

INSPECTION REPORT

CRAZIES HILL C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Wargrave, Reading

LEA area: Wokingham

Unique reference number: 109983

Headteacher: Ms Suzanne Kelly

Reporting inspector: Anne Currie
25429

Dates of inspection: 8th – 10th May 2002

Inspection number: 196795

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Crazies Hill Wargrave Reading Berkshire
Postcode:	RG10 8LY
Telephone number:	(0118) 940 2612
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Sue Griffiths
Date of previous inspection:	June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
25429	Anne Currie	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Religious education Foundation stage curriculum Equal opportunities	The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9563	Jeanette Reid	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
1710	Thelma Edwards	Team inspector	English Science Design and technology History Physical education	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
10391	Valerie Du Plergny	Team inspector	Art Geography Music Modern foreign languages Special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Crazies Hill is a small voluntary controlled Church of England primary school set in an attractive rural area near Reading. It has 85 pupils, 47 boys and 38 girls, aged from 4 to 11 years. It is a popular school with a rising roll and about half the pupils come from outside the immediate catchment area.

Pupils enter school in the term in which they are five. Almost all have attended nurseries or playgroups. They come to school with a variety of academic and social experiences. There is a wide range of attainment on entry to the school and there are also often marked differences within each group of children. Overall, attainment is slightly above that found nationally. No pupils come from homes where English is not the first language. Most are from white United Kingdom heritage. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is slightly below the national average. Nineteen pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, which is below the national average. They have a variety of needs including those resulting from specific learning difficulties. No pupil has a statement of special educational need.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Crazies Hill is a successful, improving school with many strong features. The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher and governors with strong support from the whole staff. The quality of teaching is good overall and it leads to good gains in learning, although the results achieved in national tests have yet to improve significantly. In lessons, pupils are achieving standards that are in line with expectations for their age and some pupils exceed them. Pupils' attitudes to their work and their behaviour are very good. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Teaching is good overall, with examples of very good and excellent teaching, especially in Years 3 to 6, which is leading to significant progress in lessons.
- Staff develop very good relationships with pupils and have very effective strategies for encouraging pupils to work hard and to behave well. As a result, behaviour is very good and pupils have extremely positive attitudes to their work.
- Staff know pupils well and give good support and guidance for their personal and social development as well as for their academic progress.
- The headteacher gives very good leadership. She is extremely well supported by the governing body and a team of dedicated teachers.
- The school has developed effective links with parents and strong links with the community. Both of these have a beneficial impact on pupils' learning.
- There is a very good range of extra curricular activities.

What could be improved

- The standards achieved, especially in English, mathematics and science across the school.
- The accommodation; to improve facilities for various aspects of the curriculum, especially physical education.
- Reports to parents, to give them a clear indication of the standards their children are achieving and what they have to do to improve.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1997. Since then there have been several changes in leadership and the whole staff has changed in the last two years. Priorities for future work have been clearly identified. The new teaching team works well together and it is clearly addressing the apparent

underachievement by pupils in the past few years, although it will take time to bring about higher standards in all subjects. The improvement since the last inspection has been good.

Progress is now more consistent across the school and across subjects. The quality of teaching has improved significantly and teachers now have high expectations. Teaching is monitored and new staff supported well. Schemes of work have been introduced in all subjects, to ensure that appropriate work is covered and new work builds on what pupils already know. The role of teachers with subject responsibilities has been enhanced. They have time out of their classrooms to oversee the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects. Assessment arrangements have improved and the tracking system ensures that pupils' progress is closely monitored. There have been marked improvements in behaviour. A new classroom has been added to limit the age range in each class to no more than two years. However, the shortcomings in the accommodation are still outstanding, but, because of the money involved, they are largely outside the control of the school.

STANDARDS

The table giving the results of National Curriculum tests has been omitted as the number of pupils taking the test is very small. This makes year-on-year comparisons, comparisons with national results and with the results of other schools statistically unreliable and may give a misleading impression of the school's results over time. With small numbers in each year group, the results are linked very closely with the capability of each individual child.

The results in national tests have varied markedly over the last four years, reflecting the ability range in each year group. Last year's Year 6 had a high percentage of pupils with special needs. The percentage of pupils achieving Level 4, the level expected for their age compared to the national average for all schools, was well below average in English and mathematics and very low in science. Looking at the percentage who exceeded the level expected and obtained Level 5, the results were average in English and maths, but no pupil achieved Level 5 in science. In the national tests and tasks set for seven year olds last year, pupils' results were well below the national average for all schools in reading and below in mathematics. They were similar to the national average in writing. In science the teacher judged all pupils to be reaching the standard expected.

Inspection evidence indicated that most pupils are now achieving at least the standards expected, by the end of Years 2 and 6, in all subjects, except gymnastics which is not covered by the school because of the lack of suitable space. Most pupils reach the standards set out in the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. In English, mathematics and science the school has set the ambitious target for 100 per cent to reach Level 4 in this year's national tests for pupils in Year 6.

Attainment on entry to the school is generally accepted to be just above average. Most children achieve the early learning goals, the standards expected, in all the recommended areas of learning by the end of their time in the reception class. The school's tracking procedures, which are being developed, indicate clearly that some pupils in the past have been underachieving as a result of very unsettled teaching and a lack of focus on raising standards. Pupils are now achieving at least in line with expectations in all lessons and the work scrutiny also indicates secure progress over time.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are extremely enthusiastic about school and show a high level of interest in all activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good. Pupils co-operate with and relate to each other very well, both in lessons and in the playground.
Personal development and relationships	Staff and pupils develop very positive relationships with each other. Pupils take their responsibilities seriously.

Attendance	Attendance is in line with the national average.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Thirty six lessons were observed and of these one was excellent and six were very good. Half of the teaching was good and almost a third was satisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Most of the very good and excellent teaching is in Years 3 to 6. In these sessions, teachers planned lessons very well and provided stimulating activities which captured pupils' interest. They had high expectations and very positive relationships with the class. As a result, pupils responded extremely well and worked hard to do their best. English and mathematics are generally taught effectively. The teaching of basic skills is good. The school makes good provision across the ability range for all its pupils. All teachers and support staff have considerable skills in managing pupils, which means that the pace in lessons is good and no time is wasted. Teachers know their pupils well and give focused additional support as and when required. Pupils with special educational needs receive extra help to enable them to meet the targets identified in their individual education plans. They make similar progress to their peers. The school also recognises pupils who are capable of higher attainment and gives them additional opportunities to challenge their thinking.

Throughout the school pupils are making at least satisfactory and often good gains in learning in lessons, especially in Years 3 to 6. The work scrutiny shows that pupils are making steady progress over time. Pupils apply themselves well in lessons and show a good level of concentration and interest.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides an interesting curriculum which is mostly broad, balanced and relevant to its pupils. The limited hall space prohibits coverage of the full physical education curriculum. Children in the reception class have insufficient opportunities to learn through practical activities and to use the outside area. Very good use is made of the local community and the environment.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils are appropriately supported and they have clear targets in their individual education plans. They make similar progress to their peers.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. Pupils have good opportunities to explore their own cultures, but opportunities to develop an awareness of other cultures are limited. Provision for spiritual development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Staff care for pupils well and they make good provision for their health and welfare. Assessment procedures are developing well and these give a clear indication of the progress pupils are making.

Parents have high opinions of the school and they have good relationships with staff. Parents make a very good contribution to pupils' learning at home and in school. The school keeps parents well informed about various aspects of its work.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership and she is well supported by all staff. There is a joint commitment to raising standards. There are marked strengths in the management of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their roles very effectively and they play a clear role in the forward planning of the school and in monitoring its performance.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Results are analysed and pupils' progress and teaching are monitored, with action taken as necessary.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses its resources well and applies the principles of best value to its spending decisions. It makes good use of its limited accommodation and finances have been used effectively to provide additional staff to support pupils' learning.

There are shortcomings in the school's accommodation, learning resources and staffing. The school's accommodation is unsatisfactory. The school hall is a corridor that links the other classrooms and offices. It also attempts to cover a range of other functions but meets with only limited success. The number of teachers is appropriate and resources are generally satisfactory. Children in the reception class do not have the benefit of a full time classroom assistant, which restricts their activities on some afternoons. They also lack a suitable well-equipped outside area.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is approachable. • Their children like school. • The school is well led and managed. • Teaching is good. • Behaviour is good. • Their children make good progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information they receive about the progress their children are making. • The range of activities provided outside lessons. • The amount of homework set.

The team agrees with the positive comments made by parents. There are areas for improvement in the information the school provides to parents about how their children are progressing. The parents' consultation evenings are not well timed and gaps are too long between each meeting. Pupils' annual reports tend to emphasise the work they have covered rather than reporting how well they are achieving and what they have to do to improve. Homework is generally used appropriately across the school, but, on occasions, the timings set out in the school policy are not followed and this can result in pupils in the lower part of the school receiving more work to do at home than older pupils. Home school books are used inconsistently across the school. For its size the school provides a very good range of activities for pupils outside lessons.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The number of children entering the reception class is very small compared to most schools and the overall standard on entry, as seen in the baseline assessments, varies from term to term. Generally, the levels of attainment are slightly above those normally found. The staggered entry means that some children only spend one term in the reception class, although, overall, most make at least steady progress. Consequently, by the July before they enter Year 1 almost all are achieving the early learning goals, the standard expected of them, in all the recommended areas of learning. They are well prepared for the work they will encounter in Year 1. In some areas, such as personal, social and emotional development, speaking and listening and knowledge and understanding of the world, some children exceed the expected standards. Children behave very well and work and play happily together. They listen carefully during whole class activities and some make lively contributions. They eagerly share books and make up stories from the pictures. Some are beginning to recognise simple words on sight. They show an active interest in the world around them and they are keen to explore materials and living things.
2. As they move through the school, the number of pupils in each year group continues to be small so the results obtained in national tests are very closely linked to the ability of individual pupils in each year group. The tracking records that the school is developing indicate that, in the past, Year 6 pupils, both boys and girls, have not all been achieving the standards predicted from assessments made soon after they entered the school. However, the school is predicting a closer match in this year's results.
3. In National Curriculum tests in 2001, Year 2 pupils attained standards that were well below the national average for all schools in reading, below in mathematics and average in writing. Closer inspection of the results reveals that the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2, the level expected for their age, was very high compared to the national average in writing and mathematics and well below average in reading. The percentage of pupils achieving above the level expected was below average in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics.
4. In 2001, the percentage of Year 6 pupils attaining the level expected, Level 4, in National Curriculum tests in English and mathematics was well below the national average. In science it was in the lowest five per cent nationally. There were only seven pupils in this year group, six boys and one girl, with several pupils recognised by the school as having special educational needs. The percentage achieving the higher level, Level 5, was average in English, above average in mathematics and very low in science.
5. In English, inspection evidence shows that the majority of pupils currently in Year 2 attain standards at or close, to national expectations. The attainments of pupils currently in Year 6 also show that most are reaching the standard expected of this age group, with some doing better. Standards are similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are in line with expectations. Most listen carefully to instructions, join in discussions well and respond readily to questions. In reading, standards are in line with expectations with some pupils exceeding them. Pupils engage very readily in reading both fiction and non-fiction books. Many pupils are able to identify a favourite author and talk about books they have enjoyed. Standards in writing are in line with those expected, with some particularly good work being seen in Years 3 to 6, partly the result of the interesting activities that are planned which stimulate pupils' interest. Pupils make satisfactory use of their literacy skills in other subjects.
6. In mathematics, standards are generally similar to those expected throughout the school, although there is evidence of above average attainment in Years 4, 5 and 6. Pupils are making steady gains in their numeracy skills and the opening session of the numeracy hour is helping pupils

