

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bracknell

LEA area: Bracknell Forest

Unique reference number: 110027

Headteacher: Mrs Geraldine Lindley

Reporting inspector: Mrs Diane Wilkinson
23048

Dates of inspection: 25th – 28th February 2002

Inspection number: 196725

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Gipsy Lane Bracknell Berks
Postcode:	RG12 9AP
Telephone number:	01344 425246
Fax number:	01344 305463
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Margaret Kempster
Date of previous inspection:	March 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23048	Mrs Diane Wilkinson	Registered inspector	Science Art Geography History Equality of Opportunity Special educational needs	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well pupils are taught? What should the school do to improve further?
9454	Mrs Deborah Pepper	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
3678	Mrs Jo Harris	Team inspector	Foundation Stage English Music	How well is the school led and managed?
27654	Mrs Robina Scahill	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and Technology Physical education English as an additional language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Joseph's is a Roman Catholic primary school with 194 pupils (103 boys and 91 girls) in seven classes from reception to Year 6, all attending full time. It is smaller than most primary schools and around the same size as when it was last inspected. The school is popular with parents and is over-subscribed, with pupils coming mainly from the local parish and also other parishes in Bracknell. As is seen in many schools, St Joseph's has experienced problems in recruiting and retaining teaching staff. The number of pupils (11%) with special education needs (SEN) is below the national average. A slightly above average proportion of pupils (four) have a specific statement of need. A below average proportion of pupils (2.6%) are known to be eligible for free school meals. Currently, there are few ethnic minority pupils, but the proportion of pupils (6.7%) who speak English as an additional language (EAL) is higher than in most schools. The area has high employment levels and the majority of pupils come from a socially advantaged background. The attainment of children entering the reception class does vary from year to year, but overall it is above average, as it was at the time of the previous inspection.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Joseph's is a good and effective school, which is well led and managed. Teaching is good overall and pupils' achievements are particularly good in Years 3 to 6, so they reach above average standards by the end of Year 6. The school's Catholic ethos, effectively set out in its Mission Statement and shared by the whole school and parish community, permeates all aspects of its work. It is a very caring school, working hard to ensure that the needs of individual pupils are met well and that all are fully included in all its activities. In this it is particularly successful. It provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils' achieve well, especially in Years 3 to 6 where standards are above average in English, mathematics and science.
- The caring ethos, shared by the whole community, makes a very positive contribution to pupils' learning.
- The very good provision for pupils' personal development, which is valued by parents, results in the very good relationships seen, pupils' good attitudes to learning and their good behaviour.
- The majority of teaching is good, particularly in Years 3 to 6.
- Leadership and management are good, and the new headteacher provides very good quality leadership.

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT), which are below average.
- Provision for gifted and talented pupils and for those pupils who are achieving good average levels.
- Opportunities for independent learning and outdoor play for children in the reception class.
- Monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning by the subject co-ordinators.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been good improvement since the last inspection in May 1997 with the issues identified all being addressed, some of them well. However, the very high turnover in staffing has prevented full implementation of some developments. The very good personal development of pupils, and their good attitudes and behaviour has been maintained. Teaching has improved; little is now unsatisfactory and the majority is good, which has led to higher standards of attainment. Schemes of work are now in place and give clear guidance to help teachers' planning. The provision for SEN and EAL pupils is very good. Resources are now satisfactory and are used well to help support learning. Leadership and management have improved and continue to do so. The school no longer has a significant under spend. Parents now receive information about what their children will be taught each term. Good assessment procedures are used to help to monitor pupils' progress, but not yet as effectively as they could

be. The curriculum for reception children has improved, but there are still some weaknesses, partly because of difficulties in recruiting staff. The school has a good capacity for further improvement.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key

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

Since 1997, the school's performance in the tests for Year 6 pupils has improved at the same rate as in most schools. Results have been consistently above average, although in 2001 they were lower than previously. This is because of differences in ability between year groups, and last year's pupils had made good progress since they took the national tests in Year 2. The school exceeded its targets in English, but not in mathematics where they were set too high. Inspection evidence shows that pupils continue to make good progress and achieve well. Standards in the current Year 6 are above average in English, mathematics and science and this year's targets are likely to be reached. In the tests for Year 2 pupils, the school's performance also improved at a similar rate in writing and mathematics, but better than this in reading. In the 2001 tests, results were well above average in reading, above average in writing and average in mathematics. Standards are lower in mathematics partly because there is too much emphasis on the use of workbooks, which limits some pupils' achievement. Teacher assessments in science showed nearly all pupils reached average levels. Inspection evidence shows that standards in the current Year 2 are above average in English and science, and average in mathematics. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Results in the Year 6 tests are close to those of similar schools. They are better than this in the Year 2 reading tests, as reading is taught particularly well, although they are not so good in writing and mathematics. Standards are generally better for older pupils because teaching is better in this phase. Contrary to the national picture, boys tend to outperform girls, but largely due to prior attainment and ability.

In ICT, pupils now make better progress and achievement is satisfactory. However, unsatisfactory progress in the past has prevented them reaching average standards. Across the school, pupils achieve well and reach standards above the national expectation in physical education, and in geography by Year 6, because of the good provision. In other subjects standards are in line with expectations and achievement is satisfactory. The achievement of children in the reception class has been affected by the high turnover of staff. Children currently in the class achieve satisfactorily and reach standards above those expected for their age, especially in their personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematics, and knowledge and understanding of the world.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. This helps most pupils to work hard and make good progress.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The majority of pupils behave well in lessons, which enhances the quality of their learning. Behaviour around the school is very good. No bullying was observed.
Personal development and	Pupils are confident and take on responsibility willingly. Very good relationships

relationships	help to make the school a happy and harmonious community.
Attendance	Satisfactory. There is little unauthorized absence.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection, and is good overall. It promotes pupils' learning by helping them to concentrate, work hard and make good progress. Five very good lessons and only two unsatisfactory were seen. The majority of good teaching was seen in Years 3 to 6 and in these classes pupils make good progress. Some good and very good teaching was also seen in Year 2. Teaching is good in science and geography throughout the school and also in very nearly all other subjects in Years 3 to 6. Across the school, literacy and numeracy skills are taught well, especially those for reading, and pupils use these skills well in other subjects. In Years 1 to 6, lessons are well planned. Although the majority of teachers expect pupils to do well, expectations are not always high enough for the gifted and talented pupils, and those average pupils who could aim for higher standards. Most teachers manage pupils well, although this was a weakness in the unsatisfactory lessons. On those occasions the teachers did not organise the lessons well and the pace was too slow. Pupils' work is usually marked well, giving them good advice on how to improve, although it is not consistent between classes. Homework gives good support for learning, especially in Years 3 to 6. The reception class teacher has high expectations of the children, but some activities do not encourage their independence enough and they sometimes spend too long sitting on the carpet. Pupils with SEN and EAL are well taught and make good progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. Good for English, science and geography. In ICT, lack of progress in the past means pupils have not fully covered all aspects. Reception children do not have enough opportunities to plan their own activities and choose the resources they will use.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good, including for pupils with a statement of need. Pupils make good progress and achieve well, so some reach average standards by Years 2 and 6.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. Pupils make good progress, both in their acquisition of English and also in their work in other subjects. They achieve well, with many reaching average standards by Year 6 and sometimes exceeding this.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good, especially for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. It has a positive impact on the very good relationships seen and the good behaviour and attitudes of pupils. Cultural development is satisfactory although there is too little emphasis on the cultural diversity of modern British society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well for all its pupils, working hard to meet their individual needs. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal and academic development are good.

The school has a strong partnership with parents. They give good support and have very positive views about its work. The information the school gives them is satisfactory although reports do not give enough information on whether their children are working at the expected level for their age.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The new headteacher, effectively supported by the acting deputy, is providing very strong leadership. Some subject co-ordinators give very good support, but the overall contribution made by other key staff is satisfactory.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors are knowledgeable and supportive. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are effective in helping direct its work.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory overall. Good analysis of test data helps senior staff and governors to identify and plan appropriately for areas for development. The monitoring and evaluation of the learning taking place in lessons is not so well developed.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Rigorous financial management and control effectively support educational priorities. The principles of best value are applied well

The difficulty in recruiting and retaining permanent teaching staff has slowed some of the planned developments and has also meant that some staff, especially the headteacher, have had to take on extra responsibilities. Classroom assistants give very good support, particularly for SEN and EAL pupils. The recently improved accommodation is good. Resources are effectively used to support learning.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children are enthusiastic about school. • Teaching is good and helps children to work hard and make good progress. • The provision for personal development is very good, and results in good relationships and behaviour. • The school is effectively led and managed and has improved well in recent years. • A sense of community and strong parish links are fostered. • The school is very welcoming and encourages parents' involvement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework arrangements. • The information they receive about their children's progress. • The extra-curricular activities

Inspectors fully support parents' positive views. They disagree with most of the concerns raised by some parents. Homework arrangements are good, particularly for pupils in Years 3 to 6, and help them to make good progress. Extra-curricular activities are good when compared with other schools. The arrangements for parental consultations

are similar to those seen in most schools. Reports give information about what pupils have learnt during the year, but are not so clear in helping parents to judge whether their children are working at the levels expected for their age.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The standard of attainment for children entering the reception class is above expectation, although not greatly so, and it does vary from year to year. Over the past two years the achievement of children has been affected by the high turnover of staff. In the current reception class, children achieve satisfactorily in most of the areas of learning. They do not make enough progress in their physical development because of the lack of resources for outdoor play. By the time they move to Year 1, the majority of these children will have exceeded the overall standards expected for their age. In particular, standards are above average in their personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world.
2. For pupils in Years 1 to 6, standards are higher than when the school was last inspected in 1997. The overall results in the national tests for pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6 have been improving at around the same rate as in most schools. However, there are variations from year to year, both in the proportion of pupils reaching average standards and also the proportion reaching the higher levels. This is largely due to differences in ability between different year groups, more marked because the year groups are small when compared with the majority of schools. Standards are generally higher for pupils in Years 3 to 6 because there is more good teaching in these year groups.
3. In the 2001 tests for Year 2 pupils, the school's results in reading were well above the national average. This is largely because of the good teaching of this aspect. Results were above average in writing, although too few pupils reached the higher Level 3 because of lack of challenge. The results in mathematics were average and not as good as in the previous year when very nearly all pupils reached the average Level 2. The lower results in mathematics are partly because there is too much focus on the activities set out in workbooks, which limits what pupils can achieve. Although the results were better than those of similar schools in reading, they were not as good in writing and mathematics. Standards are also above average in science where, in the teacher assessments, very nearly all pupils reached the average Level 2. However, as in writing, the lack of challenge meant too few pupils reached the higher Level 3. The overall achievement of pupils currently in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. The high standards in reading and science have been maintained. In addition the school's awareness of where it needs to raise standards further, and the strategies it has put in place are already beginning to have an impact. For example, in mathematics, Year 2 pupils' number work is above average. However, standards in mathematics and writing, although improved still remain average. In both Years 2 and 6, boys consistently outperform girls, which is contrary to the national picture although this is largely due to prior attainment and ability.
4. Since the last inspection, results in the national tests for pupils at the end of Year 6 have consistently been above average. Although the 2001 results were above average in English, mathematics and science, they were lower than the previous year, both in comparison with all schools and also those in a similar context. However, data shows that these pupils had made better than expected progress in English, mathematics and science since they took the national tests at the age of seven. Therefore, pupils had continued to achieve well, as they had done in previous years. In 2001, the school exceeded the target it had set for English. However, the school did not reach the target set in mathematics, largely because it was too high and not specifically based on the prior attainment of this group of pupils. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 continue to achieve well. Current Year 6 pupils are reaching above average standards in English,

mathematics and science. This year the school is likely to reach the targets it has set in both English and mathematics.

