are extended beyond this level.

100. At the age of eleven, speaking and listening skills are well above average. Pupils discuss sensibly, maturely and articulately in small groups. They listen to the points of view of others and treat them with respect. They concentrate for long periods of time when listening to their teachers or to taped information programmes. They make spoken presentations of their work or ideas - in assembly, for example, or to their classmates - in a sensible and serious manner. They answer questions well in class and their answers are often extended, rather than single words or short phrases. Year 5 pupils read their own prayers in assembly and did so confidently and clearly. Reading is an area of strength. Reading standards are above average. All pupils can read fiction and non-fiction materials of an appropriate standard with considerable understanding, including information presented in an electronic form, such as that on CD-ROMs or the Internet. All can absorb the information they read and understand it well, reproducing it in their topic work in their words. When they read fiction texts, they show good insight into character and motive. They have some understanding of style and the stylistic effects that writers use. They are aware of similes and metaphors and can recognise them and higher attaining pupils use them successfully in their own work.
101. Attainment in writing is close to average overall. There is good emphasis on the structure of stories and this has improved their work. They know how to gain the reader's attention with an unusual and interesting start to their writing and how to structure the narrative in order to produce conflict or a problem. They know to resolve this at the end to produce a satisfying conclusion. They are taught to recognise the power of persuasive writing and use some of the techniques in their own work to write successful persuasive letters, advertisements or arguments in favour of school uniform. They learn and practise a wide range of purposes and styles of writing during their time in the junior classes. As with the younger pupils, however, there is still insufficient opportunity for story writing and redrafting in order to improve their skills as writers to any great extent. Teachers do not model writing sufficiently with them. There are only limited opportunities to use ICT as a tool to help them to revise their written work. Most pupils write neatly and punctuate and spell reasonably accurately, but few rise above an average standard, Level 4, by the end of Year 6. A small number does. One girl writes with particular skill and is achieving well above average standards. This is the beginning of a story she wrote, showing a remarkable command of language, a very wide vocabulary and the ability to deliberately break grammatical rules for stylistic effect.
102. *"An icy wind swept around the towering trees. The rain hammered down; tiny, diamond-like droplets dropped off leaves and petals. Pools of silvery moonlight were dotted along the forest floor like pebbles on a beach. Kelly was nattering away to me so fast that I couldn't understand a word she was saying. Unexpectedly, she stopped dead. Rooted to the spot. Frozen. Stunned."*
103. The teaching of literacy is good. The school has appropriately adapted the literacy hour to tackle the underachievement in writing and this is raising standards. Pupils use skills of literacy well, for example in history, to present their findings and in geography to research.
104. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their work. Their behaviour is very good and they listen and concentrate well. They are very co-operative when working in groups and help each other when necessary. They listen to each other and respond well to the suggestions that are made. They are enthusiastic about their work and try hard to improve. The very good relationships and attitudes to English that are fostered in every class have a positive effect on standards of attainment.
105. The overall quality of teaching in English is good. There is no unsatisfactory teaching, and the quality is sometimes very good, with particular strengths. One is the very good relationships that teachers have with their classes. This was evident in a Year 5 lesson, in which pupils were studying the language of advertising. The teacher had high expectations and the subject matter was too difficult for many of the pupils in the class. They were struggling to understand the task at first and achieving little because they were unsure what to do. In other circumstances, the lesson may not have gone well. They all made progress by the end, however, because of the trust and confidence that they had in her and her very good management of them. She recognised that some pupils were struggling and intervened effectively to support them. Towards the end of the lesson, she used a question and answer session to make teaching points effectively and all the class understood, by the end, the difficult concept of how advertisers use word play, such as 'bare-faced chic' or 'get stuck in the world wide web' to put a message across.

106. In the best lessons, the planning and preparation are thorough and there is a good range of activities to interest and motivate the pupils. In a Year 6 lesson on persuasive writing, the teacher used the overhead projector well to focus the attention of the whole class on the texts that he wanted them to study in depth. The transparencies were attractive and well produced and made telling and graphic points – one containing a coloured photograph of a dead whale on a whaling ship. The pace was brisk and the pupils completed a lot of work in the time available, so making good progress. His good subject knowledge ensured that the advice that he gave them was accurate and helpful, helping to extend their understanding and ensure that they achieved well. Good understanding of the literacy hour, sensible adaptation of it to increase its effectiveness and good subject knowledge is a feature of all teachers' work. There is good evidence of homework being used well to reinforce work done in class. Reading books are sent home and reading records kept. Older children have written tasks to complete, sometimes including extended writing as part of topic work.
107. The school needs to review the amount of time that pupils spend learning or practising skills of writing before actually using them in writing tasks of their own. There is insufficient time for teachers to work with children on improving the quality of their writing as they produce it and spending less time on exercise work would provide some opportunities for this.
108. Leadership and management in English are good. The co-ordinator has worked with teachers to analyse the reasons for the drop in attainment in 2001 in the Year 6 national tests and strategies have been adopted that are beginning to improve provision as a result. Considerable effort has gone into planning for the teaching of literacy, and teachers' plans are monitored regularly to ensure good coverage of the curriculum. Attainment is monitored; the co-ordinator regularly scrutinises samples of work from across the school. She has been trained and has led training sessions for the school - for example, in writing. She has not had recent opportunities to observe teaching in the literacy hour. Since the last report, there has been satisfactory improvement. There have been improvements in the detail and effectiveness of teachers' planning and the level of resourcing, including library provision. The co-ordinator is also the librarian. The library is attractive, well organised and used well by pupils.

