

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ST STEPHEN'S (TONBRIDGE) PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

Tonbridge

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118578

Headteacher: Mrs Pam Gow

Reporting inspector: David Tytler  
8990

Dates of inspection: 5 – 8 November 2001

Inspection number: 600263

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Community
School category:	Infant and Junior School
Age range of pupils:	5 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Brionne Gardens
Postcode:	TN9 2HH
Telephone number:	01732 354143
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Elizabeth Weston
Date of previous inspection:	September 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
8990	David Tytler	<i>Registered inspector</i>		What sort of school is it ? What should the school do to improve further? How well are pupils taught ? How well is the school led and managed?
1311	Barry Wood	<i>Lay inspector</i>		Pupils' attitudes and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
20063	Gerry Slamon	<i>Team inspector</i>	Foundation Stage; English; Information and communication technology; Design technology.	
20457	Brian Fletcher	<i>Team inspector</i>	Special educational needs; Mathematics; Music; Physical education; Religious education.	How good are the learning opportunities for pupils?
27736	Jeremy Collins	<i>Team inspector</i>	Equal Opportunities; Science; Art; Geography; History.	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Stephen's (Tonbridge) Primary School is a community school serving families in the immediate vicinity, most of whom live in housing association accommodation. The number of pupils has risen over the last five years and at the time of the inspection there were 283 pupils aged four to eleven. There are more boys than girls, with a significant imbalance in Year 1. A second Reception Class will be opened in January when the number on roll could rise to the school's maximum 315 pupils. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is in line with the national average. There are few pupils from minority ethnic groups and none who have English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs, including statements, is well above the national average. The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is close to the national average. Six pupils have been identified as being particularly talented in mathematics. Fifteen pupils, many of whom needed extra support, joined the school other than at the normal time, and 20 pupils left. The school is facing staffing difficulties. At the time of the inspection, one class was being taught by two supply teachers on a one-term job-share contract, and another by an unqualified teacher well supported by the very experienced deputy head. The attainment of pupils on entry into the school is well below that expected nationally for children of their age, with particular weaknesses in literacy, numeracy and social skills.

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

St Stephen's provides a good education for pupils of all abilities. It is well led and managed by the headteacher, who is given good support by the deputy head, staff and governors. Standards have risen in English, mathematics and science, but improvement has been inconsistent and they remain below national expectations. The good teaching in the school enables all pupils to make good progress and achieve well. The school provides a high level of care for its pupils, and their personal development is good. When account is taken of all these factors, the school provides good value for money.

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

- The school is well led and managed, with the whole school community focused on raising standards.
- All adults in the school provide a high level of care for all the pupils, enabling them to take advantage of all the available learning opportunities.
- Teaching is consistently good in the Reception Class and for pupils in Years 1, 2, 5 and 6. As a result, children make good progress in lessons.
- Children get a good start to their education in the Reception Class.
- The spiritual, social and moral development of pupils is good.
- Good arrangements are made for pupils with special educational needs, and they make good progress in line with the targets in their individual education plans.

## WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- Standards throughout the school, but particularly in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT).

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in September 1997. Whilst further improvement is required in standards, particularly in English, mathematics and ICT, the school has successfully addressed all the key issues for action. The Foundation Stage is well managed and the spiritual development of pupils is good. There has been a significant improvement in the quality of teaching, which is reflected in the good progress pupils make. The school has identified its gifted and talented pupils and makes special arrangements for them. Arrangements for gathering information on what pupils know and can do are now good, and the information is used well to guide future planning for individuals and groups of pupils. Improvements to the accommodation include a library and ICT suite, which are beginning to have an impact on standards.

## STANDARDS

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

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

Key	
<i>well above average</i>	<i>A</i>
<i>above average</i>	<i>B</i>
<i>average</i>	<i>C</i>
<i>below average</i>	<i>D</i>
<i>well below average</i>	<i>E</i>

The proportion of 11 year olds attaining the expected levels in the national tests in English, mathematics and science in 2001 was below the national average for children of their age. Results in mathematics were slightly lower than last year but improved in science. The year group included a significant number of pupils with special educational needs or who had joined the school other than at the usual time, and this had an adverse impact on standards. The school met its target for the proportion gaining the expected Level 4 or above in English. There was a significant shortfall in the proportion meeting the target for mathematics. Standards in all three subjects were depressed by the few pupils reaching the higher Level 5. Boys significantly outperformed girls in mathematics and science. In recent years, standards in English have been variable. Inspection evidence shows that standards in the current Year 6 are similar to this year's test results in English and mathematics but are close to national expectations in science. Despite the dip in mathematics this year, there has been a steady rise since 1998. Test results in science have risen in line with the national improvements but remain below the national expectations.

Results in this year's national reading tests for seven year olds were in line with national expectations. They were well below in writing and below in mathematics. There was a significant shortfall in the proportion meeting the target for mathematics. Standards in



English and mathematics were depressed by the few pupils reaching the higher Level 3. Evidence gathered during the inspection shows that standards in the current Year 2 match this year's test results. Whilst standards in all aspects of English have risen over time, they have been variable. Results have been erratic in mathematics.

Standards in ICT are below national expectations throughout the school. Standards in all other National Curriculum subjects are in line with national expectations, and 11 year olds achieved high standards in geography. Standards in religious education meet the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Most pupils are enthusiastic and responsive learners.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The behaviour of most pupils in most lessons and around the school is at least satisfactory and sometimes good, enabling them to make good progress. The behaviour of a few boys in some classes and in the playground is unsatisfactory and impedes the learning of others.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships between adults and pupils are good and most pupils can sustain good relationships with each other.
Attendance	Satisfactory and improving. A minority of pupils, however, are regularly late arriving to school.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Examples of good teaching were seen in all year groups. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. The quality of teaching enables all pupils, many of whom enter the school with low attainment, to make at least satisfactory, and often good, progress. All the lessons seen in reception were either good or very good, giving children a good start to their education. The majority of lessons seen in Years 1 and 2 were either good or very good. As a result, pupils of all abilities make good, and often very good, gains in their learning. Teaching and learning is good overall in Years 3 to 6. There were many examples of good and very good teaching. Two lessons were outstanding. The high quality lessons were characterised by high expectations of what pupils can achieve, and work that was carefully matched to what pupils already know and can do. In lessons that were otherwise judged to be satisfactory, there were certain shortcomings. Teachers either did not have high enough expectations of what children could achieve, or they spent too much time managing behaviour or in slow direct teaching rather than let pupils get on with activities. As a result, pupils became disengaged and their progress was not as fast as it could have been. The teaching of English and mathematics, together with the teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, is good, enabling pupils to make good progress. Lapses of behaviour in some lessons resulted in some pupils making slower progress.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	There is an appropriate focus on English and mathematics and the curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils' experience is widened through positive links with the community.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils make particularly good gains in their learning when given individual support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Pupils' spiritual, social and moral development is good; their cultural development satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	High quality care enables pupils to make good progress in their academic and social development. Arrangements for gathering information on what pupils know and can do are good, and used well to inform planning for pupils' needs.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	The school works hard to involve parents in the education of their children and most give it their full support. A significant minority, however, are not yet fully involved in the work of the school.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The strong and determined leadership of the headteacher is well supported by the experienced deputy, senior management team and subject leaders.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and use their knowledge to inform strategic planning. All statutory requirements are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Regular monitoring of teaching and learning in English, mathematics and science has led to a significant improvement in teaching. Governors and staff regularly review the progress towards meeting targets set out in the school improvement plan and make necessary adjustments.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of all available resources, including the skilled learning support assistants, who make a strong contribution to learning. It applies the principles of best value in all aspects of its work.

The school is suitably staffed but is finding it difficult to appoint full-time permanent teachers. This has not so far had an adverse affect on standards. The accommodation has been substantially improved. Resources are adequate to teach all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• Their children are expected to work hard and do well.</li> <li>• Their children are making good progress.</li> <li>• The school is helping their children become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• The good teaching.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Behaviour.</li> <li>• Information on how well their children are doing.</li> <li>• The partnership with parents.</li> <li>• The range of out-of-school activities.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with the positive views of the majority of parents. They also concluded that:

- whilst a vocal minority of parents have a poor perception of pupils' behaviour in the school, the behaviour of most pupils in and outside classrooms is at least satisfactory and often good. The unsatisfactory behaviour of a few boys, however, is a cause for concern.
- the information provided by the school is satisfactory but it is not always easily understood by all parents;
- most parents respond well to the school's efforts to establish a good working relationship, but a significant minority are not yet fully engaged in the life of the school.
- the range of out-of-school activities is satisfactory but there are limited opportunities for pupils aged seven and eight.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

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

1. Many children enter the Reception Class with well below average standards in communication skills and mathematics and have little knowledge of the world outside their own home. The good teaching the children receive results in good learning, and they make good progress. Children's attainment is, however, still below national expectations in language and literacy and in their mathematical development by the time they transfer to Year 1.
2. Good teaching continues throughout the main school and pupils of all abilities achieve well. Attainment, however, remains well below national expectations. In the Year 2001 tests for seven-year-olds, results in writing were well below the national average and below the average in mathematics. Results in reading matched national expectations. The overall results in English and mathematics were depressed by the fact that few pupils reached the higher Level 3.
3. In the national tests for 11-year-olds, results in English, mathematics and science were below the national average for children of their age. Three particular factors led to these results: the low attainment of children when they entered the school; the fact that the year group included a significant number of pupils with special educational needs; and the number of pupils who had joined the school other than at the usual time. The overall results in English and mathematics were depressed by the fact that few pupils reached the higher Level 5. Boys significantly outperformed girls in mathematics and science.
4. Evidence gathered during the Inspection shows that in English the attainment of pupils currently in Year 2 is below national expectations in reading and well below in writing. In the current Year 6, attainment matches the national expectations in reading, but is below in writing. Whilst many pupils enter the school with limited vocabulary, they achieve the national expectations by the time they are 11.
5. The National Literacy Strategy is used well and pupils throughout the school learn to listen to their teachers and to follow instructions. They make good progress, and by the age of 11 are more confident in speaking formally, answering questions and explaining their ideas to the class. In reading, pupils make good progress through a well-organised reading scheme. By the age of seven, most pupils can read aloud confidently and understand what they have read. Most pupils in Years 3 to 6 enjoy reading regularly at home and at school and make good progress. By the time they leave Year 6, most pupils read for a range of purposes and know how to use information books.
6. The school has made improvement of handwriting a priority, and as a result many pupils in Years 1 and 2 already join their letters. They do, however, find it difficult to write down their ideas in simple words and phrases. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 learn to write for an increasingly wide range of purposes and audiences. By the age of 11, pupils' writing is often fluent, thoughtful and lively.

7. In the Year 2001 national tests for seven year olds in mathematics all but three pupils attained the national average of Level 2, which was a significant improvement upon the previous year. Relatively few pupils attained the higher grades and therefore the results, overall, are marginally below the national average and well below the average for similar schools. Inspection evidence shows that the attainment of pupils in the current Year 2 matches the test results.

8. In the tests for 11 year olds, two-thirds of the pupils attained the national average of Level 4, with almost a quarter attaining the higher grades. These results are slightly below the national average and the average for similar schools. Evidence gathered during the inspection shows that the attainment of the current Year 6 is in line with the test results.