develop their mental skills well. Progress generally is now more uniform across the school than it was at the time of the last inspection, although it is better in Year 1 and Years 3 to 6 than in Year 2. Appropriate opportunities are given for pupils to use their numeracy skills across the curriculum.

7. In science, most current Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are attaining standards in line with expectations and some are exceeding them. This is a marked improvement on 2001 and is similar to the judgements made at the time of the last inspection. Pupils are making at least steady progress as a result of the generally good teaching, an interesting curriculum and the emphasis placed on scientific investigations.
8. Standards in all other subjects of the National Curriculum are at the expected level, except in gymnastics, which is not taught as the school does not have suitable accommodation. Standards in religious education are in line with those in the locally agreed syllabus. Progress across the school is generally average and more even than it was at the time of the last inspection and there is less variation between subjects. The introduction of schemes of work has ensured that pupils' knowledge and skills are steadily developed as they move through the school and the cycle of topics ensures that appropriate work is covered each year in the mixed age classes.
9. All pupils, including those who have special educational needs, are now making at least satisfactory progress over time and sometimes good progress in lessons. Higher attaining pupils are given every opportunity to succeed. This is an improvement since the last inspection. There has been considerable improvement in pupil's achievements over the past year, partly because of the good quality of the teaching and the different age grouping of classes and partly because the school sets appropriate targets for individual pupils. Boys and girls achieve equally well. It will take time for the good progress in lessons to result in above average attainment in all subjects at the end of Year 6. The school is on course to achieve its target of 100 per cent of its pupils to reach the standards expected in national tests in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Children in the reception class have very positive attitudes to school. They settle quickly to the activities they are given and they maintain concentration well. They have only limited opportunities to make their own decisions, but they respond very responsibly when they are given. In the rest of the school, pupils' attitudes to learning are now very good. They like school and feel both happy and secure. Most are extremely enthusiastic and well motivated learners. They are quick to settle in class and to move onto the next task or activity. They are very attentive and persevere with their work, particularly when the quality of teaching is good. In a Year 5/6 English lesson, where pupils were composing their own Haiku poetry, they were very focused on their writing and discussed positively among themselves to find interesting words. Pupils throughout the school are keen to contribute their ideas and ask questions.
11. Pupils' behaviour has improved since the last inspection and is now very good in and around the school. This has a positive effect on their progress. They are respectful and courteous towards adults and towards each other. They are clear about the way they should behave due to the consistent behaviour management strategies that are in place. In a Year 3/4 design and technology lesson, where pupils were designing a torch, very good behaviour was observed as boys and girls contributed to a meaningful discussion. The behaviour of pupils with special educational needs is as good as that of the rest of the pupils generally, though in some instances they apply themselves even more assiduously and work even harder. All pupils show respect for property and the environment. There was only one instance of unsettled behaviour during the inspection. There have been no exclusions at the school.
12. Pupils' personal development is very good. Their relationships with staff and with each other are extremely positive. Older pupils play and care for the younger ones. Pupils work well together, whether working in pairs or in groups. In a Year R/Year 1 lesson, when the children were learning about the weather and places in the world, there was very good interaction and they shared and

took turns. Pupils respond well to the various well-structured roles and responsibilities offered them at all stages. For example, pupils say their own end-of-day prayers in class in a mature and unassuming manner. The older pupils are good role models for the younger ones as they do their jobs sensibly. Incidents of bullying are very rare.

13. Attendance and unauthorised absence are both at the national average and are satisfactory. Punctuality is good with most pupils arriving at school on time. There is a prompt start to the school day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. The quality of teaching is good overall and pupils make at least satisfactory and often good gains in learning in lessons. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. This marks a very significant improvement since the last inspection, when 20 per cent of the teaching was unsatisfactory. Of the 36 lessons observed one was excellent, six were very good, half were good and eleven were satisfactory. Teaching in the reception class is good. The standard of teaching for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory, with examples of good teaching, especially in Year 1. There are strengths in the teaching in Years 3 to 6 where all but two of the lessons were at least good and almost a third were very good or excellent.
15. In the reception class, the teacher's planning takes account of the areas of learning and the standard expected, the early learning goals, for children of this age. The teacher gives children a good range of activities to help them develop early literacy and numeracy skills. Good assessment records are built up and the teacher knows the children well. On occasions, there needs to be more detailed lesson planning to ensure that reception children are given sufficient appropriate opportunities to take part in practical activities both inside and outside, to learn through play and to make their own choices. However, the classroom assistant does not work every afternoon and, when there is no additional support it is very difficult for the class teacher to offer a suitable range of practical activities. A particular strength is the relationship that the class teacher and the classroom assistant develop with the children. They work effectively together as a team and manage the children very well. They have high expectations of behaviour which they apply consistently. There are firmly established routines so that children feel secure and know what is expected. The pace of work is good and children are helped to develop very positive attitudes to their work and to concentrate well. An illustration of the positive impact of this is the way that the group of children, who were in their first week of full time school during the inspection, were settled and responding well in both class and group activities. The reception class teacher and classroom assistant engage the children well in conversation. They help them to extend their vocabularies and encourage them to express their ideas. This was seen when a group of children were planting sprouting potatoes and other plants in the garden. They were learning the names of the plants, how to plant them and what they needed to grow.
16. Across the school, the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are well known and are used appropriately by teachers to extend pupils' skills. Children in the reception class are gradually introduced to elements of the literacy and numeracy hours in preparation for their work as Year 1 pupils.
17. In Years 1 to 6, most lessons are clearly planned, with learning objectives defined and shared with pupils. Usually the progress of the class against these objectives is discussed at the end of the lesson, with the result that pupils' own knowledge of their learning is promoted, and learning is reinforced. In some satisfactory lessons, the learning objectives are not sharp enough to ensure that pupils gain a really clear understanding of the key points; instead they gain only a superficial knowledge. Teachers know their pupils well and, in most lessons, the work is well matched to pupils' learning needs. This is important as most of the classes cover two year groups. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and achievement. The work they set is challenging. In the Year 3/4 class, the teacher makes his standards very clear by displaying on each table his expectations for written work. This has a positive impact on pupils' presentation of their work. The good teaching is designed to drive progress and to stimulate pupils to do the best they can. Teachers have good and often very good relationships with pupils, most are keen to please and they work hard. Teachers also encourage and support pupils well so that they develop self-

confidence; they are willing to share their ideas because they know that their responses will be treated with respect. In an excellent English lesson both boys and girls responded very well to the challenging task of writing Haiku poems. With encouragement, they visualised the picture they were trying to convey and they enthusiastically looked for interesting words to express their ideas.

18. A strength of the teaching, especially in Years 3 to 6, is the way teachers employ a very good range of methods that capture pupils' imaginations and ensure that their interest is sustained. As well as using good questioning techniques, teachers also set stimulating activities. For example in the Year 5/6 class, the teacher asked pupils to imagine that builders were going to erect houses on the land behind the school. Through a very well led discussion, pupils examined various issues such as the impact on the school and on local traffic conditions. They also considered what the reaction of various people might be. The brief for the written part of the work was to compile a newspaper account setting out the arguments for and against the development. Throughout the lesson, pupils showed a high level of interest and concentration, they listened well to what others had to say and they all made very good gains in understanding the issues involved and how to present their ideas. In a very good lesson in Years 3/4, the teacher captured pupils' interest very well when he acted the part of a Victorian teacher during a history lesson, giving a very realistic experience which led pupils to gain a clear understanding of what a Victorian classroom was like. In Year 1, the teacher devised an experiment to give a good visual presentation of what happened to tubs of cress which were given water and those which were not, which was particularly appropriate for pupils of that age. A feature of the satisfactory lessons is that the activities do not involve pupils sufficiently for them to make good progress in their learning. Whilst teachers ensure that pupils are introduced to an appropriate range of information and communication technology skills (ICT) through direct teaching, they do give them sufficient additional opportunities to reinforce these skills by using them in other subjects.
19. Teachers usually make good use of time and resources. A feature of some satisfactory lessons is a slow pace and lack of drive to complete activities, but most lessons are taken at a brisk but appropriate pace and there is a good relationship between content and timing. The vital plenary session at the end of the lesson, which summarises and reinforces learning, is allocated an appropriate amount of time in most lessons. Good use is made of the school's very willing learning support assistants. They work closely with teachers, who conscientiously brief them on what is expected. Assistants give very helpful additional support to pupils to reinforce their understanding. Good questioning helps teachers to establish how much pupils have learnt and to ascertain where reinforcement is required. The standards of marking are more variable. While pupils' work is usually marked, this is sometimes no more than ticks and bland praise and does not always give pupils a clear understanding of what they have to do to improve. Teachers are refining their use of targets in English and mathematics and these are helping to show pupils and parents where improvements are required.
20. Homework is used effectively throughout the school to extend learning. All pupils are expected to take home reading books and they usually also have spellings to learn and some mathematical tasks. There is some discrepancy between the amount of work actually set for pupils to complete and that indicated in the school's homework policy. This can result in more work being set in the lower part of the school than in the middle.
21. Teachers have good knowledge of all the subjects they teach and they ensure that pupils extend their use of specific vocabulary as well as the basic knowledge and skills associated with each subject. In the best lessons, teachers make good use of their well-established knowledge and give very clear instructions and illustrations to help pupils understand what they are to learn. A good example was seen in Year 2 when the teacher carefully talked pupils through the processes involved in finding work which was stored in their own folders on the computer. As a result, almost all pupils completed the task with little additional help and they were learning to access the computer independently.
22. Across the school, pupils with special educational needs receive well focused support, which enables them to make similar progress to their peers. The work in lessons is well matched to their needs and the class teacher and the support assistants give valuable additional help. Very

useful and effective individual education plans have been drawn up, the pupils know their targets and the withdrawal group work focuses very specifically on them. Pupils are pleased and therefore increasingly motivated, when they realise that they have achieved their targets. There is also a good level of challenge in some of the work set for pupils capable of higher attainment, especially in Years 3 to 6. A few pupils are successfully integrated into the Year 5/6 class for mathematics and English, as the work there is more appropriate for their needs.