MATHEMATICS

109. The findings of the inspection are that the standards attained by seven year olds are average and by the time pupils are eleven standards are well above average. The standards achieved by the pupils in Year 2 have not kept pace with the improvements that have been recorded nationally and are lower than those recorded at the last inspection. There are currently insufficient numbers of pupils who are working at the higher level in the National Curriculum. The standards achieved by the pupils in Year 6 are better than those recorded at the time of the last inspection. In other areas the school has made good improvement since the last inspection.
110. In response to the fall in standards in Year 6 the school took effective action. This included:
- the targeted support of both higher- and lower-attaining pupils in Year 6;
 - a programme of revision to prepare pupils in Year 6 for the national tests;
 - rigorous analysis of test papers to identify which aspects of mathematics caused pupils most difficulty;
 - groups of lower-attaining pupils in Years 3 - 5 were provided with additional support to raise achievement in these classes;
 - identification of higher attaining pupils in each class and the methods needed to ensure their high attainment.
111. By the age of seven, pupils make satisfactory progress developing their mathematical knowledge and understanding. Pupils with special educational needs are particularly well supported in their learning and make good progress when their prior attainment is taken into account. In Year 2 most pupils add doubles competently and show a sound understanding of the value of numbers up to 100 and beyond. In a lesson in Year 2, higher-attaining pupils added on 11 and 21 mentally to numbers up to 100. Average and lower-attaining pupils used apparatus and fingers to achieve a similar task. Previous work indicates that pupils have a satisfactory understanding of shapes and measures.

They know the properties of common geometric shapes, recognise shapes with line symmetry and measure lengths in centimetres.

112. By the age of eleven, pupils of all abilities make good progress in their learning. In Year 6 pupils record their work in charts and spreadsheets, recording such data as the dimensions and areas of a room. Pupils have a good understanding of number and apply what they have learnt to problem solving activities. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils described the properties of two- and three-dimensional shapes and identified the nets of cubes and pyramids. During the lesson the pupils displayed good skills of investigation and deduction, carefully considering and evaluating the properties of each shape. In the same lesson the pupils displayed a good understanding of angles, identifying different types and using the correct names. Previous work indicates that pupils have a good understanding of fractions, decimals and percentages and calculate mean, median and modes. Higher-attaining pupils solve number problems using formulae. Pupils calculate the areas, volumes and perimeters of shapes and accurately interpret information on graphs.
113. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory for pupils aged six and seven and good for pupils aged seven to eleven. Higher attaining seven year olds are insufficiently challenged by their work. The National Numeracy Strategy has been adopted successfully. Teachers are familiar with the three-part lesson structure and planning is good. In the best lessons the work is well planned so pupils of all abilities are able to learn well. These lessons begin with a rigorous mental session or games to engage the pupils in their learning. In a good lesson in the Year 1 class, for example, the teacher had a good repertoire of practical activities to reinforce pupils' understanding of place value. Teachers often have high expectations of pupils' concentration and effort that encourage them to learn well. In a very good lesson in Year 6, the teacher presented the lesson in a lively manner that engaged the pupils' interest. The enthusiasm he displayed encouraged the pupils to become involved in their learning and work hard. The teacher maintained very good control and pace throughout the lesson and as a result the pupils learnt very well. In a few lessons, however, the introduction is too long, the pace is too slow and as a result the pupils lose concentration and become restless. It is also the case in some of these lessons that the teacher's expectations are not high enough and consequently pupils, particularly the higher-attaining pupils, do not achieve as well as they ought to.
114. The teachers use a good range of mathematical vocabulary and encourage their pupils to explain their work using the correct terminology. Teachers' questioning of pupils at the beginning and end of lessons is good at times, but in a minority of lessons it is not used sufficiently well to assess what pupils understand or have learned. Teachers make good choices of resources that help pupils to learn well. Support staff are used effectively to aid pupils' learning, in particular those with special educational needs. They help these pupils very well, using initiative and questioning effectively to clarify the understanding. As a result of their very good support these pupils make good progress. The quality of teachers' marking is variable. In the best examples it informs pupils of the quality of their work and provides pointers for further improvement. In some cases work is not marked or not marked accurately and is not used as an effective assessment tool.
115. A particularly good feature of lessons is the quality of relationships between staff and pupils and between the pupils themselves. The level of care that the teachers show encourages pupils to grow in confidence and self-esteem. In response, most pupils display positive attitudes to their work and want to do well. Teachers regularly use homework to support the work pupils are learning in class.
116. Throughout the school, pupils are beginning to make use of computers to support their work in number, shape and data handling. Pupils make some use of mathematics to help learning in other subjects. For example, they use accurate measuring skills in realising their designs in design and technology projects and tabulate findings of their experiments and generate graphs in science. In geography, pupils take readings using weather equipment and in history create timelines.
117. Teachers use a good range of strategies to assess pupils' attainment in mathematics. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The results from the annual non-statutory tests are beginning to be used to track pupils' progress from year to year and are also used to guide the school's target setting. Teachers evaluate pupils' progress against 'key objective' statements for the elements of mathematics covered. Their findings aid the setting of individual and group targets. However, these are comparatively new and have yet to have their value reviewed. The subject is

