

INSPECTION REPORT

STOURFIELD JUNIOR SCHOOL

Bournemouth

LEA area: Bournemouth

Unique reference number: 113730

Headteacher: Mr Dave Nayler

Reporting inspector: Geoff Burgess
OIN: 23708

Dates of inspection: 5th to 9th November 2001

Inspection number: 196984

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Cranleigh Road Bournemouth Dorset
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Peter Green
Date of previous inspection:	March 1997

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			Music	Teaching & learning
			Religious Education	Leadership & management
				School improvement
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				Personal welfare & care
				Partnership with parents
				Adequacy of resources
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			Art : Design Technology	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Stourfield Junior School serves a wide spectrum of families of mainly British heritage in Southbourne to the east of Bournemouth. Unusually, it only takes years four, five and six with year three attending the neighbouring first school. Fewer than eight per cent of pupils actually take free school meals though more are entitled with much work in this tourist area seasonal and low-paid. The number of pupils on roll has been a little above 310 for the past five years. Nearly a half of all pupils are on the special needs register, a high number, but the way the local authority funds special needs means that only one has a statement. The attainment of the most recent intake was average in writing and mathematics and below in reading when they took their national tests for seven-year-olds in 2000 but, on entry as eight-year-olds, their standards were below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school, well led and managed where good teaching is enabling pupils to achieve well throughout the school. With average funding and attainment on entry below average, it provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Consistently good teaching with much of it even better is helping pupils to steadily achieve more and improve standards especially in mathematics
- Standards in information and communications technology, music and physical education are better than in most schools
- Boys and girls are encouraged to work hard and try their best and they respond very positively
- Pupils' personal, moral and social development have a very high priority. They behave well, understand the impact of their actions on others and get on very well together
- The head, with great support from senior colleagues, has managed a difficult phase in the school's development very well and together they put in place measures which have produced the good quality learning environment it now enjoys.

What could be improved

- While higher attainers do well, fewer pupils achieve average standards in writing than in reading or mathematics or in schools in a similar situation
- Pupils identified as needing extra help in literacy are not making sufficient progress and miss out on good teaching in other subjects
- Assessment procedures do not provide good enough information for teachers to use

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

After an initial fall after the last inspection in March 1997 and until this year, standards in English, mathematics and science rose at about the same rate as in most schools. Science standards continue to improve but the 2001 national test results fell back in English and mathematics. Current standards have resumed the improving trend. Most issues from the last inspection have been resolved with a well-planned curriculum and much better provision for information technology but assessment procedures still require attention. Teaching standards, provision for music and the accommodation are much better. Overall improvement is satisfactory.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

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

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

After a good overall improvement in standards as shown by national testing in 1999, subsequent results in the three subjects have been very different. In English, pupils' attainments improved at the same rate as most schools in 2000 but fell back to 1999 levels this year as standards continued to rise in other schools. Results in mathematics fell slightly in both years while national standards improved but science standards improved at the same good rate as in most schools. It is significant that in the last two years, the number of pupils gaining higher levels in each subject has been better than the overall picture would indicate. However, compared with schools in a similar situation, mathematics results were below average with English well below, especially in writing. Most pupils are now achieving well in literacy, numeracy and science. Current standards in year six are better in English, notably in writing, being close to the national average with mathematics, also improved, a little above. Science standards are as good as they were this time last year. Overall standards in other subjects are at least as would be expected with particular strengths in physical education and other subjects such as music and information technology where teachers have particular expertise. However, inspection evidence shows that few pupils identified as needing extra help make sufficient progress to move down or off the special needs register and their progress is less than satisfactory.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Boys and girls are very positive about school and join in wholeheartedly with all it has to offer. They are very keen to talk about their work, proud of their achievements and their school and work hard to complete tasks set. Attitudes to school and learning are very good
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	With a few exceptions, behaviour observed in and out of the classroom during the inspection was very good. Staff have worked very hard to help pupils to know what behaviour is appropriate at different times and they have responded extremely well. This is making it possible for teachers to attempt stimulating activities knowing that most pupils can cope with the demand this places on their self-control. However, a minority of pupils still exhibit challenging behaviour. Behaviour overall is good.
Personal development and relationships	Very good: Everybody gets on very well with everybody else and visitors are made to feel very welcome. Adults act as very good role models in this respect which helps to foster the friendly feel of the school. Pupils are growing into very confident, sociable and sensible citizens who recognise their own worth and appreciate the contribution made by others. They work together very well and enjoy taking responsibility when it is offered.
Attendance	Pupils enjoy their time in school and attendance is good.

The school has invested a great deal of time, effort and money on improving pupils' personal standards to very good effect. Pupils' very good attitudes and relationships and good behaviour have helped to make teaching and learning much easier and put smiles on everyone's faces.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 3 - 6
Lessons seen overall	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.

Most teaching is good with more than a quarter even better and some satisfactory. No teaching is unsatisfactory. The good quality of teaching is broadly consistent across the three year groups. Both very good and satisfactory teaching were observed in a range of subjects including English while about a half of mathematics and physical education lessons were very good. Other excellent and very good lessons came where teachers had particular expertise such as in music and information technology. Strong features of teaching and learning in class are the effective way pupils are managed and the effort pupils put into their work. Out of class support provided for pupils who find learning difficult is generally sound but its organisation cuts across good teaching in the same or other subjects. In class support is good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a suitable range of learning opportunities for most of its pupils with literacy and numeracy strongly represented. Music and physical education are strengths of the school with the quality of provision in information technology growing term by term. A good range of extra activities in and out of school time enrich normal school work and personal, social and health education has a high priority. However, many pupils are taken out of lessons, mainly for help with their reading and writing, and they unnecessarily miss out on sharing in aspects of literacy and other subjects with their classmates.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Basic procedures for identifying need, setting targets and monitoring progress are in place but these and the arrangements made to deal with pupils' needs are not working well enough. Learning targets are not specific to individual pupils and the work provided is not planned to match and support what they are doing in other lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Staff make very good provision for promoting pupils' personal development especially in the development of pupils' social skills and attitudes and moral awareness. Curricular provision for pupils to study and appreciate their own cultural heritage and celebrate the cultural diversity of others is sound with good attention given to helping pupils to reflect on the more spiritual aspects of their growth.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Teachers and other staff know the children well and take good care for their safety and well-being. Procedures for these aspects are satisfactory but in the context of this school, need to be better. Attendance and behaviour are monitored carefully and high standards are actively promoted. Current assessment arrangements are not sufficiently detailed or rigorous for teachers to keep an eye on academic progress, identify individual needs or to guide planning. Personal development is well monitored but, apart from pupils who give cause for concern, few records are kept.

The school has good links with parents who find it easy to communicate with the head and teachers when necessary. It provides good general information about the curriculum and school events but reports do not give specific information about how well children are doing in relation to others.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership & management by the headteacher & other key staff	While providing a firm personal overview, the head shares responsibility for much of the direction and running of the school with a group of senior colleagues. They fulfil their roles very effectively and with several more established subject coordinators doing a good job, overall leadership and management is good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are very supportive and proud of their school. They have an appropriate range of committees and individual responsibilities to carry out most of what they need to do. Many have worked particularly hard recently to support the efforts of the school in its building programme and in managing its complex finances.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Arrangements for identifying priorities for development are much improved and the consequent school improvement plans provide an appropriate agenda for focussing the efforts of the school. The head monitors teaching and deals with performance management but subject coordinators do not have the opportunity to check on what is happening in classrooms in their subjects. Some analysis of national test data has taken place recently but current assessment procedures are not good enough to provide the information needed for more detailed analysis.
The strategic use of resources	The school is fortunate to have generous amounts of accommodation, staff and resources. However, it is in a transitional phase and though resources are well used, historic staffing requirements and future accommodation needs mean that aspects of both these resources are less well deployed. The new building has given the school the opportunity to upgrade facilities within the school and the head and governors are wisely not rushing to buy in new equipment until the exact requirements are known.

The school's management team deserves great praise for leading the school through a particularly challenging period in its history. The effectiveness of their actions can be judged by the quality of this report and the positive, optimistic feel of the school.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children enjoy going to school • Teaching is good and their children are making good progress • the school is helping pupils to grow up sensibly • pupils are expected to work hard and do their best • the headteacher and staff are very approachable • the school is well led and managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information about how well their children are doing • the work their children are expected to do at home

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views. Improvements could be made to reports but homework provided is as good as in most schools.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. From 1998 to 2000, results in national testing improved at roughly the same rate as in most schools in English, mathematics and science with English a little below average, mathematics a little above and science above average in 2000. Standards in science continued to improve this year but English results fell away considerably, especially in the writing element with less than half the pupils obtaining the expected level. Results in mathematics also went down but still stayed within the average range. When compared with schools in a similar situation, science was average, mathematics below average and English well below average. It is worth noting that in each subject, the percentage of pupils obtaining the higher grade of level five has been relatively better than the percentage gaining the expected level four and above in each of the last two years. It is also significant that an analysis of special needs records shows that few pupils move down or off the special needs register during their time in the school.