23. As a result of the overall good teaching, pupils generally make good gains in learning in lessons. They are well motivated and their efforts often promote very good progress, especially in the two upper classes in the school. Pupils are interested in what they do and even the younger ones stay on task for quite long periods. The skills and attitudes of independent learning are being developed satisfactorily and target setting and plenary sessions at the end of lessons make pupils well aware of their own learning.

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

24. The school provides an interesting curriculum which is mostly broad, balanced and relevant to its pupils. In teaching very good use is made of opportunities offered by its own outside environment and by the local area and community. The school makes generous provision for extra-curricular activities, including music and sports. The statutory curriculum is being taught appropriately, except for the gymnastics requirement in physical education. The school hall is too small to allow gymnastics to take place, as there is insufficient space to allow pupils to use the apparatus safely. In planning its curriculum, the school makes good use of a selection of published schemes, including the programmes of work suggested by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education, to plan appropriate work. The DfES (Department for Education and Skills) guidance for the Foundation Stage ie children in the reception class, is thoughtfully interpreted in the activities planned. On occasions, there are insufficient opportunities for the youngest children to learn through practical play activities and for them to make their own choices. The curriculum is enhanced in lesson time by the provision of short French and German sessions for older pupils. Overall, pupils are offered a good range of experiences which promote their all-round development. All pupils have opportunities to succeed. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
25. Sound provision is made for pupils who have special educational needs. They have equal access to all the curricular opportunities provided by the school. They are able to take advantage of these opportunities through careful planning, effective individual education plans, good additional adult support and a good system for assessment of strengths and weaknesses in the core subjects of mathematics and English. Their individual education plans clearly detail targets for improvement and the support and activities to be provided. Pupils who have particular abilities are also identified, supported and challenged. A few pupils from Year 5 for example, have the opportunity to work on projects with pupils from another local school.
26. The school makes satisfactory provision for the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils learn English and mathematics as subjects and the skills learned are further developed by their use in other subjects. When pupils are given homework, as was seen with reading, design and technology and history, it is the kind of work that links to what they are doing in class and will help them to learn. More use could be made of ICT skills in other subjects.
27. There is satisfactory provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. Sex education, drugs awareness and healthy living are specifically taught; sometimes as part of the science curriculum and also when the school nurse speaks to the oldest pupils. Discussions are timetabled for the younger classes where pupils share their ideas and listen to what others have to say.
28. The school's provision of extra-curricular activities is very good. A range of clubs is offered, covering music and the arts, languages and sport. Both boys and girls take part in football, golf

and summer sports, learn Latin, learn and practise a range of art techniques and sing in the choir. Specialist music teaching is made available through Berkshire Young Musicians' Trust. A dance and fitness club is provided for pupils in Years 1 and 2, in response to a request from parents to give more activities for younger pupils. There is specialist tuition in football, rugby, cricket and golf. Pupils take part in local football and, with notable success, in tag rugby tournaments. Twice a month, the headteacher offers an Early Bird club before school for children from Year 2 and upwards to take part in challenging fun activities. In the summer term, Year 6 pupils participate in a week long residential trip.

29. The local community makes a strong contribution to pupils' learning. As part of their studies in history, pupils visit a Victorian school. The whole school has visited the Look Out Science and Environmental Park. Visitors to the school have included a local artist, who has helped pupils produce an attractive stained glass window. Other visitors have talked about animal welfare and The Wolf Conservation Trust. There are good links with the local church where the choir sometimes performs. A parent, with specific qualifications, runs the fitness and dance club. More use could be made of visitors from other faiths and visits to various places of worship in the locality.
30. Links with nurseries and pre-school groups, which children attend before they come to school, are good. The teachers visit the children in their pre-school settings and they are invited to attend the Christmas productions. There are equally good links with the secondary schools to which most pupils transfer. They disperse to a range of schools with most attending the local Piggott Senior School. Year 6 pupils are given induction days and Year 5 pupils taster days. The receiving teachers visit Crazies Hill School to meet pupils and to talk with the headteacher and their class teacher. Pupils' particular needs and talents are discussed. A teacher from Piggott School teaches French at Crazies Hill.
31. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual development, very good provision for moral and social development and sound provision for cultural development. Pupils respond well in each of these areas. The provision for spiritual, moral and social development has improved since the last inspection. Arrangements to extend pupils' cultural development are considered to be less good because of limited opportunities to develop pupils' awareness of the multicultural nature of society.
32. Spiritual development is well promoted within the curriculum and through the general ethos of the school. Pupils are encouraged to consider feelings and to develop respect for themselves and others. This is seen in assemblies and in the classroom. They think about the world around them, as when young pupils studied, with fascination, cress seeds growing. Older pupils consider the lives of others in their history studies and, in their poetry writing, they sensitively and creatively describe nature at different times of the year. Music is used well to create an appropriate atmosphere at the start of assemblies.
33. The provision for moral development is very good. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong. The school reinforces the rules of correct behaviour and adults are consistent in their expectations. This is an improvement since the last inspection. All school staff speak calmly and politely to pupils. Caring for others is strongly emphasised and pupils understand that sometimes people need help. They support a range of charities, including Operation Christmas Child and the relief effort for children in Afghanistan. Pupils respond well and were seen to help each other.
34. Arrangements to promote pupils' social development are particularly good. Pupils learn to relate well together in class and when working in pairs or groups. In the playground, the school provides seating areas as well as open spaces. Those who wish to sit and talk can do so, others play games. Older pupils help younger ones with their reading in paired reading sessions. Year 6 pupils are given particular responsibilities; they assist teachers and supervise younger pupils around the school. The school's programme for personal, social and health education is well considered. The extra-curricular activities provide opportunities for working and learning with boys and girls across the age range and from other schools. Clubs and extra activities are well attended.

35. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Art and music make an appropriate contribution. The school holds Book Weeks and book fairs and pupils have the opportunity to perform in the choir. The school's long standing connection with a village school in Nepal is valuable in learning about the lives of others in a different part of the world. Pupils write to a school in Cologne. The emphasis is, however, very much on British and European cultures and the school is not grasping the many opportunities available to learn about other cultures in our multicultural society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. The arrangements for providing for the care and support of pupils continue to be good. Staff create a positive and safe learning environment which is harmonious and well ordered. Teachers show respect for pupils and are concerned for and sensitive to their needs. Classroom assistants and other staff contribute to the calm ethos of the school. On the last day of the inspection, almost half the pupils were ill with a sickness bug and others were taken ill throughout the day. Staff, who were often feeling unwell themselves, showed great concern and took considerable care of the pupils. The school knows pupils and their families well but there is no formal monitoring of personal development. Induction procedures for new pupils joining the reception class are good.
37. The required policy for child protection is properly implemented. Staff are aware of the procedures and are updated regularly. The arrangements for health and safety are secure. The Governing Body is fully involved. There are appropriately trained first aiders and equipment is checked annually. A programme of risk assessments has been carried out. The school has plans to attend to the identified concern.
38. Since the last inspection, the school has put in place very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour which are working well. There is now a comprehensive behaviour policy with a clear system of rewards and sanctions. All staff, both teaching and non-teaching, have a consistent approach to behaviour. Instances of inappropriate behaviour are quickly noted and dealt with effectively. Each class has its own agreed class rules on display. Pupils are aware of the standards of behaviour expected and of the consequences of inappropriate behaviour.
39. Different aspects of behaviour and social interaction, including bullying, are discussed in assemblies, in personal, social and health education and at circle time. The school has a detailed anti-bullying policy. The school is a harmonious community with pupils of all ages playing happily together. There are very few incidents of bullying and these are dealt with effectively. The school provides an environment where pupils are comfortable to tell of their concerns and believe they will be listened to.
40. The procedures for the monitoring of attendance and the follow up of absence are effective. There is good liaison with the Education Welfare Officer. The school meets the requirements for the recording and reporting of attendance.
41. The school has improved its formal assessment procedures and ensured that they are consistently implemented across the school. Good use is made of the baseline assessments, which are made soon after children enter the reception class, to ensure that future work is matched to children's needs and that areas of concern are addressed early. Parents are also made aware of the assessment details so that they have a clear idea of how their children are doing. An informative range of tests and assessments are used throughout the school to build up information about individual pupils so that their progress can be tracked. Pupils that are underachieving, or are capable of higher attainment, are identified and appropriate action taken, either by giving further support or more challenge through planned activities. The tracking procedures and assessments across the curriculum are relatively new and it will take time for them to become fully effective. Until they were set up, there is evidence that there was an element of underachievement within the school, with some pupils not making appropriate progress. All pupils identified as having special educational needs have individual education plans that are very useful and logical. The school is already operating within the framework of the new requirements for pupils with special educational needs and the system is bedding in nicely. The relatively new Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) has a good overview. There is a good and productive relationship between the school and the Educational Psychology service, which means that the school is enabled to make the best provision for their children and pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. Parents acknowledge the improvements made in the school since the last inspection and hold the school in high regard. They are very supportive of the school and think it is well led and managed. They find the staff very willing to have dialogue and say that staff approach them if their child has done well or if there are concerns. However, minor issues were raised. Some parents think that the home school book is not used as effectively as it could be and that the setting of homework is inconsistent. The inspection team found that the amount of homework is appropriate overall for children across the school, although it does not follow the explicit amounts detailed in the homework policy. They judged the home school books to be used well for communication by both parents and teachers in Years 1 and 2, but that full use is not made of them by parents or teachers in Years 3 to 6. Some parents are unhappy with the long interval between the two parents' evenings at the beginning and end of the school year. The headteacher acknowledges that parents' evenings need to be better spaced so that parents are formally kept better informed about their child's progress. A few new parents would like more information on school procedures when their child starts school and a few parents are not clear about the targets their child is set. Home visits and sessions in school take place prior to children starting in the reception class. Information on the targets set for children was given to parents in a newsletter and during the meeting held to explain the Standardised Assessment Tests and Tasks (SATs). Some parents were critical of the range of additional activities provided outside lessons, but considering its size, the school provides a good variety of clubs.
43. The school has good links with parents. It is successful in involving parents in the life and work of the school. It encourages parents to contribute to children's education at school and at home. There is a regular flow of information and newsletters both from the school and the governing body, advising them of activities, significant dates and any particular issues upon which the school is concentrating. Key newsletters and dates are posted on the school web site. Each term parents are told what their child will be specifically studying. The views of parents are sought in different ways, for example, by questionnaire or a comments box following meetings. As a consequence, more extra-curricular activities are now provided for pupils in Years 1 and 2. The governors' annual report to parents and the prospectus are detailed and readable. The presentation of information at parents' evenings is good with much detail and time given. However, pupils' individual annual reports are unsatisfactory. Apart from English, and occasionally mathematics, they only say what pupils can do and what they have studied. Inevitably they nearly always repeat the same message for each child in the class in subjects other than English and mathematics. They fail to identify areas for improvement or to provide specific learning targets consistently in the core subjects for each child.
44. Parents involvement in the life of the school is very good. All assemblies, parental consultation evenings, information evenings, concerts and sporting events are well attended. The school has a very active Parent/Teacher Association that organises many social events and fund-raising activities. These are well supported by parents and raise considerable funds for the school. A good number of parents help in the school, for example, with reading or running extra-curricular clubs. They frequently assist with emergency lunchtime cover because of the shortage of lunchtime assistants.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