now well led by the co-ordinator who evaluates the termly plans of teachers. She has monitored the quality of lessons and pupils' work and contributes well to the school improvement plan.

SCIENCE

118. The findings of the inspection are that the standards attained by seven-year-olds are average and by the time they are eleven they are well above average. The standards achieved by the pupils in Year 2 are lower than those recorded at the last inspection. There are currently insufficient numbers of pupils who are working at the higher level ¹in the National Curriculum to achieve above average standards recorded at that time. The standards achieved by the pupils in Year 6 are well above average and are higher than those recorded at the time of the last inspection. In other areas the school has made good progress since the last inspection.
119. By the age of seven, pupils conduct experiments and record their results in charts and on graphs, for example the properties of materials. In Year 2 pupils are encouraged to develop skills of observation through studying the structure of wild flowers. Pupils know the names of different parts of plants and understand the life cycle of humans and other creatures. They understand that some materials change when they are heated such as jelly or popcorn. Pupils have some understanding of the forces such as pushes and pulls that are in operation to make something move. Through testing how far vehicles travelled down a ramp and on to different surfaces the pupils begin to understand about friction. The pupils know that some appliances need electricity to make them work and construct electric circuits with batteries, wires, switches and bulbs.
120. By the age of eleven, pupils select the equipment they require to conduct an experiment and make predictions based on their scientific understanding. Pupils in Year 6 designed an experiment to examine the growth of plants, considering such issues as fair testing and controlling variables. They recorded their observations on charts, drew conclusions and made generalisations about the outcomes of the experiment. Previous work indicates that pupils have a good appreciation of the feeding relationships between plants and animals in a habitat. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils showed a good understanding of electrical circuits and the properties of various materials including those that insulate and those that conduct electricity. Through experimenting with parachutes and hanging weights in water pupils develop a good understanding of the forces of gravity and air resistance and balanced and unbalanced forces. The results of these experiments were recorded on charts and graphs and the pupils drew conclusions based on their results.
121. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Although the teaching that was observed in Years 1 and 2 was good, scrutiny of pupils' previous work indicates that higher-attaining pupils are not making sufficient progress in their learning. This can be seen in the quality of teachers' planning, which is often of very good quality, but in some cases does not take into account the learning needs of different ability groups.
122. At the beginning of lessons teachers share the learning objectives so pupils understand what they are expected to achieve. Teachers have good subject knowledge, and emphasise the importance of subject specific vocabulary. In the introduction to their lessons teachers make good links with previous learning and ensure that lessons carefully build upon pupils previous knowledge and understanding. In the best lessons, teachers take a positive encouraging approach, which fosters self-confidence. Teachers place a good emphasis on the development of scientific skills and give pupils a good range of opportunities to select their own equipment, perform experiments and record their findings. In Year 5, for example the pupils tested the properties of different types of soil, carefully measuring and recording their observations. In this lesson the teacher managed the pupils well ensuring that they listened attentively and worked hard. Where teaching is not so successful the pace of the lesson is too slow, the introduction is too long and as a result pupils become restless and lose concentration.
123. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by the learning support assistants, who ensure that they are involved and contribute to class discussions very well. Their learning is enhanced by the good help they receive for written tasks. Learning support staff work closely with teachers to promote the involvement of all pupils in class activities and discussions. However, at

times tasks within lessons are not sufficiently focused on the individual needs of these pupils for them to be able to work unaided. There are examples where the work provided has been too difficult and pupils have been unable to complete it.