2. Good teaching and pupils' very good attitudes to learning are making it possible for most pupils to achieve well in each of the three year groups. Arrangements for grouping pupils by what they can do in mathematics, which also results in smaller class sizes, is having a very important impact in this area. However, inappropriate provision for pupils identified as needing help with their reading and writing means that these pupils make slower progress. In addition, when they are withdrawn from literacy lessons, the disruption inhibits learning for their classmates and their progress is slowed. This affects higher achievers least and with overall good teaching and a good opportunity to extend their writing each week, they do well. However, the achievement of middle attainers is not as good and, with work in supported groups unrelated to work in class, children getting help with their writing are not catching up.

3. The consequence of all this is that standards in mathematics are improving and are currently a little better than would be expected across the ability range in each year group. However, the trend of recent years continues in writing, with fewer pupils achieving average standards than seen in most schools which brings overall standards down to a low average. Reading standards are generally satisfactory but older pupils' library skills are not well developed. Most pupils have good speaking and listening skills. Pupils' achievements in science are above average and the strength of the core subjects being.

4. Standards in those subjects which are taught in timetabled blocks during the year including art, design technology, history, geography and religious education are appropriate for the ages of the pupils concerned and the time of year. In those subjects which are taught throughout the year, such as information technology, music and physical education, standards are higher especially where individual teachers have particular expertise. However, in all these subjects, individual pupils lose out when they miss good lessons to go and do extra literacy work and their standards in the subjects missed suffer.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

5. Pupils have very good attitudes to school and are extremely enthusiastic and involved in the activities they are given to do in class. This will come as no surprise to their parents, as all the questionnaires returned prior to the inspection stated that parents believed their children liked school. All classes showed themselves capable of listening quietly to instructions and then beginning work promptly and enthusiastically. A whole school music lesson, where they sang several songs to the accompaniment of various instruments played by staff and pupils, was a most impressive display of pupil involvement. More than three hundred children displayed total concentration and above all enjoyment of what they were doing. Pupils move quietly around the school and remind each other not to run in corridors. They are careful and responsible when handling school property and are very proud of the new classrooms and facilities.

6. Behaviour is good and no oppressive behaviour was observed during the inspection.

Almost all behaviour observed during lessons was good or better. Pupils are anxious to answer questions and take pride in their achievements. They are exceptionally friendly and courteous towards visitors, happy to discuss their work and their school, politely opening doors and doing everything they can to be welcoming. This situation is particularly remarkable since during the last academic year there were sixteen exclusions. These involved eight pupils, all white boys who had moved from other schools. Nine of them involved year six pupils during the period after they had done their statutory assessment tests in their last term. The dramatic recent improvement in behaviour is the result of the school's changed approach to behaviour management in response to a small group of very challenging pupils.

7. The school's clear teaching of its 'Golden Rules', and of the difference between right and wrong, means that pupils have a very good appreciation of the impact of their actions on others and show real respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. This was clearly demonstrated in the circle times observed during the inspection. Pupils were clearly used to discussing their feelings and ideas without fear of being laughed at or dismissed, and clearly understand that other people can feel upset by their actions. Year six pupils showed themselves capable of considering major issues, like the terrorist attack on America, and quickly drew a parallel between terrorism and a bully in the playground getting his way by force. Pupils respond well to opportunities to take responsibility. They undertake various jobs in their classroom and around the school uncomplainingly and conscientiously.

8. Relationships between adults and children, and between pupils, are very good and a real strength of the school. Pupils trust and respect their teachers and the other adults who have charge of them. Children work together in class very well whether working in pairs or groups and boys and girls work together as naturally as single-sex groupings. This was seen in a music lesson for year six, where the teacher divided them into pairs at random, then into groups of four. In each grouping pupils worked hard to produce joint compositions without any argument or time-wasting behaviour. At playtimes children are kind and sympathetic if someone is hurt and are quick to get them adult help. When children returned to class in the middle of a lesson, their friends helped them understand what was going on and what they needed to do.

9. Attendance and punctuality are good. In the academic year 2000-2001 the attendance rate was 94.5%, slightly above the national average of 94.4%. Unauthorised absence was below while authorised absence was slightly above. Very few pupils arrive late for school in the mornings and parents and guardians promptly explain virtually all absences.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

10. The quality of teaching has improved greatly since the last inspection when it was described as generally satisfactory but with one in six lessons unsatisfactory. This time, over four-fifths of lessons were at least good with none unsatisfactory. Nearly a quarter of teaching was very good and two lessons were excellent. What makes this even more impressive is the fact that, in each class and in every subject, more than a half of teaching is at least good and nine teachers achieved at least one very good lesson. With pupils working hard and doing their best throughout the school, this means that teaching and learning are consistently good in each year group and generally across the curriculum with strengths in certain areas.

11. Given the school's recent history, a key factor in this is the very good way teachers manage their classes and the way pupils respond with enthusiasm, effort and good behaviour. Staff are delighted that the poor behaviour and apathy indulged in by several pupils in the older classes in recent years, and the negative effect this had on teaching and learning, has all but disappeared. This is a tribute to the effectiveness of the steps taken to break the cycle and means that teachers are able to attempt 'risky' activities with confidence. For instance, sensitively 'chaired' by their teacher, older pupils shared their feelings and opinions about name-calling, a very sensitive subject, with great common sense.

12. 'Setting' arrangements, by which pupils are taught in groups with similar attainment, and the very effective use of the Numeracy Strategy has led to mathematics teaching being very

strong. Nearly a half of the numeracy lessons observed were very good with most of the rest good. Teachers take full advantage of the smaller class sizes and the much smaller ability range they have to deal with to provide very focussed and well-matched lessons. Pupils enjoy the extra attention and the fact that they can succeed at their own level. Good mathematicians in year four eagerly took on the challenges set by their teacher using harder 'tables' to do rapid calculations with big numbers. Allowing pupils plenty of time to discuss and talk through their answers gives them the confidence to 'have a go'. The lowest ability groups are even smaller in size and benefit from additional adult support and good teaching. This has a positive impact on the progress made by these pupils. However, those pupils who have significant difficulties working with number do not have numeracy targets on their individual plans.

13. Another strong subject is physical education where confident teachers and enthusiastic and physically able pupils were observed in a range of activities inside and out. In a hall with poor acoustics, the teacher challenged and inspired pupils to produce high quality sequences of balances with rapt concentration and a lot of mutual appreciation. Good coaching and very good use of demonstrations helped pupils to understand what they need to do to improve and they really try to do so. Outside on the playing field, very new rugby players thoroughly enjoyed learning the basics of the game while keeping warm on a chilly afternoon. Very good management techniques and a brisk, lively manner kept everyone on task and busy.

14. Other very good teaching came in subjects where teachers have particular expertise. The whole school singing lesson is a good example, where staff and pupils join together to learn, practice and perform a range of songs with the music coordinator and a small band. The obvious shared enjoyment which everyone gets out of the experience, the quality of pupils' response and the actual performance is testament to the impact this has on pupils' singing. Another area where teacher expertise and confidence is significant is in information technology. Here the infectious confidence of the two coordinators rubbed off on their classes so that pupils very quickly learned how to use the garden planning programme they were using at the levels appropriate for their ages and then moved on to experiment for themselves.

15. Extra support given to those pupils who find aspects of literacy difficult is mainly in the form of small group work well away from the classroom. While in itself it is generally sound and focussed on what the special needs coordinator (SENCO) has identified for improvement, it has a negative impact in other areas both for the children involved and the rest of the school. Over time pupils' progress is unsatisfactory because tasks provided for them are often mundane or inappropriate and when pupils are withdrawn to work in small groups they often miss out on good teaching in other subjects. Class teachers know their pupils well and in lessons usually plan tasks suitable to meet the needs of the different ability groups of pupils within their class. Support staff are used effectively to support the needs of individual pupils in the classroom, particularly in literacy and numeracy lessons. Teachers meet with the SENCO to discuss the needs of individual pupils and to review their targets. However, they are not involved in the writing of the individual education plans for the pupils in their class and so the plans are not used consistently by all teachers when preparing lessons. Group education plans prepared for large numbers of pupils by a teacher's assistant in consultation with the SENCO do not meet the individual needs of the pupils concerned.

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

16. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school is satisfactory. Statutory requirements are met and the balance of subjects taught is satisfactory with sufficient emphasis on the teaching of English, mathematics and science, all of which had been identified as an issue in the last inspection. The effectiveness of the strategy for teaching numeracy is good and it is satisfactory for literacy. Cross-curricular links are good; for example in literacy pupils wrote detailed descriptions of their visit to Hengistbury Head and when studying life in Victorian England, pupils in year six looked at the works of William Morris during art lessons. The curriculum is enhanced by visits and visitors to school which support the history and geography curriculum, as for instance the visit to Cranbourne Ancient Technology Centre to support history.

Special occasions such as the Victorian school morning for pupils in year six also enhance the curriculum and support learning well.

17. Planning for the long and medium-term is effective. The school has adopted the national strategies and schemes of work for each subject. This has successfully addressed the concerns in the previous inspection that there was insufficient guidance for teachers to support them with planning to ensure activities match the abilities of the pupils. At present, two out of the three year groups are being taught some of the non-core subjects and some science units in blocks rather than having one short lesson each week for each subject. For example, design technology is taught over several sessions in one week to enable pupils to learn the skills to design, make and complete a project. Pupils say they enjoy having more intense time developing skills and knowledge in one subject and this has a positive impact on their learning.

18. Short-term planning takes place weekly in year groups and effectively ensures continuity and consistency across the years. Activities are well planned to meet the needs of the different ability groups within the class. However, the school's decision to withdraw pupils from lessons for various activities, particularly spelling and handwriting, does not allow all pupils to have equal access to the whole curriculum. Many miss out on interesting work in other subjects.