45. The current headteacher took over the running of the school in January 2001 following an unsettled period of leadership. There has been a high turnover of staff in recent years. Of the four teachers on the staff one has been at the school for two years, one for one year and two joined the staff in September 2001. Since her appointment, the new headteacher has made considerable changes and given the school the very clear leadership and very good management it required. She enjoys the support of parents, governors and staff who recognise the improvements that have been made. The headteacher has given the school a clear sense of direction and she is building up a confident, energetic team, of both teaching and non-teaching staff, to support her. There is a strong commitment to improving the quality of education provided and to raising attainment. The school has very good capacity to improve further. Together with staff and governors, the headteacher has

effectively identified and prioritised for attention areas that have most impact on pupils' learning and these are identified in the school's development plan. The school's resources are focused on bringing about the necessary improvements. For example, a fourth class was created in September 2001 to give a separate class for Year 2 and one class for Years 3/4 and one for Years 5/6. Previously there was one class covering Years 4 to 6 and this was generally acknowledged as being unsatisfactory. The post of assistant headteacher was created in April 2001 and this has strengthened the management team.

46. The headteacher monitors teaching throughout the school and also regularly takes classes herself so she has a very clear view of standards across the school. Advisers for literacy and numeracy from the local authority have also monitored lessons and given support and advice where necessary. When the headteacher releases teachers with co-ordinator responsibilities from their classrooms, it allows them to take an active role in managing their subjects. The monitoring of teaching and the improved role of co-ordinators constitutes a significant improvement since the last inspection that has a beneficial impact on the overall quality of teaching and the curriculum offered.
47. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties well. Its understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development is very good and governors take a very active role in deciding priorities for the future. Governors are regular visitors to the school and they have valuable expertise to share. The chair of the budget sub-committee, for example, has shared his business expertise to guide the school's plans for a new extension.
48. The school manages its finances effectively. The office is run very efficiently. Appropriate use is made of new technology. It has put forward plans to erect a modular building in the school grounds to house the library and the computer suite. It has earmarked funds in its budget. Money has also been obtained from outside sources so that the school can apply for additional funds through the Seed Challenge scheme. The plans have run into difficulties as the local authority prefers a brick built extension and this may prohibitively increase the cost to the school if additional funding is not provided. Specific grants are used for their intended purpose. The school looks for the best value when it is awarding contracts and it has already changed the provider for its grounds' maintenance in order to cater better for the school's needs. It is beginning to evaluate the impact of its decision to appoint an extra teacher and provide more support assistant time on pupils' attainment.
49. The school is evaluating its performance well. Children who may require additional support are identified from baseline assessments conducted soon after they enter the school. A tracking system is being developed, which records results in a range of tests as pupils move through the school and this identifies pupils who are under-performing and areas of the school's work that need improving. The school also analyses the results pupils obtain in national tests. As a result, it has recognised the need to target the teaching of writing to increase the number of pupils exceeding the standards expected in both Years 2 and 6. With the local authority the school has set challenging targets, which it is expected to achieve, in this year's National Curriculum tests.
50. There is a clear emphasis on promoting educational inclusion within the school and ensuring that all pupils, including those who require additional support to enable them to reach the standards expected and those capable of higher attainment, receive a good standard of education. Pupils identified as having special educational needs receive well-targeted additional support, which has a positive impact on their learning. A few pupils from Year 5 have had the opportunity to work on a challenging project with pupils from another school and some from Year 4 work alongside those in Year 5/6 in mathematics and English to ensure that the work is well matched to their learning needs. All pupils are encouraged to work hard and they receive praise for their efforts. The school's aims are reflected very well in the work of the school, with pupils' confidence and self-esteem increasing.
51. The school has generally adequate staffing and learning resources to meet the needs of the curriculum, although there is a lack of suitable equipment for the youngest children. The accommodation is unsatisfactory and it has a negative impact on several aspects of the school's

work, although staff do everything they can to overcome difficulties. Apart from the creation of a new classroom, there has been little improvement in the general accommodation since the last inspection and it continues to be crowded and inadequate. The school hall is also a corridor that links the other classrooms and offices. One end provides both a computer suite and library area. It is difficult for pupils to access books and this restricts opportunities for independent research. The hall is also used for the storage of musical instruments as well as for occasional individual or small group work for pupils with classroom assistants. Teaching of physical education is affected as the school has been advised not to use the hall for gymnastics, due to the limited height and the storage of resources such as dining tables and benches around the walls. The teaching of music is also constrained by the accommodation as there is inadequate soundproofing between the hall and the classrooms. The accommodation for children in the reception class is still lacking a separate secure outside area and space to undertake practical activities in bad weather.

52. There is a sufficient number of appropriately qualified teachers to teach the National Curriculum effectively. The school has a good number of support staff and they make a good contribution to pupils' achievement. However, the lack of an assistant in the Year R/Year 1 class on three afternoons has a negative impact on the quality of opportunities available to children in the reception class. The school is also experiencing severe difficulties in recruiting lunchtime assistants. There is now a good system of induction for teachers new to teaching and to the school. The detailed staff handbook gives new and supply staff the information they need. There is an effective programme of staff development for teaching and non-teaching staff that follows the priorities in the school development plan. Appropriate procedures are in place for performance management and these take account of the school's aims and priorities.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

53. In order to improve the quality of education provided by the school the headteacher, governors and staff should:

(1) raise further the standards achieved at the end of Years 2 and 6 in all subjects, but especially in English, mathematics and science and ensure that all pupils are making as much progress as they can by:

- sharing the good teaching practice, especially the range of teaching strategies, already in the school;
- refining and consolidating the assessment information gathered and use it to guide future learning;
- giving more opportunities for pupils to consolidate and extend their ICT skills across the curriculum;
- providing more opportunities for reception children to learn through practical activities and to make their own choices; and
- providing more opportunities for investigations and problem solving in mathematics.

(Paragraphs 2, 9, 14, 15, 23, 41, 89, 119)

(2) work with the local authority to investigate ways of improving the accommodation to ensure:

- full coverage of the physical education curriculum;
- improved facilities for ICT and the library, to encourage more independent research;
- improved facilities for teaching music; and
- that a suitable outside area is provided for children in the reception class. (This was an issue at the time of last inspection)

(Paragraphs 8, 24, 51, 55, 124, 130)

(3) improve the quality of the reporting to parents especially on the progress their children are making and the standards they are achieving.

(Paragraphs 42, 43)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	36
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	11

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	6	18	11	0	0	0
Percentage	3	17	50	30	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	85
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	7

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	19

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.2
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	3	6	9

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	7	9	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	78 (83)	100 (92)	100 (83)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	9	9	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (92)	100 (83)	100 (100)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	6	1	7

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	4	4	4
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	57 (80)	57 (60)	71 (80)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	4	4	4
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	57 (70)	57 (70)	57 (80)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Details of the numbers of boys and girls taking the tests have been omitted as the total number of pupils taking the tests is under 10.