9. Most pupils in Year 2 can accurately count sets of objects and use mental recall of addition and subtraction facts to 10 but find it difficult to count backwards. They can double and halve numbers, work out the change from 10, 20 and 50 pence, and tell the time on the hour and at the half hour. Some have difficulty in distinguishing between a quarter past and a quarter to. Most pupils know the names of regular two dimensional and three dimensional shapes and accurately count edges, corners and sides. Whilst pupils can use mathematical vocabulary, many find it difficult to write their calculations.

10. By the age of 11, many pupils have a sound understanding of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. The highest attainers, who have been identified by the school as being particularly able in mathematics, are able to explain what they are doing and recognise that there is more than one way of finding the correct answer. Pupils use their numeracy skills satisfactorily in other subjects such as science, history, geography and music.

11. In science, results in the Year 2001 teacher assessments of seven year olds were below average compared with those of other schools nationally and below those of similar schools. Inspection evidence shows that whilst attainment in the current Year 2 is higher than in the tests, it remains below what is expected nationally for children of their age. Results in the tests for 11 year olds were also below average nationally and below the average for similar schools. There was, however, a significant increase in the number of pupils who reached the expected Level 4 and above. This improvement is being maintained, and inspection evidence shows that the standards of the current Year 6 are in line with national expectations.

12. Standards in ICT are below what is expected nationally for children aged seven and 11. In all other subjects they are in line with what is expected nationally for children of their age, although they were above in geography in the case of 11 year olds. Standards in religious education match the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus.

13. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in literacy and numeracy, where targets are well written and ways of achieving them closely defined. There are recorded gains in pupils' reading, writing and spelling and in numerical skills. Pupils who have been identified as being particularly talented in mathematics are given extra help and as a result make good progress.

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

14. The school has high expectations of the attitudes and behaviour of all its pupils. As at the time of the previous inspection, pupils show good attitudes and their behaviour is satisfactory, although a small minority of pupils disrupt lessons. Whilst the personal development and relationships of pupils are good, not all pupils happily work and play together. A vocal minority of parents have a poor perception of pupils' behaviour in the school, but an increasing number understand that good teaching, with a strong focus on the management of behaviour in the classroom, has led to a marked improvement in behaviour.

15. Children in the Reception Class often show very good attitudes and behaviour, and they build trusting relationships with their teachers and support each other well. They respond enthusiastically to teaching and learning and gain enjoyment and happiness from the many new activities. Very few children exhibit any challenging behaviour, although some do shout out in excitement, or become restless if formal teaching is prolonged. Some pupils are late, but most pupils arrive calmly and look happy to attend.

16. Most pupils wear the school uniform with pride. Pupils' attitudes are generally good. They are keen and enthusiastic, which helps to establish a positive learning environment inside and outside the classroom. A significant minority, mostly boys and particularly in the Year 3 and 4 classes, have inconsistent attitudes that can impede the learning of others. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, listen well to their teachers and concentrate. They enjoy participating in new activities, as when Year 5 pupils gave impromptu acting performances to demonstrate behaviour conflict resolution, even though they lack the confidence to develop their ideas. They work hard, and by Year 6 persevere with tasks, even when they are limited by their prior learning or lack of confidence in explaining and developing their ideas.

17. The behaviour of the pupils aged five to seven and ten to eleven is often good in the classrooms when they are under the close supervision of teachers. All members of the staff exercise clear control, and pupils do not challenge even when being corrected. There is occasional restlessness amongst pupils aged seven to ten, and this can disrupt learning. Many pupils, however, have a developing understanding of self-discipline and are realising the benefits of a calm and ordered classroom.

18. Behaviour around the school is orderly and calm, particularly in assemblies. Poorer behaviour can erupt in the school playground despite close supervision. Occasionally, as happened during the inspection, inter-personal problems can develop, which spill over into the classroom and disrupt lessons or lead to lingering resentments between pupils. The teachers and senior staff closely monitor any incidents of oppressive behaviour. Historically, incidents have included bullying, fighting, racism, swearing and theft. These have made necessary the use of exclusions, and are closely identified with the behaviour of a minority of boys. Such incidents have reduced in number this year.

19. Relationships between the staff and pupils are strong and support pupils well. All adults in the school are very good role models and pupils value the trust, understanding and care that they are shown. In the classroom, teachers develop pupils' abilities to listen to each other and use pupils to take an active role in the teaching and learning process. Pupils are increasingly valuing one another's opinions and qualities, and will applaud each other's efforts. The co-operation and collaboration among pupils improves as they progress through the school. Older pupils are encouraged to look after younger ones through a 'buddy system', and strategies to establish friendship groups are developing well. Older

pupils have an awareness of other cultures and religions and realise the need for tolerance. Pupils are inquisitive and politely welcoming to visitors. Boys and girls eat and play amicably together. Relationships between a minority of boys, however, can be made more difficult by occasional eruptions of aggressive behaviour.

20. The personal development of the pupils is good. A priority is to raise the pupils' self-esteem and this is helping to raise their confidence and maturity. This is increasingly well promoted by the quality of assemblies, which have many varied moral themes, and by the formal programme for personal, health and social education. The school constantly promotes positive role models through good teaching and visitors to the school. Some lessons include guidance on health and safety so that pupils can react safely in school and in the outside world.

21. Pupils are given good opportunities to take part in whole school routines and initiatives. Year 2 pupils were particularly enthusiastic in collecting for the British Legion Poppy Day Appeal in the school playground. The school makes good use of monitors, and pupils are encouraged to participate in the school council, which discusses significant school issues. The site is free of litter and graffiti, and pupils are beginning to become aware of environmental issues. They treat equipment well and tidy their classrooms and cloakrooms under direction.

22. During the last three years the school has worked hard to improve attendance, which is now just above the national average. Despite its efforts, the school finds it difficult to impress on all families the need to carry out their statutory obligations regarding their children's attendance at school. There is no truancy, but unauthorised absence has risen, particularly during the present term in the lower age classes. Attendance levels improve as pupils progress through the school, but the number of holidays taken during school time is a principal cause of older pupils' authorised absence. Some pupils are regularly late at the start of the school day but punctuality is satisfactory throughout the rest of the day.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

23. There has been a significant improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection, with examples of good teaching in all year groups. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen, although lapses of behaviour in a few lessons impeded the learning of others. All the lessons seen in reception were either good or very good; the majority of lessons in Years 1 and 2 were either good or very good; in Years 3 to 6 there were many examples of good and very good teaching. Two lessons were outstanding. As a result of this consistently good teaching throughout the school, pupils of all abilities make good, and often very good, gains in their learning.

24. Teachers' knowledge and understanding is good in all year groups and used to underpin clear explanations and demonstrations. As a result, pupils understand clearly what is expected of them and waste little time in getting on with the task in hand. In an outstanding Year 6 science lesson the teacher's skilful questioning, using the correct scientific vocabulary, ensured that pupils had to consider for themselves precisely how to conduct a fair test, which they did successfully.

25. The teaching of English and mathematics is consistently good and ensures that pupils make rapid progress in learning the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. In nearly all cases, teachers plan well to ensure that the lessons match the pupils' prior attainment so that they can build on what they already know and can do. A particularly good example of

this was in an excellent Year 6 mathematics lesson when the planning ensured that the needs of all abilities were met, including those identified as being particularly able. Where the planning was less effective, time was lost while pupils waited for the next activity as, for example, in a Year 2 music lesson.

26. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are good in the case of pupils in Years 1 and 2 and Years 5 and 6. They are not high enough in all lessons in Years 3 and 4. In a good Year 2 mathematics lesson on tens and units, pupils responded well to the teacher, who made her high expectations of work and behaviour clear. They did not disappoint her. In an otherwise satisfactory Year 3 mathematics lesson, the teacher's expectations of what the pupils could achieve were not high enough and as a result the work set did not challenge the pupils.

27. Throughout the school, teachers use a wide range of teaching methods which engage and maintain the interest of pupils, enabling them to concentrate for long periods of time. In a good Year 5 science lesson on how to carry out a fair test on dissolving solids at different temperatures, the teacher used whole class explanations, individual guidance, and a final review session at the end of the lesson to ensure that the lesson objectives were achieved. As a result, pupils made good gains in understanding what they had been taught.

28. The management of pupils is good in Years 1 and 2 and Years 5 and 6. The key lies in the teachers' high expectations and a range of activities which engage the pupils' interest and a brisk pace, leaving little opportunity to waste time. Management of pupils is less good in some Year 3 and 4 lessons, where teachers have to spend too much time controlling the behaviour of a significant minority of boys who are disruptive and hamper the learning of others.

29. Good use is made throughout the school of time and resources, including the skilled learning support assistants, who make a very important contribution to pupils' learning and work closely with class teachers. In a very good ICT lesson in the new computer suite, the teacher used the resources well. Pupils with special educational needs made good progress in their learning as a result of the advice offered by the learning support assistant.

30. Whilst most teachers make satisfactory use of ongoing assessment to ensure that pupils have understood what has been taught, there were some good examples seen. In a very good Year 6 English lesson, the teacher used assessment well to plan work for pupils of all abilities. Homework is used satisfactorily to extend the work in the classroom.

31. Pupils with special educational needs are well taught and they make good progress in achieving the targets in their individual education plans. Records are carefully kept and teachers and classroom assistants, who have detailed lesson plans, exchange progress notes daily. The quality of individual and group education plans is good. They are written jointly by the class teacher and by the special educational needs co-ordinator, and are accessible and easy to read. They are revised each term and contain targets that are specific, measurable and easily understood by the pupils. Pupils who have been identified as being particularly able in mathematics are given extra help, including teaching by a specialist from the neighbouring high school, and as a result make good gains in their learning.



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

32. The quality and range of learning opportunities has improved since the last inspection. The upward but fragile trend in the performance of pupils aged seven in the national tests is evidence that the school plans well to promote the intellectual development of pupils in this age group. The arrangement of classes on the basis of prior attainment in numeracy and literacy throughout the school has made a positive impact upon the quality of learning. There is still a need to ensure that all pupils have enough opportunities to develop the skills of investigation and enquiry. Intellectual stimulus for high attaining pupils in mathematics is provided in extra lessons taught by a secondary school teacher.

33. The school continues to offer a curriculum that is broad, balanced and relevant to the needs of all the pupils. Subjects are systematically planned and taught. The school has successfully implemented the national literacy and numeracy strategies and all pupils, whatever their ability, are now given good opportunities to acquire the core skills that give access to a wide range of learning experiences. There is a two-year planning cycle for the foundation subjects to ensure that all pupils have access to the National Curriculum. All subjects have appropriate schemes of work, which are carefully implemented. The recent introduction of pupil targets provides a much sharper focus for learning. Teachers continue to plan collaboratively, clearly identifying learning objectives and opportunities for assessment of pupils' progress.

34. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught, together with religious education. Sex education and drugs awareness are taught as part of the science curriculum and within personal, social and health education lessons. In addition, pupils' questions are encouraged and factual answers are promptly given. The personal social and health education (PSHE) programme is very well organised. The two lessons observed during the inspection were well taught and provided an open forum for pupils to discuss their concerns in a safe and secure environment.