19. Extra provision for pupils who find learning difficult is inappropriate and does not adhere to the national initiative of inclusion. Many pupils are withdrawn in very small groups to work with specialist teachers or a teaching assistant if possible at the time when other pupils in their class are having a literacy lesson. However, they miss at least one lesson of a series of five literacy hours in a week, which makes it difficult for them to take part in the other literacy hours. For example during one lesson a small group of pupils was withdrawn to work with a teacher to develop their phonic skills and to understand the structure of sentences, while the rest of the class were writing an interesting character study as a whole class. The class teacher had been encouraging pupils to use varied and adventurous vocabulary in their writing; key skills important for pupils of all abilities. The provision is not planned sufficiently carefully to ensure that pupils can still experience all the subjects to which they are entitled. For example during two good geography lessons pupils were withdrawn for handwriting practice.

20. Many pupils who have been identified as having learning difficulties have group plans with vague targets that are not specific to their individual needs. Pupils who have difficulties with numeracy do not have individual education plans. Some, who find learning or conforming difficult, are well supported in the classroom by well-trained teacher assistants and for them provision is satisfactory. The appointment of a welfare officer to support pupils with emotional and behavioural problems supports the provision for these pupils well. As a result the behaviour of many pupils in the school has improved and this has a positive impact on their learning.

21. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good with a carefully planned programme for pupils suitable to meet their needs. Sessions when pupils sit in a circle and discuss issues are a regular feature of the weekly timetable. A sex education programme, agreed by governors, is in place and a drugs awareness programme forms part of the health education programme. The school is part of the Health Promoting Schools Scheme and the Life Education classroom recently spent two weeks at the school. This gave pupils and parents the opportunity to take part in drug prevention activities. The fire service has talked to pupils about the dangers of fire and a group of construction engineers talked to the pupils about the dangers of building sites. This was particularly important while the school was undergoing extensive building works. Lifeguards also talk to pupils before the summer holidays about safety on the beach and pupils in year six follow a basic first aid course. Following a survey of staff, parents and pupils, the school decided to introduce water bottles in school. This gives pupils the opportunity to have a drink of water during lessons without leaving the classroom and interrupting valuable teaching time. The school nurse talks to pupils regularly and is often available to support parents with their children's health related problems.

22. Links with partner institutions are satisfactory. Teachers attend liaison meetings with local secondary schools and there is an active local group of head teachers. Pupils moving to secondary school visit their new school for a day at the beginning of July and on the same day

pupils in the first school spend a morning in the junior school. The year four team of teachers also spend a morning in the first school so that the pupils transferring to the junior have an opportunity to be taught by the new teacher in their own classrooms. Some special needs co-ordinators (SENCO) meet with the SENCO of the junior school to ensure that appropriate provision can be organised in the secondary schools for pupils who need help. The SENCOs of the first and junior schools meet to discuss the needs of those pupils who find learning difficult and the junior school receives all the year three individual education plans. However, these are not continued across the change of schools with new individual plans being set up.

23. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development and places a strong emphasis on the improvement of their social skills, attitudes and moral awareness. Pupils are clearly taught the difference between right and wrong. The school's code of conduct, soundly based around a set of golden rules, is well displayed both in classrooms and in shared spaces. Teachers and other staff often refer to them and individual rules such as 'Do be kind and helpful' and 'Do be gentle' are well used as themes for assemblies. All pupils benefit from regular, carefully planned times for sitting quietly with their teacher and discussing feelings such as anger and aggression and their reactions to this anti-social behaviour in others.

24. An important part of this schools provision for pupils' moral and social education is the work of the welfare manager, a teacher, employed to work specifically with children who have problems with relationships, behaviour or who just need to talk to an adult about a personal worry or problem. His presence and guidance has made an important contribution to pupils' personal development, relationships and behaviour in the school. He shows great patience and calm when dealing with pupils and spends all lunchtimes and playtimes with them when he can often be seen sitting with pupils discussing behaviour, resolving conflicts and encouraging pupils to think of others.

25. Boys and girls respond very well to the many opportunities they have for working together. They are regularly asked to work in small groups or pairs and the setting arrangements in maths provide children with good opportunities to work with others in their age group who are not necessarily in their class. Sport activities such as football, music, extra curricular clubs and residential visits promote skills of teamwork and cooperation and pupils were often seen to offer help to one another or encourage another child who was having difficulties. Pupils currently have limited opportunity to take responsibility for tasks within the school community. They perform small routine jobs such as tidying up the classroom and library. However, the school is planning a School Council so that pupils can be more involved in the management of their community.

26. Provision for encouraging spiritual development is good especially during some acts of collective worship, when pupils are encouraged to reflect on issues such as war and aggression, remembering and celebrating special things and events. A very good example was an assembly based on Remembrance Day in which pupils and teachers talked about artefacts of particular importance to them and looked at the medals and photograph of a soldier killed in the Second World War. The children were obviously moved and fully engaged by pictures of Flanders field, music and poetry which set the scene. Many other good opportunities are provided for pupils to express their thoughts and feelings and to reflect on values and beliefs. Times such as the whole school singing assemblies are joyous occasions when pupils experience the pleasure of making music together and being part of a happy community.

27. Staff make satisfactory provision for pupils' cultural development. Children learn about their own culture when they make visits to places such as the Weald and Downland museum to support their work in history. They study the work of artists such as William Morris, Turner, Lowry and Matisse and listen to music by a range of different composers such as Copeland and John Lennon. However the provision for pupils to appreciate ethnic and cultural diversity is more limited. Pupils study Islam and Hinduism in their religious education lessons and sometimes visit a Hindu temple. They also have a Moslem leader visit the school to talk about his faith. A parent with Russian nationality has just started an after school club which is providing pupils with a good insight into the Russian way of life and some knowledge of the Russian language.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

28. Procedures for monitoring and improving behaviour and for eliminating oppressive behaviour, are very good and a real strength of the school. Two years ago the school faced a crisis when a small number of extremely disruptive pupils demonstrated that the behaviour management techniques used at that time were inadequate. To counter this situation, the present system was developed, based around the school's 'Golden Rules', which are widely displayed around the school and constantly referred to by staff. Any unsatisfactory behaviour is noted in a daily log. This has been carefully analysed to identify the situations in which problems are likely to arise, so that strategies can be devised to deal with them. For instance, analysis showed that nearly 60% of the incidents reported from playtimes involved only 25 children. These were obliged to attend a 'lunchtime club', where they learnt to play constructively and earned the right to return to the playground with the rest of the school.

29. The management of behaviour was previously handled by the deputy head as welfare manager alongside his other duties: a year ago the school decided to appoint a full time children's welfare manager with no classroom duties who devotes his time to the monitoring and improvement of behaviour. He helps pupils develop anger management strategies and to learn to recognise the situations in which they are likely to get themselves and others into trouble. The school intends to broaden his role through additional training, so that he can identify pupils who are likely to have emotional and behavioural difficulties as soon as they enter the school. The welfare manager carries out his work with impressive care and sensitivity. However, there are disadvantages when a specialist member of staff handles all disciplinary matters. Firstly, particularly at playtimes, pupils tend to think that he is the only adult who can deal with problems, and thus other members of staff, particularly non-teaching ones, are disempowered. Secondly, the removal of pupils from class for sessions with the welfare manager disrupts their education.

30. All employed adults working in the school can reward hard work or good behaviour with 'merits', which lead to the award of certificates, and 'Golden Time' when pupils can choose what they do. Detentions can be given for unfinished classwork, not walking sensibly around school, unacceptable lunchtime behaviour, breaking the playground code, answering back, or arguing with an adult. While all staff use the reward system, not all make use of the detention system. The school's approach to behaviour management over the last two years has been highly successful and the use of detentions is no longer really necessary in its current situation. All class teachers demonstrated during the inspection that they are very capable of handling their pupils, partly because they have developed close relationships with them and partly because they are well trained in a variety of behaviour management strategies.

31. Provision for monitoring and supporting personal development is good with provision for personal, social and health education very good. All classes have a circle time session every week, on a topic linked to school assemblies. Pupils are given abundant information on topics such as healthy eating and the dangers of smoking, drugs and alcohol and year six are given some first aid training. Teachers work hard to get to know their pupils and use a number of different strategies to support them, such as 'Think Books', discussion with the special needs coordinator or suggesting strategies to pupils to help them avoid losing their temper. However, there are no written records of personal development by class teachers apart from a section in pupils' annual reports.

32. The children's welfare manager draws up personal support plans (PSPs) for pupils identified as having behavioural or emotional difficulties, to help them monitor and improve their behaviour. PSPs are closely linked to the school's Golden Rules, and include specific targets, such as the pupil not appearing in the daily log of misbehaviour more than once a week. The welfare manager also draws up contracts with individuals or groups who have persistently misbehaved in one particular situation, when both the welfare manager and the pupil(s) concerned undertake to ensure the problem will not arise again. All these documents are drawn up in consultation with the parents of the pupils concerned and are modified in the light of the

pupil's future behaviour, in consultation with the pupils themselves. This is a very good way of making pupils aware of their personal development and of the progress they are making.