124. The curriculum is good and clearly underpins the development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. A particularly good feature of the school's work is the emphasis that is placed on the skills of scientific enquiry. There is good provision for pupils to develop skills of investigation through conducting experiments, obtaining and presenting their findings and drawing conclusions. Also, there is good provision for pupils to apply their numeracy skills in this subject. For example, pupils frequently use instruments such as force meters and weather equipment for measuring and display their findings on charts and block graphs, sometimes using computer databases. Computer programs are used effectively to support learning. In Year 4, for example, pupils use sensors to measure light and temperature. In some classes there is an over-dependence on the use of worksheets with insufficient opportunities for pupils to record and present their own work. There are good assessment procedures to record and chart the pupils' progress in their learning and which are used to monitor pupils' progress and inform teachers' planning. These are at an early stage of development and their effectiveness is not yet proved.
125. The subject co-ordinator leads the subject well. The monitoring and evaluation that she has undertaken have been valuable in assessing the effectiveness of teachers' planning for progression and pupils' attainment levels. The school recognises that more work needs to be done in this area.

ART AND DESIGN

126. The last inspection found that attainment in art was above average and that the teaching was good. This picture has been maintained. By the end of Years 2 and 6, attainment in art is above average. Pupils make good progress across the school. Pupils who have an aptitude for art receive good opportunities to use and develop their skills through both the teaching in classes and the art club which runs weekly. One example was in Year 5. Pupils have studied the art in Africa and although most of the work is of high quality, one pupil produced excellent pictures of Africa. Pupils who are lower attaining or who have special educational needs are taught well and receive good support, so that they also make good progress.
127. By the end of Year 2, pupils understand how to mix paints to create the colour effect they wish. They also have a good repertoire of techniques to draw on to produce a wide range of work. By the end of Year 6, the wide experience they have had of using a range of materials has extended their understanding and skills. A key strength is the confidence of pupils which enables them to experiment and to use their imagination. This results in work that is highly individual, expressive and of high quality. Pupils are not afraid to produce large works and are confident to work in both two and three dimensions.
128. Examples of this are seen throughout the school. Pupils in Year 1 and the reception class worked together to produce a large mural of an underwater scene, using collage and paint. Year 2 pupils produced large pictures of Struay, linked to their work in geography, which depicts the differences between living on the mainland and the island. Year 3 pupils have worked on three-dimensional images of people at work and play, skilfully using straws, nets and other materials. They have also experimented with batik and produced thoughtful designs using dyes on fabric. Year 4 pupils have developed good techniques, sometimes based on the style of other artists such as Chagall. Their work shows good awareness of colour, tone and texture, and they have developed the skill of using fine brushwork when necessary, such as in their land and seascapes. The work in Year 5 following the study of the Masai in Africa is bold and imaginative and uses techniques very well. Pupils in Year 6 produced skilful pencil drawings of three-dimensional sculptures that they had put together in groups. Their understanding of how to create tone and texture through lines and shading is very good.
129. Art has a high profile in the school which is another reason for the high standards. Every two years, pupils produce a mural for the hall. The recent one depicts the four seasons and was done by Year 6. They drew on the influences of Chagall, Klee and Hockney amongst others. The work uses acrylics and is rich and striking. Year 6 pupils have also designed an image for each of the fence posts around the pond, which creates a most colourful and attractive effect. The art club is

recreating a tablet showing Mary and baby Jesus, using clay. Pupils discussed whether or not to change the effect by using a different technique from the one used previously. Each class has created a picture to represent the school aim; these are placed in the form of a flower with the aim at the centre.

130. Pupils thoroughly enjoy art and are very proud of their work. Many discuss good features of their own and others' work and how it might be improved, encouraged by good evaluative questions from the teachers. They concentrate well and persevere with challenging tasks. One boy in Year 1 concentrated for an hour to produce a picture using pointillism. This was a personal best for him. Behaviour in art lessons is very good and often excellent, due to the motivation and very good relationships that permeate the school.
131. Teaching is good and many lessons are very good. Teachers have a good understanding of the subject, helped by the subject guidance, which they use well. Many teachers enjoy teaching the subject, and their enthusiasm motivates the pupils. They use the technical language of the subject, which is a good model and ensures that pupils use it with understanding. ICT is used well as part of the teaching; for example, the work on pointillism included the use of an art program. The plenary at the end of many lessons is used well by teachers to evaluate the work that has been done, although sometimes, the teacher does all the evaluation rather than asking the pupils for their views. Teachers ensure that work extends the more able pupils and appropriately challenges the lower attaining ones, either by giving different tasks, or by their expectations of the finished product. The key strength, however, is in their encouragement of pupils to use their creativity.
132. The subject is well led. The co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and leads by example. She has also visited each classroom to observe work on display and the teaching, and this survey has been used with staff to raise and maintain the high standards. There are few systems for formally assessing art although the co-ordinator is planning to tackle this in the future.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