35. Provision in English and mathematics is well supported by the introduction of the national schemes. Each subject is given a prominent place in the curriculum and the time allocated is well used. Teachers plan lessons well and give appropriate weight to each element, though in mathematics handling data needs greater emphasis for senior pupils. Although the prominence of the core subjects, exclusively taught during the morning session, detracts a little from the time allocated to other subjects, pupils have benefited significantly by the emphasis placed upon the acquisition of core skills, such as numeracy, speaking and listening. The school is in the process of improving its provision for ICT. Information and communication technology does not yet play its proper part in the teaching of other subjects.

36. The school operates an inclusive curriculum. Governors and staff share the determination to offer a curriculum that takes into account the needs of all pupils and raises standards of attainment. All pupils enjoy equality of access and opportunity. There are no barriers to self-improvement. Provision for special educational needs is good. It is better than at the previous inspection, when it was reported that some pupils with special needs became isolated from the rest of the class. This is no longer the case. Pupils are well integrated into class groups and have good access to the curriculum. Pupils are well supported in the classroom by well-qualified classroom assistants who ensure that pupils understand the work that is set. Some pupils are withdrawn from the class and receive high quality support in small groups. Teachers and classroom assistants plan together and thus

ensure that all pupils do the same work. The quality of individual and group education plans is good. The plans contain specific targets in numeracy and literacy, which are easily understood by the pupils. Pupils' progress is carefully measured and recorded. The needs of statemented pupils are fully met.

37. Despite parents' perceptions, the curriculum is enriched by a range of extra-curricular activities that include a breakfast club, recorder groups, French, guitar and gymnastic clubs. The soccer club was well attended during the inspection week. Forty boys and girls took part and were coached by a teacher, a classroom assistant and a parent. There is a newspaper club at which pupils work on laptop computers to design the front page of a newspaper.

38. The school makes good contact with partner institutions and with the local community. Where possible the school makes use of the expertise of local secondary schools, in order to enrich and challenge teaching and learning. Pupils visit secondary schools prior to transfer. There are strong links with the neighbouring girls' school. The school regularly offers places to work experience students. Groups of senior students with special needs run supervised play activities for younger pupils. A major local firm has sponsored the development of the environmental area, and a local estate agent helps to raise money for the school by advertising school events. A school choir sings at the senior citizens' home and at the local hospital.

39. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum. The school is addressing the problem caused by negatively inclined low attainers, mainly boys, by providing practical work and reading books of high interest for those with low reading levels. The new computer suite is already having a positive impact on pupils' attitude to reading.

40. Personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved significantly since the last inspection. It is now a strength of the school and underpins a tolerant and respectful community. Spiritual development was a key issue for improvement at the last inspection. It is now good. The school assembly is the key focus for spiritual development. The peace candle is lit regularly so that staff and pupils may reflect on the part they can play in making the world a more peaceful place. Pupils listen to stories from around the world and learn how others live. A prayer is spoken and there is a moment of quiet reflection. In one assembly, the headteacher directed sunlight on to a mirror ball and crystal ball and there were gasps of astonishment and wonder at the pattern of dancing lights.

41. Pupils are taught to respect and value each other. They are also taught to observe nature through the changing seasons, to appreciate the environment and to take care of it. There is, for example, a window painting through which the sun shines, declaring 'Land of a thousand crimson foxgloves'. Circle time discussions in classes provide an opportunity for younger pupils to talk about events at home and at school. Pupils are given opportunities to express their personal thoughts and feelings through lessons such as art, music and writing.

42. The provision for moral development is good. The school is unequivocal in what it expects from its pupils. Pupils are clear about what is right and what is wrong. The good behaviour of most pupils shows that they recognise the difference. The home-school agreement, which parents are encouraged to sign, reinforces shared standards and expectations. In classrooms, sensible rules are displayed to which all pupils are signatories. A system of rewards, highlighted in achievement assembly, gives emphasis to the school's central aims. Pupils recognise that the school is an honest and fair place.

43. The provision for social development is good. Relationships are good throughout the school and encouraged by all adults, who provide good role models for their pupils. The large majority of pupils are kind and caring to each other. Year 6 pupils take responsibility for younger children at break and lunch time. Their conduct is exemplary. A school council, established during the past year, gives pupils a greater share in the running of their school. In the playground there is a seat on which there is a notice: *Friendship stop: sit here and wait for a friend*. This is the essence of social development in the school.

44. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory and is supported in subjects such as English, music and science, but more could be done to celebrate pupils' achievement in art. The school does not have the opportunity locally to share in others' cultures and beliefs but is hoping to make links with other schools where different cultures can be celebrated. In the recent Art and Book Week, pupils had the opportunity to make tribal masks and listen to African drumming. The festivals of the world religions such as Divali and the Chinese New Year are celebrated in assembly. Pupils make many visits to places of local historical and geographical interests, and they visit theatres, museums and art galleries. Senior pupils explore the local environment by taking part in weekend camps.

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

45. The previous inspection judged that the school regarded support, guidance and welfare as of great importance and that effective policies were being put into practice. Pupils with special educational needs were well supported. An effective approach to assessment was developing. The support, guidance and welfare provision has strengthened in most aspects since then and is now of high quality. Through good assessment and monitoring of procedures for academic and personal development, the school is increasingly focusing on the individual pupil. As a result, pupils make good gains in their learning and their personal development is good. The pupils, who come from a wide range of backgrounds, are being well prepared for the next phase of their education and to take their place as responsible citizens. This aspect of the school's work is being appreciated by an increasing number of parents.

46. The headteacher and staff are very mindful of the diverse range of families they serve. The headteacher spends a considerable amount of time on pastoral support for both parents and pupils, which often extends into the local community. The monitoring of the personal development of pupils is good, with a strong focus on the behaviour of the individual pupil. Procedures are well documented and rigorous, and produce accurate assessments. Teachers produce personal profiles, which accompany the pupil at the end of the academic year. Throughout the school, formal targets are agreed between teacher and pupils and their progress is tracked. The personal, health and social education procedures and creative assemblies have a considerable positive impact on the development of pupils' personal development.

47. Procedures for assessing and supporting pupils' attainment and progress are generally good, and teachers' practice is well guided and consistent. Teachers make good use of assessment information to re-plan lessons. There are good systems of monitoring and tracking pupils' progress in English, maths and science throughout the school, but they are not as thorough in other subjects of the national curriculum, and in information control technology they are only embryonic. All classes in the school experience some level of testing during the school year, and the results are analysed well and future predictions modified. Underachieving pupils are identified and targets for improvement are set, along with action plans to improve their progress. The school has made a good start to identifying gifted and talented pupils and work is differentiated to their needs.

48. The school has a comprehensive range of support, guidance and welfare policies, which are effectively put into practice by staff. Pupils with special educational needs are quickly identified. The school has a constructive relationship with outside agencies, and where necessary these are used to support pupils on a routine basis. The school nurse has provided very good support over many years, and gives valuable help in medical checks, sex education and child protection. Child protection procedures are very good, clearly set out in the staff handbook and reinforced through regular staff training. The school is vigilant, through the leadership of an experienced co-ordinator, and the Childline number is advertised.

49. The school has high expectations of the behaviour of all its pupils and has realised the importance of achieving a calm and ordered society with a clear understanding of acceptable behaviour. The procedures for monitoring and promoting behaviour are very good and a fundamental pillar of the school's caring agenda. Teachers and other staff have a consistent focus on the management of pupils' behaviour and raising their self-esteem, particularly within the classroom. Strong systems and procedures maintain an effective balance between sanctions and rewards, which are fairly and consistently applied by well-trained staff. Strategies for dealing with pupils with challenging behaviour are invariably well thought through and implemented, and this limits the disruptive influence of poor behaviour in the classroom. All members of the staff have been very effective in monitoring and dealing with poor behaviour around the school. As a result, the school has reduced the number of incidents of unacceptable behaviour.

50. The constant contact with the consistently good adult role models throughout the school day has a very positive effect on most pupils within the classroom and it creates a favourable teaching and learning environment, where most pupils know the boundaries.

51. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. The school practices first-day telephoning for known 'problem families', and has effective routines for families where literacy skills are not high. Although unauthorised absence has risen in the present term, due partly to an inconsistent coding of registers, it is well controlled, and this has been a strong contributor to a rise in attendance levels. Despite the school's best efforts some parents resist the commitment required of them to carry out their statutory obligations for attendance and punctuality.

52. Registers are completed accurately but would benefit from a more consistent approach to coding absence, so that the school could more easily analyse attendance and punctuality data for control purposes. The registration period is carried out courteously and efficiently and provides a settling and calming period for all pupils. The school has good arrangements for dealing with poor attendance and punctuality, but would benefit from a review of positive incentives for attendance and punctuality in order to change some parents' low aspirations in this respect.

53. The school is a safe environment for all pupils and staff. Health and safety procedures are very good and are well focused under the guidance of the headteacher, caretaker and a governor. The school's policy is comprehensive: health and safety audits and risk assessments are regularly carried out and recorded. The school has a sufficient complement of qualified first-aiders, and benefits from a dedicated medical room. The recording of accidents is adequate and shows a lower than usual number of minor accidents. Pupils learn about health and safety principles in the home and at school through the school's personal health and social education programme and at the start of some practical lessons. The school administration uses information technology to update all pupils' personal information and this is sufficiently accurate and detailed to support any medical emergency.

54. Admission procedures are well handled. Induction procedures are good and allow

parents to become acquainted with the school, its procedures and documentation, and essential members of staff, including the school nurse. The school has set out to create effective relationships with the many secondary schools and to guide parents and pupils through the complexities of transfer in Kent secondary schools without anxiety. Records, including those of pupils with special educational needs, are passed on to the secondary school.

55. Pupils with special educational needs are well looked after. The high quality help given to individual pupils and small groups in literacy and numeracy enables them to make good gains in their learning. Satisfactory provision is made for pupils who have emotional and behavioural difficulties, and the needs of the statemented pupils are well met. Good arrangements are made for the pupils who have been identified as being particularly talented in mathematics, with work provided by the local high school.

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

56. All aspects of the partnership with parents are satisfactory and in line with the findings of the last inspection. The school works hard to create a good partnership but has not been totally successful with all parents. Some display a wide range of individual needs, aspirations and expectations for their children's education. Others are not fully engaged in the life of the school.

57. Most parents have a solid interest in their children's education and wish to sustain a purposeful relationship with the headteacher and staff. When account is taken of the parental questionnaires, the pre-inspection meeting and the substantial number of interviews with individual parents during the inspection, it can be seen that parents' satisfaction levels have marginally increased and remain satisfactory. There are, however, four areas of significant dissatisfaction. These relate to 'pupils' behaviour', 'being well informed on progress', 'working closely with parents', and 'the range of activities outside lessons'. Inspection evidence shows that the behaviour of pupils, overall, is satisfactory and often good in some classes. Parents' perceptions of behaviour, however, are strongly influenced by the unsatisfactory behaviour of a significant minority of boys in some classes.

58. The information on progress is satisfactory but is not always easily understood by parents. A significant minority of parents are not yet fully engaged in the life of the school and have not yet developed a respect for the school. The range of activities outside lessons is judged as satisfactory, although there are limited opportunities for younger pupils.

59. Teachers are readily available to talk to parents at the start or end of the day. There are particularly effective links in the reception class. Most parents find the school approachable, and the headteacher and staff try to work hard with parents to resolve any problems, although their efforts are not recognised by a small minority of parents. The school has a full complement of enthusiastic parent governors, but only a few parents have the confidence to work or help in the school. The parents teachers association has in the past raised large sums of money through well-attended events, which the school has used wisely. After a period of inactivity, the association is now being re-formed.