Please note that the information in these tables is statistically unreliable due to the low numbers of pupils taking the tests each 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	85
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)	5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15.4:1
Average class size	19.25

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	41

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000 /2001
	£
Total income	212,234
Total expenditure	203,189
Expenditure per pupil	2,638
Balance brought forward from previous year	20,112

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	85
Number of questionnaires returned	56

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	71	27	0	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	50	45	2	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	63	32	0	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	30	54	9	4	2
The teaching is good.	61	36	0	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	39	13	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	25	0	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	23	7	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	50	41	5	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	64	34	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	66	27	0	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	48	36	13	0	2

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

54. Children get a sound start to their education in the reception class. They enter the school at the start of the term in which they are five years old and this usually means that a small number of children enter school at the start of each term. Almost all have attended one of the many nurseries or pre-school facilities in the surrounding area. They initially attend part-time to enable them to settle gradually. Children come to school from a wide variety of backgrounds and, as a result, their skills and knowledge are very varied. On average, attainment on entry is slightly above that normally found, with strengths in children's personal and social skills and their speaking and listening skills. Some also have a good knowledge and understanding of the world around them.
55. There is a generally appropriate curriculum to enable them to extend their knowledge and skills. There is scope for reception children to have more opportunities to learn through play and practical activities, especially outside the classroom and to make their own choices and decisions about what they are going to do. This would bring the curriculum offered more in line with that recommended for children of their age. There are practical reasons which make it difficult to bring this about. The children share a teacher and classroom with Year 1 pupils and, on three afternoons a week, there is only one adult, the teacher, in the classroom. For the rest of the week there is a classroom assistant working in close partnership with the teacher. The school also still lacks a separate play area for the youngest children and the necessary range of play equipment, a concern identified in the last report.
56. The baseline assessment, which is conducted soon after children start school, is appropriately used to identify, at an early stage, those children who may need additional support to enable them to reach the standards expected. The results of the assessment are communicated to parents so that they have a clear idea of how well their child is achieving. Regular assessments and daily observations are also used which result in the teacher knowing each child well. She builds up a picture of the progress being made, which she uses to ensure that future work builds on what the child already knows and that additional support is given where required.
57. Teaching is good overall. This is a major improvement since the last inspection when teaching was found to be unsatisfactory. The management of the children is now very good and it helps children to develop very positive attitudes to school and to learning. A good partnership is developed with parents, starting with the home visit prior to their child starting school.

Personal, social and emotional development

58. Teaching in this area of learning is good and it builds on the well developed skills that many children already have. As a result, almost all children exceed the standards expected, the early learning goals, by the end of their time in the reception class. Adults are good role models and they develop very positive relationships with all children. They have a positive, consistent approach to behaviour so that children know what is expected and, as a result, they feel secure and they respond well. Adults put a good emphasis on working with other children and on sharing and taking turns. This was seen outside when several boys all wanted to play on the two scooters provided and an amicable arrangement was agreed by all. During the inspection the new intake of eight boys were in their first week of full time schooling and they were all well integrated. Children undertake activities enthusiastically and they concentrate well for considerable periods of time without constant adult intervention.
59. The classroom is well organised with equipment stored so that children can become independent, getting what they need for themselves and replacing it after use. Currently there is too much emphasis on activities selected by the staff and insufficient opportunities for children to make choices for themselves.

Communication, language and literacy

60. Teaching is good and children are making clear progress. Most children start school with a wide vocabulary for their age and they confidently communicate with adults. They also sit and listen well to instructions and stories. By the time they leave the reception class, almost all are exceeding the early learning goals in these aspects. On entry to school, there is greater variation in children's ability to write letters correctly and in their knowledge of letter names and the sounds they represent. The higher attaining children clearly write their name from memory using correctly formed letters. They are beginning to write their own sentences. Others do not form letters properly and they do not write their own name. A few children recognise some words on sight and they are beginning to use their knowledge of the sounds that letters represent to work out unfamiliar words. Most children are likely to reach the standards expected in these aspects before they transfer to Year 1; some will exceed them.
61. Children are gradually introduced to the National Literacy Strategy as they work for more of the time with the Year 1 children. Good use is made of the support assistant to enable the two age groups to work separately from time to time and still have adult input. In a very good lesson, the reception children had their own session looking at a big book on mini-beasts during which they showed that they knew that an author wrote the book. Some knew the difference between fiction and non-fiction books. The teacher used questions well to encourage children to extend their speaking skills by talking about the book and what they could remember about mini-beasts. Prior to this they had been working with the assistant practising letter formation by tracing. When sharing a book with an adult, they treat the book with care and talk enthusiastically about what is happening in the pictures.
62. There are opportunities for children to take part in role play activities, but these are not well developed, especially outside and the teacher does not clearly plan to develop communication skills in a range of settings. A good partnership is developed with parents starting with the home visit prior to the child starting school. Parents are appropriately involved in their children's learning. They are encouraged to share books with them at home and there is also a consistent approach to homework with parents asked to help their children recognise basic words to help them develop their reading skills.

Mathematical development

63. Teaching in the lesson seen was satisfactory. There was a good introduction with the reception children and Year 1 working together naming two dimensional shapes and counting the number of sides and corners each had. There was appropriate emphasis on developing the related vocabulary, including the use of the terms *curved* and *straight* to describe the sides. After that, the activity for the youngest reception group was very prescribed, namely painting a square, a triangle, a rectangle and a circle on a sheet of A4 paper and it gave the children little opportunity to make choices and explore the shapes for themselves. However, all children concentrated well on the task they were given and listened carefully to instructions.
64. Songs and rhymes are used well to reinforce counting skills and the teacher also includes the opportunity to count in other activities. For example, when looking at the book about mini-beasts they counted the number of legs on each creature. The scrutiny of completed work shows that there is a wide variation in children's ability to write and recognise numerals. A higher attaining child recognised and wrote numbers to 10 and said that 100 was the biggest number he knew and he wrote it correctly, whilst another pupil only recognised the numbers 1 and 2 and had difficulty counting beyond five. During their time in the reception class children are given appropriate opportunities to count items and to learn to write numbers correctly and they also use sand and water play to explore the capacity of various objects. By the end of the reception year, almost all children are likely to achieve the early learning goals set for this age and some will exceed them.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

65. Children's knowledge varies considerably when they start school, but overall it is above that normally found and most children are likely to exceed the standards expected at the end of the reception year as a result of the good teaching and the varied activities provided.
66. During the inspection, a very good lesson was seen in which reception children worked alongside the Year 1 children whilst they talked as a class about what plants needed to grow. The reception children then went outside to plant sprouting potatoes and various plants in tubs for display outside the classroom. A strength of the lesson was the way the teaching assistant helped to extend children's language and communication skills by getting them to talk about what they were doing. She also gave them good opportunities to make decisions for themselves, such as where the plants should go and talked through their decisions with them. Children responded enthusiastically to these opportunities and they were keen to share with other adults what they had been doing.
67. The classroom has a computer but it was not in use during classroom observations. There is scope to extend the opportunities children have to learn through practical, play activities. There is a role play area in the classroom, set up as a house, which is appropriately resourced, but no reception children were observed using it. The house outside has no resources so it offers only very limited opportunities for learning through play. There is a roadway drawn on the playground, but it was only used by children trying to follow it when riding the scooters.

Physical development

68. Teaching was good in the formal physical education lesson observed with Year 1 pupils and children extended their skills well. Children demonstrated well-developed skills when they changed out of their PE kit. They generally managed buttons and shoes competently, with only two needing help. During the lesson they demonstrated good awareness of space and of each other when running around. They responded enthusiastically to the tasks and co-operated with each other amicably. They controlled the ball well when rolling it to a partner. Apart from lessons like this, there are only limited opportunities for reception children to extend their physical skills. There is no dedicated outside area for them to use and no covered area for use in wet weather. The class also lacks large play apparatus, such as sit-and-ride toys, to be used regularly outside, although the children do use the adventure playground in the main playground from time to time.
69. On average, children do not show as great a skill in handling pencils and paint brushes as they do when controlling a ball or riding a scooter. They are given appropriate activities to refine their writing skills, however, and by the end of the reception year almost all are expected to meet the early learning goals.

Creative development

70. There was little opportunity to see children engage in creative activities so no overall judgement of the quality of teaching can be made. There are sound activities planned, but they are rather prescribed and they offer only limited opportunities for children to extend their own ideas and make their own choices. Children produce satisfactory drawings to illustrate their work and they confidently sing songs such as 'Five Little Speckled Frogs'. They remember the rhythm and tune well.
71. By the end of the reception year, almost all children are likely to reach the early learning goals in this area, as much the result of the skills they brought to school as those gained in there.

ENGLISH

72. The results in the 2001 national assessments showed that reading, by the end of Year 2, was well below the national average and well below the average for similar schools. Standards in writing were better and in line with both the national average and that for similar schools. The national assessments at the end of Year 6, in 2001, showed that standards were well below the national average and low compared with similar schools, although judgements are qualified by the very small number of pupils taking the test. The inspection shows that the majority of pupils currently

in Year 2 attain standards at or close to national expectations. The attainments of pupils currently in Year 6 also show that most are reaching the standard expected of this age group, with some doing better. These judgements echo those made at the time of the last inspection. All pupils, including those who have special educational needs, are making satisfactory progress over time. Higher attaining pupils are given every opportunity to succeed. This is better than at the time of the last inspection. There has been considerable improvement in the past year, largely because of the good quality of the teaching, the different age grouping of classes and because the school sets appropriate targets for individual pupils. Boys and girls achieve equally well.

73. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are in line with expectations, overall. Pupils of all ages listen carefully, answer questions and enter into discussions. In Years 1 and 2, they attend to instructions and respond with satisfactory understanding. Having listened attentively to a story, they readily and correctly answer questions put by the teacher. Listening skills are reinforced in a range of lessons, for example, in physical education, where pupils move in different ways on command. When working in groups, pupils discuss together the work that they are doing. They enjoy listening to stories, sometimes on tape. In Years 3 to 6, most are articulate, confident speakers with a wide vocabulary. In discussions they respond to the teacher and to one another, as was seen in a design and technology lesson where a class 'brainstormed' ideas for designs. They very readily read out their own poems and listen carefully to those of other class members.
74. Reading, overall, is in line with expectations with some pupils doing better. All pupils questioned say they enjoy books. They engage very readily in reading with the teacher and also read in groups or individually. Across the school, pupils enjoy fiction and non-fiction, studying and discussing the texts. In Years 1 and 2, pupils were seen to study a book cover and correctly read the title and name the author. They know that fiction books are stories and that non-fiction books give information. In their reading, the younger pupils make use of their developing knowledge of phonics to read unknown words. Most pupils understand what they are reading and are able to predict the likely end to a story or recount what came earlier. In Years 3 to 6, pupils read across a range of books and express preferences for particular kinds of stories. They readily identify favourite characters and say why they like them. Across the school, many are able to name their favourite authors and say what it is they like about their books. Those in the earlier stages of reading make use of carefully graded books, but the small library is also used, particularly by older pupils who wish to select books or find particular information.
75. Standards in writing are in line with expectations, overall, with some particularly good work being seen in Years 3 to 6. Activities are well chosen and work is carefully organised so that pupils are able to write for different purposes. In Years 1 and 2, pupils write about themselves and their holidays. They make up their own stories or retell those they know, such as the story of Goldilocks. They organise and shape their writing according to its purpose, as when writing the recipe for a good night's sleep, written with an appropriate sequence. Some pupils write eagerly and at length. The more able writers produce stories that have an interesting beginning, a development of the story in the middle and a satisfying ending. Many pupils write with a correct use of capital letters and some understanding of basic punctuation. Spelling is more erratic. Pupils are, however, able to find 'families' of similar words and use the phonic knowledge they are developing in literacy hours when tackling the spelling of unknown words. Handwriting is often not clear or well formed. Throughout Years 3 to 6, pupils are showing an enjoyment in the selection and use of words. Here, pupils again write for different purposes but are also learning the techniques of writing for effect and a feeling for language. For example, a pupil writing from the point of view of Black Beauty, chose an effective short sequence, 'I feel free, alone, wild...'. In a lesson on poetry writing, a boy used alliteration effectively with, 'The outline of a fox slinks through the deep, dark forest', and a girl conjured up a particular atmosphere with, 'Dusk slips slowly into night'. Most pupils write confidently and are able to produce a range of work, such as making a particular point in a letter, or writing an evaluation of a model made in design and technology. They write using a neat cursive script. Pupils use a dictionary and thesaurus confidently and have a satisfactory understanding of the rules of punctuation and grammar. Some use is made of ICT, but it is restricted by the availability of computers.