5. In English, achievement is satisfactory for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and good for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Overall standards are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6, particularly in speaking and listening and in reading. Pupils are confident and articulate speakers who participate in discussions enthusiastically. They enjoy reading, and most Year 2 pupils use a range of skills to read accurately. By Year 6, most pupils read fluently and expressively and know how to locate information in reference books. Throughout the school, pupils cover a wide range of writing. Pupils reach average standards by the end of Year 2 and above average standards by Year 6 where pupils write competently in different styles.
6. In mathematics, Year 1 and 2 pupils achieve satisfactorily and the majority reach average standards by the end of Year 2 although their number work is above average. Achievement is better in Years 3 to 6, and most pupils reach above average standards in all aspects of the subject by the time they leave the school. They use a range of strategies effectively, for example in working with fractions or co-ordinates. However, they do not easily apply this knowledge when they have to solve mathematical problems, partly because the work they are given relies too much on that set out in textbooks.
7. Because of the very good emphasis placed on learning through investigations, most pupils achieve well and reach above average standards in science. They develop good investigation skills and a better knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts than most pupils of their age. For example, by the end of Year 2, pupils undertake simple tests such as to find out the speed at which different materials melt. Year 6 pupils plan and carry out investigations, forming hypotheses, controlling variables and recording and interpreting the information accurately. Across the school, pupils have a good knowledge of the areas covered in the National Curriculum Programmes of Study.
8. The school has recognised that it needs to raise standards in information and communication technology. Although standards are improving, they are not yet good enough and, by the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils do not yet reach standards that match the national expectation. The recently appointed co-ordinator has produced an effective set of plans to increase teachers' expertise and confidence and ensure that effective opportunities are planned to improve pupils' skills and knowledge. This has already begun to have an effect, with pupils now achieving satisfactorily. However, the older pupils' skills in using spreadsheets, and in using information and communication technology to monitor and control events are weak because they have not had enough experience of these aspects of the subject.
9. In all other subjects pupils reach standards that are at least in line with national expectations and achievement is satisfactory. However, because of the good quality provision, pupils achieve well and reach above average standards in physical education, and also in geography by the time they leave the school. Standards are also above average in some, but not all aspects of this subject in Year 2.
10. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are particularly well supported and included in all activities. This means they achieve well, often reaching average standards and occasionally exceeding them. The achievement of the more able pupils is good overall, especially in Years 3 to 6. There are a few occasions when the most able pupils are not sufficiently challenged and therefore do not achieve as highly as they could. This is partly because the school has not identified and set up a register for gifted and talented pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils have good attitudes to school, which support their learning. Parents say their children like coming to school and pupils are clearly happy and secure. In the large majority of lessons, pupils are interested in their work and are keen to participate. For example, pupils contributed enthusiastically in a lesson where they wrote a class poem in the style of 'The Highwayman'. Pupils enjoy answering questions and ask questions of their own. They settle quickly, and work sensibly on individual tasks, completing good amounts of work, such as, in a Year 5 numeracy lesson about angles and degrees. Pupils' interest often continues even where the lesson is not particularly exciting, or the pace is rather slow. However, in a minority of lessons, some pupils find it difficult to concentrate and they become restless, usually when the lesson is not very stimulating, but in some cases, even when the work is interesting.
12. Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and very good around the school and in the playground. Pupils' good behaviour supports their learning. Parents are pleased with the good standard of behaviour at the school and are particularly supportive of the attitudes and values, which the school promotes. Pupils show a good understanding of their own mission statement, which summarises the behaviour expected of them, particularly in the way they behave and relate to adults and each other. In the great majority of lessons, pupils behave well. For example, the Year 4 pupils making Tudor purses worked purposefully, selecting materials and talking quietly to each other. However, in a few lessons, where teaching was less than good, there was some silly behaviour, which slowed the pace of the lesson and impeded children's learning.
13. Pupils play happily together at break times. The Year 6 lunchtime monitors support the younger children, and the different year groups use the playground together well. Lunchtimes are relaxed and pupils relate well to each other and the midday supervisors. The behaviour of all pupils during a fifty minute Lenten Mass was exemplary. Around the school, pupils are polite to each other and adults. For example, they hold doors and stand aside to allow adults to pass. There was no evidence of bullying during the inspection and the incidence of bullying is very low. There have been no exclusions during the past year.
14. The needs of pupils with special educational needs are usually met well. This helps them to stay focused and behave well in most lessons. There were a small number of occasions where the work planned for them did not meet their needs so well, or when the class was not effectively controlled. In these lessons, they often wasted time or interrupted the work of other pupils.
15. The school's attention to pupils' personal development is very good and a strength of the school. It has improved further since the previous inspection. Relationships between all members of the school community are very good and are characterised by respect, care and genuine warmth. Pupils speak easily and confidently to adults. They work co-operatively in pairs and groups. For example, a group of reception children took turns in planting beans, and older pupils worked together successfully in groups to write and perform a radio script for 'The War of the Worlds'. In lessons, pupils listen to each other with respect and share each other's successes gladly. Pupils of different nationalities, including those from minority ethnic groups or with special educational needs, work and play together harmoniously. Pupils in the class of a child with a visual impairment include him in activities sensitively, but without being overprotective.
16. Pupils are encouraged to take on responsibilities throughout the school, which help them to become mature and caring. In lessons and assemblies, they take on small tasks and responsibilities cheerfully. The school council provides a good opportunity to incorporate pupils' views into school decisions. In a meeting during the inspection, pupils maturely and sensibly planned an assembly to promote a new 'playground buddy' system. Year 6 pupils read with

reception children each week with obvious mutual enjoyment. They also looked after children on a visit to school prior to their entering the reception class. Good opportunities allow Years 1 to 6 pupils to develop responsibility for their own learning although this is not promoted so well in the reception class.

17. Attendance for 2000/01 was unsatisfactory as it was below the national average. However, much of the absence was accounted for by a small number of pupils. Attendance is now improving and, for the autumn term 2001, was above the national average. There is little unauthorised absence. Pupils are punctual, except when traffic is particularly heavy, and registers are filled in appropriately at the beginning of each session. During the inspection however, pupils arrived late for assembly on several days, which meant that the first lesson of the day was cut short by around ten minutes.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

18. The overall quality of teaching is good, with good or better teaching being seen in nearly two-thirds of the lessons observed. Five very good lessons were seen with only two being unsatisfactory. This is very good improvement since the last inspection where nearly a fifth of the teaching was unsatisfactory and fewer lessons were good. Parents also agree that teaching has improved and is now good. Pupils are well taught, particularly in Years 3 to 6, and this is helping to ensure that they make good progress in their learning and achieve well.
19. Good teaching and learning was seen in science, geography and physical education across the school and also in very nearly all subjects in Years 3 to 6. Teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy is good throughout the school, particularly for reading where these skills contribute to high standards in both Years 2 and 6. Teachers also plan good opportunities for their use in other subjects. For example, pupils write instructions as part of their work in design and technology and imaginative writing about different events in history. Numeracy skills are used effectively in subjects such as science and design and technology, where they contribute to accurate measurement and data collection. As no lessons were observed during the inspection, it is not possible to make an overall judgement about the teaching of information and communication technology. Nor is it possible to make judgements about the teaching of design and technology or history for pupils in Years 1 and 2. The improvements in teaching are partly due to the monitoring and support for this aspect given by the previous and current headteachers. In addition, there has been a significant changeover of staff since the school was last inspected and the quality of teaching seen in some of the new staff has also raised the levels of good teaching. However, partly due to high living costs in the area, the recruitment and retention of teachers is still difficult for the school. This does have an adverse effect on the continuity of learning, particularly for children in the reception class. During the inspection there were three members of staff employed on temporary contracts.
20. The teaching for children in the reception class is satisfactory overall. This post has been very difficult for the school to fill, with a high number of temporary teachers over the past two years, and the current post holder is also on a temporary contract. This has made it more difficult for the school to implement the curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage effectively. The strengths in teaching seen in this stage are partly due to the very good management of the children, which ensures they remain focused and on task in the majority of activities. The teacher has high expectations that they will do well. As a result of these strengths in the teaching, children are developing very good attitudes to learning and they work hard and at a good pace. Children with special educational needs are sensitively supported, with good encouragement of their achievements and, as a result, they make good progress. However, not enough emphasis has been placed on providing activities where children can make their own choices and decisions about how they will carry out their task, or what resources they will

use. This limits the progress they make in their independence skills, as well as preventing them from gaining a greater understanding about what they are learning. There are some occasions when children are kept too long sitting on the carpet, although they still concentrate and listen well. Not enough use is made of assessment in lessons to help inform the planning for the next stage of learning.

