

## INSPECTION REPORT

**WRAXALL CHURCH OF ENGLAND VOLUNTARY AIDED  
SCHOOL**

Wraxall

LEA area: North Somerset

Unique reference number: 109237

Headteacher: Mrs R Newton

Reporting inspector: Jacqueline Ikin  
3349

Dates of inspection: 25-28 February 2002

Inspection number: 197472

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior School

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Bristol Road  
Wraxall  
North Somerset  
Postcode: BS48 1LB

Telephone number: 01275 854216

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Sylvia Clist

Date of previous inspection: 16 September 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
3349	Jacqueline Ikin	Registered inspector	History Geography Music Foundation Stage	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19338	Graham Ellis	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
30457	David Evans	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Art and design Design and technology Equal opportunities	How high are standards? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
23958	Christine Balson	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Physical education Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Wraxall is a small, village Church of England primary school with 87 pupils, 48 boys and 39 girls, on roll. It is a popular school and many parents choose to send their children there because of its small size and Church of England nature. Pupils are arranged into four classes according to age. All children are of white United Kingdom heritage. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national average, although this is not an accurate indicator of the context in which the school works. Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds and most children have attended some form of pre-school provision. There is a wide range of attainment on entry, but overall it is average. The nature of each year group varies considerably from year to year, often changing over the course of time as new pupils join the school beyond the usual starting time. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is broadly average. Two and a half per cent of pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need, which is above average.

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

This is a good school. It benefits from the very good leadership of the headteacher and an able and committed staff and governing body. The quality of teaching is good and pupils achieve well as a result. All members of the school community work as a collaborative team within the atmosphere of mutual care and respect, which pervades every aspect of school life. This contributes to the above average standards that pupils attain. The school gives good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Pupils achieve well and reach above average standards in English, mathematics, science and music as a result of the good teaching they receive.
- The school has a clear educational direction and has made significant improvements to the quality of education that it provides as a result of very good leadership and management by the headteacher, the commitment and hard work of all staff and the good support given by the governing body.
- There is very good provision for the spiritual, moral, and social development of pupils and, as a result, relationships are very good, there are good standards of behaviour and the school works as a harmonious community in which all are included and valued.
- A very good range of extra-curricular activities and a wide range of links with the community, particularly with the church, enrich the curriculum and make a significant contribution to the life of the school.
- The care that the school provides for pupils is very good. Their personal needs are known to all staff and, as a result, all pupils are very well supported.
- The school's partnership with parents is excellent, they are fully involved in the education of their children and many aspects of school life. Parents have very positive views about the school.

#### **What could be improved**

- The precision of assessment and marking to inform the next steps in learning for individual pupils.
- Pupils' skills of independent learning and self-evaluation.

*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 1997. Since then it has made good progress in improving standards in English, mathematics, science and music so that attainment in these subjects is now above average when pupils reach the end of Years 2 and 6. Standards have also risen in information and communication technology as a result of the school's investment in training and the provision of new

computers and a computer suite. The quality of teaching has improved considerably, with all lessons seen during the inspection being satisfactory or better. Reports to parents are now good. They give a clear picture of the progress that pupils make and cover all areas of the curriculum. The governors have secure procedures to ensure that they are well informed about all aspects of school life. They have a very good understanding of the curriculum that the pupils receive and the standards that they achieve.

## STANDARDS

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

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

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

The results of national tests for Year 6 pupils in 2001 were above average for English and average for mathematics and science when compared to national figures and also when compared to similar schools. These results are not as high as in previous years because of the small nature of the year group and higher numbers of pupils with special educational needs. Taken together over the last four years the school's results show an improving trend, which is broadly in line with the national average. The results of national tests for pupils in Year 2 in 2001 in reading and mathematics were well above national averages and the results of similar schools. Results for writing were above the national average and the results of similar schools. The results of Year 2 teacher assessments in 2001 were well above average when compared to national figures.

Inspection findings show that standards for reading, mathematics, science and music are above those expected for pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils are on course to meet or exceed the targets set for them in English and mathematics. In all other subjects of the curriculum pupils attain average standards. All pupils, including higher attainers and those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well in English, mathematics, science and music.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to the school. The majority are keen to learn and interested in their work. However, a significant minority of pupils are over dependent on adults for help with their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good both in lessons and around the school. Pupils generally work and play well together and are polite and courteous to each other and adults.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is good. They have very good relationships with their teachers and each other. Their skills of independent working are less well developed.
Attendance	The rate of attendance is well above the national average.