133. Standards attained by seven and eleven year olds are average and pupils make satisfactory progress during their time in school. Attainment is similar to that recorded at the time of the last inspection. There have been significant improvements in the quality of teachers' planning and the range of opportunities provided for pupils, both of which are raising standards.
134. By the age of seven, pupils undertake a good range of activities to promote their design and making skills. They work with a range of recycled materials, card and textiles developing their skills of cutting, sticking and joining. In Year 1, for example, pupils made rooms for a doll's house creating furniture, fixtures and fittings from recycled materials. They created moving pictures using strips of card for sliders and levers. Pupils in Year 2 often produce well drawn, labelled diagrams showing how they intend to make, for example *Joseph's Coat of Many Colours*, creating a template from paper and then making the artefact from fabric. They stitched the pieces together and made patterns by drawing onto the fabric. Pupils created patterns using a computer program and used these as a basis of the design on their coats.
135. By the age of eleven, pupils disassemble everyday objects such as purses and torches to see how they are constructed and how they work. Based on their observations, they generate ideas and plans about how they are to make their own. Pupils in Year 4 designed plans for a money container after they had studied the fastenings and mechanisms of different purses and wallets. They drew clearly labelled designs, indicating what materials they intended to use and how the money container would be closed. In a lesson in Year 5, pupils investigated biscuit packaging, thinking about what influences people to buy a product. They considered the healthiness of the biscuits and designed questionnaires using computers. In the same lesson, a group of pupils carefully measured out the ingredients they required for baking biscuits. They blended the mixture together showing an understanding of issues relating to health and safety. Pupils in Year 6 created clearly labelled diagrams detailing how they would construct a battery-operated vehicle. The vehicles were well constructed from wood and card with batteries, wires and motors strategically placed to power the vehicle.

136. One lesson was observed, but evidence from teachers' plans, past work and discussion with pupils and staff indicates that teaching is good and that pupils learn well. In one lesson the teacher set high expectations of pupils' attention, concentration and effort. She effectively questioned the pupils, encouraging them to consider what questions they would need to ask people about the factors that influence their choices. The teacher valued all the contributions that pupils made, fostering their self-confidence and self-esteem. The lesson was well organised with a good range of activities to promote pupils' skills. In response, most pupils settled to their tasks quickly and worked well. Those who needed encouragement were well managed by the class teacher.
137. There is now good guidance for the teaching of this subject. Pupils are provided with a wide range of opportunities to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding, including in food technology. The guidance is relatively new and has yet to have a significant impact on the raising of standards. There is no whole school approach to the assessing and recording of pupils' skills. The co-ordinator has worked effectively to raise the profile of the subject by developing the curriculum and improving the quality and range of resources.

GEOGRAPHY

138. Standards in geography are above average by the age of seven. The pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs, and attainment is also above average by the age of eleven. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.
139. Pupils have a good knowledge of local places. Pupils in Year 2 can locate the area in which they live on a map of Great Britain. They can name some of the geographical features and understand and use the term 'amenities' when describing the neighbourhood in which they live. They can find a number of countries on a world map, including Canada and Britain. They know which areas of the world are hot and which are cold. They know that vegetables and fruit come from different parts of the world and have a good knowledge of the different foods eaten across the world, including pasta in Italy and curry in India. They recognise the flags of some countries other than Britain, as well as their own. Sometimes their understanding and knowledge reflect prejudice rather than fact and teachers need to be careful to correct derogatory images of third world countries. One pupil had written about Gambia, for example, that there is no electricity and the people do not have beds. This had been marked as correct.
140. By the age of eleven, pupils know about a number of geographical areas distant and different from their own, including the Himalayas and the Andes. They use reference books and the Internet to find and retrieve information to help them in their study of these parts of the world. They can make simple comparisons between the climate, landscape, populations and occupations of these areas compared with their own. They have a good understanding of weather patterns, weather symbols and forecasting. The Year 4 class was observed studying Internet and television weather forecasts, using barometers, thermometers and wind direction indicators to prepare their own weather forecasts. They achieved well and learnt about air pressure and the way that it, and the direction of the wind, can affect the weather day by day.
141. Teaching is good overall. The teachers use questions effectively to help the pupils develop their understanding of geographical concepts. One teacher organised a mapping exercise of the school rounds. The class first devised their own symbols for trees, steps, pond, and other features and then went outside to draw the symbols onto their own maps. They were co-operative and sensible, working hard and showing great interest. At the end of the lesson, they had a very clear and first-hand knowledge of how symbols are used in mapping and why they are necessary.
142. The management of geography is good. The co-ordination of the subject is shared with history and this arrangement is effective. The subject is regularly monitored, and a report written which feeds into the school improvement plan. The curriculum is planned to ensure continuity in the acquisition of mapping and environmental skills. A scheme of work has been introduced since the last inspection and this supports teachers as they plan to help the pupils to progress. Resources are adequate and supported by the school environment, use of the locality, books from the local library and information researched on the Internet.