21. For pupils in Years 1 and 2, teaching is satisfactory overall. In the lessons seen, one was unsatisfactory and a third were good or better. All of the good or better lessons observed were seen in Year 2. However, the scrutiny of work and the progress made by pupils shows that there is good teaching and learning in both these year groups in science and geography. As a result, pupils are now achieving well and reaching above average standards in science and in their map work on geography. In these classes, teachers generally have good subject knowledge, and the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, particularly for reading, are taught well. An example of this was seen in a very good Year 2 literacy lesson, where the teacher explained the “er” sound on the end of words particularly well. This good teaching helps pupils to make good progress in improving their literacy and numeracy skills. Teaching and learning in science emphasises an investigative approach, which engages pupils’ interest, as well as helping them to learn the skills and concepts more easily. Lessons are generally well planned with clear objectives and work well targeted at different ability groups. This helps all pupils, whatever their needs, to make sound progress and achieve appropriately.
22. In the good or better lessons seen in Year 2, pupils were managed well and the activities were effectively organised. Great care was taken to ensure that all pupils were fully involved and, in this, the learning support assistants were deployed particularly well, giving very good support. This was very effective in involving all pupils, including those with a specific statement of need, in all activities. It also helped pupils to listen carefully and concentrate well. The lessons were well paced and resources, such as pictures or videos, used well to interest and motivate pupils. These good features help pupils to make good progress. Discussions were effectively managed, with pupils being encouraged to ask lots of questions to make sure they understood. The good teaching in Year 2 has led to better learning and achievement for this group of pupils. As a result, standards are rising.
23. Where teaching was less than good, the management of pupils was inconsistent and not so effective. For example, in the Year 1 class, the pupils are lively, keen and interested in their learning. However, partly due to the fact that they had a very high number of teachers during the reception year, a significant minority find it difficult to respond well to class routines. In lessons where they were more actively involved, as in the art lesson seen, learning was more effective. However, the management of pupils was less successful in those activities where they had to listen carefully and concentrate hard. Expectations of behaviour were made clear to pupils, but they were not consistently enforced throughout the lesson. Also, on a number of occasions, too much time was taken up with making sure that pupils remained focused, and therefore the pace of learning slowed. The interrupted flow of these lessons also meant that the instructions given to pupils about the activities they had to do were not clear. In addition, the organisation of group activities was not as effective as it could be, despite the fact that these had been well planned and prepared. In very nearly all the lessons seen, learning was satisfactory and pupils achieved appropriately, although not as well as in the Year 2 class. In addition, these weaknesses contributed to the unsatisfactory teaching and learning observed in one lesson.
24. Over three quarters of the teaching seen in Years 3 to 6 was good, and four very good lessons were observed. Teaching was unsatisfactory in only one lesson. As in Years 1 and 2, teachers have good subject knowledge and they teach the basic skills of literacy and numeracy well. The good teaching seen in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science is an important factor in the above average standards pupils reach by the time they leave the school.

Teachers' planning is good and this is partly due to the good medium term plans, which the curriculum co-ordinators have produced for each subject. In most lessons, there is suitable work set for the different ability groups. However, the school has not yet formally identified and provided for those pupils who are gifted or talented which means the needs of the most able pupils are sometimes overlooked. Teachers are good at identifying and planning activities, which will stimulate pupils' interest and help them to learn easily. In the best lessons seen, this was particularly good. For example, a very good geography lesson helped pupils to gain a particularly good understanding of environmental issues as they role-played a situation where local residents responded to the pressures of tourism. In addition, teachers are good at planning lessons, which effectively build on and extend pupils' skills and knowledge as they move through a topic. This was evident in a very good lesson on classifying soil types, where pupils were able to achieve success because of previous learning. Teachers' high expectations help pupils to make good progress overall. This is enhanced by the fact that pupils have individual targets to promote their learning in literacy and numeracy. However, the school has not yet sufficiently targeted those pupils who are working at a good average level and set challenging work, which will allow them to reach the higher levels. This is a weakness, which has been correctly identified by the new headteacher, although plans are not yet in place to address it. Teachers use a good range of methods, and choose resources, which are well matched to pupils' interests as well as the specific needs of different subjects. This was seen in a good literacy lesson where the teacher collated and synthesised pupils' contributions well in the writing of a class poem. Teachers are skilled at leading pupils in discussions, and questioning them well to help understanding. There is a very good awareness of the needs of different groups of pupils, so all are involved well in these activities. In another good lesson, the contribution made by a health educationalist, and the resources she brought, helped pupils to gain a good understanding of the effects of bacteria on food. Teachers manage pupils well, having high expectations of the way they will behave and work. On only one occasion was this not so good, so the pace of the lesson was too slow and teaching and learning were unsatisfactory. The quality of marking and assessment is good overall. The best marking is a very effective dialogue between teacher and pupils, identifying what the pupil can or cannot do and giving very good advice on how to improve. However, marking is inconsistent and ranges from very good to barely satisfactory, where it is largely confined to ticks for correct work. One reason for the differences in marking is the high turnover of staff.

25. Across the school, very good attention is given to supporting pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Teaching is always good, and better than this when these pupils work under the supervision of the very effective learning support assistants. The quality of teaching provided for a statemented pupil who is visually impaired is exceptional. The support given by the class teacher, special needs assistant and the visiting teacher from the Sensory Support Unit is excellent. As a result the pupil is making good progress and is achieving standards above those expected.
26. Although some parents who responded to the questionnaire were concerned about homework, inspection evidence does not support their views. The homework, mainly in English and mathematics, given to the younger pupils is similar to that seen in most schools. Provision is better than this for pupils in Years 3 to 6 where the range and quantity builds up progressively as pupils move through the school. It is regularly set and marked and gives good support to learning.

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

27. The school meets statutory curricular requirements. The curriculum provided for pupils in the reception class is satisfactory. Although it is not planned specifically using the recommended areas of learning for this age group, it covers very nearly all of them adequately. However, not enough emphasis has been given to promoting children's independent learning and the lack of facilities for outside play limits some aspects of the provision for physical development. In the rest of the school, provision for the required subjects of the National Curriculum is satisfactory overall. Since the school was last inspected, nationally recommended schemes have been adopted for all subjects and consequently planning has improved. Although a new scheme of work is in place for information and communication technology, it is not yet being followed and the subject is not covered in sufficient depth. This is partly because, in the past, pupils did not make enough progress and are not yet ready to move on to some aspects of the subject. The curriculum for English, science and geography is particularly strong and is helping pupils to reach above average standards in these subjects.
28. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are good and well established. The time allocated to them and the opportunities to use the skills acquired in other areas of the curriculum are having a positive impact on standards, which are above the national average by the time pupils leave the school. However, the timetables planned for each class are not making the most efficient use of the time available, so there are short periods, which are not used effectively to support learning.
29. The school is making very good provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE). The programme is delivered mainly through religious education and science. For example, Year 6 pupils shared what they had learned about food hygiene in a science topic by displaying posters around the school. In addition to this, there is a whole school focus on a particular topic for PSHE during one week each term. The school also takes part in the Healthy Schools Award Scheme and children are proud of the fact that the potatoes they grew are served for school lunches. There is a planned programme for drugs' education in Year 5, and specific lessons for sex education in Years 5 and 6. Visits from the local community police officer and town planning officer support the pupils' learning in citizenship.
30. The school is committed to including all pupils in its work and to offering equal opportunities for all. Pupils with English as an additional language are included in all aspects of school life. Provision for pupils with special educational needs, including those with a specific statement of need is very good and, in the case of a pupil with visual impairment, the provision is exceptional. These pupils make the same progress as other pupils, with some reaching average or above average standards. The school intends to set up a register of gifted and talented pupils in order to provide opportunities to meet their specific needs.
31. There is good provision for extra-curricular activities, although this does not include the younger pupils. Because there is no music specialist, there are few extra-curricular opportunities for music other than private tuition for guitar. Teachers and some outside specialists are involved in running a wide variety of lunchtime and after-school clubs. These include, French, football, netball, badminton, chess, science and first aid. The curriculum is extended appropriately through the visits pupils make and the contribution visitors bring to the school. History and geography are particularly well supported by visits to museums, places of historic interest and field trips. Year 6 pupils' annual residential visit to The Isle of Wight enriches other areas of the curriculum, such as information and communication technology and physical education, as well as making a significant contribution to their personal and social development.
32. There are very strong links with the parish, and the whole parish community is supportive of the school and its work. The parish priest is one of a number of visitors who present positive role models of life in the community. The school also has good links with the local community as a whole, which benefit pupils. For example, the Bracknell Planning Development Officer has

visited to the school to talk about current suggested developments for the town centre. Pupils also benefit from the close association with a teachers' training institution. The school has very good links with the nursery school on the same site and this helps support children when they begin full time education. Satisfactory links with the many secondary schools to which pupils transfer ensure that they are well prepared for the next stage of their learning.

33. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development and, since the previous inspection, has further improved this aspect of its work, particularly for social development. This is a strength of the school and has positive outcomes in helping pupils to develop good attitudes to their work. It also supports the very good relationships and good behaviour seen. The active partnership of school, parents, governors and parish creates a strong sense of community, based on shared Catholic principles, in which all are valued and respected. Staff provide very good role models for the values the school promotes. Involvement in the Healthy Schools Award has made a particular contribution to pupils' personal development in the past two years. Parents say that the very good provision for this aspect of the school's work is a major reason for choosing this school for their children.
34. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good and is promoted particularly well through acts of collective worship, class assemblies and English, music and science lessons. Prayer and reflection are integral parts of the school day and children pray naturally, without prior preparation, in class and whole school assemblies. During the inspection, Year 6 pupils led an assembly, which challenged other pupils about their response to the season of Lent. Pupils are helped to explore their feelings in response to the world around them. For example, in a music lesson, they were asked to write a poem or draw a picture to show what four different pieces of music meant to them. Children in the reception class are developing a sense of awe and wonder in the natural world and they were very excited about the growth of beans they had planted.
35. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good and is underpinned by the school's values. Clear boundaries for behaviour are set for all pupils, from the reception class onwards, and all pupils know the difference between right and wrong. Good behaviour is regularly praised and rewarded. The provision for pupils' social development is also very good. As a result, they are natural and unaffected in their dealings with adults and with each other. Pupils work well together in pairs and groups, for example in researching information about Tudor life to prepare a poster. In a town study as part of a geography lesson, pupils were asked to consider how to meet the mobility needs of young families and elderly people in Bracknell town centre. Pupils willingly take on responsibilities within the school, including on the school council. Good additional provision is also made for Year 6 pupils, including responsibility as house captains, and experiences on the school journey to the Isle of Wight.
36. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' cultural development, particularly helping them to understand their own culture, through history, art and music. Some opportunities are provided to help pupils understand other cultures. For example, they explore comparisons between life in the Gambia and Bracknell in geography, and study Indian music. However, the curriculum does not contain enough activities to raise pupils' awareness of other cultures or the cultural diversity of our society. For example, there are no visits to places of worship, other than Christian churches.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. The good provision for the care of the pupils is rooted in the school's Catholic ethos and values. These good standards of care have been maintained since the previous inspection.

Pupils are valued as individuals and are secure within the school's happy and caring environment. Parents are particularly pleased with this aspect of the school's work. Class teachers and learning support assistants know the pupils well, are sensitive to their needs, and support them effectively. Pupils are confident in approaching adults if they need help. Circle time is used effectively, as part of the personal, social and health education, to provide opportunities for pupils to discuss issues.