## 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.*

All teachers in the school quickly build warm and caring relationships with their pupils so the children feel confident and secure. Teaching in reception puts appropriate emphasis on the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and the need for these very young children to learn through practical experiences and play. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is good. Teachers are implementing the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are high and teaching methods and lesson content engage their interest. In the main, work is appropriately challenging to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Where weaknesses occur it is because of inconsistencies in marking and the use of assessment to inform planning. As a result, the next steps in learning are not always clear. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own work and develop the skills of independent learning. As a result, some pupils are over dependent on the teacher, worry about making mistakes and lack the confidence to tackle new or difficult work.

#### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality of the curriculum is good and is enhanced by a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and, as a result, pupils make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral and social development is very good. As a result, pupils distinguish right from wrong and have a good understanding of their responsibilities for themselves and towards others.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school's attention to the care and welfare and health and safety of its pupils is very good. Assessment of pupils' progress over the longer term is satisfactory, but judgements are not sufficiently precise to guide their next steps in learning.

The school's links with parents are excellent. Parents are fully involved in their children's learning and the life of the school. They give very effective support to all aspects of school life and this makes a significant impact on the quality of education that the school provides and the progress that their children make.

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

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The very good leadership and management of the school by the headteacher ensure that the school's aims and Christian values are reflected in all its work. She and her staff are highly committed to the school and work as a very effective team.
How well the governors fulfil	The governors fulfil their responsibilities well. They are strongly



their responsibilities	committed to the school and their combined strengths make a substantial contribution to it.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has a clear picture of its strengths and knows what it needs to do to continue its improvement efforts as a result of its good monitoring and evaluation systems.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes very good use of all the resources available to it and applies the principles of best value well in all aspects of its work.

The accommodation is satisfactory overall and recent improvements are having a positive impact on pupils' learning, particularly in information and communication technology. There are sufficient teachers and collectively with other staff, they have the right experience and expertise. The range of resources is satisfactory overall.

#### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The standards that the school achieves.</li> <li>• The values and attitudes that it promotes.</li> <li>• The good teaching.</li> <li>• The importance the school places on the individual.</li> <li>• The accessibility of teachers and the headteacher.</li> <li>• The way the school is led and managed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of homework that their children receive.</li> <li>• The information that they receive about homework.</li> <li>• The information that they receive about their children's progress.</li> </ul>

Parents appreciate the hard work and commitment of the headteacher and the teaching staff. The inspection team agree with the parents' positive views of the school. Regarding their concerns, the inspection team judges the information that the school gives parents about their children's progress to be at least satisfactory and often good. Inspectors also judge that pupils are given reasonable amounts of homework to support work that children do in school and judge the information that the school gives about homework to be satisfactory.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. There is a wide spread of attainment on entry to the school and the profile of each year group varies considerably from year to year. Overall it is broadly in line with that expected for four-year-old children. Pupils achieve well in relation to their starting points and by the end of the reception year the majority attain standards that are a little above those expected for their age in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. They acquire satisfactory standards in their personal and social development overall, but their skills of independent learning are below average when they enter Year 1. Pupils continue to achieve well in English, mathematics, science and music as they progress through the school, to attain standards that are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. As a result of the school's improved provision for information and communication technology (ICT), pupils achieve well and attain standards that are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. In other subjects of the curriculum achievement is broadly satisfactory.
2. Standards in English are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6 and have been maintained since the last inspection. The speaking and listening skills of most pupils are above average. By the time they reach Year 6 pupils speak clearly and have a good vocabulary. Most pupils listen attentively to their teachers and each other and show a keen interest in what is being said. Standards in reading are above average for pupils in Years 2 and 6. Younger pupils read simple texts fluently and use an appropriate range of strategies to decode new words. They read expressively, responding well to punctuation marks and can find hidden meaning. Most Year 6 pupils can analyse and appreciate a wide range of fiction and information texts and can justify their choice of reading matter. When weaknesses occur it is because older pupils have insufficient skills to draw conclusions from their reading, or look for meaning beyond the literal. Pupils generally make good use of dictionaries and thesaurus in the course of their work and use their reading skills well across other subjects of the curriculum. As a result of the school's focus on writing as an area for improvement, standards are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils take care with their handwriting and use punctuation and grammar with increasing accuracy. By the time they reach Year 6 they write in a range of styles, use a good range of vocabulary and are able to use their words carefully for impact. Work is nearly always well presented and spelling is generally accurate. Throughout the school, pupils make good use of their writing skills in other subjects of the curriculum and also make satisfactory use of their word-processing skills to enhance their work.
3. Standards in mathematics are above average for pupils in Years 2 and 6 and have been maintained since the last inspection. By the time they reach Year 2, pupils demonstrate an accurate knowledge of number facts, which they use to solve simple word problems and to develop their understanding of the relationships between number operations; for example, when addition is the inverse of subtraction. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of place value; they use whole numbers, decimals and fractions, find percentages and recognise the equivalence of numbers written in different forms. They use their knowledge of number to solve practical problems and explain their calculations. Pupils' knowledge of shape, space and measure is good throughout the school and pupils are familiar with handling data in different ways. Pupils' skills in applying their numeracy skills in other subjects of the curriculum are particularly well developed.
4. Although only one science lesson was seen during the inspection, evidence from this and pupils' work indicates that the standards achieved by the majority of pupils are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection and is due to the improved provision for science throughout the school. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use observation and handle materials to answer scientific questions. They follow simple instructions in the course of their enquiries and communicate their findings in a range of ways, including tabular