60. School induction procedures are good. The quality of information for parents is satisfactory but could be improved by making its language and style more accessible. The school prospectus and the annual governors' report to parents are quality documents, which contain all the points of statutory information and indicate that the school values its parents. They are not, however, easily understood by all parents. The school has a sufficient range of policies and procedures but improving their display could be of benefit to parents. Information

letters are formal and do not always give parents enough time to react. There are too few notice boards and those that are present lack impact and real interest for parents. The school's annual reports to parents on their children are good but are not always successful in conveying simple messages to parents. They contain a review of pupils' targets and sets new ones for the year ahead. The school assists parents who wish to join classes in parenting skills in order to raise their expectations of what education can offer to them and their children.

61. Although most parents have co-operated in raising attendance levels, there is a high level of holidays taken during term time, and punctuality at the start of the day is still poor. One in six parents has not signed the home-school agreement. The school has tried to gain the interest of parents in the national tests at literacy and numeracy evenings, but these and the annual governors meeting are poorly attended. Attendance at information evenings on pupil's progress is satisfactory. The majority of parents, who are committed to their children's education, take a real interest in homework.

62. Many, however, feel that there is not enough feedback to parents and pupils on the quality of the homework. Parents receive good advice from the school at the time of transfer to secondary school, which minimises parental anxieties. There is close collaboration with the parents of pupils having special educational needs. The school tries hard to involve these parents at every stage of the process, and a growing number attend the annual review.

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

63. The headteacher's strong determined leadership, which is actively supported by governors and teachers, provides a clear educational direction for the school, bent on raising standards. The school's aims do not specifically include raising standards but focus on social and personal development which will support learning. These aims are largely being met, although more work remains to be done in instilling self-discipline and independence in pupils and involving parents in the life of the school.

64. The head and deputy headteacher have a good working relationship with a clear division of responsibilities. The other members of the senior management team are the two key stage co-ordinators and the special needs co-ordinator. Two have only recently been appointed and are still developing their roles. The senior management team meets every other week to consider strategic planning, curriculum management, pupils' progress, behaviour and discipline. The headteacher attempts to use all the available expertise, talents and enthusiasms of the staff. All subjects have co-ordinators, although there are only temporary arrangements for geography. Some are new in post and are in the early stages of planning for their subjects. Subject leaders are responsible for their subject areas, core subjects being shared with representatives from both key stages.

65. Governors receive regular reports from the headteacher and use the knowledge to plan for future development. Governors are playing an increasingly active role in setting the school improvement plan, which is the driving force for change designed to raise standards.

66. A regular programme of monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning has been established and the quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. The headteacher and her deputy make regular class observations and have focused recently on literacy and numeracy. The monitoring programme includes lesson observations by subject leaders but these have not been carried out fully in the last two years. It is planned to re-introduce this regular monitoring in January. Regular monitoring and evaluation of planning

and assessment procedures is carried out by the headteacher, deputy, and subject leaders. As a result, practice is frequently revised,

67. All members of the staff, teachers, teaching assistants and office personnel have always been involved in the appraisal process. This has now been included in the school's Performance Management policy. The first year of performance management has been completed for teaching staff and is underway for teaching assistants and office staff. The school is being assessed as an Investor in People.

68. The provision for special educational needs fully reflects the national practice, and the recently appointed co-ordinator is well advanced with plans to meet requirements of the new code of practice. The developing knowledge, commitment and organisational skills of the co-ordinator and the classroom assistants are the foundation for good provision. The development plan for special educational needs takes full account of the need for closer contact between class teachers, classroom assistants and the special educational needs co-ordinator. The special needs governor is keenly interested in pupils' progress and keeps a watchful eye on provision. The governing body is kept fully informed of all developments. Equally good provision is made for the pupils identified as being particularly able in mathematics.

69. The school's priorities are set out in the school improvement plan, a useful working document which is central to the school's management and development. Priorities are clear and designed to improve all aspects of the school's work. Staff, parents, governors, and in certain areas pupils, are encouraged to contribute. The school improvement plan also includes, in separate sections, the future development of the school and targets for individual subject areas.

70. The progress towards meeting the school's targets, as set out in the school improvement plan, is reviewed at least once a term by the staff and governing body. Any required adjustments are made. Individual and group targets are reviewed regularly in the light of assessment information and classroom observation. The unquestioned commitment of the headteacher, senior staff and chair of governors to raise the quality of education is enthusiastically supported by all in the school, including those on temporary contracts.

71. Financial planning underpins educational priorities, such as the new library and computer suite. More regular allocations are considered alongside recommendations from governors' committees. A current priority is to maintain the level of teaching and support staff required to provide for the school's high level of special educational needs. Larger than normal balances have been carried in recent years for specific projects. A contingency fund is maintained as part of the school's three-year budget plan to meet any possible short falls.

72. The school makes good use of all the monies available to it and seeks any grants that are available to extend the facilities and learning opportunities available to pupils.

73. A useful staff handbook is available for all new staff. Any immediate training needs are identified and provided for as soon as practicable. The school regularly takes on students from a teacher training institution in the county. Teachers have been difficult to recruit, due in part to the demands of the high number of pupils with special educational needs. The school has, however, made good arrangements for solving staffing problems. It continues to be adequately staffed with suitably qualified and experienced teachers, and they are deployed well to meet the demands of the national curriculum. Two job-sharing

teachers have worked effectively together, and an unqualified teacher has received significant in-class support from the deputy headteacher. Although the average length of service of all the teachers is low, the school's younger teachers are given good support by more experienced teachers.

74. Teachers are well supported in the classroom by a good number of learning support assistants, who are trained, experienced and skilled. The school has experienced difficulties in recruiting lunchtime supervisors, but enthusiastic learning support assistants have supplemented a shift system of cover, so that there is an adequate ratio of pupils to supervisors. The administrative staff ensure smooth running of the school. All members of staff have undergone sufficient training for their roles and are well supported by a comprehensive staff handbook. The school's use of information technology is in an early stage of development.

75. The school has satisfactory accommodation with some good features, which allows the National Curriculum to be taught effectively. The new library, computer suite and administration areas are good additions to the school's physical resources. The mobile classrooms provide only adequate accommodation and create problems for the movement of pupils to the main school in poor weather. Some classrooms can suffer from noise intrusion, or have to be used as transit areas, as a result of the physical layout of the school. External areas have been pleasantly enhanced. There is a good allocation of grass and hard play areas, but play areas for the early years children are limited. The school is distinguished by its painted glass windows, and by a Millennium Mosaic created by pupils of the school, and identifies Kent scenes. The school is well maintained by its caretaker.

76. The school has improved its resources during the last two years and there is at least a satisfactory supply for learning in all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Expenditure levels have been above average in comparison with those of other primary schools, and the resources are of satisfactory quality and well maintained through the care of the pupils. They are well used throughout the school day and, although storage space is at a premium, pupils have good access to them through classroom activities and clubs. The new library is in a transitional state as many old books have been removed, but the number and quality of books is developing and finances for replacement are allocated. Some of the classroom English books require replacement. Information control technology resources have been improved but equipment problems have restricted their use by pupils. Large equipment in the early years is insufficient and requires review. Resources are further supplemented by the many interesting and colourful displays, which greatly add to the school's overall ambience.



## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

77. In order to raise standards, particularly in English, mathematics and ICT\*\* throughout the school, the headteacher, governors and staff should:

- In English:
  - \* develop pupils' writing for a range of purposes across all subjects\*\*;
  - \* extend pupils' proof reading skills so that they examine their spelling, punctuation and omissions and then correct their mistakes.
  
- In mathematics:
  - \* ensure that all mental arithmetic sessions are brisk and demanding;
  - \* further develop pupils' investigative and problem solving skills\*\*.
  
- In information and communication technology:
  - \* teach skills systematically and then use these skills to support and reinforce learning in all subjects\*\*.
  
- The governors should also:
  - \* Improve communication with all parents so that they have a clear understanding of the school's work and procedures, in particular the management of difficult behaviour, the work their children are doing and the progress they are making.
  - \* Improve the behaviour of the more challenging pupils and actively encourage co-operative play and behaviour so that pupils learn how to work more productively with their classmates and teachers.
  - \* Re-establish regular monitoring of work in the classroom by foundation subject leaders\*\*.

*\*\*These have already been identified by the school as priorities for development.*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	66
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	109

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satis-Factory	Unsatis-factory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	13	30	21	0	0	0
Percentage	3	20	45	32	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR–Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	283
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	40

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR–Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	118

#### English as an additional language

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

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	20

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year:	<b>Year</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Total</b>
	2001	23	22	45

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	<b>Boys</b>	16	16	20
	<b>Girls</b>	19	20	22
	<b>Total</b>	35	36	42
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	<b>School</b>	80 (73)	80 (77)	93 (80)
	<b>National</b>	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	<b>Boys</b>	16	20	20
	<b>Girls</b>	20	22	21
	<b>Total</b>	36	42	41
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	<b>School</b>	80 (75)	93 (73)	91 (84)
	<b>National</b>	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year:	<b>Year</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Total</b>
	2001	17	13	30

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	<b>Boys</b>	13	13	17
	<b>Girls</b>	9	7	9
	<b>Total</b>	22	20	26
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	<b>School</b>	73 (63)	67 (67)	87 (70)
	<b>National</b>	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	<b>Boys</b>	11	13	14
	<b>Girls</b>	8	9	9
	<b>Total</b>	19	22	23
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	<b>School</b>	63 (69)	73 (70)	76 (70)
	<b>National</b>	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

**Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	251
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

**Teachers and classes**

**Qualified teachers and classes:  
YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.3
Average class size	28.1

**Education support staff:**

**YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	167

**Qualified teachers and support staff:  
nursery**

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Exclusions in the last school year**

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	7	1
Other minority ethnic groups	0	

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

**Financial information**

<b>Financial year</b>	<b>2000-01</b>
	<b>£</b>

Total income	539612.00
Total expenditure	513505.00
Expenditure per pupil	1777.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	11666.00
Balance carried forward to next year	37773.00

**Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4
<hr/>	
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	2
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	3
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out  
Number of questionnaires returned

283
87

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	51	43	5	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	33	56	6	3	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	13	57	18	6	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	18	66	10	6	0
The teaching is good.	35	52	5	1	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	25	42	26	7	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	43	46	8	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	37	57	3	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	26	41	24	6	3
The school is well led and managed.	22	58	8	2	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	21	66	7	1	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	8	43	23	10	15

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

78. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage has improved since the last inspection: teaching has moved from satisfactory to good and children are making good progress in their learning. Children enter the Reception Class on a full-time basis either in the September or January preceding their fifth birthday. At the time of the inspection there were 25 children in the Foundation Stage, with a possible further 21 joining in January. There are two classrooms, so that the learning of the older children will not be disrupted when the younger children join the school. Two children have been identified as having special educational needs, but as yet no special provision has been made for them. The adults in the class, however, are aware of their needs and plan appropriate activities for these children so that they are fully included and make good progress. When children enter the Reception Class they start from a fairly low level of skill, particularly in language and literacy, mathematics and social development, but make good progress in their learning. There are good procedures for assessing how children are doing in lessons. The class teacher and the support assistant work successfully as a team and have a good knowledge of how young children learn. Arrangements for admission are good, and include a carefully managed start for each child. Parents are well informed and are always made to feel welcome. Of the nine lessons seen, two were very good and seven were good. The quality of teaching and care children receive in the Foundation Stage ensures that their early experiences of school are happy ones.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

79. The children's personal and social development is given high priority and underpins all the work in the reception class. Teaching in this area is very good. Children settle well into a caring and safe environment where they quickly learn to trust staff and learn the routines. They settle to tabletop activities and separate from their carers or parents with confidence when they arrive at school in the mornings. They respond well to the care they receive from the staff and from the very good role models they provide. The children are encouraged to listen to others, to share, to take turns and to relate positively to adults. Inspectors noted their ease with visitors.