33. Procedures for child protection and health and safety are satisfactory. Policies for both areas of these topics follow local authority guidelines. New staff are briefed on child protection, first aid and fire precaution arrangements, and further guidance is available in the staff handbook. The school has appropriate liaison arrangements with outside agencies such as social services and the police and satisfactory links with other agencies that advise the school including for example the behaviour support service and the educational psychologist. Provision for the pupil who has a statement of special educational needs is satisfactory and the school ensures that all agencies as outlined in the statement are fully involved. Annual reviews are appropriately prepared and carried out and the agencies involved with providing support either attend or provide written reports.

34. Staff have a good awareness of day-to-day safety requirements. They are not given specific training in health and safety in physical education and technology lessons but advice is given by the subject coordinators. The school will give prescription medicines with written instructions from parents. A member of the administrative staff provides first aid cover in the medical room throughout the school day and other members of staff hold first aid qualifications. First aiders are trained in the use of the epipen, and all staff are alerted to pupils with serious allergy conditions. All doors are locked at the start of school except the main door, where visitors have to ring for admission. Visitors must wear badges and sign in and all regular helpers in school are police-checked. The fire brigade has just carried out a risk assessment of the premises following the building work. Parents are asked to park 'thoughtfully' and to ensure that their children use the crossing patrol or pedestrian lights to cross roads.

35. An annual risk assessment walk is undertaken by the headteacher and representatives of the governors' premises committee. The school has a significant problem with vandalism: during the inspection the skylights on the swimming pool roof were broken by youths climbing on the roof and a parent who had been running an after-school club found her car surrounded by threatening teenagers. Damage has already been caused to the new buildings. The caretaker has in the past been beaten up badly enough to put him in hospital when he challenged intruders after dark. Part of the problem is that the shape of the playground, with its sloping surfaces, is a magnet for skateboarders, who climb over the fences to make use of it. The current fencing will shortly be replaced with the 'vandal-proof' type already surrounding the other school on the site, and it is hoped that this will reduce intrusion and vandalism. A number of minor health and safety issues have been notified to the school for its attention.

36. The last Ofsted inspection report required the school to improve teaching by:
- developing assessment procedures which identify what pupils know, understand and can do, and inform future lesson planning
 - engaging pupils in setting their own targets for learning through consistent whole school approach to marking and feedback.

Although the school has made some progress in this recently, the procedures for monitoring standards and evaluating progress still do not sufficiently identify how well pupils are doing academically or generate adequate assessment information to guide planning properly. The staff recognise the need to develop manageable systems of assessment and to ensure that data is used to improve teaching and learning and to inform planning.

37. Following the last inspection the school began the process of building up its collection of assessment data. This now includes detail of national tests for seven and eleven year-olds, standardised tests of reading and spelling given at the beginning and end of each year and diagnostic test information, which are used to help monitor attainment and identify incidents of underachievement. Although these tests generate a great deal of valuable information, some are not matched to National Curriculum levels and little use is made of the data to identify trends or set measurable targets. The newly appointed assessment coordinator has begun the process of analysing assessment information throughout the school and is looking to introduce an electronic database (Assessment Manager) to improve the collection and analysis of data.

38. Alongside these more formal assessments a number of planned teacher assessments are identified throughout the year. For example, twice a year a piece of unaided writing is collected from each child and compared with National Curriculum level descriptors. Data from this kind of assessment not only gives information about pupils present levels of attainment, but provides an opportunity to set specific personal targets. Regular on-going assessments in mathematics are based upon the year group key objectives outlined in the Numeracy Strategy. Teachers keep appropriate records of pupil progress, while more routine day to day assessments are recorded in the teacher's mark book. However, the way this kind of assessment is collected and used is inconsistent and could be more effectively used to track pupils' progress, reset targets and influence planning. Samples of children's work are collected and matched to National Curriculum levels using national guidance to ensure sound judgement when identifying levels.

39. Pupils' work is regularly and consistently marked and often includes helpful comments and guidance to help them recognise how they can improve. However, it has been broadly decided that teachers will make an objective linked assessment comment at the end of each piece of work and a developmental comment where necessary. This is an improvement since the last inspection when it was said "The marking of pupils' work throughout the school gives little feedback to pupils to enable them to understand their achievement and progress". The school acknowledges and encourages pupils' achievements by awarding merit stickers and by sharing examples of good work with other children in the class.

40. Inappropriate assessment procedures used to help the school identify pupils who need extra support do not give enough information to judge their level of need and decide what further help is needed. The SENCO makes very detailed analysis of pieces of individual pupils' unaided writing when they enter the school and is able to identify needs such as handwriting and phonological awareness problems. However, these are not specific enough to identify what each pupil needs to do to achieve the expected National Curriculum levels of attainment. Reading tests given to some pupils are used for setting targets on a their individual education plan but these are too general and not specific enough for pupils to experience success. For instance, group education plans prepared for large numbers of pupils by a teacher's assistant in consultation with the SENCO do not meet the individual needs of the pupils concerned.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41. The school has good, effective links with parents. Teachers are available for informal consultation after school, and the children's welfare manager regularly meets parents to discuss the progress of children with personal support plans, as well as others with various problems. The school has just begun holding literacy and numeracy courses for parents to help them support their children's work at home. Parents are invited to meet their children's new teachers and hear about the work they will be doing at the start of each new school year. The school nurse holds 'drop in sessions' publicised in the newsletter when parents can consult her informally about their children's health. During the parent consultation evenings, parents of pupils who find learning difficult are invited to discuss the individual education plan, which has been prepared for their child. Some individual education plans are signed by the parent at these meeting and the special needs co-ordinator is available to talk to parents. If they are unable to attend they are invited by letter to meet the special needs co-ordinator at a different time.

42. Information provided for parents is good. The prospectus and governors' report are of satisfactory quality and fulfil statutory requirements. All pupils are given a well-designed 'welcome pack' containing stationery, a prospectus, and guidance on homework and reading on joining the school. Newsletters issued approximately twice a term include dates of school events, information on staff changes, after school clubs and activities run by the parent-teacher association. It would be helpful to parents if they were all dated. Detailed curriculum information is sent out at the start of each term for all year groups, and a noticeboard for parents in the reception area includes a range of information about activities and places of interest. The information technology coordinator has set up a well planned and attractive school website but, as yet, only a few parents visit it. Reports are of satisfactory quality: that for a pupil whose first language was not English was supplied in his home language. Children's achievement in English,

mathematics and science are described as being 'above, within or below national expectations' and are also graded for effort. Other subjects are simply graded for effort. The sections discussing children's personal development show that most teachers know their pupils well. Reports do not include a section where pupils give their own view of their progress and achievement or a space for parental comments to be added.

43. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is satisfactory. A few parents help in class and the library. Others help with supervising swimming or by accompanying visits. The parent-teacher association concentrates on organising a few fundraising events a year, of a nature which experience has shown are highly profitable. There is a school disco each term, which is very well-attended despite an admission charge of £2.50, and the association sells sweets, crisps and drinks to participants. In addition, there is an annual Spring Fair. By these means the association contributes around £5,000 to school funds every year. The parent suggestion box put up by the school last year has not been used, although it has not yet been resited in the new reception area, which would improve its visibility.

44. Parents' contribution to children's learning is satisfactory. Virtually all parents attend parent consultation evenings, and there is a good attendance at the annual 'welcome' evenings. Parents are not involved in setting learning targets on their children's individual education plan and they are not given targets for supporting their child at home. However, very good links have been made with most parents of pupils with behavioural difficulties and many work with the welfare manager to help their child behave appropriately in school and at home. Most homework set gets done. However, the school makes little use of its parent body as a resource such as talking about their life experiences or contributing artefacts to support particular areas of learning. The reading system used allows little or no opportunity for parents to note their views on their children's progress.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

45. With the considerable support of the deputy head and senior teachers, the head has overseen very necessary changes to help improve teaching and learning, deal with a downturn in pupil behaviour and manage the disruption caused by substantial building improvements. Together with an able and hard working staff team, they have created a caring and secure environment where children behave well and have a positive attitude to school. Parents share this view with 87% feeling the school is well led and managed. Overall, the leadership and management of the school are good which is an improvement since the last inspection when several aspects were criticised.

46. Subject leaders manage their subjects well and are committed to improvement. They work with other staff to develop existing schemes and policies, monitor planning and assess standards by collecting work samples. However, most do not yet have the opportunity to observe classroom practice so as to be in a better position to support their colleagues. The introduction of a welfare manager has made a significant improvement to the way pupils' pastoral care is managed. Working directly with pupils and their families and supporting colleagues by suggesting strategies to support pupils with behavioural difficulties, he has been very effective in the improvement of the behaviour and self-esteem of pupils in the school.

47. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is unsatisfactory and does not comply with the national recommendations on the inclusion of all pupils as described in the Department for Education and Employment Circular following the Macpherson Report in 1999. The SEN co-ordinator and teaching assistants are well qualified but their expertise is not utilised effectively because of the way provision for supporting SEN is organised. Systems for identifying pupils needs and setting and reviewing targets are poor and individual education plans are only reviewed twice a year instead of at least once a term as required. A recent audit by the local authority points out many of these issues and makes sound recommendations for improving the situation but as yet they have not been addressed.