form. In Years 3 to 6 they continue to explore scientific phenomena and are able to carry out scientific tests that involve changing one factor and observing the effect whilst keeping the others the same. Pupils' knowledge of life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes is good throughout the school.

5. Standards in information and communication technology are average by the end of Years 2 and 6. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when standards were below average. As they progress through the school pupils demonstrate increasing confidence with the functions of the computer and are able to apply this knowledge to help their learning in other subjects of the curriculum. They review, modify and evaluate their work as it progresses when using the word processor and make good use of the Internet for finding things out. For example, younger pupils can make selections of type and size of font and older pupils access the Internet to find information, import this into their work and illustrate it using graphics materials. By the time they leave school, pupils are developing an understanding of the importance of technology in the modern world and how it affects their lives.
6. Pupils' attainment in music is above average at the end of Years 2 and 6. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when it was judged to be satisfactory. The quality of singing across the school is very good. Pupils sing with enthusiasm, enjoyment and commitment. The school makes very effective use of the local authority peripatetic music service, which greatly enhances musical provision in the school. Pupils play a wide range of musical instruments with increasing control and are provided with many opportunities to sing songs, explore rhythms, use percussion instruments and learn music for Christmas and Easter concerts as well as composing music in their class lessons. There are many worthwhile and well-planned opportunities for pupils to listen to music and this makes a significant contribution to their musical appreciation and their knowledge and understanding of the musical elements.
7. Standards in other subjects of the curriculum have been maintained since the last inspection and are in line with those expected at the end of Years 2 and 6 in art and design, design and technology, history, geography and physical education. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in these subjects.
8. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress both in lessons and small withdrawal groups, where they receive additional tuition from support staff. They have full access to lessons as a result of the well-targeted support that they receive and achieve well in relation to their starting points, with some attaining standards that are in line with those expected for their age. Gifted and talented pupils are identified and given work that is well suited to their capabilities in the core subjects. As a result, they achieve above average standards. The variation between the attainment of boys and girls is not significantly different from the national trend.

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

9. Pupils' attitudes to the school are very good overall. All pupils enjoy coming to school and show interest in learning throughout the range of school activities. They are full of enthusiasm when they arrive in the morning and they settle quickly. They respond positively to lively teaching. For example, in a Year 2 literacy lesson, pupils were immediately caught up in the learning because they were interested in the way the teacher developed the work on poems by demonstrating the musical aspects of rhyme. They produced their own poems based around colours and discussed the differences between fiction and non-fiction. All pupils are regarded as individuals and teachers build up good relationships with them. As a result, most pupils respect their teachers and support them in every way possible.
10. Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. This makes a positive contribution to pupils' achievements. Pupils are kind and courteous, friendly towards visitors and happy to discuss school life. Parents also feel that behaviour is good and that this is a marked feature of the school community. Older pupils can be relied upon to act responsibly towards the younger ones and especially to assist them during break and lunch-times. Pupils say that they are very

clear about what to do if bullying occurs, but that it is not a feature of school life. There were no exclusions in the last school year. Pupils move around the school in an orderly fashion and most show respect for their own property and that of others.