38. The whole school community shares the same high expectations of good behaviour and there are sound procedures for promoting this. The behaviour policy is underpinned by the school's Catholic values, emphasising the rights and responsibilities of pupils, and the importance of forgiveness and reparation. The pupils' own mission statement summarises behavioural expectations for children and in addition, classes agree their own rules. Pupils are regularly praised and rewarded for good behaviour, often with merit points. However, partly as the result of the high turnover in staffing, the rewards and sanctions set out in the behaviour policy are not consistently applied across the school. Staff, pupils, parents and governors were all involved in preparing the anti-bullying policy which sets out clear procedures in cases where bullying occurs.
39. The school has improved assessment procedures since the last inspection. It now assesses pupils' attainment and progress systematically, for example through interim standard assessment tests and commercial tests. Children are tested when they enter the reception class and each year thereafter. Each pupil has a portfolio with samples of work that are annotated, and these give a clear indication of how much progress each child has made over time. The assessment co-ordinator keeps a careful record of the levels that pupils attain and tracks their progress effectively. Class and group targets are set, based on these records. The information is also helpful in identifying those pupils who would benefit from extra support.
40. Data in English, mathematics and science is now analysed to look for trends and areas needing improvement. As a result of this, emphasis was placed on raising standards in science, which have since improved considerably. The school has also identified weaknesses in spelling and writing, which are now receiving a higher priority. However, assessment information is not consistently used to inform lesson planning. Consequently, although work is modified to meet different abilities, it often presents too little challenge for the good average pupils, which would enable them to reach higher standards.
41. The other subjects of the curriculum are not yet formally assessed so areas for development are not easily identified. Neither do children in the reception class have their achievement monitored against national goals for the Foundation Stage curriculum. However, the school is aware of the need to use the information it gathers to greater effect and to develop the ways in which assessment can be used to improve pupils' progress in all areas of learning. The school has an effective marking policy but, partly due to the high staffing turnover, this is not consistently applied. In most classes written comments are positive, and the best marking gives the pupils guidance on how to improve their work.
42. Child protection issues have a high profile amongst both teaching and support staff. There is a useful policy, and the headteacher is the nominated child protection officer. Fire drills are held regularly. First aid procedures are good and Year 6 pupils complete a course in care and first aid. Good provision is made for pupils with specific medical conditions. Regular health and safety checks are carried out. Good attention has been paid to awareness of any potential incidents in the locality of the school. For example, special procedures are in place to deal with any that may take place at a nearby factory.

43. Attendance is monitored closely and an attendance policy is in preparation. Weekly awards are made to classes with 100% attendance. The school liaises closely with the education welfare officer where pupils' absence causes concern.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. The school has a strong partnership with parents which supports pupils' learning well. The quality of the partnership has strengthened since the previous inspection. Parents are very supportive of the work of the school. They feel their children achieve well and their behaviour is good. Parents find the school welcoming and staff approachable. Links with parents, based on shared Catholic values, are integral to the strong sense of community within the school. The home/school agreement promotes this shared commitment effectively and includes a section for pupils to complete themselves when they reach Year 3.
45. The school provides satisfactory information for parents including the prospectus, governors' annual report and newsletters. Staff also provide termly curriculum newsletters with useful information about topics, but these do not always include enough information to enable parents to know how to support children's learning at home. This is particularly the case in numeracy and literacy. Reports give parents useful information about the progress their children have made during the year and include targets for the following year. However, the reports do not consistently evaluate pupils' learning against the requirements of the National Curriculum nor do they include comments about how well pupils' are achieving.
46. Home/school reading records enable parents to support their children's reading at home. Staff use contact books for pupils with special educational needs particularly well to communicate daily with parents about achievements and difficulties. A number of parents help in school and on school trips. Parents are involved well in the induction programme for pupils entering the reception class. There are many opportunities for parents to speak informally with staff at appropriate times of the day. An active parent teacher association makes a good contribution to the life of the school and has raised significant sums of money for books, resources and playground equipment. These enhance the environment and extend opportunities for pupils to play and learn together.
47. The school seeks actively to involve the parents of the small number of children for whom English is an additional language, although it has sometimes been difficult to find interpreters in the relevant languages. The school has also supported the welfare needs of some families. Parents whose children have a special educational need are included very well in helping the school to support them. There is an exceptionally good partnership between the school and the parent of a pupil with visual impairment. She gives particularly good support to the school in helping ensure that the provision for her child is of the very highest quality.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

48. The school has experienced changes of senior staff recently. A new headteacher had just taken up her post at the time of the inspection and there was also an acting deputy headteacher. Although only recently appointed, the headteacher has already carried out a thorough evaluation of the school's work. As a result, she has a clear view of strengths and weaknesses and is providing very good leadership to raise standards. She is well supported by the acting deputy headteacher, who is increasingly playing an effective part in the management of the school, such as leading professional development initiatives. The senior management team, which also includes the infant and junior phase co-ordinators, is effectively involved in

issues concerning raising pupils' attainment. The good work of senior staff is helping to move the school forward.

49. The contribution made by the subject co-ordinators is satisfactory overall. However, the problem with recruiting staff has meant that some teachers have more than one role. In particular, the headteacher has a heavy responsibility for three curriculum subjects as well as special educational needs. In addition, the high turnover of staff has meant some co-ordinators have not yet received the necessary training. Although there are a number of new co-ordinators, most are providing satisfactory support for colleagues. Where experienced and knowledgeable co-ordinators are in place, these subjects are managed well. This is the case in science, history and geography. A new member of staff is also providing effective support in the technology subjects although her good leadership skills have not had enough time to show significant development. An improvement since the previous inspection is the regular provision of time for co-ordinators away from their classes to fulfil their management role. This has helped co-ordinators in the core subjects to evaluate national test results and to identify where the school needs to improve. However, as yet, no co-ordinators have undertaken observations in lessons and not all have analysed pupils' recorded work. These were weaknesses at the time of the last inspection and this is still the case. Teachers have not had enough training in these monitoring aspects of the role. The previous special educational needs co-ordinator fulfilled her role very well and the headteacher is effectively maintaining this high standard. She is aware of how to obtain the best support possible for pupils. This is also the case for pupils for whom English is an additional language and the provision for this aspect is also managed very well. The recent appointment of a new teacher for next term, who will take over the role of special educational needs co-ordinator, will ease the high number of responsibilities carried by the headteacher.
50. The school has a very clear mission statement, which is displayed in the school and in the prospectus for all to share. The detailed aims are helpfully formulated under four headings and most of the aims are being met successfully in the life of the school.
51. The governors are supportive, and provide help and advice for the school. They fulfil their statutory duties effectively and most have a good understanding of the schools' strengths and areas for development. A number visit the school informally during the day, but some do not, and this prevents governors gaining first hand information about the progress being made in the developments. The committee structure is well established and committees had an effective input into the formulation of the previous school development plan. The decision was taken not to formulate a new plan until the new headteacher had become aware of issues requiring development and until after the inspection, in order to incorporate any issues arising. The format of the previous plan was helpful, with success criteria often related to the impact the particular target would have on teaching and learning. The current priorities identified by the headteacher are fully appropriate and include the development of the information and communication technology suite and staff training for this area of the curriculum. In addition priorities are to increase the subject co-ordinators' monitoring skills and to undertake a curriculum audit in order to identify areas needing further improvement.
52. The school has introduced a good system of performance management, based on the recommended framework. The interviews the new headteacher held with all staff were part of the process. Until a new deputy is appointed, the headteacher is managing the process for all staff and this is not appropriate. Very good use is made of new technology within school administration, and the arrangements for financial management are very good. The bursar is highly efficient and the recent auditors' visit was very successful, with almost all procedures meeting the required standards. The large carry forward figure reported at the time of the last inspection is now reduced to an appropriate amount. The governors' finance committee receives regular statements and is fully aware of the school's finances. Governors have

debated spending decisions, such as purchasing additional resources and financing further learning support assistants. Any grants made to the school, either from the local education authority or the diocese, are spent appropriately and have been successful in helping to improve the school environment and its provision. The procedures for ensuring best value are good. This is the case, not only in spending to improve the resources and the fabric of the school, but also in taking decisions which help to improve teaching and learning.

53. The school has had difficulty in recruiting teachers and has experienced a high turnover since the last inspection. Currently there are two full time teachers and one part time teacher who have temporary contracts, as well as an acting deputy headteacher. Inevitably, this has an impact on consistency for the pupils and workload for other staff. However, the current staff work well together and the senior management team supports new teachers effectively. The learning support assistants are valued members of the team and are effective in supporting the good progress pupils make, especially those with special educational needs or those for whom English is an additional language. In addition, midday supervisors, administrative and cleaning staff all make a good contribution to the school's work. When the school is staffed by a full complement of permanent teachers this, together with the expertise and sensitive approach of the new headteacher, will ensure that the school will be well placed to raise standards further and succeed with challenging targets.
54. The accommodation is good overall, with good-sized classrooms which are enhanced by stimulating displays of pupils' work. The recent developments to the staff room and headteacher's room, and the provision of a medical room, special educational needs resources room and passage to link the younger children's classrooms are all making an effective contribution to the school's work. The current plans which include the development of the information and communication technology suite and a new information centre, incorporating the library and another resources room will bring about further improvement. There are good outdoor facilities for pupils in Years 1 to 6, including a good size field and two playgrounds, with climbing apparatus. However, the outdoor facilities for the reception class are inadequate and this limits regular opportunities for physical development. Resource provision is satisfactory overall, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. In particular, the better resources for science have had a very good impact on standards.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

55. The school is aware that there are some areas of its work where improvement is still needed. Most of the weaknesses identified during the inspection have already been highlighted by the new headteacher as priorities for inclusion in the new school development plan.
56. In order to build on the good work already taking place in the school and to help raise standards further the headteacher, staff and governors should:
- (1) Raise standards of attainment in information and communication technology by implementing the development plan, particularly through increasing teachers' expertise.
(The school already has an appropriate plan, which includes training for teachers, improved accommodation and extra computers, to put this in place)

See paragraphs 8, 27, 106, 108, 109, and 111.

- (2) Improve the provision for the gifted and talented pupils and those who are working at a good average level by;

- setting up a register of gifted and talented pupils and providing a range of activities to raise their achievements.
- identifying the good average pupils, and planning activities for them that provide a greater challenge, so that they can more easily aim to reach higher standards.

(The identification of and provision for gifted and talented pupils is currently under review)

See paragraphs 3, 10, 24, 30, 40 and 75.

(3) Improve the teaching and learning for children in the reception class by;

- planning a greater range of activities to help them gain independence in learning;
- providing regular opportunities for outdoor play.