80. From their earliest days in the class they are taught right from wrong in a firm but positive way, and are sensitively shown, for example, how to settle disagreements. As a result, good all-round relationships are forged and behaviour is generally very good. Any incidents of inappropriate behaviour are managed calmly and good behaviour is reinforced by praise. Opportunities to discuss books such as *A Pig's Book of Manners* are well used to give children an understanding of the need for agreed values within a community.

81. When they arrive in the mornings, children choose partners or groups to work with, and they quickly forge strong friendships. The class teacher and support staff encourage children to be independent. In consequence, children respond to new challenges, displaying enthusiasm and enjoyment in their work and play. The well-structured activities support children's personal and social development effectively, encouraging consideration of others and co-operative play both indoors and outside. Adults encourage children to take responsibility by giving them opportunities for choice and by involving them in tasks such as tidying up at the end of sessions. This leads to a sound level of independence and most children are on course to attain the recommended Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year.

## Communication, language and literacy

82. Many children enter the Reception Class with well below average standards of communication skills. Despite the good teaching they receive and the good progress they are making as a result, many children are still below the required standard in language and literacy by the time they transfer to Year 1. A high number of children have a limited vocabulary when they first come to school and are not able to engage in extended conversation with adults. There are a few children who are high attainers and who express their ideas fluently.

83. Rich opportunities are provided for children to improve their speaking and listening skills through stories, poems and rhymes. Teachers and support staff provide good models for spoken English and promote discussion well, questioning and encouraging children to express their ideas. Imaginary settings such as a home corner and the 'Post Office' give children opportunities to engage in conversations with others or to imaginary people by telephone. There is, however, scope for more adult intervention to develop early writing skills more frequently in, for example, role-play and for children to be given more direction in letter formation.

84. Literacy skills are effectively developed through daily lessons, which include small group reading and writing sessions. Teaching in these lessons is good, with an interesting range of activities and a focus on developing phonic skills. Adults in the class give good support to groups, enabling children to make good progress in their learning. Most children listen well, and a few higher attainers have good speaking skills. Many have had little experience of books when they come to school. The class teacher is aware of children's needs and uses effective teaching strategies to show them that, in English, print is organised from left to right on the line, from top to bottom on the page, from left-hand page to right-hand page, and from the first page to the last, turned from right to left. Children enjoy listening to stories such as *The Three Little Pigs* and *What a Bad Dog!* The quality of adults' reading holds children's attention and enhances their vocabulary.

85. During literacy sessions, members of staff take every opportunity to extend children's vocabulary and understanding of words such as 'push' and 'pull', and use effective methods such as organising pushing and pulling activities to deepen understanding. Reading activities are well organised and parents are fully involved by being present at book changing sessions every morning, and through advice on how to help their children at home. As a result, children make good progress in their reading.

## Mathematical development

86. Many children enter the Reception Class with well below average attainment in mathematics. Although they make good progress in their learning through well focussed teaching, a high number are still not attaining the 'stepping stones' that indicate they are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals for mathematics. In consequence, there needs to be a greater emphasis on continuing to develop mathematical vocabulary and understanding of all aspects of the subject, through role-play and other activities throughout the school day.

87. Teaching in daily numeracy sessions is good. Effective planning and organisation, together with interesting and imaginative activities, games and resources, ensure that children learn well in these lessons. Adults introduce mathematical vocabulary very well. In one lesson, children were successfully challenged to answer questions such as 'How much more is this now?' and 'How many cubes have you added?' They are introduced to simple addition and subtraction and most can work out what is 'one more than, or one less than 5'. Higher attaining children use this knowledge to work with numbers to ten. All children



experience a good range of practical activities to further their understanding of shape, space and measure. In one lesson, it was obvious that many had little experience of shapes before coming to school and some could not identify a circle or a square. The class teacher and other adults continue to develop the vocabulary associated with shape, space and measure as, for example, 'greater', 'smaller', 'heavier' and 'lighter' to compare quantities. Practical activities such as making mince pies are well used to consolidate children's understanding of weight and shape.

88. Good use is made of songs and rhymes such as *1, 2, 3, 4, 5 – once I caught a fish alive* and *Five Little Speckled Frogs*, to develop children's counting skills, and they respond to these with enthusiasm. Behaviour in lessons is good, children enjoy their lessons, and most try hard to think of answers. A note for parents on the classroom door tells them what children will be learning during the week, such as 'adding 1, 2, 3', so that they can help their children at home. This is another fine example of the good practice seen in the reception class.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

89. Many children come to school with little knowledge of the world outside their own home environment. The curriculum is planned to enrich their experiences and to develop their understanding of the world. Most children are on course to attain the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year. Teaching of this area of children's learning is good because it is well planned and organised and builds on children's natural curiosity.

90. Many opportunities are provided through direct teaching as well as independent play, inside and outside, to develop children's understanding of the world. Good questioning and intervention by adults encourages children to investigate the world around them. For example when planting crocus bulbs, the children are asked such questions as 'What do you think we need to make them grow?' These challenge the children to make sense of what is happening and lay the early foundations of scientific enquiry. There are well-planned opportunities to play with Lego, sticklebricks and other materials, such as clay and playdough. As a result, the children recognise which materials are suited for which purpose. Children are encouraged to observe the passing of the seasons and to describe the weather.

91. Other well-planned activities, such as nature walks within the school environment, to a farm and to the local church, are used to increase children's understanding of nature and of the local area. As a result, they are able to talk about and describe in simple language what they have seen and their views on the environment. Adults set activities where children can observe natural materials such as plants and autumn leaves, and teach the importance of caring for the environment. Children develop a sense of the past by finding out about past and present events in their own lives and those of people such as 'Guy Fawkes', as well as the origins of Christmas and other festivals during the year. They are given a growing understanding that a child from a different background or with different religious beliefs nevertheless has many more similarities than differences to their own way of life.

92. Children are developing competence in using computers. They are taught the skills required to control what happens on the screen, for example by using a mouse when engaged on the *All New Animated Alphabet* program to identify and name letters of the alphabet. Computers are well used to support learning across the curriculum.

### **Creative development**

93. During the inspection, children in the Reception Class were attaining the 'stepping stones' that indicate they are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals for creative development by the end of the reception year. Teaching is good and, as a result, children make good progress in their learning. This is largely due to the planned provision of a wide range of both directed and free choice opportunities, which develop children's creativity. These include exploration and use of a variety of painting, modelling, collage and printing activities, which are often linked to literacy or other aspects of the curriculum, and there are opportunities for imaginative role-play in designated areas such as the home corner or 'Post Office'. With adult help, children make up simple plays using puppets and are given many opportunities to describe and to respond to what they see, hear, smell and touch. Through the support of adults during these activities, including their questions or comments, children are helped to develop skills well and to express their own ideas with confidence. Adult-led activities promote good learning of colours, as for example when children are asked to paint pictures using red, green or blue paint. Through a wide range of supervised activities, children are becoming confident in using creative tools such as scissors, paintbrushes, glue sticks and a variety of mark-making instruments.

94. Good use is made of percussion instruments for children to experiment and explore the sounds they make, and for them to respond to music with body movements. In a lesson based on a book entitled *Night and Day*, children were listening carefully to reproduce what they heard or what was demonstrated for them by adults.

### **Physical development**

95. Standards are broadly typical for the children's ages, so most children are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year. Regular, planned access to the secure outside area allows children to gain skills in steering and riding wheeled toys. The class teacher makes effective use of climbing apparatus in the school hall during timetabled physical education lessons, and this promotes children's confidence in climbing and balancing. Good management and control of behaviour ensures that children follow instructions to move safely. In all activities, effective intervention from adults challenges the more able children and gives support to those with less confidence.

96. Lessons are well thought out and organised, and demonstrations by adults and children are well used to improve skills. Evidence of this was seen in a lesson in which children were improving their co-ordination and control, using hoops, and in a dance lesson where adult demonstration made children more observant when mirroring the movements of a partner. Lessons begin with warm-up activities and children are made aware of the effects of exercise on their bodies. As a result of this, and through discussions on healthy diets, children know the importance of healthy living and of those things that contribute to this. When they first enter the reception class, many children need help in changing for lessons, but the class teacher is effectively promoting independence in this.

97. Teaching of fine-motor skills and manipulation of tools, such as pencils, brushes and small apparatus is good, so that children develop their manipulative skills well and make good progress in this aspect of their physical development.

## ENGLISH

98. Inspection evidence shows that the attainment of pupils currently in Year 2 is below what is expected in reading and well below expectations in writing. Standards attained by pupils currently in Year 6 are in line with what is expected in reading, but below expectations in writing. Although many pupils enter the school with limited vocabulary, standards in speaking and listening are in line with what is expected by the end of Year 6.

99. Despite pupils making good progress in lessons and achieving well in relation to their prior attainment, a number of factors depress standards. There is a high proportion of pupils with special education needs. For example, 42 per cent of the present Year 6 pupils are on the register of special needs. The school's records show that a significant number of pupils join the school other than at the usual time of admission. The school has a good reputation for its provision for pupils with special educational needs, and many of the pupils who join the school late have already been identified as requiring support. The school's data shows that pupils who remain at the school achieve well over time.

100. Another factor to be considered is that children enter the Reception Class with literacy skills well below those found nationally. Half of these children start in January, and in consequence they spend only seven terms in school before sitting the national tests at the age of seven. This means that they do not have enough time to achieve expected standards. Girls perform better than boys in the national tests at age 11 because there are more boys than girls on the register of special educational needs. Although some boys do not readily offer to answer questions, there was no evidence during the inspection of boys underachieving.

101. At the last inspection, standards in basic literacy skills and speaking and listening were below expectations for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6. Then, the quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory in Year 3 to Year 6, but there was a high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching in Years 1 and 2. The quality of teaching has greatly improved and, in consequence, pupils are making good progress in lessons. Of the 15 English lessons observed, teaching was very good in two, good in ten and satisfactory in three. There was no significant difference in the teaching of different age groups.

102. The National Literacy Strategy has been firmly established since the last inspection and is well used to ensure pace of teaching and learning in lessons. This, together with the training of teachers and support assistants and the regular monitoring of teaching, has resulted in improvements in the quality of teaching. The school now closely analyses its test results to identify weaknesses in provision. As a result, the teaching of basic skills in writing, including spelling, has been intensified, and pupils are now making better progress in this aspect than previously. Setting arrangements are effective and opportunities to teach pupils of similar abilities are well used by teachers.