76. The quality of teaching is good, overall, and very good in Years 3 to 6. One lesson was found to be excellent. No teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory. Teachers have a good knowledge of the English curriculum and choose activities which challenge and hold the interest of their classes. Pupils respond well and rise to the expectations of their teachers. The basic skills are well taught and are enhanced by their use across the curriculum. Teaching methods are effective, particularly in Years 3 to 6 and pupils work with concentration and enjoyment, receiving extra help from teachers and class assistants when necessary. Teachers plan their work carefully, having regard to the two year age span in most classes and the wide range of pupils' capabilities in English.
77. Pupils know their own targets and can refer to them inside the cover of their books. In one class, a printed list of the teacher's requirements, for the careful presentation of work, was on each table as a helpful reminder. Class control and the management of pupils is of a high standard and there is a good pace to the lessons. The liveliness and interest of the pupils is well channelled into their work. Behaviour is very good and pupils are attentive to their teachers. They show very good attitudes, sharing space and materials in rather small classrooms and often discussing their work together. The resources, particularly for the literacy hour and to support writing, are used well. The support staff give valuable help as they work with groups and individuals. Pupils with special educational needs receive the additional help they require to help them make similar progress to their peers. Teachers assess how well their pupils are learning and what they need to learn next. Assessment takes account of individual targets and they are sometimes referred to in the marking of work.
78. The school has a sound and comprehensive system of assessment and record-keeping which gives clear information on the progress pupils are making. Parents know their children's targets and regularly support their learning, particularly in reading, making their comments in reading diaries.
79. There are sufficient resources for the subject to be taught across the school. Older pupils have plenty of choice of books for reading; both fiction and non-fiction. Some also use the public library. Younger pupils take their books home to read and change them at suitable intervals; allowing time for enjoyment of the story, discussion about the characters and a consolidation of reading skills.
80. The subject is well managed by the headteacher, who is the co-ordinator. In addition to her many other duties, she observes teaching, studies planning, considers the information from assessments and national tests and makes sure that teachers have the resources they need.
81. The school makes good use of its library, but it is badly placed in the computer area at the end of the hall. There is no other space for it in the school. Appropriate use is made of literacy across the curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

82. Attainment at the end of Year 2, as measured by the standard assessment tests, varies from year to year, reflecting the small number in each year group and the very variable range of knowledge and skills of each pupil. In the 2001 tests, all pupils obtained Level 2, the standard expected, but the percentage exceeding this level was below the national average. Attainment at the end of Year 6 shows even more marked variations over time, with a considerable dip in 2000 and only a slight rise in 2001. In the 2001 tests, the results showed an above average percentage achieving Level 5, which is above that expected, but a higher than expected percentage failed to reach Level 4, the expected level. Variations in the cohorts, with each pupil representing several percentage points and the unsettled period the school experienced, with variations in the quality of teaching and learning, have affected the results achieved. Taking into account the small year groups and the often marked variability in the number of boys and girls in each year group, there is no significant difference between the attainment of either group. Most pupils are achieving in line with their abilities in lessons.

83. Evidence from work scrutiny and lessons indicates that pupils are now making at least satisfactory progress over time and they often make good gains in learning in individual lessons as a direct result of the good teaching. Standards have improved as a result of the good teaching and the increased emphasis on helping each pupil to achieve his or her best. In Year 2, most pupils are working in line with national expectations across all elements of the National Curriculum. In Years 4, 5 and 6, there is evidence that a significant proportion of pupils is working at a level above that expected for their age. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and are given extra adult input to ensure that they understand the work they are set and that they make steady progress. There is a good level of challenge to extend the thinking of pupils who are capable of higher attainment. A few pupils from Year 4 are taught alongside pupils in the Year 5/6 class. A very positive factor in the progress pupils are currently making is their good and often very good attitudes to their work, which are fostered by the very positive relationships they have with staff. Pupils settle quickly and stay on task. Presentation throughout the school is good.
84. There are several areas where there has been good improvement since the last inspection. Progress is now more uniform across the school, although it is generally better in Year 1 and Years 3 to 6 than in Year 2. There is at least appropriate challenge in all classes and high expectations in some.
85. Throughout the school, the National Numeracy Strategy is implemented well. Teachers recap pupils' previous work and also clearly set out the new work they are going to cover, making pupils aware of their own learning. The mental arithmetic sessions at the beginning of lessons are usually well organised and the pace is good. Pupils are developing good mental skills. The plenary sessions are used effectively to reinforce learning, with the teachers using good questioning skills, showing their understanding of the varying levels of attainment of pupils. Teachers and pupils throughout the school use appropriate mathematical language. There is evidence of some links with other subjects, for example the use of bar charts and line graphs in science and using pupils knowledge of repeating patterns to design their own prayer mats in religious education.
86. Most pupils in Year 2 have a secure understanding of number, for example they understand simple fractions, such as a half and a quarter and add and subtract numbers to 100. They are beginning to use suitable strategies to help them with addition, such as pairs of numbers that make ten. Most have a sound understanding of measures and correctly identify a range of two and three-dimensional shapes. By the end of Year 6 most pupils have a secure understanding of place value. They make satisfactory use of multiplication bonds. They have an appropriate understanding of measures and can calculate the area and perimeter of shapes. Most accurately interpret bar charts.
87. Teaching is now good overall, with strengths in Years 3 to 6. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Throughout the school, teachers have secure knowledge and understanding of the subject, which enables them to give clear explanations and any additional reinforcement that is necessary to help pupils understand the various concepts presented. Teachers identify clear learning objectives in their planning which they convey to pupils, giving a good focus to the lesson. This leads to good levels of achievement in lessons. Staff ask pupils to explain how they arrive at their answers. This helps pupils clarify their ideas and staff can assess pupils' levels of understanding. A good example of this was seen in the Year 5/6 class. Pupils were required to use a variety of the four basic operations, addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, to solve real life problems. The teacher worked through several problems with pupils, getting them to talk about the operations involved to ensure their understanding. Additional support was well focused to give additional help where it was most needed. Teachers set tasks which vary according to the needs of individual pupils and these always relate well to the objectives of the lesson. As a result, all pupils, including those who need additional help to achieve the standards expected and those that benefit from more advanced work, are appropriately challenged and achieve well in lessons. Adults establish very good relationships with pupils and these give pupils great confidence in approaching teachers and support staff with any learning difficulties they may have. Teachers amend their planning when they observe that pupils need more practice to consolidate their learning. For example, in Year 2, more work was planned to give some pupils additional

experience of doubling numbers when they needed considerable support to complete the work that was originally planned. Teachers use questions well to assess pupils' understanding and also to give them the opportunity to use and become familiar with specific vocabulary. This was seen when Year 1 pupils were sorting two dimensional shapes according to whether they had curved or straight sides and then playing a game that involved describing a shape for others to identify.

88. The most effective lesson involved interesting activities which captured pupils' interest and imagination well. This was seen in the Year 3/4 class. Work on right angle turns and clockwise and anticlockwise movement was linked with making a map with several features on it. Pupils had to write instructions for getting from one feature to another. This also made a good link with geography and the use of scale with one square on the map representing one mile. More able pupils were asked to use quarter turns to move around the island and also to consider the shortest route between two features.
89. There are two areas for development that the school has already recognised. One is that there is too little emphasis on developing pupils' investigative and problem solving skills. The other is that there is more scope for the use of ICT to extend and consolidate pupils' skills.
90. The co-ordinator has secure subject knowledge and gives clear leadership. She has used the time available to her to monitor the work done and ensure that pupils steadily build up their skills and understanding as they move through the school. Test results are analysed to give information to guide future work. There are several initiatives that are beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' learning. The school has started to track pupils as they move from year to year, to identify those who are not making the expected progress and to direct extra support as necessary. Assessment procedures are evolving well. Targets are set for individual pupils, giving them a clear indication of what they need to do to improve.

SCIENCE

91. In 2001, teachers' assessments at the end of Year 2 judged attainment to be high compared with the national average. Inspection evidence of the attainment of pupils currently in Year 2 shows that the majority are in line with national expectations. This echoes the judgement made during the last inspection. The 2001 national tests for 11 year olds showed that standards in science were in the bottom five per cent nationally and low when compared with the average for similar schools. These results were influenced by the very varied attainment of the small number of pupils in the year group. Inspection evidence shows that the current Year 6 pupils are attaining standards in line with expectations, with some doing better. It echoes the judgement made during the last inspection about this age group. Pupils are achieving appropriately for their capabilities in lessons. By the time they reach the end of Year 6, all pupils have made good progress, including pupils who have special educational needs. This is because of good teaching, an interesting curriculum and the emphasis placed on scientific investigations.
92. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of investigative and experimental science. In Years 1 and 2, pupils learn how to observe closely. In studying different materials, they correctly list objects made from wood, glass, metal and plastic. They know that some materials can change shape when a force is applied. In reaching this conclusion, they have tried squeezing, twisting and bending objects and have found that foamballs and elastic bands immediately come back to shape but that blu-tak, plasticine and playdough do not. As part of their investigations, pupils have rolled toy cars down ramps and have recorded their findings in block graphs; observing that the higher the ramp the further the car rolls along the floor. In learning about life and living processes, they know that seeds require certain conditions to grow. They have looked closely at fruit and identified the seeds, noting their different sizes and shapes. They can name some of the differences between plants and animals. Pupils understand that there are different kinds of forces and are aware of the need for safe practice when working with electricity. They have a satisfactory understanding that a test must be fair and they record their conclusions in graphs, words and pictures.