48. Governors are very supportive and have a clear long-term view of the school's development. They have a well developed Stourfield committee structure to deal with necessary business

Individual governors help and visit regularly with some making planned visits to see the school in action by spending time in classrooms. The special educational needs governor ensures that her colleagues on the governing body have full knowledge of the special needs provision in the school. The governing body is given information about what is happening in the school and current developments. However, as yet they have not been in a position to use this information to act as enough of a 'critical friend' by, for instance, questioning why pupils stay on the special needs register or the high number of exclusions last year.

49. Strategic planning was an issue at the time of the last inspection and the school has improved all aspects a great deal so that it now forms a useful mechanism for establishing priorities and setting targets for improvement. For instance, Key Issue 1 includes the improvement of standards in writing as identified by an analysis of national test results. Lead responsibilities, success criteria, time scales and actions are all planned with monitoring and evaluation built in and resource requirements noted. However, this is limited by a lack of detailed information from assessment and specific monitoring on which to base judgements and measure success and value for money in terms of standards and improvements in provision. Such information would have identified the fact that pupils receiving support for special needs were not making the sort of progress the investment should have resulted in.

50. The strategic use of resources, including funding, is satisfactory. Funds are prudently managed and spending decisions properly reflect the priorities the school has identified through the whole school self review process. The governing body finance committee approves a skeleton three-year plan as well as a detailed annual plan and monitors the progress of the school improvement plan and the emerging financial position regularly. Appropriate levels of responsibilities for spending are delegated to staff with management responsibilities. The deputy head oversees the supplies and services budget and the Standards Fund, while subject co-ordinators manage their subject budgets. Financial planning has improved since the last Ofsted report, which stated "Priorities and targets for improvement are not clearly supported by action plans." However, the evaluation of the impact which developments are having on standards or provision is less well developed. It should be noted that although balances carried forward look relatively high, this is misleading as they include funds wisely held back to cope with the costs of equipping the new accommodation and funding the reorganisation to take over responsibility for year three from the first school.

51. Systems of financial control are well-developed and respective roles and responsibilities are appropriately defined. Good accounting records are maintained and monitored by the school. The school secretary and the financial officer provide valuable support by managing the day to day running of the school unobtrusively and very effectively. A finance computer package is well used to raise orders and monitor spending. The most recent external audit carried out in June 2001, found the standard of financial administration was very good. The school has subsequently started to put in place the actions recommended in the report.

52. The governors and headteacher actively explore alternative means of funding. For example the school obtained grants of £10,000 to help fund the computer suite, £9000 for 'After School Funding' and are presently making a 'risk management bid' of £7000 to provide fencing to help security. The parents association made available £2000 additional financial resources to part fund the new computer suite. Available financial resources are used effectively. Competitive quotations are sought where appropriate and the local authority scheduler rates contractors are used to achieve 'best value'.

53. Financial resources used to create additional posts outside the classroom to support the smooth running of the school have proved successful in addressing some of the difficulties it faced, such as the high levels of indiscipline, which is now much improved. However a consequence has also been that numbers in teaching groups in most subjects are high. The additional space provided by the new buildings and the changing circumstances now present the opportunity for the school to look again at how it uses its staff and accommodation.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

54. To make the most of all the hard work put into achieving recent improvements, the governors, headteacher and staff of Stourfield Junior School should:

- 1) Seek to increase the percentage of pupils who achieve average levels in writing by:
 - giving all pupils the encouragement, tools and opportunity to complete extended pieces of their own writing each week and
 - using this to:
 - judge and log how well individual pupils' writing is improving
 - see how effective recent teaching has been in a real context
 - determine what needs to be done next to improve pupils' writing and share this with them (Paragraphs 2,3,56,59 & 61)

- 2) Improve the identification, evaluation and support for pupils who find learning and conforming difficult especially in their communication skills by:
 - making better use of information provided by the First school on transfer and building a more constructive relationship with its special needs department.
 - developing more precise ways of identifying need and monitoring progress (see below)
 - setting specific, smaller scale achievable targets and reviewing them regularly
 - involving class teachers, learning support assistants and parents much more in this process and integrating any extra support with the activities other pupils are doing in the classroom. (Paragraphs 1,2,12,15,19,20,40,44 & 47)

- 3) Develop assessment arrangements in the core subjects that are sufficiently rigorous and detailed to make it possible to track the progress of individual pupils, identify priorities before pupils leave school and use this to monitor whole school trends by:
 - working with the First school to develop a common approach to assessment across the year three and four transition between the schools
 - using existing standardised and diagnostic tests to supplement this and establish a school baseline from which to set targets and measure subsequent progress
 - establishing procedures (as in 1 above) for matching work to national levels
 - making use of optional national tests to audit teachers judgements about pupils' achievements
 - using all the above to set targets throughout each pupils' school career, track their progress and identify trends and priorities in years four and five.
 - exploiting existing expertise to make best use of information technology to manage and interpret assessment data collected (Paragraphs 36,37,38, 49,63,72 & 77)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- subject managers are not able to monitor classroom practice (Paragraphs 45, 64 & 78)
- records are not kept of most pupils' personal development (Paragraph 31)
- provision for pupils to appreciate ethnic and cultural diversity is limited (Paragraph 27)
- the tracking of pupils' reading at home and school is not very rigorous (Paragraph 58)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	63
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	23

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	15	35	12			
Percentage	3	23	53	18			

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	Y3– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		312
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		20

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		151

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	17
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	94.6
National comparative data	94.1

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	48	54	102

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	29	30	41
	Girls	38	38	50
	Total	67	68	91

Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	66 (70)	67 (68)	89 (88)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	26	28	37
	Girls	34	37	45
	Total	60	65	82
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	59 (67)	64 (62)	80 (80)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	260
Any other minority ethnic group	52

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	15	1
Other minority ethnic groups		

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: Y3– Y6

Number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.2
Average class size	31.2

Education support staff: Y3– Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	154

Financial information

Financial year	2000
	£
Total income	653998
Total expenditure	620328
Expenditure per pupil	1908
Balance brought forward from previous year	32315
Balance carried forward to next year	55985

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6.7
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	7

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 1 term	0
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	312
Number of questionnaires returned	92

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	44			
My child is making good progress in school.	41	47	2	2	8
Behaviour in the school is good.	18	65	7	1	8
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	52	11	5	1
The teaching is good.	42	46	2		10
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	20	49	19	2	10
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	34	2		3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	41	4		4
The school works closely with parents.	29	54	9	1	8
The school is well led and managed.	42	45	3	2	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	33	57	1		9
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	46	8	2	14

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

ENGLISH

55. Since the last inspection standards in English have been inconsistent. In general the

school has maintained standards at a time when most schools have made significant improvements. The 2001 results show that the standard of reading is better than writing but that higher attainers do well in both. Inspection evidence shows that overall attainment has improved and is now close to average, although standards in writing are still below average.

56. When pupils enter the school their speaking skills are average. Most listen well, although some struggle to maintain concentration throughout the lesson. Reading skills are again average, but pupils' writing is below average. Effective teaching is helping to address these limitations so that pupils achieve well. The quality of teaching is particularly telling with high attainers who find the work challenging and as a result make good progress. Progress of less able pupils in English is not as marked. They are often withdrawn for the whole or part of the literacy hour to receive additional support outside the class doing work, which is often unrelated to the work being covered by the rest of the class. These pupils do not benefit from the rich learning environment seen in 'Literacy Hours' observed during the inspection. Although boys' results in national tests were better than girls, this was not apparent during the inspection.

57. Boys' and girls' attainment in speaking and listening is average and sometimes better. Nearly all pupils listen attentively to the teacher's explanation and are eager to answer questions. Most participate fully in the shared text session and express their opinions well. For example, the pupils in year five discussed how to use appropriate description, action and dialogue to present and develop their characters confidently. Most extend their ideas logically, using a suitable growing vocabulary and many pupils' speech is lively and expressive.

58. Pupils read with improving fluency and accuracy. Eleven-year-olds read with expression and talk about the plot and characters in their books, showing critical awareness of a range of books and authors. They use the school library well to find the information they need but are less sure of how to access information books in a public library. All pupils have opportunity to read text as a whole class and in groups during guided reading sessions. Children select and read 'real books' from the library. They use a well thought out reading record, which focuses their choice of reading material on a range of reading suggested by the Literacy Strategy for that term. However, inspection evidence showed that the record is not used consistently and that tracking of pupils' reading at home and school is not as rigorous as in many schools. High attainers read accurately, fluently and expressively. The enjoyment of literature is well promoted in the school particularly by good story and poetry reading by the teachers. The oldest and the youngest pupils enjoyed working together during paired reading sharing play scripts, an area both years have covered recently in their literacy work, to help foster the enjoyment of reading.

59. Although improving, the standard of writing is mainly below average, indicating satisfactory achievement for the majority of pupils. Pupils are beginning to use grammar and punctuation more consistently and show increasing awareness of grammatical convention. By the age of eleven, pupils have a satisfactory and often good knowledge of grammar. For example, the oldest pupils are able to construct a sentence containing a noun, an adjective, a personifying verb and an adverb, while year five pupils know the difference between similes and metaphors and use synonyms to help improve their description of a character. However, pupils' knowledge and use of appropriate punctuation is a weakness. For example, an analysis of the work of last year's top class showed an inconsistent use of commas to demarcate clauses and that children are not reading through their work to check for errors. None the less, many pupils write sustained stories with a good attention to characterisation and plot. Again the more able children achieve best as illustrated by the high quality work by the year six extension group retelling part of the story of 'Romeo and Juliet.' The school has identified the need for children to have the opportunity to write freely for longer periods of time.