103. Across the school, pupils learn to listen to their teachers and to follow instructions, although the attention of a minority of pupils wanders when they are not involved through carefully focussed questions. Most teachers, however, are successful in engaging the interest of pupils of all abilities during whole class sessions. As a result, pupils make good progress and by the time they are in Year 6, most pupils have become more confident in speaking formally, answering questions and explaining their ideas to the class. There are occasional opportunities to extend speaking skills through class assemblies and school productions such as *Bugsy Malone*, but too few planned opportunities to develop pupils'

understanding of standard English. By the age of 11, most pupils are confident in contributing to class discussions in all subjects, using technical terms appropriately because teachers identify the vocabulary to be taught in lessons. Pupils are confident in explaining their work to visitors and in so doing show that they have understood what they have been taught.

104. In the initial stage of reading, pupils are systematically taught the relationship between letters and sounds, because teachers are competent in teaching basic skills. Pupils make good progress through a well-organised reading scheme. By the age of seven, most are confident in reading aloud from books closely matched to their levels of ability. They show understanding of what they have read, though some are restricted by a below average vocabulary and limited life experiences. Only those with the highest attainment in reading are able to describe and explain events and characters, using a good vocabulary.

105. Across the school, pupils show a developing enthusiasm for books and this supports their learning. The school has introduced daily guided reading sessions outside literacy lessons which are effectively supporting groups of pupils, but teachers need to organise well-planned reading activities to ensure the progress of those pupils working independently. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress through a collection of good quality reading books in each class, and regular opportunities for reading in other subjects. Most enjoy reading regularly at home because the school is successful in developing an interest in books. They record their reading experiences in their reading journals, but teachers could make better use of these to develop pupils' writing skills.

106. By the end of Year 6, most pupils read longer texts appropriate for their age with good understanding. They have sound experience of reading for a range of purposes, and know how to use factual books to gain information in other subjects such as history, geography and religious education. An example of this was seen in a religious education lesson where pupils in Year 4 were effectively researching places of pilgrimage within Christianity and other faiths. These opportunities for independent research will further improve when the new library is fully in use.

107. There is a clear policy and new scheme for improving handwriting, which is consistently implemented. As a result, many pupils in Year 1 and 2 already join their letters and are proud of their efforts. A Year 2 pupil who asked 'Do you like my joined-up writing?' is a good example of the pride most pupils take in their work and achievements. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 write sentences such as 'Mum found his toy in the dishwasher', using full stops and capitals correctly, and write a sequence of sentences to describe how to make an aeroplane. Whilst many pupils currently in Year 2 can shape and position their letters correctly, they experience difficulties in communicating meaning through simple words and phrases, and do not leave spaces between words in their normal writing.

108. Throughout Years 3 to 6, pupils learn to write for an increasingly wide range of purposes and audiences because of the recent emphasis on this area of learning, and there are good examples of creative writing in each year. Year 3 and 4 pupils consider the use of adverbs in their writing, as for example, when writing 'pet' poems, and use words such as *loudly*, *noisily*, *quickly* and *sensibly* to good effect. However, the writing of a significant number still lacks fluency and they do not achieve as much as is expected of pupils of this age. The writing of pupils' in Year 5 and 6 becomes more fluent, thoughtful and lively. Efforts made by their present teachers, and those who taught them when they were younger, are beginning to take effect.

109. Pupils' writing of plays, poetry and imaginative stories take account of the reader, and they consider interesting characters, exciting vocabulary and figures of speech such as similes and alliteration, to enrich their work. Pupils of higher attainment make good use of synonyms to add shades of meaning within a poem. Most pupils achieve a joined, legible style by the age of 11 and work hard to achieve the standard required before they are allowed to switch from pencil to pen. There are good examples of formal writing in other subjects, for instance well sequenced science reports and writing up of their research projects in geography. More opportunities in all subjects could, however, be provided. Standards of accuracy develop well because grammar and handwriting are well taught. However, spelling is a weakness identified by the school, and teachers now need to extend pupils' proof reading skills so that they examine their spelling, punctuation and omissions and then correct their mistakes.

110. Pupils have been well trained in literacy hour routines and little time is wasted. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject, including phonics. Pupils are told the learning objective for each lesson and co-operate well because they know where they are going. In a small number of lessons, the learning objectives refer more to what teachers want pupils to do rather than what they want them to learn. Teachers read aloud well, helping pupils to understand and raising their interest in books.

111. A weakness in lessons which were otherwise satisfactory is for teachers to take answers from volunteers, so that others are not actively involved in learning. Practical activities, such as where Year 3 pupils researched information on Robert Louis Stevenson, are well organised and effectively managed. Tasks are well designed to focus pupils' attention and give them practice in key skills. Standards of behaviour are good, but a few pupils are restless and find it difficult to concentrate. Lessons are generally harmonious and productive, though not all teachers remind pupils of the quantity of work expected. Pupils with special educational needs have appropriate work and good support whilst taking a full part in class activities. The whole class review at the end of lessons is used well to reinforce learning of the language target.

112. The subject is well managed, which is a very good improvement since the time of the last inspection, when leadership of the subject was unsatisfactory. The commitment to raising standards has been pursued with determination, and careful monitoring of pupils' progress, as well as the initiatives already mentioned, has ensured significant improvements. Individual and group targets are set, and the school supports pupils well to reach these targets. There is a high degree of consistency in teaching of the National Literacy Strategy, which is an indication of good management. Good use is made of visiting authors, book weeks, and theatre visits to see specially adapted Shakespearean plays and other plays such as *Alice in Wonderland*, to extend the curriculum and to increase pupils' enjoyment. In this respect, the subject contributes well to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development

## **MATHEMATICS**

113. Since the time of the previous report, standards achieved by pupils in Year 2 in successive years have been variable. This is explained by the difference in attainment on entry and by the varying proportion of pupils with special educational needs. In the national tests of 2001, all but three pupils in Year 2 attained the national average of Level 2, which was a significant improvement upon the previous year. Relatively few pupils attained the higher grades and therefore the results, overall, are marginally below the national average and well below the average for similar schools.

114. The inspection findings for pupils currently in Year 2, based upon lesson observations, a review of previous work and conversations with pupils, confirm the test results. Pupils are learning well and most are making good progress, although attainment is just below the national average. This is much better than at the previous inspection, when progress was described as unsatisfactory.

115. The standards achieved by pupils in Year 6, in successive years, have varied but have been more consistent than those in Year 2. Pupils with special educational needs show the benefits of sustained support from teachers and classroom assistants, which has helped them to overcome their poor numeracy skills on entry. Pupils are taught in groups that are arranged according to prior attainment and this makes a strong impact upon the quality of learning.

116. In the national tests for 2001, two-thirds of the pupils in Year 6 attained the national average of Level 4. Almost a quarter attained the higher grades. The results overall are marginally below the national average and the average for similar schools. The trend is upward. The inspection confirms the test results. Pupils are learning well and making good progress. Teaching programmes such as *springboard mathematics* are helping pupils to improve their performance. The additional help they are given prior to taking the national tests improves their confidence.

117. Most pupils in Year 2 count sets of objects reliably and use mental recall of addition and subtraction facts to 10. They count forwards in multiples of 2 and 5, but find difficulty in counting backwards. They double and halve numbers and some understand that one is the inverse of the other. Pupils satisfactorily apply their knowledge of number to working out the change from 10, 20 and 50 pence. Pupils tell the time on the hour and at the half hour. Some have difficulty in distinguishing between a quarter past and a quarter to. Most pupils know the names of regular two- and three-dimensional shapes and accurately count edges, corners and sides. Pupils use the language of mathematics quite well but many have difficulty in writing down number statements, and this impedes learning.

118. By the end of Year 6, many pupils have a sound grasp of the four rules of number, but during the inspection week they had too few opportunities to practise their skills in solving problems. Consequently, their skills are not tried and tested, which makes learning less secure. The exception was in the high attaining group, where pupils show considerable understanding and skill in reflecting and rotating shapes. The highest attainers quickly achieve the competence to rotate and reflect consecutively. Pupils are able to explain what they are doing and recognise that there is more than one way of finding the correct answer. Some of this group are particularly able, and they receive extra tuition from the local secondary school and are very well prepared for school transfer. Another group learns about probability and chance. Many pupils are successful in arranging events on a probability line and are preparing for experiments with coins and dice.

119. Numeracy skills are satisfactorily used in other subjects. In history, for example, pupils use a timeline to chart events and in geography they use their knowledge of co-ordinates to find places on a map. In music, pupils beat time and in science they use measuring skills in conducting experiments.

120. Pupils learn well and make good progress because the teaching is good, especially in Years 1, 2, 5 and 6. Of the nine lessons nine seen, one was excellent, two were very good, two were good and four were satisfactory. The good teaching helps pupils to overcome weaknesses in numeracy skills on entry. The teaching in Years 3 and 4 is less assured and confident but is nonetheless satisfactory. Classroom assistants give invaluable support to the teachers and in particular to pupils who have special educational needs. Teachers and

classroom assistants plan together to ensure that pupils are taught the basic skills of mathematics with care and precision. Pupils with special educational needs have well defined targets that are attainable. Progress towards their achievement is carefully measured.

121. The outstanding Year 6 was exemplary. It was ambitious, enterprising and challenging. There was a buzz of excitement when the pupils were working. Learning was purposeful and the pupils knew exactly what was expected of them. They rose to the challenge, enjoyed the work and made very good progress. All classes are at least satisfactorily managed. Clear objectives are set for work and behaviour. Questions are pertinent and designed to allow all pupils to contribute. Most pupils respond well to their teachers and they work well together. They enjoy what they do and regard mathematics positively. Occasionally, some boys misbehave, distract the teacher and spoil the learning of others. Such pupils are promptly dealt with but sometimes these difficulties arise because the lesson lacks pace and stimulus. Most pupils achieve well because they are given work to do that is appropriate to their needs and because they are given praise and encouragement. The teaching environment is almost always positive and, as a result, pupils often make good progress.

122. The subject is skilfully and enthusiastically managed. As a result, standards are rising. The school acknowledges that standards could be raised by ensuring that all mental arithmetic sessions are brisk and demanding, and greater use made of information technology to reinforce learning. Good assessment procedures are already in use to support teaching and learning but are not yet consistently applied across the school. The mathematics curriculum is satisfactorily balanced but there is a need to develop further problem-solving skills, including collecting and processing information. All teachers share the commitment to an improvement in standards and together they have the capacity to succeed

## **SCIENCE**

123. When considering the school's performance in science assessments and national tests, it is important to recognise that the very large proportion of pupils with special education needs affects the scores significantly. This explains the lower standards seen, which do not reflect the good teaching. In 2001 teachers' assessments of standards for seven year olds are below average compared to those of other schools nationally and below that of similar schools. However, standards are improving. The school has seriously considered the judgements made in the previous inspection that insufficient attention was paid to practical investigations. This inspection found that the school promotes scientific enquiry at every opportunity, plus the teaching of key vocabulary and the development of questioning skills. This was particularly evident in one lesson where the pupils had to question one another about their findings in a 'feely' bag. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.

124. Standards in the national tests for 11 year olds in 2001 were also below the national average and below the average for similar schools. However, there was a significant jump by almost a fifth in the number of pupils who reached Level 4 and above, which is the nationally recognised average score. This improvement is presently being maintained due to the strong emphasis in those areas of the subject similar to those improvements described above. These promote considerable excitement and interest. Consequently,

pupils throughout the school make good progress in lessons, and scrutiny of their earlier work showed that this acceptable level of progress was evident over the year. Pupils with special educational needs progress well as the teachers and learning support assistants give additional help most ably when it is necessary.