11. Relationships are very good amongst pupils and staff and with each other. Pupils are always kind and considerate towards one another and show respect for teachers and visitors alike. During one reading session that was observed, higher attaining pupils sensitively encouraged a pupil who found her book more challenging. In class, most pupils are attentive and concentrate well. They usually listen carefully whilst their classmates are talking and share ideas and resources well.
12. The personal development of the pupils is good overall. However, they do not have sufficient opportunities to take initiative, work independently and choose their methods of working, and, as a result, some pupils become over dependent on adults around them. Where opportunities are provided for personal development, pupils respond well. For example, they take their responsibilities on the school council seriously and appreciate the opportunity to have a forum for discussing their concerns with the headteacher. Agendas and minutes of the meeting are retained and council decisions are usually circulated to parents in the school newsletter.

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

13. The quality of teaching is good. In none of the lessons seen was teaching unsatisfactory, whilst in six out of the 27 lessons or parts of lessons seen, teaching was very good. There has been a significant improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection and, as a result, pupils learn well and make consistently good progress as they move through the school. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and constantly challenge them to do their best. Consequently, pupils work hard, acquire new knowledge and skills and increase their understanding. There is genuine use of praise and encouragement and, as a result, all are keen to be involved and respond to teachers' questions. Throughout the school, classroom organisation is good and lessons are well prepared so that the maximum use is made of the time available for teaching. Very good relationships between teachers and pupils are evident in the high level of mutual respect and trust, which make pupils feel safe and secure. Pupils are encouraged to take risks and see mistakes as opportunities for learning, however, some pupils find this idea difficult, are sometimes fearful of getting things wrong and are over dependent on adults for help and access to resources. This then limits the complexity of the work that they are able to tackle and hence the progress that they are able to make in some lessons. The school is aware of the need to develop greater consistency in marking to help pupils to understand the next steps in learning and what they have to do to improve their work.
14. The quality of teaching for reception-aged pupils is good overall. The teacher is knowledgeable about the needs of young children and the requirements of the curriculum guidance for this age group. Planning is well structured and clear and ensures that there is an appropriate balance of teacher-directed and child-initiated tasks. The range of activities that is provided is effective in enriching children's experience. Appropriately designed tasks help children to learn through play and talk. Interaction between the teachers and the children is good and supports children's learning, encouraging them to think for themselves and helping them to make progress. Children are sensitively, but firmly, managed and this gives them security in their early days of schooling. Pupils' learning skills and self-confidence are generally satisfactory, but there are not enough planned opportunities for pupils to make decisions and choices in the course of their work, so that they can learn to overcome problems for themselves and operate more independently of the teacher.
15. The teaching of English is good throughout the school. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this well to inform their planning and preparation for lessons. There is an appropriate emphasis on the teaching of phonics and the focused teaching of handwriting and spelling has resulted in improvements in these basic skills. Teachers use questions skilfully to help pupils to build on their knowledge and understanding from previous lessons, extend their thinking and develop their ideas. There are good opportunities for pupils to work in pairs to share their ideas

and this ensures that everyone is involved in making contributions to whole-class sessions. Throughout the school, lesson objectives are clearly linked to the National Strategy for Literacy. They are shared with pupils so that they understand the purpose of lessons. Good use is made of a wide range of literature to deepen pupils' knowledge of the grammar, form and structure of English. Lively and enthusiastic explanations are very effective in engaging pupils' attention and motivating their learning. When weaknesses occur it is because there is sometimes an over-use of published worksheets for group work sessions, which constrains learning for some pupils.