60. Spelling patterns are taught using a variety of sources. The Stourfield spelling journal, now used throughout the school, draws words from the Literacy Strategy as well as spellings taken from children's own mistakes. It allows pupils to work in pairs to check each other's progress. The scheme used in the teaching of handwriting is presently under review. Although handwriting is regularly taught and some examples of really good handwriting were seen, many pupils fail to develop a clear and legible style.

61. English teaching overall is good and, in some cases, very good and pupils are enthusiastic and enjoy their work in the subject. Over two thirds of lessons observed were good and very good. Throughout the school teachers have good subject knowledge and identify clear learning intentions in their planning using the National Literacy Framework. Work is generally well matched to the children's abilities. Pupils work particularly well during the whole class shared text session and are really keen to answer. Reading is well modelled by the teachers with good contributions from pupils. Teachers use rich and wide vocabulary to stimulate pupils' interest in new words and use interesting and varied approaches to writing. However, though providing pupils with sufficient time to complete extended pieces of writing is included in the current school improvement plan, this is not yet happening sufficiently in practice. Consequently, pupils do not have enough opportunity to make use of their developing skills and knowledge or get involved in substantial pieces of writing.

62. The most effective teaching combines good use of questioning to refine knowledge and appropriate expectation for the whole range of pupils, conducted at a brisk pace. For example, in year five questioning was used effectively to find out if pupils have a good picture of the Roald Dahl character Victor Hazell using dialogue, description and action. As a result by the end of the week pupils were much better at developing the character they were writing about in their story. Teachers insist that proper terms for language are used, such as personification, passive and active sentences and alliteration. Teaching assistants, present in all 'Literacy Hour' lessons, provide valuable additional support to individual and groups of children. They understand the need to provide opportunities for pupils to think through their ideas before they begin to write. The end of the literacy sessions are well used to encourage pupils to identify what they have learned and to get them to think about what they need to learn next. The teaching of less able pupils is less effective for the reasons described above.

63. Pupils are assessed using end of key stage and standardised tests for reading and spelling. Recognising the need to improve standards in writing the school has introduced an in-depth assessment of every child's unaided writing. Although some analysis of assessment data is used, often retrospectively, better use could be made of it, particularly in identifying targets and trends. Work is marked regularly and helpful comments are made to allow pupils to improve their work but the marking policy is only in draft form and marking varies from one class to another. Teachers keep appropriate records of pupil progress but the way this kind of on-going assessment is collected and used is inconsistent and could be more effectively used to track pupils' progress, reset targets and influence planning.

64. The management of English is good. The subject coordinator has a clear view of her role and has worked closely with the local authority Literacy Consultant to help identify areas of development and improve standards. At present, she provides support to other teachers and monitors planning, but does not have the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning. The school has a suitable range of fiction and non-fiction books and resources to support the teaching of the Literacy Strategy. Although the main library is rather small it is well stocked and provides a valuable central resource. Book access and usage is managed by an effective information technology (ICT) system, run mainly by a team of parent volunteers. The school has entered, and won, some national competitions, had poetry published in a regional anthology and had guest writers in to work with the children, such as Carnegie Winner, Beverley Naidoo. Some good examples of writing for reports, displayed outside the year four classes, show the kind of links already established with information technology, although the school is looking to further develop ICT in literacy.

MATHEMATICS

65. The results of national tests taken in 2001 showed that eleven-year-olds were doing as well as most boys and girls but less well when compared to similar schools. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are improving and that attainment is a little above average with more pupils expected to achieve higher levels. Pupils throughout the school, including those who find learning difficult, achieve well and are making consistently good progress, some are making very good progress. The introduction of teaching in ability groups, the successful implementation of

the national numeracy strategy and the hard work of teachers have had a very positive impact on standards. This is a significant improvement on the last inspection when a weakness in pupil's knowledge and understanding of basic number work was identified. This has been well addressed through a greater emphasis on mental maths, direct whole class teaching for part of a lesson, good use of teacher expertise and regular analysis of 'gaps in children's learning'

66. All year groups are well taught in ability sets and this successfully ensures that work is suitably matched and planned to meet the needs of pupils at different stages. Lessons start with brisk, challenging mental warm up sessions where children show a very good ability to recall multiplication and division facts, double and half numbers and play games such as 'countdown'. Many of these sessions are timed and pupils strive hard to improve on previous times and scores. The main part of lessons involves pupils in lots of good practical activities to teach and reinforce ideas and skills being taught. In year four, higher attaining pupils make very good progress in their learning of processes that will enable them to make rapid calculations. They show a very good ability to work out different strategies for solving problems and speedily recall number facts to help them. Year four pupils in the group that have the most difficulty with mathematical understanding, work on the idea of doubling numbers and with clear teaching and the patient support of the teacher and two assistants, they are making good progress.

67. Pupils in year five learn to identify the properties of regular and irregular shapes. They show a very good knowledge of the mathematical language associated with shape, confidently and correctly talking about vertices, faces, angles and identifying hexagonal prisms, regular and irregular octahedrons and polygons. They successfully learn about perimeters and how to measure the perimeter of regular and irregular shapes making accurate estimates and predictions about measurement. Many are beginning to understand that the properties of a shape dictate the way in which the problem has to be tackled. Other pupils in this year group, whose learning is slower, work on recognising the properties of different triangles. They have a very good grasp of the language related to this, confidently using vocabulary such as acute, obtuse and right angle. However, they experience some difficulty in recognising and naming isosceles, equilateral and right angled triangles and this is sometimes because, in the examples given, there is too little obvious difference.

68. Ten and eleven year olds in year six consistently make good and often very good progress working on coordinates. Higher attaining pupils are very well challenged by the idea of plotting and reading coordinates in four quadrants using negative and positive numbers while pupils in the other groups make good progress working on different levels related to this concept. They all understand how this idea can be applied to reading maps and plotting position and those pupils working at the first level of this idea enjoy using their knowledge to find buried treasure and other features on a desert island.

69. Mathematics teaching is almost always good with nearly half of the teaching very good. Teachers work hard to make lessons exciting, challenging and interesting. Planning is thorough and systematic with learning outcomes clearly identified and always shared with the pupils at the beginning of lessons. Mental maths "warm ups" are brisk, pacy and fun. Teachers have good subject knowledge and they give clear explanations to pupils. They encourage pupils to think of different strategies to enable them to work out problems. Pupils are well managed and clearly know what is expected of them. Teachers know their pupils well and activities and questions are generally well matched to the needs of all individuals. Just occasionally some children are set a task which they find too difficult. However, day to day assessment is generally well used and teachers will readily modify planning if ideas have not been learned. Resources are well prepared and all classrooms have good displays where maths language related to the current topic, tables, mathematical charts and lists help children.

70. Boys and girls have very good attitudes to their work. They respond particularly well to mental maths sessions, practical activities and to the regular opportunities provided for them to apply their mathematical skills and knowledge in games and other relevant situations. They are well motivated, work hard and are very well behaved in lessons. Pupils work well together and share equipment without fuss. They help one another when appropriate and try hard to please their

teachers. A number say that mathematics is their favourite subject. The standard of presentation of pupils' work is good with some examples of very neat, careful work .

71. The curriculum is well planned and firmly based on the National Numeracy Strategy. This provides good continuity for pupils as they move through the school. The decision to put children in ability groups has proved to be very successful in raising standards and meeting the needs of all children. There are many good examples of maths being used in other curriculum areas such as map reading in geography, working with shape and pattern in art and using language and writing skills to explain mathematical processes such as 'Chunking' (Long division) and the grid method associated with long multiplication.

72. Assessment arrangements are improving and the recent decision to assess pupils each term against four or five targets in maths is proving useful in identifying individual strengths and weaknesses and whole group trends. Some pupils have individual targets for improving their own performance, while others have whole group targets to work towards. Work is regularly marked and the best marking includes constructive comment to help pupils recognise how they can improve. Pupils undertake a commercial test each half term that is used to confirm that they are in the most suitable group for their ability. However there are no formal procedures for levelling pupils work against National Curriculum targets and for making predictions about what children might achieve in their national tests (SATs).

73. Mathematics is strongly led by a well qualified, enthusiastic subject leader. Her interest and expertise is having a very positive impact on the development of the subject. She is keen to see more information technology used in the teaching of maths and wants to develop assessment procedures. At the moment she is not allocated any time to monitor the teaching and learning throughout the school although this is done by external advisers and the head teacher. She would welcome time to be involved in this herself. Very good use is made of the subject expertise of the deputy head who, because he does not have a class of his own, is timetabled to teach all of the maths groups in turn. This not only gives him a clear idea of standards in the subject but also enables pupils to benefit from his enthusiasm, experience and expertise. Pupils regularly take work home to do, such as learning tables or practising a new process. Parents are interested in the teaching of maths and in response to parents' questions on how to teach particular skills, the school is holding a series of numeracy meetings.

SCIENCE

74. Standards of pupils' work in science at the end of year six are currently similar to most schools and have been maintained since the last inspection. Evidence shows that test results rose significantly five years ago and have been maintained since. The school has put in place a good revision programme involving timed tasks during the spring and summer term prior to the standardised tests. This enables its oldest pupils to do even better in national tests than current standards might suggest. The number of pupils attaining the higher level five has improved significantly during the last two years.

75. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection and, with most teaching good and none unsatisfactory, it is now good. Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge and ensure that basic skills are taught appropriately. Pupils in year four know how to construct a simple circuit. They use their knowledge and skills effectively to investigate how to make the bulb shine brighter and dimmer. Most pupils are able to record their work using diagrams and drawings. A good variety of teaching methods is used well and this makes a positive impact on pupils' learning. In year five pupils predict whether an instrument has a low or high pitch and then investigate the instruments to find out whether their predictions are correct. By the end of the session most pupils know that the length of the air column determines the pitch of an instrument. Teachers question skilfully and use plenary sessions effectively to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding. One pupil carefully explained to the rest of the class his suggestion that the larger of the two instruments will have the lowest pitch because it vibrates the most air. However, pupils withdrawn for additional literacy support during science lessons miss out on good teaching and have difficulty catching up because in some year groups science is blocked to give pupils

intensive science teaching over one or two weeks.

76. Tasks are suitably differentiated to meet the needs of the different ability groups and teachers often focus on the lower attaining groups when giving additional support. This enables those pupils who find learning difficult to be fully involved in lessons. Pupils in year six describe the reaction of a range of materials and magnets to one another using the correct scientific vocabulary. Most know that forces have different strengths. They understand the need to carry out a fair test. They use scientific language effectively to describe reactions. For example pupils use the terms 'attract' and 'repel' when testing the magnetic reactions. Higher attaining pupils predict, record their results using the correct vocabulary and in diagrammatic form. Average and lower attaining pupils predict and use a range of prompts to help them use the correct vocabulary when writing down results.

77. A nationally recommended scheme of work supported by a planning document prepared by teachers in the local authority is used effectively to ensure that teachers plan consistently and skills are covered progressively. This has addressed an issue in the previous report where there was insufficient guidance on how pupils were to acquire and develop appropriate scientific skills. Two out of three year groups plan some of the science topics in blocks of several lessons during the week. This enables pupils to use and develop scientific skills well and they are enthusiastic about this method of working. Teachers are enthusiastic and share their enthusiasm for science with the pupils and as a result pupils learn well. Each scientific topic includes particular references to assessment activities, the results of which are recorded by teachers on class record sheets. Thereby teachers are able to assure themselves that the pupils have achieved the expected level, better than or below. Although the statements are taken from the National Curriculum document there is no reference to the actual levels that the pupils have achieved. Marking is inconsistent. Where there is good practice the teacher suggests ways in which the pupil can improve by extending or explaining the investigations more fully and good use is made of praise. Pupils respond favourably to this and increase their interest and concentration on the subject.

78. The management of science is good and the coordinator has a detailed action plan on how the subject can be improved. She monitors planning effectively, supports colleagues in their year group planning and has appropriately highlighted the need to develop the use of information technology in science. Samples of pupils' work are monitored and test results are analysed to support the continual raising of standards in science. The headteacher monitors teaching generally but the coordinator does not have the opportunity to monitor classroom practice in the subject. Resources are good and well organised.

ART, DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

79. No design and technology lessons and only three year five art lessons were observed during the inspection. This is because years four and six plan their time for the foundation subjects in blocks of one and a half weeks, while year five focus on either art or design technology for half a term. From the three lessons observed, teachers' planning, photographs, displays and examples of pupils' past work, standards are generally appropriate in both subjects for the ages of pupils involved with strengths where teachers have particular expertise.

80. In the art lessons seen, year five pupils achieved well when using their observation skills and pencil shading techniques to draw their shoes. They pay good attention to detail, carefully observing shape, pattern and style, understand the principles of light and shade and know how to achieve these effects with their pencils. In year four, good examples of pupils' collage work were inspired by the designs of Matisse, while in year six pupils have created very effective designs with string prints inspired by studying the textile and wall paper patterns of William Morris. A portfolio of photographs of pupils' work in art collected throughout the year, indicates that children have the opportunity to use a wide range of media and learn a variety of skills and techniques. Some examples of work are of a high quality particularly with pastels and paint.

81. Attractive displays in shared spaces in the school brighten up the environment and celebrate pupils' achievement in art. A number of these displays are of work inspired by famous

artists, such as Lowry, Matisse, Turner, Braque, Picasso and Andy Warhole. Pupils know about these artists and can express their response to style, colour and technique, for example one pupil said of Turner's work, 'He likes to paint boats and buildings in soft, misty colours which I like'. Other inspiration for pupils' artwork is found in literature such as the Halloween poems inspired by the poem 'Instructions for the last day in October' by Wes Magee and the witches chant from Macbeth. Year five pupils have illustrated their poetry with imaginative, effective colour wash and silhouette pictures.

82. In design and technology, photographs and retained work show that pupils are covering all aspects of the National Curriculum programme of study for design and technology except for food technology which has limited coverage because of the lack of facilities. Year six design and make fairground equipment using kits and recyclable materials. Photographs of the well finished models show that they can use a range of joining, folding and constructing techniques. Year four pupils in conjunction with their work in English use tabs, sliders and other paper joining and folding skills to make pop up pictures to illustrate their story books. Boys and girls in year five also link their work in literature to design and technology when they write instructions before they make the caravan from the story 'Danny the Champion of the World'

83. Pupils say they enjoy their work in these subjects and in the art lessons seen, they worked diligently on their drawings, tried hard to improve their pictures and were proud of their efforts. No overall judgement can be made on the quality of teaching in design and technology but in the art lessons seen it was consistently good. The lessons were well planned and the teaching of techniques explicit and well demonstrated. Teachers valued all efforts and celebrated difference in style and interpretation. The subject coordinators are both enthusiastic about their subjects and proud of what the pupils achieve in art and design and technology.

GEOGRAPHY

84. Standards in geography are as expected of pupils by the end of year six. Most pupils make good progress in their learning. However those pupils withdrawn from geography lessons for handwriting practice and other literacy support do not make as good progress as their peers because they miss out on good teaching.

85. Pupils in year four show their knowledge, skills and understanding in studies at a local scale by looking at simple plans and develop their mapping skills by looking at local land use maps. They use their knowledge of the local area when investigating the effects of flooding on Iford Bridge Caravan Park. In year five, pupils use their knowledge of the coastal area following a visit to Hengitsbury Head to find information from an Ordnance Survey map. Good cross-curricular links with literacy are exploited as pupils write detailed descriptions of their visit during their literacy lessons. Evidence from samples of pupils' work indicates that they have a satisfactory understanding of the water cycle and sources of rivers.

86. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and introduce key geographical vocabulary effectively. Lessons are well planned and tasks suitably planned to meet the needs of the different ability groups. Resources are well organised to support learning. For example, during lessons observed in year five, each pupil had the appropriate section of an Ordnance Survey map available for them to use. Teachers question well to ensure understanding and provide the pupils with good explanations of unfamiliar geographical vocabulary such as 'groynes'. This ensures pupils make good progress in their learning. Pupils are interested and use their own experiences well to suggest explanations as to why towns grow in certain areas and not in others.

87. Management of geography is satisfactory. The subject has been without a coordinator for a while but the new coordinator has clear ideas of the strengths and areas to develop. She is aware of the need to plan for the year three curriculum when the junior school takes over this year group soon. The development of the use of information technology in geography is also a priority. The coordinator monitors samples of pupils' work and displays but does not yet have the opportunity to monitor the quality of geography teaching. Visits to the local area and the annual

residential visit for pupils in year six make a good contribution to the curriculum.

HISTORY

88. Standards in history are as expected of pupils by the end of year six and have been maintained since the last inspection. Most pupils make good progress in their learning because of good teaching and the school's policy to have many opportunities for pupils to have 'hands on' experiences in history. These include a 'Victorian School Day', observed during the inspection, visits to an Ancient Technology centre, Tudor houses, and museums. They have also had demonstrations of a Roman Army and enjoyed historical drama sessions with a local dramatist.

89. By the end of year six, pupils understand the various sources available for them to use for historical enquiry and use them effectively to find out about the past. Pupils looked at Victorian photographs of women and children queuing for food and drink. They were able to use the photographs well to discuss life in those times and to compare them with life for themselves today. Pupils and teachers dressed as Victorians to experience a morning in a Victorian school really enjoyed taking part in this activity, which had a positive impact on learning. Younger pupils in year five gain a sense of time when studying the Tudor period. They use a timeline to understand the place and significance of the Tudors in the history of Britain and to realise that the past can be divided into different periods of time. In year four, as part of a Topic about life in Roman Britain, pupils took part in a day when actors gave them the experiences of what it would have been like as a member of the Roman Army. Pupils talked enthusiastically about their experiences and made good progress in their understanding of the main events and changes during this period of history.

90. The quality of teaching and learning is good and has improved since the last inspection. Termly and weekly planning is good and lessons are delivered at a good pace. Very good use of resources stimulates pupils' imagination well and as a result they concentrate and are enthusiastic about the subject. Good question and answer sessions are used effectively to find out what pupils know and understand. These enable teachers to move the pupils on to their next stage of learning. Assessment procedures have been identified by the co-ordinator as an area for development and this will enable teachers to have a clearer understanding of what individual pupils know and can do.