(Improvements in provision are already identified as a priority for the new school development plan)

See paragraphs 2, 20, 54, 59 – 62 and 66.

(4) Ensure that subject co-ordinators receive appropriate training and are given opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning that takes place in lessons in their subject, in order to help improve provision and raise standards further.

(This has already been identified as a priority for the new school development plan)

See paragraphs 49, 51, 74, 86, 91, 101, 105 and 115

Minor areas for consideration within the action plan include:

1. Ensure that the library is used more fully to support pupils' learning, especially by increasing the opportunities for them to access its resources.

See paragraph 70

2. Continue to develop the ways in which assessment is used to improve the work of the school and promote pupils' progress.

See paragraphs 40, 41, 74 and 78.

3. Make sure that the marking policy is consistently followed throughout the school.

See paragraphs 24, 41, 73 and 78.

4. Review planning, especially in mathematics, to ensure that the curriculum is not so heavily reliant on the textbooks of a specific scheme.

See paragraphs 6, 75 and 78.

5. Re-examine the time allocated to subject areas and the timetabling in each class, to ensure that the most effective use is made of time to support learning.

See paragraphs 17 and 28.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

44

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

28

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	5	22	15	2	0	0
Percentage	0	11	50	34	5	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)	0	190
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	21

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	10

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.5

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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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	11	18	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	10
	Girls	17	17	17
	Total	27	27	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (86)	93 (86)	93 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	10
	Girls	17	17	17
	Total	27	27	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (93)	93 (100)	97 (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	19	11	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	15	19
	Girls	10	8	11
	Total	27	23	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90 (94)	77 (90)	100 (90)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
	Boys	16	16	16

Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Girls	10	10	10
	Total	26	26	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	87 (84)	87 (84)	87 (84)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

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

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.95
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.8
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	129

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0
Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0
Number of pupils per FTE adult	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
	£
Total income	377,527
Total expenditure	389,382
Expenditure per pupil	1,987
Balance brought forward from previous year	29,567
Balance carried forward to next year	17,712

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6
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Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6
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Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
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Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
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Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	190
Number of questionnaires returned	101

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	52	45	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	47	45	6	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	31	63	5	1	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	48	21	3	1
The teaching is good.	45	50	3	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	26	46	23	3	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	54	36	5	4	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	45	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	25	55	10	6	4
The school is well led and managed.	36	51	2	3	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	46	47	4	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	21	41	27	1	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

57. Children are admitted to the reception class at the beginning of the term in which they will be five. At the time of the inspection, there were seventeen children in the class, eleven of whom had been in school since September. Thirteen more will join after Easter and these children will have just one term of full time schooling in the Foundation Stage. Induction arrangements are good, as most children have attended the on-site, independent nursery. During the inspection, the nursery children visited school to use the hall facilities and to watch a class assembly. The children who will be joining the reception class next term visited the class and stayed happily for a school lunch, accompanied by a Year 6 “buddy”. They will visit several times, which helps them settle confidently. Formal appointments are made termly for parents to discuss their child’s progress. A written report, appropriately completed under the headings of the six areas of learning, is provided at the end of the year.
58. The reception class has been taught by a number of teachers since the last inspection. Currently there is a temporary teacher, but he will stay for the whole academic year, providing valuable continuity. The full time learning support assistant has been in school for several years and is another valued source of continuity and support. Provision for children with special educational needs is good, with a part time learning support assistant giving appropriate help. A very good dialogue with the relevant parents is in place, with notes of these children’s progress being made regularly in a home contact book. At times, as a result of the frequency of whole class teaching, the learning support assistants are insufficiently involved with the children.
59. In all areas of learning the quality of teaching seen was satisfactory overall, with some that was good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The teacher is fully involved with the children at all times and plans many practical activities to motivate and interest them. For example, in a good session, the children were fascinated to see and feel beans, some of which had been in water and some of which had begun to grow roots and shoots. One child said these were ‘amazing’ as she felt the shoots! Having watched the teacher, with the help of a child, plant some bean seeds, the children then planted their own, understanding the importance of water for growth. The teacher enjoys good relationships with the children and his questioning and frequent reminders of key learning points are very helpful. However, at times the children are asked to sit on the carpet for too long, though their behaviour and concentration is very good at these times.
60. The prior attainment of children entering the reception class does vary from year to year although, overall, it is above expectations. Baseline assessments and inspection observations show this to be the case for children currently in the class. The achievement of children, including those with special education needs is satisfactory. By the time they join Year 1, it is likely that almost all of the present, older children will attain and many will exceed the early learning goals in all the areas of learning specified for the Foundation Stage. However, the fact that some children do not enter the reception class until the start of the summer term does limit the progress these children are able to make. Although the curriculum is planned under National Curriculum subject headings, most of the requirements for the Foundation Stage are addressed. However, there is not an appropriate balance between teacher directed and child initiated activities. Opportunities for activities to support the children’s developing skills in making choices and decisions, exploring, experimenting and learning independently are limited. There are weaknesses in the assessment and recording of the progress children make. This is because their achievement is not monitored against national goals for the Foundation Stage curriculum. The Foundation Stage policy is inadequate as it is very limited in the information it

provides, referring to the early learning goals and little else. The school prospectus provides insufficient detail of the Foundation Stage curriculum. These weaknesses are partly due to the recent lack of staff with expertise in the Foundation Stage.

61. The reception classroom is of reasonable size, with adequate resources, though some are rather worn. However, the main weakness is the inadequate outdoor provision. The enclosed area is very small and is inadequately resourced for use as a learning environment for young children.

Personal, social and emotional development

62. Although provision is satisfactory overall, not enough opportunities are provided for children to develop independence. Children understand class routines and arrive happily and confidently each day. They are enthusiastic learners and concentrate well when required. For example, they developed their recognition of sounds through playing I-Spy as they studied a large picture of toys. Good emphasis is given to reminding the children of appropriate behaviour and they respond well, as in taking care not to damage books when returning them to the shelves. Children speak confidently in front of the class and enjoy good relationships with each other. For example, they undressed independently for a dance lesson and co-operated well in pairs as they practised their movements.

Communication, language and literacy

63. Provision is satisfactory overall, but oral language skills are promoted well. Children listen very well to each other and the teacher. They are confident speakers, and are keen to give opinions and ideas, and to answer questions in front of the class. Very good opportunities to develop these skills are provided, for example when individual children spoke about a favourite toy and the teacher and other children asked questions. Children enjoy acting out different sounds. For example, during the inspection they were focusing on the sounds “b” and “t”, sorting many items which began with these letters into the correct group. Children also enjoy listening to stories and remember them well. The Year 6 “buddies” join the reception children once a week to share a book with them. This was a very successful session, with the reception children reading confidently, many at a well above average level, to their older friend, who supported, encouraged and praised appropriately. The children copy over and then under the teacher’s writing, and are learning to join their letters, with the more able beginning to write unaided. However, there are few opportunities for them to write independently, using their own marks.

Mathematical development

64. Nearly all children can say and order numbers to 10, and many recognise numbers beyond this. In a good lesson, the teacher reinforced mathematical language such as more, less, full and empty. Children learn positional language, such as above and below and use this when they write a sentence about some toys in a picture. Through well-planned, practical activities in a good lesson, the children understood half full as they poured coloured water into transparent containers. They estimated how many cups of “tea” would be needed to fill a teapot, and checked their estimations. Older children add single digits confidently and measure and compare the height of different items by using cubes.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

65. Although the provision is satisfactory overall, the opportunities provided for investigations are good and give children a good foundation for scientific learning. Children use their senses in a variety of ways. For example, they feel and describe different fruits, and taste such items as crisps, lemons, sweets and coffee. The current topic on ‘growth’ is providing many

opportunities for the children to learn the conditions plants need in order to survive. They enjoy using construction equipment to make models, and happily explain how these work. The current focus on old and new toys is helping children to understand the passing of time. Some unusual toys are displayed in the classroom and the children have found their countries of origin on a world map. More locally, a nature walk and a study of the road outside school have helped them appreciate their local environment. Children have drawn good maps to show the route taken in "The Gingerbread Man's Escape". They use the computer confidently, enjoying looking up words such as seed and bean in a dictionary program. Children understand that we have special food for celebration meals and they recall a number of Bible stories, such as Noah's Ark.

Physical development

66. Fine co-ordination skills develop satisfactorily, for example as children use scissors or the computer mouse, and pour water and sand carefully. Few activities supporting large muscle development were observed during the inspection, apart from a dance lesson. Here the children showed good control as they mimed the stages of a seed's growth into a plant. They subsequently mimed the actions of different toys and were keen to develop dance routines, which showed good imagination. However, the overall provision in this area is unsatisfactory because children do not have regular opportunities for physical activities. The main reason for this is the very small outdoor accommodation and lack of resources

Creative development

67. In their artwork, children's paintings of flowering daffodil bulbs and the printing they undertook with fruits are of a good standard. Children enjoy singing action songs from memory, marching in time to 'The Grand Old Duke of York'. In a music lesson, they were able to select an appropriate instrument and play it in a suitable style to depict different sounds, such as rain, sunshine or different toys. They were fascinated to see and hear a long rain stick being used. However, opportunities to explore different situations, engage in role-play and use their imaginations are limited. They reach the standards expected for their age by the time they leave the reception class.

ENGLISH

68. At the time of the previous inspection and over the past few years, the school's results have been above average. These standards have been maintained for pupils currently in Years 2 and 6. The school's predictions indicate that its performance will continue to be above average in this year's national tests and it is likely to achieve the targets it has set for pupils in Year 6. However, in the current Year 2 class, there are three pupils on the special educational needs register and one who speaks very little English. This has had little effect on standards in reading, which remain above average, as do those in speaking and listening. However, it has had some impact on the standards in writing, which are average. The school recognises that it needs to improve the majority of pupils' achievement in writing and is already working hard to bring this about. In relation to the prior levels of attainment, most pupils in Years 1 and 2 are making satisfactory progress overall. However, those with special educational needs and English as an additional language receive effective targeted support. They make good progress and achieve well. Progress is better in Years 3 to 6 where the majority of pupils make good progress to achieve well and reach standards, which are above average in all aspects of the subject.
69. Standards of speaking and listening are above average throughout the school. Nearly all pupils listen attentively to their teachers and each other. Many are confident, articulate speakers with a wide vocabulary. Pupils participate in class discussions enthusiastically and many are keen

to respond to teachers' questions. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to engage in paired or group discussions in a range of subjects. For example, Year 5 pupils role-played a town council debate in a geography lesson. With the teacher as the town planner, pupils used appropriately formal language as they debated the impact of proposed developments on the environment. A very good assembly by Year 6 pupils provided the opportunity to speak in front of the whole school and parents.