HISTORY

143. The last inspection found that attainment was above average and that progress was satisfactory. Higher attaining pupils were not challenged by their work and there was little in the way of subject guidance to ensure that all areas of history were covered. This has improved; subject guidance is used and is being adapted to take account of the needs of pupils in the school. There is still some inconsistency in the challenge for higher attaining pupils and the amount of work that lower attaining pupils are expected to complete, but overall, attainment is above average and pupils make good progress across the school. By the end of Year 6, higher attaining pupils attain well above average standards as the work in Year 6 challenges them. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as support assistants work effectively with them.
144. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of chronology and explain the significance of a timeline. They understand that Guy Fawkes lived a very long time ago and most can give plausible reasons for the Great Fire of London and its spread. Lower attainers have less grasp of the detail of events in the past, but others know, for example, that Samuel Pepys buried his diary and wine in a pit to stop them from burning. Their good grasp of facts is helped by the good use of

resources, such as videos and visits to places of historical interest. They also understand aspects of life in World War Two as they are asked to talk to their parents about their experiences. Pupils in Year 1 took home a questionnaire for parents to complete and to discuss with their children. Many pupils went on to explore features for themselves, such as a boy in Year 2 who asked neighbours about their experiences. He could recall many facts as a result of this activity. Pupils use their skills of literacy well to present information as teachers take opportunities to use the skills that they have acquired in the literacy hour. During a discussion about history, all turned to their books for reference.

145. Skills of literacy are also used well by pupils at the end of Year 6. Although lower attaining pupils do not write at length and with the same detail, higher and mid attaining pupils write with flair about their research. They have a good understanding of post-war Britain, as they have researched it in depth. Much of the writing showed good empathy with people who lived at the time, due to the very good teaching of the subject. Pupils have researched well into their own family history by asking questions of their family and friends. They have a very good understanding of the changes in post-war Britain, including ways of living, sport and music. One pupil wrote a moving account of two people who had lived during the time and finished the pieces with the fact that she knew as she was writing about her dad and granddad. All pupils are skilled in using the Internet and CD-ROM to aid their research. They have a good understanding of primary and secondary sources as teachers constantly reinforce this idea.
146. Many pupils enjoy history. One boy in Year 2 said he really liked the subject. Two boys who had worked on the computer to find reasons for raids on monasteries were eager to share their findings with the class. This is because teachers make the subject interesting for them and relate it well to the pupils' own experiences. Pupils work well together when they are asked to research and they persevere when it becomes difficult. Relationships are very good as is behaviour, because the ethos in the classrooms is to value all pupils equally and give them opportunities to share their ideas in a safe and caring environment.
147. Only two lessons could be observed so evidence comes from discussion with pupils and staff and analysis of pupils' work and other documentation. The teaching is good overall. In addition to the points above, teachers have a good understanding of the subject and they give pupils many opportunities to use secondary and primary sources. One example is when a group of pupils in Year 6 visited the graveyard to look at tombstones for people who were born in Victorian times. They then followed this up by looking at census information for these people then wrote an autobiography for them. They were given the scenario that these people had to move to find work and so wrote a job application for the new industries that were developing. This excellent teaching resulted in very deep understanding about life in Victorian times and the differences between rich and poor people. A Year 4 teacher shared the objectives of the lesson with the class so they were clear about what they were expected to achieve.
148. The subject is well led; the co-ordinator has worked on a method of assessment that is appropriate for the subject but this is not used by all teachers to ensure that work is appropriate, for example, the unfinished work by lower attainers. As in other subjects, the provision for history is regularly reviewed. Some marking is excellent, for example the study of Victorians and of life in World War Two. Here the teacher used a post-it note to write a detailed commentary on the work, including ideas of how to improve the work. Other marking is more cursory and does not give suggestions as to how it can be improved.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

149. The recent improvements in the provision for information and communication technology (ICT), including a new computer room, coupled with the developing skills and enthusiasm of all the staff, have ensured that the school has improved the teaching and the learning in this subject. Attainment is also improving. Pupils reach average standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and all achieve well, including those with special educational needs and those from minority ethnic groups.
150. By the age of seven, pupils access the Internet with help and find information from it. They search for minibeasts, for example, and extract some simple information about cockroaches or ants. They