125. Pupils in Year 1 worked particularly well when the teaching required them to think for themselves, as they tried to name hidden objects by touch. The higher attaining pupils asked imaginative questions, such as, 'Why can't we tell if something is shiny if it's in the bag?' These pupils were also able to record their work well in simple sentences. Occasionally the pupils took some time in settling to their tasks, but once settled they were very absorbed and productive. Year 2 pupils were especially attentive when their teacher was explaining how to make and record predictions in their investigation of the properties of materials. They clearly understood that they had to think for themselves, but also worked successfully together suggesting whether objects such as a wooden ruler could be twisted or squashed. Where differences of opinion arose, pupils recorded accurately what they thought was best. Half of the pupils wrote their predictions in simple sentences, such as 'It will break'.

126. Though no lessons were seen for Years 3 and 4, their work from the beginning of the year showed that the teachers taught all areas in depth. The pupils wrote detailed accounts of what is necessary in order to complete electrical circuits. All pupils made most appropriate predictions. In a further investigation on insulators and conductors they clearly understood what represented a fair test.

127. In Years 5 and 6 pupils were discovering how quickly sugar could be dissolved in water that had been heated to different temperatures. Through informed teaching the pupils clearly learned the need to set up a structured and fair test to obtain accurate results. A number of pupils were working at an advanced level, as they could identify the key factors to be considered when conducting a fair test. In this experiment, for example, these pupils recognised the critical factors of timing and care in handling the thermometer, which could vary the temperature reading significantly.

128. The quality of teaching is good. Of the six lessons seen one was outstanding, two were very good, one was good and two were satisfactory. This is a considerable improvement from the previous inspection, when teaching was satisfactory and some poor teaching was seen. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. In the outstanding lesson the teacher consistently stressed the importance of all clinical aspects to ensure the success and accuracy of the test. Most of the information came through challenging questioning, and after the experiment the teacher asked why there were so many variables in the results. In answer, the pupils discussed the possibilities of variations in temperature caused by the passage of time between tests. Throughout this lesson the pupils were most absorbed in their work. This quality of concentration was evident in all other lessons as these involved a high level of first-hand experience.

129. In discussions, pupils showed that their knowledge was secure, particularly in the requirements for fair testing. Such a positive attitude ensures the good progress seen overall. Teaching in the very good lessons drew out much of the information from the pupils and positively encouraged their own questioning skills, as noted in the learning above. In other lessons, though full of detailed knowledge, the more direct teaching gave pupils a little less to think about for themselves. All teachers promoted the use of scientific language well and careful reference was made to the aspects of safety when dealing with near-boiling water. The pupils also benefited from the help given by the experienced and well-qualified learning support assistants.

130. There was considerable evidence of cross-curricular elements in science. When



recording and reporting experiments, many high attaining pupils produced written work of a very good standard. There was also concentrated use in the mathematical measuring of time and temperature. Science plays a large role in pupils' personal development. The school ensures that the world of science is satisfactorily covered through visits to a number of science museums.

131. The co-ordination of science is good. The two subject leaders have vigorously promoted the skills of data handling and the use of scientific vocabulary in the school. This has been most effective in raising the standards now found in the school. The team also regularly monitors the pupils' work and teachers' planning. There has been little monitoring of teaching. Assessment is good and takes place on a regular basis, using national guidelines, and informs future planning. The use of ICT is not yet satisfactory, and represents a weakness in provision at present. There are, however, some CD-Roms on life processes and the water cycle. Resources are now being linked to the planning of lessons and are satisfactory.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

132. Timetabling arrangements meant that it was possible to see only one lesson during the inspection. A review of teachers' planning and the scrutiny of work around the school and in classrooms indicates, however, that the school has maintained the satisfactory standards seen in the last inspection. The lesson seen, in a mixed class of Years 5 and 6 pupils, was good. The teacher gave the pupils clear guidance on what was expected in terms of perspective, foreground, background and shading. Though the quality of the work was below average, all the pupils, including a number with special needs, progressed well in their learning.

133. Displays around the classrooms are generally neat but relate to areas of study and are the work of staff. Art displays in the school are sparse. There is a range of self-portraits of good quality adapted for cross-curricular purposes, one representing the pupils during circle time. These are carefully painted, full figure, and very colourful. In one of the hallways there are stained glass paintings, which diffuse brilliant colours when the sun shines. There is a series of tile paintings that relate to a visit to London. These are well painted and the pupils had scaled down the scenes well. Year 4 pupils have an interesting display of dream paintings based on artists such as Fuseli, Miro, Blake and Chagall. Overall, however, the school does not celebrate its artwork well. For example, a collection very high quality drawn and painted fuchsias deserved to be on display. A series of equally good clay and ceramic African masks, produced during the visit of an African artist, remain in the art cupboard. As a result, the contribution art makes to pupils' cultural development is limited. Resources are good but some teachers lack expertise and confidence in the teaching of art.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

134. Timetabling arrangements during the inspection meant that only two lessons, both in Year 4, were observed during the inspection. Other evidence was obtained in discussion with teachers and pupils, and by looking at completed work on display and teachers' plans.

135. When the school was last inspected, standards were below expectations for pupils in Year 2. There has been good improvement since then, and pupils currently in Year 2 are attaining standards expected for their age. The average standards attained by pupils in Year 6 have been well maintained. All inspection evidence indicates that the quality of teaching supports satisfactory progress in pupils' learning. The two lessons seen were satisfactory.

These significant improvements in provision and attainment have been achieved through the efforts of the enthusiastic and well-informed subject leader, which are helping to improve teachers' understanding of the subject. Where teaching assistants have particular expertise in the subject, such as in food technology or textiles, this is well used by class teachers.

136. The recently introduced planning arrangements are rapidly becoming established. They help teachers plan tasks that offer interest and challenge at the right level. Work on display shows that teachers place good emphasis on developing pupils' designing, making and evaluating skills. An example is when Year 6 pupils design and make structures, having studied different bridges such as *beam*, *arch* and *suspension*. They experiment with materials, combining them to ensure rigid structures, and evaluate their work as it develops.

137. Teachers expect pupils to suggest improvements to their finished products. Pupils measure accurately, cut and shape a variety of materials, and combine components to achieve the right effect. Although design and technology is taught as a discrete subject so that skills are progressively developed, effective links are also made with other subjects. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, for example, design and make houses to enhance their work in history, and pupils in Year 4 use their knowledge of electrical circuits from their science lessons, to design and build torches. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 visit the flood barriers to support their work in geography, and design and make bridges as a result. Completed work shows that boys and girls, including those with special educational needs, are fully included in lessons and make equal progress. Teachers report that pupils enjoy the subject and work hard to produce good quality work. The good behaviour of the majority of pupils, and their ability to work constructively together, makes a strong contribution to their learning. Completed work is generally imaginative and takes account of aesthetic considerations.

138. There is a sound range of resources to support teaching and learning. Tools and materials have been reorganised and are readily available to teachers. Pupils' developing skills in ICT are being used to support their work in design and technology. For example, pupils in Year 5 and 6 access websites to generate ideas for their designs. The co-ordinator has a clear plan for the future development of the subject. One area for development identified is to make better use of assessment procedures to ensure the systematic development of skills as pupils move through the school. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' literacy and numeracy skills as teachers ensure that they teach the correct vocabulary and expect pupils to measure and assemble precisely.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

139. During the last inspection, standards in geography were satisfactory for pupils aged seven and eleven. Pupils currently in Year 6 achieve high standards. This improvement lies in the detailed development of the curriculum. No lessons were seen in earlier years, due to timetabling arrangements. Planning shows, however, that there is satisfactory coverage of the subject in the planning and programmes of study. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making very good progress. In one lesson, however, a minority of boys caused disruption and restricted the learning process.

140. In Years 3 and 4 pupils were observed during their second geography lesson and were intrigued as teachers showed how to find exactly where they were in the world, starting with the globe and a large map of the world, which the pupils carefully studied. They did, however, require assistance in locating England. When the teacher challenged them, one pupil realised that as the areas covered became smaller and smaller they were able to see more detail even though the maps remained the same size.

141. In Years 5 and 6, the scrutiny of pupils' exercise books showed some high quality work on the water cycle. The subject was fully discussed and included a detailed examination of drainage, watersheds and the characteristics of the flow of rivers. The section finished with independent research on different rivers, which was well presented and of high quality.

142. One of the two lessons seen was good, the other satisfactory. The coverage of the subject is good and the pace of work rapid, and teachers capture the enthusiasm of the pupils. The marking of pupils' work is good but teachers fail to ensure that pupils follow up the suggestions they make. The teachers emphasise the technical language of the subject. Pupils write about the 'erosion' caused by rivers, the 'transportation of debris' and 'meanders'. All planning involves prepared work for pupils of all achievement levels so that all have a clear understanding of the work presented.

143. The good learning opportunities are extended by visits to the local area, which also support the personal development of the pupils. The joint subject leaders are on a temporary contract and as a result little is being done to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. Assessment procedures, however, are good. Resources are satisfactory and all classes have an adequate supply of atlases, maps and books.

## **HISTORY**

144. It was possible to see only one lesson during the inspection and no firm judgement can be made on teaching or learning. The scrutiny of work in Years 1 and 2 shows that the subject is being satisfactorily covered. A similar judgement can be made for Years 3 and 4. For Years 5 and 6 the scrutiny of work, together with the lesson seen, indicates that history is well covered in these years. Standards are at least satisfactory and have been maintained since the last inspection.

145. Over the previous half term, pupils in Years 1 and 2 compared modern homes with those in Victorian times and in other cultures, such as igloos, mud huts, log cabins and houses on wooden stilts. The work was satisfactory and is mainly recorded through illustration. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 learned about Henry VIII and his six wives. Pupils were asked to consider the feelings of the women concerned and discussed the moral issues, which brought much of the learning to life.

146. The work produced by Years 5 and 6 was of particularly high quality. Teaching in the lesson seen was very good. In learning about Ancient Greece, pupils were challenged with such questions as 'Why did we look at the physical geography and the weather first?' Their response was very good: '...to discover how people worked and lived in those conditions...' The pupils showed a good awareness that language was the unifying factor even between the warring city-states of Athens and Sparta. The pupils made good comparisons between democracies of the past and present, noting that in ancient times slaves and women were not allowed to vote. The pupils make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs, who were very well supported by the classroom assistant, made good progress.

147. The teaching of history gives pupils a good perspective on past cultures, raises moral issues, and shows how conflicts arise between different peoples. The subject is well managed. The new subject leader has a personal interest in history and has clear ideas on how to develop the subject and the contribution it makes to pupils' personal development. Resources are adequate but there is a lack of artefacts and only a small budget at present.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

148. The development of information technology has been a major focus for the school since the last inspection, when standards achieved by pupils were below national expectations. Teaching was also judged to be unsatisfactory because teachers lacked confidence. As a result, pupils' progress in learning was unsatisfactory. Although standards are still below average in the current Year 2 and Year 6, pupils are now making good progress and are achieving well in lessons. The subject leaders have good knowledge of the subject and have worked hard and successfully to improve provision.

149. Grants received have been well used to provide training for teachers and support assistants, and to purchase new, up-to-date machines. The school has recently developed an attractive computer centre, which is beginning to be used well by pupils throughout the school. In addition, there is at least one computer in each classroom so that pupils can consolidate what they have been taught in the lessons and use ICT as a tool for learning in other subjects. The use of ICT in other subjects, however, is only just developing.