70. Pupils enjoy reading, and standards are above average throughout the school. In Year 2, high attaining pupils read fluently, and discuss a range of books read, while less able readers work out unknown words using secure phonic knowledge. By Year 6, the most able readers are fluent and expressive and justify their preferred authors confidently. They have encountered extracts from a wide range of books in their literacy lessons. All pupils take part in group reading activities, where they discuss the author's style and use of language. Pupils undertake research. For example, Year 4 pupils used the Internet to research aspects of Tudor life. At present the library is underused. Classes are allocated a library time once a week to change their books, but not all classes use this opportunity. Beyond this, insufficient use is made of the good provision. Most class book areas have an adequate stock of books, though some require an additional supply. While books are used well to enhance displays in classrooms, the presentation of most book areas does not stimulate interest, for example in a particular author or genre. Classes engage in quiet reading times most days, but some are insufficiently structured to be fully beneficial. Parents hear their children read at home and this has a positive impact on standards.
71. A wide range of writing is undertaken throughout the school. Pupils have made satisfactory progress to reach average standards by Year 2. Good progress is made in Years 3 to 6 and pupils reach above average standards by the time they leave the school. Year 6 pupils can write effective stories, poems, letters, autobiographies and biographies. They can also set out an effective argument for and against an issue. More able pupils in Year 2 write at length, using a neat, joined style of handwriting, punctuating sentences correctly and confidently using speech and exclamation marks. Less able pupils are not secure with basic punctuation nor are they joining their handwriting. By Year 6, the most able pupils show good awareness of different styles of writing. They use complex sentences, paragraphs and adventurous language. Group targets to improve writing skills are set termly through the school, and are displayed in the classrooms. Presentation of pupils' work is usually good, though at times insufficient pride is taken. Although pupils often plan their written work, there are limited opportunities for pupils in Years 3 to 6 to undertake the full writing process of planning, drafting, revising, proofreading and presenting their work.
72. Many valuable opportunities are provided for pupils to practise their developing skills in other subjects. For example, in history, Year 2 pupils described life in a Victorian school through the eyes of a child at the time. In Year 3, pupils wrote letters as though from a Roman legionary and Year 6's river studies in geography led to a story of a water drop's journey from mouth to source.
73. The teaching seen ranged from unsatisfactory to very good in Years 1 and 2, being satisfactory overall. In Years 3 to 6, all the teaching seen was satisfactory or better and was good overall. In a very good lesson in Year 2, the pupils enjoyed discussing the African folk tale they had heard and made very good progress with their work on antonyms and alphabetical order. The teacher was very well prepared and sustained a good pace throughout. She had high expectations of both behaviour and standards of work and used the final whole class session very effectively to reinforce the lesson objectives. The learning support assistants provided very good support for the groups of pupils they worked with, enabling them to succeed. Other features of the good teaching seen in the school include good questioning, effective links between the text and subsequent word and sentence level work and appropriate expectations of the more able

pupils. Lively expositions helped to interest and motivate pupils. For example, Year 3 pupils were fully involved as they learnt about legends, and Year 5 pupils wrote a poem in the style of "The Highwayman" after the teacher had elicited and used their imaginative contributions very well. Teaching was less effective when the learning objectives were not shared with the class, nor checked at the end of the lesson to see whether pupils had achieved them. On another occasion, the worksheet used inhibited pupils' creativity. In the unsatisfactory lesson seen, the class management and expectations were inadequate and there was a lack of focused group teaching. The quality of marking varies considerably, with the best referring to the particular objective and giving points for improvement. On other occasions it merely ticks what is correct.

74. The National Literacy Strategy is well established throughout the school, with different published schemes being used to support the work of younger and older pupils. Recently purchased sets of books for group reading are proving beneficial and the school uses the good supply of big books for whole class teaching very effectively. Teachers' lesson plans are detailed and appropriate, which is an improvement since the last inspection. There is little formal assessment of pupils' achievements in speaking and listening, although the planned opportunities show teachers are aware of the progress pupils are making. Reading tests are regularly set and pupils' independent writing is formally assessed each term, against nationally agreed criteria. Some useful setting of pupils has been adopted in Years 1 and 2 for some reading and extended writing each week. The subject is led by a new co-ordinator who is enthusiastically taking on the role, though as yet has not had the opportunity to monitor pupils' written work or learning in classes.

MATHEMATICS

75. Standards in the national tests have improved since the school was last inspected, although they were not as high in 2001 as in the previous two years. This is largely due to differences in the groups of pupils, made more noticeable because of the small numbers taking the tests. Test and assessment data shows that pupils in Year 6 had made good progress. The Year 2 results in 2001 were close to the national average, but below those of similar schools, while the Year 6 results were above the national average and in line with similar schools. The majority of pupils now in Year 2 are reaching average standards and achieve appropriately, although above this in their number work. Current Year 6 pupils show good understanding of the work covered this year and standards remain above average with achievement being good. However, they sometimes find it difficult to apply this understanding in helping to solve mathematical problems. In spite of the majority of pupils reaching above average standards by the time they leave, the most able pupils are not being sufficiently challenged or achieving as highly as they could. In Years 1 and 2 this is mainly because much of the work is done in workbooks or on prepared sheets, which is often too easy for the most able pupils. In Years 3 to 6, the most able pupils are not being given the opportunity to cover more challenging work.
76. Pupils enter Year 1 with attainment above national expectations in their number skills. Other areas in mathematics, for example understanding of measurement, are close to the standard expected. In Years 1 and 2, most pupils, including those with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language, make steady progress and their achievement, over time is satisfactory. Year 1 pupils count in twos and tens and the more able record numbers up to 100. They know the names of simple shapes and sort them according to their properties. By Year 2, the majority of pupils have a good understanding of place value, odd and even numbers and confidently count on and back in fives. Pupils can name and describe two-dimensional shapes by their properties. The more able pupils know their 2, 3, 4, 5 and 10 times tables and use what they have learned to solve word problems. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support and all pupils, especially those for whom English is an additional language, make sound progress in lessons, because they are given appropriate help through the good focus on vocabulary.

77. In Years 3 to 6 where teaching and learning is good, pupils make better progress and, by Year 6, standards are above average. Pupils in Year 3 make good progress and more than half the class are working at higher than expected levels. They are beginning to see patterns of numbers. For example, they explain why, when counting in 20s, if they start on an odd number they cannot finish with an even number. They decide on the best strategy to use when working out their answers to calculations, including fractions. They can double and halve all numbers to twenty correctly. By Year 6, pupils work confidently with numbers and have made good progress in developing strategies for calculating, such as rounding, approximating, doubling and halving. They know the relationship between fractions, percentages and decimals. Pupils apply their understanding of ratio by changing the number of servings for different recipes. They have made good progress in extending their understanding of other mathematical concepts such as reading and plotting co-ordinates, and reflecting them in all four quadrants.
78. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, and good in Years 3 to 6. The planning satisfactorily follows that outlined in the National Numeracy Strategy. However, the activities provided are reliant on the textbooks of a specific scheme, which do not always challenge the most able pupils to achieve the levels of which they are capable. Lessons are generally well planned and meet the needs of most pupils well, particularly those with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language. In the best lessons, pupils are keen to answer the rapid and challenging mental questions, which start the session. In one class, the brisk counting involved all the pupils and became more challenging and fun. In some classes, very little time is spent on this introduction and frequently pupils lose interest if they are not asked questions. Teachers have very good relationships with the pupils and high expectations of their behaviour. As a result, pupils are attentive and well behaved and this ensures that time is used well. In most lessons, basic facts are taught well, explanations are clear and relate well to what the pupils have learned previously. In lessons where pupils make the most progress, activities are clearly explained and pupils are encouraged to be responsible for their own learning. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils were asked to work in teams to solve problems. They co-operated well and discussed relative time zones sensibly. Lessons are less successful where the tasks pupils are given are repetitive and dull. Learning support assistants work closely with pupils with special educational needs. These pupils make good progress because the teachers plan well together and cater for their needs. Sometimes work is planned specifically for individual pupils. Classroom assistants spend part of the lesson giving one to one help to these pupils and, as a result, they are achieving well. Marking is not always consistent. The workbooks are marked, but there are insufficient opportunities to correct work with the teacher and thus understand why errors have been made. In exercise books, comments to the pupils are both positive and encouraging. The most effective marking shows pupils how they can improve and develop their work. As a result, the work in these books is well organised and clearly set out. However, this good practice is not used in all classes and books sometimes go unmarked. Pupils are given homework, which reinforces the work they have been doing in class.
79. Numeracy is promoted well in other subjects. For example, data is collected and graphs produced which help pupils to understand their learning in geography and science. The promotion of accurate measurement of length and angles helps pupils to construct their models in design and technology. Information and communication technology is used to support learning but, because pupils' skills in this subject are under-developed, this is limited.
80. The headteacher manages the subject well. Planning, and the resulting learning in lessons are effectively monitored and staff are supported well. There are good procedures for assessing pupils. Tests are analysed and areas for development identified, although this has not yet had an impact on future planning. Pupils' progress is tracked as they move through the school. This

information is used to match the level of most pupils' work to their needs. Target setting for groups of pupils is helping to raise standards.

SCIENCE

81. The provision for science and the standards achieved have improved well since the last inspection. The school's performance in the National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils has risen at around the same rate as in most schools and, since 1999, has been above average. In the 2001 tests, a very high proportion of pupils reached the average standard and over a third were above this. Boys tended to outperform girls, but this was largely due to their prior attainment and ability. In the teacher assessments for Year 2 pupils last year, the school's performance was above average, with nearly all pupils reaching the expected level although few exceeded this. The school is maintaining its good performance and, across the school, the vast majority of pupils make good progress and achieve well for their abilities. In all aspects of the subject, most pupils reach standards, which are above the national average by the end of Years 2 and 6. This is because of the very good emphasis placed on learning through investigations. As a result, pupils understand scientific concepts and knowledge more easily and develop good skills in carrying out experiments and interpreting the results. Another result of this approach is the benefits it gives to pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. These pupils make at least good and sometimes very good progress. A significant number reach average standards, and some beyond this. The investigative approach also gives the more able pupils opportunities to make the progress of which they are capable, particularly in Years 3 to 6. This means they achieve well and reach the higher standards. Teaching and learning in this subject are supporting the school's aims of including all pupils in all areas of its work and ensuring that they do their best, particularly well.
82. By the end of Year 2, pupils acquire good investigative skills. This is because, from the time they enter Year 1, they are taught to observe closely and to use all their senses. For example, this helps Year 1 pupils to identify and sort living and non-living things, and to describe differences in materials. By the end of Year 2, pupils can undertake a simple test to find out what makes materials melt, and record the different melting speeds in a graph. Pupils acquire a good knowledge and understanding of different scientific concepts such as the difference between the forces of push and pull and why some toy cars travel further when they roll down a ramp. Pupils gain a good knowledge about living things and can explain the life cycle of a frog, and compare different animal habitats, as well as observing and measuring how plants grow.
83. Good progress is made in building on pupils' skills and knowledge as they move through Years 3 to 6. Again, this is because much of their learning takes place through well-organised investigations where pupils clearly understand what they are learning and make good gains in their knowledge. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils have a very good understanding of how a scientific investigation should be set up and carried out. They make very well judged predictions and hypotheses about what is likely to happen and have a good knowledge of how to control variables and to make a test fair. The good attention paid to accurate recording means this is always well done, both in written and tabular or graphic form, sometimes using the computer.
84. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding across the full range of areas identified in the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. For example, Year 3 pupils can build an electrical circuit to light a bulb, and they investigate materials to identify which are conductors of electricity and which are insulators. Year 4 pupils can explain gravity and understand how friction impacts on movement. Year 5 pupils develop a good knowledge of how sound can be recorded as frequency patterns, and Year 6 pupils have a good knowledge of the different molecular structure of gases, liquids and solids.