- use paint programs to create patterns and draw pictures. They know how to control programs, how to open and close them and how to save their work – though some need help with this. The higher attainers, who often have and use computers at home, know the names of the equipment they are using and can use the keyboard and mouse accurately and well. Lower attainers are hesitant and need adult support to carry out work using the computers.
151. By the age of eleven, pupils are attaining average levels overall. There are clear signs, however, that the recent improvements in provision are having a positive effect on pupils' attainment and it is rising. The pupils are able to use a computer to control a light or motor, with adult help, and can use computers to monitor changes, such as in the temperature of a liquid. They can use simple databases to record and analyse data, such as details of names and physical characteristics of people. Pupils in Year 5 were observed recording the characteristics of imagined characters that their classmates had invented and they worked accurately and with good humour, enjoying the activity. Pupils in Year 6 are able to use the database to sort and find out information. They are beginning to make use of presentation programs to show sequences of slides. Much of this is new and there is evidence that as the pupils in earlier years move through to Year 6, the skills they are learning will be even more secure and attainment will rise further.
 152. In all classes, pupils control tape recorders and CD players, inserting tapes or discs and playing, stopping and pausing them as needed. All pupils develop satisfactory word processing skills, although there are missed opportunities for using ICT to help with the redrafting of written work. Pupils have opportunities to use computers to support their learning in other subjects. For example, in mathematics in Year 4 some pupils were doing addition of three-digit numbers using a computer program. In science, pupils create graphs, having used computers to measure and record, for example, temperatures in different parts of the school. In history, there is good use of CD-ROM and the Internet as secondary sources and pupils are skilled in their use. This helps them to improve their work in these subjects.
 153. All pupils are well motivated by the new developments in the subject, are enthusiastic about their work and have good attitudes to technology. They work hard in lessons and show great interest and enjoyment, except for a small group of boys in Year 2 who were bored when they had finished their work and behaved unsatisfactorily.
 154. Overall the quality of teaching is good. The lessons are taught in the small ICT room by a classroom assistant who prepares the lessons well and has a good understanding of the subject. She is very confident in the use of computer programs and uses the terminology correctly. The same is true of other members of staff when they support pupils in their classrooms. There are appropriate systems in place to ensure all pupils have access to the equipment. All the staff have been trained in the use of ICT and see this as an important area of pupils' learning. The majority of pupils have experience of using computers at home and this knowledge is built on skilfully by the teachers to move pupils' learning forward. For example, when demonstrating use of the Internet, the teacher encouraged pupils to recount their own experiences of finding information on the Internet. The carefully planned curriculum is comprehensive. There is a clear focus on teaching appropriate skills, developing pupils' confidence to draw on their previous experience and teaching them to be independent in their attempts to use new software. Good questioning supports learning. Pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are assessed as they proceed through the units of work and their attainments are recorded.
 155. The co-ordinator is developing the subject effectively. He has a very clear vision of what needs doing and realistic plans in place to achieve this. National initiatives have enabled the school to upgrade and improve their facilities, which are a significant improvement on the situation at the last inspection. This has been done by setting up a small unit of eight computers supported by a teacher assistant and a part-time network manager. There are also computers in every classroom. The computer room, though small, is very well equipped, with new, good quality machines and a large teaching screen. It is decorated to a high standard and provides an area, rather like a modern and attractive office, with attractive swivel chairs. The school is well placed to make further improvements in the subject.

MUSIC

156. The last inspection found music to be a strength and this continues to be so, due to the enthusiasm and commitment of the co-ordinator, and the high profile that it is given in the school. All pupils, whatever their attainment, are welcome to take part in musical activities. This has resulted in an orchestra involving a fifth of the school and a choir with more boys than is usually seen. Attainment by the end of Years 2 and 6 is above average and pupils make good progress. The co-ordinator is aware that attainment in composition is less strong and that pupils do not use their creativity as well as they do in art. This is sometimes due to the large numbers in the classes and no support for younger pupils.
157. Pupils in Year 2 sing with expression and clarity. They recognise simple forms of notation and are sensitive to rhythm and dynamics. They understand simple forms of music, such as ternary form, because the teacher explains and gives examples of techniques well. By the end of Year 6, pupils sing tunefully, with great expression and often joyously, in class and assembly. They sustain parts well. When singing, they observe pauses indicated by commas and full stops when they read from written texts. This is because the teacher has very high expectations and continually reinforces the need to observe all cues when singing. Their composition shows good understanding of simple forms and they order patterns appropriately to compose a simple piece, although some are stilted. Many understand notation, using it to record their piece, although lower attainers have difficulty with this. Their listening skills are well developed, but few opportunities were seen during the inspection for pupils to evaluate their work. Pupils who learn to play instruments attain very highly due to the specialist teaching. The school engages this independently.
158. Many pupils enjoy music and work hard. They play and sing with great enjoyment. All take part in performances and most work with energy and commitment. Behaviour is very good, but in younger classes, the attention of a few boys wanders when they are not engaged in an activity. Pupils handle equipment carefully and they listen well to their peers when they are asked to perform.
159. Teaching is good overall. Very good subject knowledge, very good demonstrations and enthusiasm ensure that learning to listen and perform is good. Lessons are brisk with a good variety of activities to maintain the motivation of the pupils. There was one exception when the time taken to give out instruments to a large class of young pupils led to a small number of boys losing interest. The teacher's effective skills in managing behaviour quickly brought their attention back again. Classroom assistants support most effectively, but are not always available. Music is mainly taught by a specialist who sees the pupils only once a week. Some teachers follow up the teaching, supporting what has happened in the music lesson, but this is not always the case. This is one reason why composition is not as strong as other areas.
160. Since the last inspection, subject guidance has been produced which covers the requirements of the National Curriculum, although sometimes, the work planned cannot be covered due to lack of time. One example was composition. Assessment is carried out regularly, but comments are mainly to do with how pupils have approached tasks and there is little comment on attainment, particularly of the lower attainers. Assessment does not therefore inform the planning of teaching. The co-ordinator works extremely hard and as a result, pupils have many good opportunities to develop their skills in music through performances, choir, orchestra and the Cadenza group which is open to the community as well as pupils in the school and those who have left who cannot join other performing groups. Pupils also have good opportunities to learn to play the guitar, violin, oboe, flute, recorder and 'cello.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