150. There are good links with other schools, including secondary schools, with whom the school works on projects. For example, pupils produced good work on Barden Lake, using Microsoft Front page, in a project organised by the local secondary school. Teachers have visited primary schools in which the subject is well established, in order to improve their own teaching methods. These initiatives, together with the adoption of nationally available guidelines for the teaching of ICT, are having a positive impact on standards, and appropriate skills are now being taught in all year groups. As a result, pupils are now making good progress in their learning, but they have not yet had time to experience all the elements of the ICT.

151. The quality of teaching is good overall and, as a result, pupils are making good progress in their learning. Five lessons were observed during the inspection. Teaching was very good in one, good in two and satisfactory in two. Teachers plan effectively, using national guidance. Explanations are clear and pupils, including those with special educational needs, understand what they are to do. Lesson plans identify the skills to be developed and teachers are well focussed on what they want pupils to learn. Pupil management is good, and this ensures that all pupils have the opportunity to learn without disruption. The good behaviour of pupils in lessons, the way they help each other, and their willingness to ask for advice, make a very positive contribution to their learning. In a Year 5/6 lesson, excellent attitudes and behaviour, together with very good teaching, resulted in pupils successfully learning to type in instructions for logging on, and how to manipulate text by changing font, size, style and colour. In one lesson, where pupils were being taught in the computer centre for the first time, their excitement caused disruptions to their learning.

152. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 are making good progress in their learning mainly as a result of good teaching. Teachers are secure in their knowledge of the subject and are able to ensure that an appropriate range of work is provided for pupils. They show high expectations of what their pupils can do and are able to teach the basic skills of ICT. In a

Year 2 lesson, pupils successfully learnt to refine sequences of instructions to control tape recorders before moving on to computers. Records show that, by the end of Year 2, pupils operate a programmable toy by entering a range of instructions to get it to follow a prescribed route.

153. The good quality teaching in Year 3 to Year 6 ensures that pupils continue to make good progress. Work produced by pupils, and evidence from the school's planning, shows that by the end of Year 6 the pupils have been taught how to enter text and manipulate it by changing font, size, style and colour. They combine pictures with text, and compose and edit their work on screen. In the Newspaper Club, which is organised by one of the knowledgeable subject leaders, pupils were confidently using Microsoft Publisher when designing a front page for their newspaper which would ensure instant impact. They combine pictures with text, and confidently compose and edit their work on screen. By the end of Year 6, pupils carefully consider layout and presentation to produce work with text, maps, graphs and pictures. By the age of 11, pupils are able to use Logo to draw two dimensional shapes on the screen, including squares, rectangles and triangles, and use 'repeat' to shortcut strings of instructions. They confidently access information, using CD-Roms and the internet, but as yet they have less experience of simulation packages and monitoring technology.

154. Data handling skills are suitably planned for across the school and will have a positive impact on the knowledge and understanding of data handling in mathematics and across the curriculum. Information and communication technology is beginning to be used to support work in other areas of the curriculum and the school plans to extend this provision.

155. Pupils have now been assigned their own folders so that teachers can use this information to assess pupils' work and to provide extra support where necessary. Teachers ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have equal access to computers, and the more able pupils are well used to help those who are less confident. However, the school is aware that better use needs to be made of assessment information to plan work suited to the needs of all pupils in Year 3 to Year 6, but particularly in the case of higher attaining pupils. The school is now well placed to continue to raise standards and to make increasing use of ICT to support the other subjects of the curriculum.

## **MUSIC**

156. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' attainment in music is in line with national expectations, maintaining the standards found at the last inspection. The subject leader is on sick leave and as a result some activities have been temporarily curtailed. The instrumental work with visiting teachers continues but the instrumental work with subject leaders will not recommence until the spring term. Class teachers have prepared a programme of musical activity, with a strong performance element, primarily singing. During the inspection pupils were enthusiastically practising for a performance of *Hosanna Rock*.

157. A programme of music is played as pupils enter for assembly. Pupils are told what they are listening to and are asked to say how the music makes them feel. Pupils are aware that music influences the mood and atmosphere. They listen attentively and are sensitive to changes in style, tempo and rhythm.

158. Pupils sing well in assembly and in year group singing practices. They have been taught how to sing. Pupils sustain pitch well. They know and use the difference between loud and soft. They phrase well and their singing reflects the meaning of the words. Pupils also enjoy singing and produce a lively and engaging response to action songs. Progress in singing is good.

159. Pupils in Year 2 explore how to control the pulse of a song and use a metronome to help them. They beat time to a lullaby and a march and begin to understand the effects of rhythm and tempo. Pupils practise their knowledge by 'rocking the baby to sleep' at lullaby tempo and by marching round the room to the *Grand Old Duke of York*. Pupils quickly discover which tempo suits which event. Pupils in Year 3 learn about the pentatonic scale and how it is possible to compose a piece of music from five notes to accompany the swishing of a dragon's tale. They demonstrate their skills on a range of percussion instruments, although some are reluctant to give the dragon the thunder he deserves. Others are less reserved in their compositions.

160. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, with several good features. Of the five lessons seen, one was very good, two were good and two satisfactory. Classes are managed well and teachers generally find the right balance between creativity and control. As a result, pupils enjoy what they are doing and are given the confidence to experiment. Teachers sing with their pupils and this generates a strong sense of community, especially in assembly. Relationships are good and based upon mutual respect. Pupils are encouraged to speak up and say what they think. Teachers listen carefully to what pupils say and where possible respond to pupils' ideas. The music to accompany the dragon's tail caused a lively debate. Teachers praise and encourage the pupils at every opportunity, which encourages pupils to contribute. All pupils achieve at least satisfactorily and rather better when preparing for the end-of-term show.

161. In the absence of the subject leader, class teachers work together to produce a satisfactory programme of music education. All pupils are to take part in the Christmas production that is already stimulating interest and enthusiasm. Pupils have the opportunity to learn to play the guitar and, later in the year, the violin. Usually, the school has an active choir that contributes significantly to the community by singing in senior citizens' homes and at the local hospital. St Stephens joins forces with other primary schools for major musical events. The school is very fortunate to have several musicians on the staff, who contribute well to music making activities. There is an excellent music room, which although underused currently, provides a fine environment for the exploration and enjoyment of music.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

162. Physical education (PE) has a firm place in the school's curriculum. The satisfactory standards in attainment and progress observed at the previous inspection have been maintained. Gymnastics for pupils in Years 5 and 6 is a particularly strong feature. The teaching is ambitious and the pupils' response is very good. All aspects of the PE curriculum are effectively covered, including adventurous activities and swimming.

163. By the end of Year 2 and of Year 6, attainment is in line with national expectations. Pupils make satisfactory progress in all lessons. Progress in gymnastics in Years 5 and 6 is good. Adequate provision is made for swimming in Years 3 and 6. Pupils take a short but intensive course, taught by swimming instructors at the local pool. Most pupils learn to swim in the time allowed for this activity. All learn to be confident in the water. By the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils are able to swim to the national standard for their age group.

164. Pupils in Year 2 know how to control a ball by hand and accurately throw it to a partner. Some pupils have difficulty in holding a bat correctly and others confuse under-arm and over-arm bowling, but most are able to pitch the ball at the right height. Year 3 pupils practice and refine ball skills in the playground. Pupils throw and catch satisfactorily but occasionally take their eyes off the ball.

165. Pupils in Year 4 learn how to travel without using their feet and are agile in performing a variety of gymnastic rolls. Pupils in Year 5 show good control and imagination in performing a forward roll over the vaulting horse. Those in Year 6 create and perform dances in different styles. Pupils work well in pairs or small groups and repeat sequences of movements with increasing control and accuracy.

166. All teaching is at least satisfactory and some is good. Of the six lessons seen, two were good and four were satisfactory. In the better lessons, the warm-up is brisk and efficient, allowing pupils to assess their own fitness. Teaching is ambitious and encourages pupils to explore their physical limits within safely conducted lessons. Pupils evaluate their own work and suggest improvements that others could make. All teachers expect hard work and good behaviour and most of the pupils respond well. They have positive attitudes towards PE. A few find the freedom of physical activity difficult to cope with and are sensibly asked to take time out to settle down. Occasionally, teaching lacks pace and pupils are not kept active enough. Pupils are very well turned out for PE. This means that they can safely take part in all the activities and begin to take a pride in their achievements.

167. The PE programme is well planned and co-ordinated. All teachers are keen to see their pupils develop expertise in physical activity. As part of the adventurous activities programme, senior pupils are taken on weekend camps where they learn the key survival skills of independence and interdependence. The school has a football and netball team with a reasonable record of success in competitive fixtures. Resources are satisfactory, though some are in need of renewal. The hall is satisfactory for indoor PE but is also used as a dining hall and storage space for chairs and PE equipment. Outside facilities are good and make a positive impact upon the quality of games play.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

168. By the end of Year 2 and of Year 6, pupils' attainment in religious education (RE) meets the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. The standards identified in the previous inspection have been maintained. Pupils are taught RE from a multi-faith perspective. This helps them to understand the differences and similarities in world religions. The school celebrates the major religious festivals in assembly. This provides insight and understanding for the pupils and increases the sense of community.

169. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress throughout the school. For the majority, knowledge and understanding grows steadily. In the lessons where pupils' learning is supported by the opportunity to see and touch the symbols of world religions, such as holy books, prayer mats and various forms of dress, progress is good. Many lessons of this kind are planned but there was limited opportunity to observe them during the inspection.

170. Pupils in Year 1 learn about giving. The teacher shows the class ordinary objects that are precious to her. She invites the pupils to think of things that are precious to them that they would like to give to others. Once pupils grasp the idea, an interesting exchange between the pupils and the teacher follows. Most pupils opt to give away favourite toys. Others have difficulty accepting that precious things are to be given away at all. It is the start of understanding the difference between value and worth.

171. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn about the special journeys that people make. The teacher plays a tape of *O Little town of Bethlehem*. He refers to his visit to Bethlehem. Pupils are asked to think about other journeys and, with prompting, they name Mecca, Lourdes and the Golden Temple. They then discuss their ideas about why journeys are important to the people who are making them. Pupils in Year 6 compare different places of worship, contrasting Christian churches with the Sikh Gurdwara. Pupils discuss Holy Books and their meaning for followers of the world religions.

172. The quality of teaching and learning is good. In the four lessons seen, teaching was good in three and satisfactory in one. Lessons are well prepared and presented, although greater use of artefacts would stimulate a greater degree of interest. Teachers encourage all pupils to contribute, so that they gain confidence in expressing an opinion. Teachers work hard to gain and sustain pupils' interest but occasionally a few boys lack the maturity to join in a serious discussion and, by their behaviour, spoil the learning of others. The greater use of video and role-play would enhance most lessons. Senior pupils will shortly have access to the Internet to conduct their own research. Assessment takes place regularly as milestones in understanding are passed. Teachers are well aware of what the pupils know, understand and can do.

173. The subject has a new co-ordinator, who is supported by the deputy head teacher. It is satisfactorily managed and the curriculum closely follows the guidelines of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Artefacts to support teaching are available for all world religions. It is acknowledged that more frequent visits to places of worship would enhance learning, as would more visitors from local church communities. This process has begun and will continue as provision for RE grows and develops.