85. Teaching is good, especially in Years 3 to 6 where some very good teaching was seen. Most teachers have good subject expertise and talk clearly and confidently to pupils, which helps them understand easily and make good progress. Lessons are well planned and prepared and resources are used particularly effectively to help learning. This was seen in two very good lessons. In a Year 5 lesson, the teacher had provided heart monitors and given good instructions to the pupils on how to use these in order to identify the effect exercise has on heart rate. In another very good lesson, in Year 4, the careful preparation of soil samples, clear instructions and very good questioning, led to pupils undertaking a very effective investigation with very good learning taking place. In a Year 2 lesson, the absence of frogspawn from the school pond was not allowed to spoil a lesson on the life cycle of a frog because one of the parents provided a very good “feel alike” substitute, using particles in jelly. This was particularly important, as one of the pupils was visually impaired and unable to gain the required information from the pictures displayed. Learning support assistants are very effective in adding to the quality of learning, especially in the group activities. Marking is good overall, although this is not consistent throughout the school and ranges from barely satisfactory to very good. At its best, seen in Years 3, 5 and 6, teachers very accurately assessed the level at which pupils were working and gave good advice on improvement. As the result of the good teaching, pupils greatly enjoy their learning. Because of the interesting lessons and investigative approach, they listen carefully, are fully involved in all activities, work hard and make good progress. Because of the high quality group investigations provided, the subject gives very good support to pupils’ social development through requiring them to share tasks and work well together as a team. This also ensures that pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are supported well and fully included in all activities, making the same good progress as other pupils.
86. The broad, well-planned curriculum owes much to the leadership of the effective subject co-ordinator. Her promotion of learning through an investigative approach and the good quality medium term planning and scheme of work she has produced has helped to bring about the good teaching and learning seen. The use of pupils’ literacy and numeracy skills is promoted particularly well and this adds to the quality and accuracy of recording, which helps pupils clearly identify the results of their investigations. Assessment procedures are good and the co-ordinator has recently introduced an effective system to help teachers to track pupils’ progress as they move through the year. Although she does not have the opportunity to monitor the learning that takes place in lessons, she has a very good knowledge of how well the teaching and curriculum is supporting pupils’ progress. She has made a very effective analysis of how well the school is performing in relation to schools nationally, and also schools in a similar context. This led to an accurate identification of where the school needed to improve. This is better than is seen in other subjects and is one reason why standards in science are above average throughout the school. The next priority is to target those pupils who are working well within the average level for their age and to put in place strategies to help them make greater progress and achieve the higher levels. Resourcing in the subject is satisfactory although the very best use is made of these resources to help support learning.

ART AND DESIGN

87. Due to the commitment of the hardworking co-ordinator, the school has improved the weaknesses seen at the last inspection. Pupils now make satisfactory progress as they move through the school and are gaining an understanding of the work of a range of famous artists, which was a weakness before.
88. The teaching of art is undertaken in half termly blocks, alternating with design and technology. At the time of the inspection, little art was being taught and therefore only one lesson was observed, in a Year 1 class. Other evidence was also taken from work in sketchbooks and on display as well as in photographs. By the end of Years 2 and 6, the majority of pupils, including

those with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language, have made sound progress across all aspects of the art curriculum. They reach standards, which are in line with the national expectation and achievement is satisfactory. The care pupils take in their work shows that they have positive attitudes to the subject.

89. In the lesson observed, pupils were developing satisfactory drawing skills in creating a picture of fruit and vegetables based on their story "The Tiny Seed". The work of Year 2 pupils seen on display showed they could use marbling techniques to produce an effective background for the silhouettes of trees. They were using printing and sticking techniques in the style of Matisse when they made pictures to simulate "The Snail" and "Icarus". Their skills and knowledge are around that expected for their age.
90. Pupils continue to build up their skills satisfactorily as they move on through the school. For example, Year 4 pupils completed accurate portraits to show the characteristics of Tudor monarchs and Year 5 pupils made a very effective display of a copy of a Lowry painting to show his style of figure painting. By the time they leave the school, pupils have developed satisfactory skills in drawing from still life, mixing and shading colours, 3-dimensional work and pattern making. For example, pupils in Year 6 completed clay models, which accurately represented sculpted statues of Ancient Greek characters found on pottery, as well as drawing pots in this style. They also compared different printing techniques by cutting out patterns in polystyrene tiles and also the building up a similar string pattern. Pupils gain a good knowledge and understanding of a range of western artists from Constable to Salvador Dali.
91. From the one lesson observed and the work seen it is evident that teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with pupils being given an appropriate range of activities to help develop their skills, techniques and knowledge. The subject co-ordinator has developed a scheme of work, which is effective in helping teachers to plan appropriate activities across a range of areas including drawing, painting and textiles as well as 3-dimensional work. Less emphasis has been placed on developing drawing techniques, particularly through the use of sketchbooks, which limits the progress pupils make in their drawing skills. Care has been taken to ensure that pupils learn about a range of famous artists who use different techniques and styles. However, this is confined to western tradition and prevents pupils learning about art from other cultures which impacts on their cultural development. The subject co-ordinator gives good support to colleagues in a number of areas, but the impact of this is limited by the fact that monitoring of pupils' learning in lessons does not take place.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

92. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are in line with national expectations, as they were at the last inspection. Throughout the school, the majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress and achieve appropriately for their abilities. There is evidence of regular work being undertaken in all classes. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
93. The evidence from pupils' past work shows all areas are covered in the three topics undertaken each year. Samples of work, including photographic evidence, show that pupils in Years 1 and 2 completed models to a good standard, for example moving pictures and seaside buildings. The younger pupils wrote and drew pictures about how they made vegetable soup. Year 2 pupils completed some carefully made cross-stitch samples of building designs. Pupils plan their work and consider the materials they will use.
94. In the three lessons seen, Year 3 pupils investigated and evaluated the design of a variety of torches prior to designing their own. This topic was related to their work on electrical circuits in science. Year 4 pupils discussed design issues when planning Tudor money pouches. They

had previously practised different stitches, enjoyed the activity and concentrated well. Year 6 pupils planned fairground models, choosing the mechanism they were going to use. They made accurate measurements and identified the tools and quantities of materials they needed. As they move through the school, the details of pupils' designs are recorded more carefully.

95. In all the lessons seen, the teaching was good. Activities are well planned and materials organised to encourage pupils to make choices about their work. Careful questioning allows pupils to explain their ideas and increase their understanding. Learning support assistants help the less able pupils. They demonstrate methods and encourage them to talk about their work. More able pupils were encouraged to make detailed, labelled designs for each component and work to a high standard.
96. The co-ordinator supports her colleagues well and has produced a clear, well-balanced scheme of work. Design and technology is closely linked with the science curriculum and based on national recommendations. It supports other areas of the curriculum where appropriate, and both mathematics and English are developed well in pupils' recording. Pupils' learning is effectively monitored through the photographic evidence of stages of their work.

GEOGRAPHY

97. Due to very good leadership and management from the subject co-ordinator, good improvement has been made in the subject since the last inspection. There is now a very good scheme of work in place, resulting in improvements in teaching which is now good. The majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make consistently good progress as they move through the school and achieve well. Most Year 6 pupils reach standards above the national expectation.
98. Only one lesson and a part of lesson were seen during the inspection so evidence is also taken from the scrutiny of pupils' work, including that on display, and photographic evidence. The scrutiny of the work of pupils in Years 1 and 2 shows that they are gaining the skills and knowledge expected for their age and better than this in their map work. In the Year 2 lesson seen, standards were above expectations, because of the good teaching. In this lesson pupils watched a video of village life in The Gambia. Through the good discussion which followed, they very accurately contrasted African and British life styles by referring to features such as food and water provision.
99. In Years 3 to 6, pupils had recorded their work more extensively and in greater detail, clearly showing that they reach standards above the national expectation in all aspects of the subject. Their work shows good knowledge and skills across the full range of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. In the short part of a lesson seen in Year 5, pupils were role-playing people in a local community whose life style was under pressure from tourism, whilst the class teacher took the role of a representative of a hotel chain. This was an exceptionally good opportunity for the pupils to learn about conflicting pressures on the environment. Pupils took their responsibilities very seriously, asking some very well thought out questions. This activity was also very effective in helping pupils develop more formal speaking and listening skills. The good level of map work skills is built on effectively as pupils move through the school and, by the time they leave, many pupils can interpret maps by using 6-figure grid references. Pupils have good skills in using a range of sources to find out about different geographical themes and places. For example, Year 4 pupils can complete accurate temperature and rainfall graphs from given statistics to help compare life in Britain with that in Chembakoli, a village in India. Year 6 pupils undertook some very good work as part of their river studies. This included calculating the river flow by using a flow meter and drawing a river profile by accurate measuring of the depth. The culmination of this project was a very good piece of individual

research, partly undertaken as homework, where pupils used a range of resources including the Internet to write about a particular river.