161. At the age of seven, attainment is above average in physical education and all pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs and those from minority ethnic groups. There are particular strengths in ball skills, including throwing and catching, and in swimming. The standards have been improved since the last inspection. Pupils are taught to swim unaided and safely and almost all attain these goals. They achieve very well.
162. By the age of eleven, attainment is well above average. In gymnastics, pupils devise and perform a series of movements, including rolls, with balance and confidence, most concluding with a good finishing position. In games, all pupils understand the rules of the games they play, playing as part of a team with awareness of others. Skills are above average overall. Pupils are considerate and realise that they are playing for others as well as themselves. Some show special aptitude, and

can throw and strike a ball very effectively. Swimming skills are developed very well and are well above average. Year 6 pupils no longer use the school swimming pool, moving on to the greater challenges and facilities of a larger, deeper pool. Almost all the pupils are strong swimmers and many have life saving awards, which they wear proudly.

163. By the end of Year 6, pupils of all abilities have made good progress and achieve well. Skills, knowledge and understanding are improved over time. During lessons, pupils make good progress, as teaching points are made to guide them on techniques. Teachers assess their pupils' performance and give feedback. Pupils also assess their own and each other's performance. Pupils with special needs are integrated into the lessons well and make good progress.
164. All pupils fully understand the health-related benefits of exercise to improve their fitness and know the effect of vigorous exercise on their bodies. In all lessons seen, pupils were keen to take part and all wore the appropriate kit. Their attitudes are very positive. They appreciate each other's efforts and sometimes applaud particularly good achievement. Behaviour is very good. They work very well together in small groups, taking turns and co-operating. They are polite and courteous. They are very responsible and sensible when working with equipment.
165. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have a good rapport with pupils and make clear their expectations about the standards of participation and behaviour. There is good emphasis on the need for pupils to improve the quality of their performance. The activities are set up well by the teachers and the teaching assistants in advance, so that no time is wasted.
166. In all lessons, teachers plan the activities well. Lessons usually take into account the prior attainment of all the pupils and this has a positive effect on attainment and progress, because they are challenged appropriately by the activities. The resources are used very well. Teachers demonstrate well, so that the pupils can see clearly what they are expected to do and high expectations are set for their performance. Good attainment is praised and pupils demonstrate for others. In the very good swimming lessons, pupils are divided into ability groups and taught appropriate skills in order to help them to progress to the next stage. The lesson plans are detailed and helpful. Pupils are applauded as they become proficient in new techniques. Teachers are very aware of the need for care over health and safety and children understand that there are signals that they have to obey. Additional helpers are welcomed and used very well by teachers to increase the level of individual support to pupils.
167. The school has introduced an improved and good scheme of work and the input of a sport professional from a local college is helping to improve provision. There is also considerable help with swimming from parent volunteers and a swimming coach, which greatly assists teachers and pupils. The large swimming pool is of a very high quality and is roofed so that it can be used for much of the year. There is a balanced range of activities that conform very well to the requirements of the National Curriculum. There is a large field and a hard play area, both of good quality. During all activities, pupils are very closely supervised to ensure their safety.
168. The subject is led well by a very enthusiastic co-ordinator. He monitors planning across the school and supports and guides teachers. There is a comprehensive scheme of work covering all the areas of physical education very thoroughly. Minimal records are kept of pupils' attainment and this is an area for further development so that it will be possible to track the progress that pupils make more effectively. Provision is good overall, because of the quality of the teaching, the good resourcing and the use of specialist coaches. There has been good improvement since the last report.