93. In Years 3 to 6, pupils develop their investigative skills further and use line graphs, charts and diagrams to present their data. They have closely observed the changes that occur when vinegar is mixed with bicarbonate of soda. When burning a candle, they predicted what would happen, made observations and produced a line graph to show how long it took the candle to go out, under different size jars. They know that it was a fair test because it was only the size of the jar that changed. They reached a scientific conclusion - 'The bigger the container, the longer the candle stayed alight.' In learning about life and living processes, they have studied a model of the heart and know something of the circulatory system. They know, from experiment and measurement, that the pulse rate varies and that exercise can make it rise. As part of their work on the human body, they have considered different types of food and healthy life-styles. They have looked at the habitat of different animals, making good use of the school grounds, and have studied the different parts of a plant, determining their separate functions. They know that some substances will dissolve and that separation can sometimes be achieved.
- In an experiment where ice-cubes were melted, they learned about evaporation and condensation. In a development of their work on electricity, pupils have successfully completed circuits and made switches. In an interesting lesson on forces, pupils learned that gravity can overcome air resistance; demonstrating this with parachutes. By the end of the Year 6, pupils have acquired a range of scientific knowledge and facts and know how to work as scientists.
94. Pupils, both boys and girls, are achieving well, because the teaching is good. No teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory. In Years 3 to 6, in particular, pupils are making good progress in relation to their prior attainment. They are systematically acquiring knowledge of the different areas of science and particularly of investigative and experimental work. The school's scheme of work is being well interpreted in the activities chosen. In the best lessons, pupils are able to draw on what they have previously learned, setting their new work into context and extending their learning. They recall what they have learned in other subjects, such as mathematics, to record their observations. Teachers establish a suitable balance between investigations and good, direct teaching which imparts information to their pupils. The pace of lessons is usually brisk. Relationships are very good and teachers manage and organise their classes very well. They have suitable expectations and make them clear. Pupils respond well, are very well behaved, interested and work with evident pleasure. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers and class assistants and take a full part in the lessons, progressing as well as their classmates.
95. Teachers make satisfactory assessments of pupils' progress and keep detailed records. There are good resources to teach the curriculum. Insufficient use is made of ICT to record findings. The outside areas are used and are an attractive resource for learning. The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator, who has some time away from class to monitor the subject. She sets a good standard by the quality of her own teaching.

ART AND DESIGN

96. During the inspection only one lesson was seen which involved the older pupils in the school. They attained at average levels, but no overall judgement can be made of standards across the school. They worked on perspective and, by the end of the lesson, all pupils understood the making of perspective and the resulting fading of colour, which takes place in a landscape. They used a picture of a village street by Sisley as the inspiration and exemplar for both the perspective and the colour changes. They worked with water colours on water colour paper and some were delighted by the effects it was possible to achieve. The teaching was well planned, thorough and ensured success for all pupils in the class.
97. The school has recently been visited by a local artist to assist pupils with their stained glass window project. Pupils are justly proud of their successes and are very keen to show visitors what and how they made them.
98. The weekly Art club was also observed. This is well attended and greatly enjoyed. It is held in a classroom, which means that space is at a premium and this restricts the independence which

pupils might otherwise exhibit in getting their own materials, tools and equipment and in putting them away. Several adults help with this club and the atmosphere as pupils painted their stones was one of jolly application. Pupils allowed the shape of the stones to fire their imagination. Through the Art club, pupils make useful and attractive items such as jewellery, picture frames and Christmas decorations, which they sell to raise funds for the school.

99. Co-ordination is good. The school has adopted a clear scheme of work, which will provide a logical structure to the subject. There are some very pleasing displays around school which act as good teaching and learning tools. Almost all the work by pupils on the walls has been carefully and effectively mounted and this does a great deal to confirm to pupils the school's good opinion of their efforts.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

100. In design and technology, pupils' standards are in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6 and they make satisfactory progress. This is not quite as good as at the time of the last inspection and reflects the other pressures there are now on the school's time.
101. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, preparing to make puppets, shared ideas and designed what they intended to make by drawing pictures. They decided the materials they would need and made a list of them. In considering joining techniques, many generated ideas using their knowledge of products, such as 'glue', 'staples', 'sewing', 'sellotape' and 'velcro' and showed that they could successfully use those that were available by carefully assembling, cutting and manipulating materials. Pupils had previously made, decorated and successfully tested wheeled vehicles.
102. In Years 3 to 6, pupils were seen to design torches, listing materials and equipment they would need. This followed a thoughtful class discussion where the needs of individuals who had 'requested' the torches by letter, were carefully considered. They included a miner, a diver and a soldier. Pupils had some good ideas and listened attentively to one another. Pupils draw and annotate their designs. They have carefully studied a real tent as part of a project where they made model shelters of various kinds. This was a successful home-school project. Pupils show they can make decisions and use a range of materials, cutting, shaping and building them securely. Evaluation is part of the process. One pupil, having made a container, wrote, 'My design is very basic. I could have tried something a bit more challenging. I think it's quite eye-catching'. As part of food technology, pupils have written out recipes and made biscuits.
103. The teaching ranges from good to satisfactory, but it is good overall. Pupils enjoy the subject and work attentively. They are well motivated and responsive because the projects are interesting. In the best lessons, pupils are provided with a wide enough range of materials to be able to make choices and be creative. Sometimes, though, the choice is too limited. The curriculum and teaching, however, ensure that pupils are developing the necessary skills for successful design and technology work. The concerns over the planning for work in the mixed age classes, noted in the last report, have been resolved.
104. Pupils take part in the assessment of their own work by their evaluation of finished products. Records are kept and teachers know how well their pupils are progressing. There are sufficient resources for the teaching of the subject. Very good classroom support is given by teaching assistants.

GEOGRAPHY

105. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection, but these, together with a study of the topics covered during the year by pupils in all year groups and a scrutiny of the work on the walls, make it possible to secure a judgement on standards. Pupils attain broadly in line with national expectations throughout the school and at the end of Years 2 and 6. They are attaining appropriately for their capabilities in lessons.

106. Pupils aged 5 and 6 begin to make maps of their route to school and of the parades of shops in their local areas. Appropriate use is made of the local area to develop fieldwork skills. They have recently been studying life on the Island of Struay and comparing it with their own surroundings. Some pupils comparing life on the island with life in Wargrave, realised that, for instance, there is no port in Wargrave and one is not needed, but the weekly boat is very valuable to the Islanders. These young pupils are beginning to form an idea that not everywhere is the same and that there are significant differences in terrain between, say, the mountains of Scotland – the Great Glen and the sandy sea shore. They know that there is a difference in temperature between the air at the base of a mountain and at the top – they explain that this is why the mountains around Lake Como and those in the Great Glen of Scotland have snow on them even when the sun is shining. The more able have some idea of the change in air pressure, though they do not express it directly.
107. The oldest pupils in the school consider the need for affordable housing in the area and the accompanying pros and cons of building immediately next to the school. They use appropriate language and show a good grasp of the technical terms associated with environmental and demographic change. They consider the larger issues associated with such a change and contribute their ideas effectively through discussion on such areas as the effect on transport systems and the impact on the size of the school. Good use is made of ICT in this project and it also allows pupils to extend their literacy skills.
108. Teachers have reliable knowledge of the subject and there are some very good examples, in the portfolio, of the work done over the last year by all pupils. Much of this is topic based and, though the topic that older pupils studied, on explorers, was essentially a history one, nevertheless a good deal of geography was learned 'by the way' as they considered, for instance, the relative routes of Scott and Amundsen to the South Pole. Pupils enjoyed the two lessons seen and made good progress. The scheme of work that the school has adopted gives a logical structure to the work and this represents an improvement since the last inspection.
109. The school has a link, generated by a local resident, with a school in Nepal and there is a very interesting display about this in the school hall. It is also building links with a large primary school in Germany and this too has a beneficial effect on pupils' consideration of their place in the wider world.

HISTORY

110. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection and that was in a class of Year 3/4 pupils. Judgements are based on the lesson seen, a study of pupils' previous work and the displays of work.
111. Attainment is in line with national expectations by the time pupils reach the ages of seven and eleven. Pupils, both boys and girls, make satisfactory progress in their learning. Pupils who have special educational needs are able to take a full part in the work and progress equally well. Higher attainers are being suitably challenged, notably in the homework set. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
112. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are satisfactorily developing a sense of old and new as they learn about the past. They have looked at transport and understand that vehicles have changed over time. In one exercise, they were able to place them correctly in order of age. In studying the lives of famous people, they have learned about Samuel Pepys and what happened during the Great Fire of London. They know that people lived differently many years ago and have considered the lives of rich and poor people in Stuart times. In a project on the Victorians, Year 2 pupils have looked at kitchen equipment and food storage comparing them with the present day.