91. Management of the subject is good and the coordinator gives effective support to her colleagues. She organises a wide variety of visits and visitors to the school to make the subject more interesting for the pupils and has identified the need to develop the use of information technology in history. Medium-term planning and samples of pupils' work are monitored effectively to ensure continuity and progression of skills but there are no opportunities for her to check on the quality of teaching of history. Links have been made with the first school to discuss topics covered by each year group in order to ensure no topics are repeated. Good resources are used effectively to enhance pupils' learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

92. Provision and standards in information and communications technology (ICT) were an issue at the last inspection and the school is to be congratulated on the great improvement made in this area. With the computer suite finally established, two very enthusiastic and knowledgeable coordinators and several new staff bringing their own expertise to the subject, the pace of improvement has been very impressive. It is also obvious that the school recognises that this is a fast developing area and with ICT featuring heavily in the school improvement plan and substantial investments still being made, this pace is set to continue. A good deal of evidence to illustrate how well things are going is displayed around the school. This shows that pupils experience the full range of activities now expected of pupils of this age.

93. By adopting national guidelines and applying these from the onset, staff have ensured that pupils are given a challenging diet of ICT related activities building up year on year. This has necessitated the introduction of an induction course in year four to bring these pupils up to speed.

A very good example of this involved pupils learning about the way databases are put together and used. Here, the teacher made excellent use of the school's digital projector to illustrate a range of databases pupils might have come across ending up with the phone book in mobile phones which intrigued the class. Making very good use of a commercial product, 'Robbery at Midnight', pupils were introduced to the idea of 'cards' and 'fields' while learning how important it is to sort out exactly what you want to find out before you 'ask' the database. The confident delivery and enthusiasm of the teacher was matched only by the confidence, positive response and engagement of the pupils.

94. Pupils in year five showed their developing skills and understanding when working on designing a garden for a house of their choosing using a graphical modelling programme. Once again the digital projector came into its own allowing the teacher to work through the process of accessing and using the software with the whole class before setting them off on their designing. The assurance of each pair of pupils in making use of all they have learned about using the computer was again very impressive. They found, selected and manipulated images very confidently and were very capable of making everything to scale which was a core learning objective of the lesson. Several were delighted to show how they could save time by superimposing the house on the grass so that they did not have to fit the grass around the building. In all this, the teacher was able to adopt the mode of coach or consultant and 'nudge' pupils into trying ever more complex solutions.

95. Year six pupils did not have the benefit of this high quality provision until they were well into year five but they still show how much progress they have made. Again the digital projector made it possible for the teacher to 'walk' pupils through the quite complicated procedures needed to make an object move around the screen from logging on to saving to pupils' own file. Making very good use of question and answer and responding positively to pupils 'What if...?' and 'Can we...?' ideas, the teacher made all the necessary teaching points and gave a few tips to help. Several had an animated plane or teddy in a few minutes and the teacher supported those who needed help. By the end of the lesson, excited and engrossed pupils had several objects moving around very complicated pathways all at the same time.

96. Although pupils were observed using computers to word process their writing and good use was made of the digital projector around the school, staff acknowledge that the possibilities of making even more use of ICT in other subjects is a fertile area for development. The steady acquisition of extra equipment such as interactive whiteboards, digital cameras and the digital microscope will greatly help in this.

MUSIC

97. With its new and well used music room, enviable supply of tuned and untuned instruments and the support of a very user-friendly scheme of work specially compiled by the music coordinator for non-specialists, provision for music is good and the best it has ever been.

98. The scheme covers all aspects of work in music and very usefully provides references to appropriate activities in commercial schemes. Unusually, a much-enjoyed weekly whole school singing session involving both pupils and staff supplements the singing element. In the one observed, the coordinator 'warmed up' his large choir very successfully by getting them to sing 'Pizza Hut' in a range of tempos using different voices such as 'posh' and 'music hall'. Renditions of 'When I'm sixty-four' and 'Shine Jesus Shine' followed with every child and adult totally caught up in the pleasure of confident music making. The school song that followed nearly raised the roof and led on to the second, very impressive go at a new song, 'Do you feel the mountains tremble'. This would have been a very good lesson with one class but with ten it was outstanding.

99. The quality of provision and the progression through the school was amply shown by lessons observed in the three year groups. In year four, the teacher confidently used body sounds including a sneeze as a means of following a score and maintaining the tempo even at high speeds. Pupils were very focussed and attentive which helped them greatly when it came to their turn. He then made good use of questioning to help pupils realise that so far they had been using unpitched instruments and were now going to move onto using glockenspiels to use the

pentatonic scale. Pupils were intrigued and soon appreciated that using the five notes, any tune sounded fine. In ten minutes each pair of children decided on, practised and were able to perform their own composition using their own score.

100. Year five pupils learned what an ostinato is and working together very well in pairs produced two, three or four pairs of notes which they wrote down and then practised repeating. While this happened the music room was a hubbub of animated conversation but the teacher was able to get instant attention when she needed it. Clever use of words made up from the notes in the key of C made it possible for pupils to play simple melodies such as FACE to go with the ostinato. Year six pupils in an introductory lesson on duration and tempo had a great deal of fun and worked very hard fitting different beats to the bar to a steady metronome beat. They enthusiastically volunteer to clap to set rhythms and then make up their own which they are more than happy to demonstrate. The confidence of the class grew visibly and by the end of the session pupils were able to clap four complex patterns at the same time. They could hardly wait for next week when they will be doing a similar exercise using percussion.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

101. Standards in physical education (PE) are good. Pupils achieve well as a result of very good teaching. This is an improvement from the last inspection when attainment in physical education was said to be "in line with national expectations and pupils make sound progress." There is no difference in standards between boys and girls.

102. The oldest pupils use broad based balances linked by turns, twists and rolls to produce good and sometimes very good sequences. Pupils are fully aware of the importance of having a clear starting and finishing position and many display excellent awareness of poise and shape in their movements. The range of movements in the sequences often included well-performed handstands, bridges, backward walkovers and cartwheels. In a year five lesson pupils used apparatus energetically and imaginatively exploring a variety of balances, including weight on hands, rolls and jumps to create flowing sequences. Year four pupils pass and catch a rugby ball with increasing certainty showing appreciation of what makes a good pass. Pupils make very good progress in PE. Nearly all participate fully, including those pupils with special educational needs who are well supported by teaching assistants. They work hard and at a very good pace and obviously enjoy their PE lessons. For example, year four pupils showed great pleasure in a rugby lesson where pupils with balls tried to 'tag' the rest in a limited space. Boys and girls enter the hall in good order and quickly become engaged in purposeful activities. They respond vigorously and enthusiastically to warm-up exercises, such as the Jumping Bean activity use by the year six classes. The standard of behaviour is almost always high. Pupils co-operate well in lessons and acknowledge the need to take turns and share fairly.

103. Overall the teaching of PE is very good. This is an improvement from the last inspection when teaching was said to be 'sound'. Lessons have a high level of challenge, which enable pupils to consolidate and extend their previous ideas and experience. Pupils are encouraged to improve and refine skills at a brisk pace and with high expectations of their performance. A significant feature of most lessons is the very good use of demonstration to share pupils' work and to illustrate where the work is good or, indeed, needs improving. In this way pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own and other pupils' performance. Teachers use language specific to physical education when talking about the pupils' work. Where the teaching is at its best, the lesson is well structured and has a good balance between direct teaching and opportunities for pupils to practise and explore movements, demonstration is used effectively and the lesson moves along at a very brisk pace.

104. The school provides an excellent range of extra curricular activities including gymnastics, athletics, football, netball, cricket, rounders, and unihoc and the school teams participate fully in local tournaments and competitions. Provision for swimming is enhanced by an on-site pool and Amateur Swimming Association trained instructors. All children receive tuition for two half terms each year and non-swimmers get additional weekly lessons until they are competent swimmers. The newly appointed co-ordinator is beginning to identify priorities for development in the subject,

such as to improve the storage of 'consumable' resources. Good accommodation for PE makes it possible for the school to fully implement the scheme of work. However, the acoustics in the hall are poor and the storage area for the mats and other moveable apparatus is difficult to access. The newly acquired good quality fixed PE apparatus in the hall enhances learning opportunities in gymnastics.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

105. The way the curriculum is organised meant that only one religious education (RE) lesson was available for inspectors to observe during the inspection week. However, teachers planning and pupils' previous work indicate that the pupils experience the full range of the locally agreed syllabus with some rigour. The RE coordinator played a full part in working with the local authority to develop the recently introduced scheme and has also worked extremely hard to provide his colleagues with detailed key activities and references in commercial schemes to support them in their planning. Despite the relative lack of activity during the inspection, this has meant that RE has seen a surge of interest and activity over the year.

106. A good indicator of this is the quality and amount of work completed by the present year six when they were in year five. This ranges from the Bible as a special book to relating Pentecost and the reincarnation to similar references in the Hindu special book. Pupils also looked at the ceremonies of baptism as joining God's family and studied the six questions associated with confirmation. They learned how Hindu worship involves all the senses and that the Holy Spirit is often represented by the dove as in the flood story. All in all, this constituted a very solid body of learning about and from religion and, in discussion, year six pupils show that they remember a great deal of what they learned.

107. This term the same group have gone on to study the many churches that make up the Christian church today. In the one lesson observed, the teacher led an interesting and very relevant discussion leading to the concept of commitment as faith in action. Pupils played their part in deciding that organisations such as Help the Aged and Children in Need all help in some way and that the people involved show commitment. This formed a good preparation for looking at the life of Mother Theresa which was planned for the following week.