100. From the lessons seen and the quality of work that pupils produce, it is evident that they have good attitudes to the subject, presenting their work carefully and accurately. These positive attitudes help them to listen well, work hard and make good progress. The good progress pupils make and high standards they reach are the result of the good teaching. Teachers' good subject knowledge and clear exposition are based on the very good scheme of work provided. Much of this includes using very good resources and fieldwork. Great care has been taken to ensure that map resources, including large-scale maps and different types of map such as town centre and road maps, are available for each topic. The use of the local area and a very good programme of visits and visitors enhance learning exceptionally well. For example, Year 3 pupils benefited greatly from the visit of Bracknell's town planning officer as part of a study of the local area. Teachers have been especially skilled at using pupils' literacy and numeracy skills to support work in geography. This has helped pupils to write clear and accurate descriptions, to compare and contrast different places well and to use geographical statistics effectively, often recording their work in graphs and charts.
101. Much of the good provision and standards is due to the particularly good leadership of the subject co-ordinator. She has a good understanding of how to maintain these good standards, although she does not have the opportunity to observe pupils' learning in lessons. As the result of her effective management, resources for the subject are good and all year groups benefit from a good programme of visits and visitors.

HISTORY

102. Overall, satisfactory progress has been made in improving the provision in history since the last inspection. However, there have been good improvements to the curriculum, the scheme of work and resources. Only a small number of lessons were observed during the inspection and none in Years 1 or 2. Evidence is also taken from the scrutiny of work, photographs and work on display. Across the school, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make at least satisfactory progress in developing their skills and knowledge in all aspects of the subject. Their achievement is appropriate. By the end both Years 2 and 6, pupils reach overall standards in their skills and knowledge which are in line with national expectations. This maintains the standards seen at the last inspection.
103. The scrutiny of pupils' work shows that, by the time they leave Year 2, pupils have made satisfactory progress in developing their enquiry skills and gaining a knowledge of what life was like in the past. For example, Year 1 pupils are beginning to recognise that artefacts can give good information about the past when they look at an old jewellery box. Year 2 pupils' understanding about using a range of resources is increased by the knowledge they gain from learning about the Fire of London as told in Pepys diary. These skills and knowledge are effectively built on as pupils move through Years 3 to 6. They gain a greater understanding of life in Britain in former times, and the legacy that ancient civilisations such as those of Greece and the Aztec Empire have given the world. For example, Year 4 pupils can complete a Timeline showing the reigns of different Tudor Monarchs. Year 5 pupils can describe how very different a Victorian washday was to that of today as a result of their visit to Reading Museum. Particularly good links have been made with literacy to enhance pupils' learning. For example, Year 2 pupils gained a knowledge of diary writing when they read accounts from Samuel Pepys' diary and Year 5 pupils pretended to be a Victorian servant writing a letter home.
104. Pupils are enthusiastic about finding out about the past. For example, in a Year 3 lesson, pupils listened carefully to their teacher before asking good questions about the artefacts they were

studying. These good attitudes and the good teaching seen, help pupils to make good progress. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good. This is because teachers explain new facts clearly and help pupils to use the different resources, which have been carefully chosen to increase knowledge and understanding. It is not possible to make a judgement about teaching in Years 1 and 2 as no lessons were observed.

105. The curriculum, which has been specifically designed for the school, covers the appropriate National Curriculum Programmes of Study, effectively making provision to develop the history enquiry skills alongside knowledge. It is enhanced by a good programme of visits and visitors for pupils in all year groups, ranging from a walk to look at local buildings for pupils in Year 1, to visits to museums and historic houses for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Pupils also enjoy the visits made to their school by "Roman and Greek soldiers". Resources are satisfactory, but they are effectively supplemented by loans of artefacts from Reading Museum. The richness and relevance of the subject and the interest that pupils have in their learning are due to good leadership by the subject co-ordinator. Although maintaining a good overview of the current provision and standards, which helps her to plan effectively for future developments, her effectiveness is limited by the fact that she does not have the opportunity to observe pupils' learning in lessons.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

106. At the time of the last inspection, standards in information and communication technology were below national expectations and pupils were not making satisfactory progress. Although standards are still below those expected, they are improving. This is because information and communication technology is being used to support work in other areas of the curriculum such as mathematics, science, history and geography. The majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language, are now making satisfactory progress. Their achievement is appropriate in respect of their prior attainment.
107. Pupils in Year 2 have basic keyboard and mouse skills, enabling them to operate and use computers well to support work they are doing in many subjects. For example, pupils use appropriate software to draw plans and produce different diagrams and charts showing the data they collected in science. They have developed word processing skills, changing fonts and letter sizes as well as amending and correcting their own text.
108. By the end of Year 6, the standards pupils achieve are below expectations because they have not had the opportunities to develop their skills and understanding as they have moved through the school. However, they are now using their more advanced word-processing skills to produce posters into which they have incorporated pictures and different texts. Pupils are beginning to use word processing to draft, edit and extend their writing skills. All Year 3 to 6 classes are using graph programs to record relevant geographical data. As these are increasingly complex, it indicates the good progress pupils are now making in this aspect. For example, Year 3 pupils produced block graphs showing land use in the local area. Year 5 pupils created temperature and rainfall graphs and Year 6 pupils recorded transects of a river. Pupils show good understanding of their work and are keen to explain what they have done.
109. Across the school, pupils are beginning to use the Internet in their investigations and can download information from CD ROM' s. Year 2 pupils used appropriate software to look up information about the Gambia to complement their work in geography. Year 4 pupils used the Internet to extend their studies about the Tudors. Many pupils have computers at home, which they use for research on a range of school topics. Pupils' skills are further developed in the work they do on their visit to the Isle of Wight. However, in school, spreadsheets are not used sufficiently, and pupils' experience of using information and communication technology to

monitor and control events is underdeveloped. Pupils in Year 5 understand how to produce a set of instructions to program a floor robot, but they lack the experience to do this confidently.

110. No specific teaching was observed during the inspection. Therefore, it is not possible to make an overall judgement about the standard of teaching, nor the quality of pupils' learning in lessons. Where pupils use the computers in classrooms they work well together. They help each other and take turns to use the mouse or keyboard. Pupils in Year 4 used computers independently to write their evaluations of how they made their Tudor money pouches in design and technology. They added interest to their work by changing the font size, colour and style, and by incorporating pictures.
111. The school has recognised the need to implement fully the plans set out for the development of information and communication technology, in order to ensure that pupils reach standards that are in line with the national average. In particular, there is to be a focus on increasing teachers' expertise. The co-ordinator is new to the post and has already drawn up effective, detailed plans of how to raise standards. Teaching and learning will be further enhanced when the new computer suite is installed, as there will be sufficient computers for whole classes to be taught at the same time.

MUSIC

112. In both Years 2 and 6, pupils attain the standards expected for their age, as at the time of the previous inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress and achieve appropriately. They enjoy singing and this is a particular strength, with pupils singing tunefully, sometimes unaccompanied, as seen in a whole school assembly. In the lessons observed, the pupils' attitudes and behaviour were satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, and good in Years 3 to 6. Music is sometimes used in other subjects, for example at the end of a literacy lesson, Year 5 pupils recited a poem, accompanying it with non-pitched percussion instruments.
113. The youngest pupils learn new songs quickly and tap out the pulse correctly as they sing. Year 3 pupils took this further as they clapped rhythms in three parts, using standard notation. Taped evidence of Year 3 pupils' previous work shows groups having made up short stories about two creatures, such as a cat and mouse, and recited these with instrumental sound effects. In a good Year 2 lesson, pupils showed understanding of several musical elements, such as tempo, pitch and dynamics. They accompanied the Goldilocks story with pitched and non-pitched percussion instruments. They discussed the instruments playing, and the mood of the music as they listened to 'Three Bears' Phantasy' by Eric Coates, showing good interpretation skills. These skills were further developed in a good Year 4 lesson, when the pupils listened very attentively to four different pieces of music and recorded their feelings imaginatively, either by drawing or through writing some poetry.
114. The quality of the teaching seen was satisfactory or better and good in Years 3 to 6. In a very good Year 5 lesson, a part time teacher's expertise and enthusiasm enabled the pupils to make very good progress with singing four part rounds and performing melodic ostinatos from written scores. Each group successfully held their part against the rest of the class singing the tune. High expectations, good class management and well-planned activities using correct technical vocabulary were additional features of this successful lesson. Some opportunities are missed to enhance the pupils' knowledge and understanding. For example, the music played for assemblies was not discussed with the pupils, and in some lessons the instruments being used were not named.
115. The school is currently using a commercially published scheme of work, which teachers are finding very useful. There are few extra-curricular musical activities, although pupils in Years 3

to 6 have the opportunity to learn to play the guitar from a visiting, independent teacher. Older pupils sang Christmas carols to local elderly residents, and other opportunities to perform are provided through concerts and in assemblies. No formalised systems for assessing and recording pupils' progress and achievements are in place through the school, though some teachers keep their own records. Although there is a reasonable supply of instruments, if more than one class has a music lesson at the same time, these are insufficient. The subject is being managed by the new headteacher, but there has been little opportunity yet for her to have an impact or to monitor any lessons.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

116. From the evidence of the lessons seen during the inspection, the majority of pupils reached above expected standards in gymnastics, games and dance. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection and the high standards have been maintained. The quality of learning and progress are very good for pupils of all abilities and needs.
117. Year 2 pupils jumped and ran with good control and awareness of space as they warmed up for the lesson. They made good progress in controlling the ball in increasingly challenging tasks. Pupils with special educational needs made very good progress and became visibly more confident as the lesson progressed. Pupils in Year 3 moved around the hall and performed a range of well-controlled movements and balances. They were active for the whole lesson and were enthusiastic and keen to improve. Pupils worked safely and sensibly on the apparatus, with a good awareness of space, although they were inclined to queue up and only use the apparatus from one starting point. In a Year 5 creative dance lesson, pupils created imaginative short sequences, working collaboratively in small groups as they composed intricate synchronised movements. Each group's work was completely different as they developed their ideas. Year 6 pupils show good ball handling skills, and worked with energy and enthusiasm in a games lesson.
118. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Lessons are well organised, with carefully planned progressive activities. Pupils understand the importance of warming up before starting activities. Because pupils are well motivated, they remain focused and fully active for the whole lesson. Teachers' very good questioning encourages pupils to develop their ideas and leads to very positive, responsible attitudes. The pupils learn techniques to improve their skills. The pace of the lessons is good, with suitable time for explanations and for pupils to practise their skills. Girls and boys of mixed ability work well together in groups, and pupils with special educational needs are supported very well by the teachers, learning support assistants and by the other pupils. A particularly good example of this was seen during a Year 2 lesson, where a visually impaired pupil was included exceptionally well in all the activities.
119. The subject is well managed. The co-ordinator is well qualified and supports her colleagues effectively. Planning shows that all elements of the National Curriculum are covered. There is a good range of extra curricular activities, including football, netball and badminton. Year 2 pupils learn to swim. Year 6 pupils participate in outdoor adventurous activities such as rock climbing and abseiling and the school is successful in competitions with other small schools. The hall is well equipped for physical education and there is an adequate range of other resources.