113. In Years 3 to 6, pupils have extended their study of the Victorians by learning what life at school was like. As part of this study, pupils in Years 3 and 4 participated in an enjoyable lesson where the teacher took the persona of a Victorian teacher, who had a very different way of teaching. Older pupils have studied different historical periods. They know about the Anglo-Saxons, their religion, homes, work and medicines. As part of this, they have learned about the monster Grendel from the Beowulf poem, making links to work in literacy. In studying the lives of famous explorers, the life of Roald Amundsen was well researched in a home-school project.
114. It is not possible to comment on the quality of teaching across the school as only one lesson was seen; but in the lesson observed the teaching was very good and pupils thoroughly enjoyed it, learning a lot. The work scrutiny indicates that teaching across the school is at least sound with no indication of the unsatisfactory teaching noted at the time of the last inspection. Pupils are being taught an interesting curriculum, enriched by their visits. Teachers' assessments show how well pupils are progressing. The school is well resourced and pupils are able to see and handle some interesting artefacts of Victorian times.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

115. The last inspection report stated that pupils' attainment was above expectations in communicating and handling information, but below average in the control element of the subject. Now attainment is as expected across the whole curriculum in Years 2 and 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs are making steady and sometimes good progress in lessons, which are regularly timetabled. Some pupils bring considerable expertise from home. There is little evidence of the use of information and communication skills across the curriculum to enable pupils to consolidate and extend their skills and this prevents them making greater progress.
116. Teachers have benefited from training and they confidently teach new skills. They use their knowledge to produce plans for well structured lessons and to create displays in the classrooms. The school has purchased a commercial scheme of work that ensures that new skills are steadily built up. It also offers valuable prompt sheets for display alongside the computer to show the steps in various processes, such as saving work or producing a spreadsheet. Teaching in the two lessons observed was good. In Year 2, pupils were learning how to create a list. Year 3/4 pupils were learning how to cut and paste an image and the more knowledgeable were also resizing and rotating the image. Teachers gave clear demonstrations and instructions, using appropriate subject specific vocabulary, which meant that pupils made good progress in learning the new skills involved. Teachers and support staff interacted with individual pupils well to ensure that they all understood. The lessons were well organised and pupils demonstrated high levels of interest in their work. When required, they worked co-operatively with a partner. They readily took turns, listened to what each other had to say and offered help and advice without taking over.
117. The accommodation is extremely limited and some of its computers are old and becoming unreliable. The school has created a small area at the back of the hall to be used to teach ICT skills. There are sufficient computers to enable the whole class to work together with two or three pupils to each computer, but it is very cramped. It is only successful because pupils are very well managed and they are extremely sensible and co-operate very well. Each pupil has his or her own file and this is helping to build up an assessment record. There is a phased plan to purchase new equipment. The school has drawn up plans and raised funds to build a new ICT suite, but the local authority has yet to agree to the proposals.
118. The active co-ordinator makes very good use of expertise in the community to enhance the school's provision. For example, a visitor worked with Year 5/6 pupils helping them to take photographs using the digital camera and to load them onto the computers. This was part of a very interesting piece of work which drew together work in literacy, geography and ICT, as well as developing pupils' awareness of social issues. Pupils used their literacy and ICT skills to create

eye-catching headlines and write interesting reports. This activity generated considerable pupil interest which results in good quality work being produced.

119. There is a computer in each classroom but they are only used occasionally to support work in other subjects and to give pupils the opportunity to reinforce their newly learned skills. As a result, valuable opportunities to consolidate and extend skills are missed. Teachers' lesson plans rarely include mention of the use of the computer. No examples were seen in the work scrutiny of the use of data handling techniques to produce graphs or charts in science or mathematics. A few examples were seen of word processed work, especially in the upper part of the school. Some use is made of CD Roms and the Internet to carry out research, for example on the Victorians and many pupils use the facilities they have at home to extend this. Staff are aware that not all pupils have access to the Internet at home and make the school's facilities available to those who do not.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

120. The school curriculum is considerably broadened by the provision of weekly 15-minute sessions in German for pupils aged 7 to 9 and half-hourly lessons in French for pupils aged 9 to 11. The former are taken by a parent governor, on a voluntary basis, and the latter are now taken by a secondary teacher who is working on a pilot project with four primary schools in the area. These sessions grew out of a club which was started some years ago by the parent governor. Pupils learn to greet each other in both languages, they understand and can say short phrases about the weather and what their names are. They can count to ten in both languages, and the older pupils were seen to listen carefully to key words in a game designed to get them to do just that.
121. There is a link now becoming established with a large primary school in Erfstätt, Germany, with whom they exchange Wünder tube and school bags and there are the beginnings of the plans for a day trip to France. This is all very exciting. It is over and above the provision usually made in primary schools and it enriches the curriculum, but it is difficult to see how progress in the acquisition of either of these languages can be sustained on such an admittedly regular, but infrequent, basis, without significant input from adults in school at other times.

MUSIC

122. Only two class music lessons were seen during the inspection. The standard in these was broadly average, but they gave too little evidence to judge overall standards. School unaccompanied singing, heard in assembly, illustrated that children and pupils have good diction and average tone. The singing was better when older pupils sang an African work song in two parts to the accompaniment of a CD during a lesson. Pupils aged 6 and 7 showed good understanding of dynamics in the music and were able to devise a code for illustrating on a score which areas should be played or sung *forte* or *piano*. They sing with good diction, and some animation when they know the song well.
123. In the two lessons seen, teachers had prepared work to meet the needs and interests of all pupils and they made sensible use of the good resources available. One lesson was satisfactory and one was very good. Teachers plan using the local scheme of work, but they find that this does not meet all the aims which they have for their lessons. Quite clearly pupils enjoy their music lessons and behave well in them. The few pupils identified as having peripatetic lessons spoke with shining eyes and in an articulate fashion about their successes, difficulties and delights of their instruments.
124. Unfortunately, it was not possible to assess the contribution made to school music by the peripatetic tutors and their lessons, as they did not take place during the inspection. The choir was not heard singing during the week and the recorder group did not meet. There are some enthusiastic and some able musicians in the school and two of these played us in and out of the Ascension Day assembly with accuracy and considerable style. In the last academic year, the

choir has sung at the Hexagon and the University in Reading, with a Year 6 girl and a Year 5 boy singing solos. There are also regular whole school productions which are well received by parents.

125. Music is used well to establish the atmosphere before assemblies. Through singing and taking part in performances, the subject makes a valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual and social development. The school does not have a suitable room for music lessons. When they take place in the hall they can easily disturb work in the ICT suite and surrounding classrooms.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

126. Judgements are made on the three games lessons seen, a study of swimming records and consideration of the opportunities provided for pupils in extra-curricular activities. It is not possible to judge attainment in other areas of the physical education curriculum.
127. Standards of attainment are in line with expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6, except in swimming, where standards, at the end of Year 6, are high and well above those expected nationally. Pupils make satisfactory progress in games and very good progress in swimming. This broadly reflects the judgements of the last inspection, though progress in Years 1 and 2 has improved.
128. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 satisfactorily control a ball, stop it with their hand or foot and kick it to a partner. Many catch and throw with some accuracy, working well with partners. In running, jumping and moving in different ways on the grass, the youngest pupils show good physical co-ordination. Bowling is quite accurate for their age but, in one lesson seen, pupils had rather more difficulty managing bat and ball together. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' ball skills have improved and they are quite agile in their movements. They travel forwards, sideways and backwards on the court. In the lesson observed, the skills of hitting and controlling the ball with a bat improved and pupils ended the lesson demonstrating satisfactory skill levels.
129. Some teaching is good but it is satisfactory overall. Teachers plan interesting and challenging lessons, which are enjoyable for their pupils and allow them to practise and develop skills. Pupils work in pairs or groups successfully, organising themselves and sharing equipment. Management and organisation are good. Lessons are generally conducted at a good pace and pupils are active for most of the time. Pupils achieve appropriately for their capabilities in lessons.
130. It is not possible for the school to teach all the required elements of physical education. Gymnastics cannot take place, using large apparatus, because the hall is too small. Years 1 and 2 dance lessons take place in the hall but it is rather too cramped for the older pupils. The many extra-curricular activities, where pupils can take part in a dance and fitness club, and where they learn and practise football, rugby, golf and the summer sports, are particularly important and are well attended. The school takes the opportunities provided by good community contacts to give pupils specialist tuition in football, rugby, cricket and golf. These activities play an important part in their physical education. Swimming lessons, for the older pupils, take place at a local leisure centre.
131. The subject is suitably organised and led by the co-ordinator. The accommodation is not suitable to allow the full curriculum to be taught. Resources are satisfactory for the activities provided.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

132. The school follows the local authority's Agreed Syllabus. There is a strong Christian ethos which permeates all its work. Pupils' levels of attainment, at ages seven and eleven, are generally in line with those expected, although some pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the topics covered. Pupils have very positive attitudes to religious education and show a genuine desire to learn. Lessons observed, and a scrutiny of samples of pupils' work throughout the school, show steady learning, with all pupils making, at least satisfactory and often good, progress in relation to their prior attainment. In the last inspection report, standards were described as being above

expectations. Since then the school has been through many changes and this has had an impact on standards. There is now a new co-ordinator who has the expertise to ensure that standards rise again. The new portfolio of completed work clearly illustrates how work in successive year groups steadily builds on pupils' knowledge and understanding, as well as showing good opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills.

133. Of the teaching seen, half was satisfactory and half was good. Teachers introduce pupils to the life and teaching of Jesus and major world religions. They purposefully help them investigate how faiths and religious practices illuminate their own lives and those of others. Teachers have secure subject knowledge of other faiths and supplement this by researching topics before each unit of work. A strength of the teaching is the way staff lead discussions. They share their own experiences and encourage pupils to express their own ideas. An example of this was seen in Year 2, where pupils were learning about the significance of the prayer mat in the Muslim religion. The teacher shared the story of her 'special blanket' with the class and invited them to talk about items which were special to them. This illustrated the warm relationships between staff and pupils that were seen throughout the school, as well as illustrating the good contribution which the subject makes to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. All pupils are encouraged to participate and they are given the confidence to do so. Staff lead meaningful discussions with pupils and help them to listen to and respect the views and feelings of others. These discussions also enable pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills well. In the Year 5/6 class, as part of their work on learning about the role of obedience in religious life, pupils were learning about Ramadan and the way Muslims fast. They went on to discuss what they would find hard to give up. In the Year 3/4 class the teacher talked about a place which was special to him and encouraged pupils to share their experiences as part of their work on how different religions have their own special places, for example the role of the shrine in the Sikh religion.
134. Opportunities for reflective prayer are given in assemblies and in the classroom. There were examples of pupils saying their own prayers that showed their personal thoughts and feelings in a very mature and responsible way.
135. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' understanding of other cultures. This could be expanded by inviting representatives from other faiths to the school and by visits to other places of worship.
136. The religious aspects of the school's life were also observed by an inspector appointed by the diocese and she has produced her own report.