16. The quality of teaching in mathematics is good throughout the school and is a major factor in the good progress that pupils make in lessons and the standards that they reach. Teachers' secure knowledge and understanding of the subject results in clear planning and well-structured lessons, which help pupils to build upon what they already know, acquire new knowledge and skills and consolidate their understanding. Teachers effectively use a range of methods to ensure that all pupils are fully involved in lessons. For example; in whole-class work they target questions to different groups of pupils, ask pupils to write their answers on individual whiteboards and sometimes to hold up number cards to show their answers. The work that is given to groups of pupils is matched appropriately to children's differing needs and the capabilities of most pupils. More could be done to extend some of the higher attaining pupils through increased opportunities for them to make decisions and choices about methods and resources that they will use in the course of their work. Teachers use a good range of mathematical vocabulary and this helps pupils to acquire the language that they need to explain their mathematical thinking and develop their powers of logical reasoning.
17. Good teaching was seen in science. Wherever possible, teachers link science to real situations and there are good links to personal and social education. This helps pupils to see the relevance of science to everyday life. The quality of teaching in information and communication technology (ICT) is good and appropriate use is made of ICT to support other subjects of the curriculum. Teachers' subject knowledge has greatly improved since the last inspection and this is having a significant impact on the progress that pupils make and their positive attitudes to the subject. The teaching of music is very good. Lessons are well planned and structured to develop learning and resources are appropriately prepared to support the learning objectives. Peripatetic teachers employed by the local authority also make a significant contribution to the above average standards that pupils reach.
18. No lessons were observed in design and technology and too few lessons were seen in art and design, history, geography and physical education to form a view about teaching in individual subjects. However, overall strengths were the lively explanations and skilful questioning, together with a range of well-planned activities designed to extend pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. Where there are weaknesses it is because planning is not always sufficiently matched to the levels expected for the different age groups in each class, particularly in the non-core subjects.
19. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well so that their needs are met. Teachers and support assistants work together, often with advice from the school's special needs co-ordinator. Suitably matched work, which directly addresses pupils' individual targets, needs and stages of development, is well planned. Where necessary or appropriate, the advice and support of outside specialists are sought. In many lessons, particularly in the core subjects of English and mathematics, pupils with special educational needs benefit from the good support offered by classroom assistants. These valuable members of staff are well briefed about what the pupils might be expected to achieve and are well trained so that they are able to interact very constructively with groups of pupils and individuals, helping them to make good progress.

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

20. The curriculum provided for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is good and the National Curriculum requirements are fully met. Planning ensures that pupils have access to all subjects of the curriculum through a wide range of learning opportunities. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.

21. The two-year curriculum map ensures that there are clear guidelines for teachers to identify what pupils are to be taught each week, term and year. The use of national guidelines for planning in all subject areas has improved the quality of the curriculum since the last inspection; for example, the control elements of information and communication technology are now in place. There has been an appropriate emphasis on the time allocated to English, mathematics and science and a positive response to the increasing demands of information and communication technology. Although the content of the curriculum is effectively covered the school recognises that the schemes of work do not fully meet the needs of the school and that there is a need to give greater guidance on the progression of skills. The good practice of joint planning in Years R, 1 and 2 is very effective in ensuring both continuity and progression in learning. The school has plans to extend this practice to Years 3 to 6. Teachers' planning takes good account of pupils with special educational needs whose individual education plans clearly provide for gains in skills, understanding and knowledge in subjects such as literacy and mathematics. In the best lessons observed, the work provided for this group was well structured and teaching assistants supported pupils effectively.
22. The school provides religious education for all pupils in accordance with the Locally Agreed Syllabus and the school complies with statutory requirements by providing a daily act of collective worship. Policies and schemes of work exist for all subjects and the personal social and health education curriculum includes sex and drugs education. Arrangements for personal social and health education are good. They are most effective when pupils are given opportunities to share their experiences, views and opinions during whole-class sessions such as 'circle time'; for example, when pupils in Years 3 and 4 reflect on how they like to be treated and express ways of fairness, respect and love.
23. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been given due emphasis and have contributed well to the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection. Pupils are given good opportunities to use their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects and worthwhile and effective links are made between subjects to make learning relevant to pupils.
24. The schools' provision for extra-curricular activities is very good and makes a significant contribution to the breadth of the curriculum that the school provides and the standards that it achieves. Sporting clubs that are seasonal, such as cricket, football and tag-rugby, add to the range of other opportunities that include art, French, science and choir clubs. Pupils are given wide-ranging opportunities to learn to play musical instruments and there is a very good school orchestra. The school aims to give high priority to providing equal opportunities for all and pupils of all attainment levels and backgrounds are valued.
25. Although pupils are challenged to work independently as individuals or groups and respond positively to opportunities to accept responsibility, there are too few opportunities for them to make decisions and choices in the course of their work. As a result, some pupils do not use their initiative and are over dependent on adults for help with their work.
26. Good curriculum provision is made for pupils with special educational needs. All these pupils are totally included in all aspects of school life. They are given as many opportunities as other pupils to be involved in all areas of the curriculum and particularly in developing their skills in English and mathematics. Teachers plan well for these pupils and tasks are matched to targets in individual education plans.
27. There are very strong links with the church and the community, which extend and enrich the quality of the curriculum. The vicar and several members of the church community work in the school. The school has also visited Wells Cathedral and has been visited by the bishop. Pupils are taken out of school to investigate the locality and are involved in maintaining part of the churchyard and graves. In addition to a very good range of visits for classes, a residential experience is available for the older pupils every other year. Pupils benefit from a good range of visitors including authors and a sculptor. Good links with local businesses, farms and garden centres have benefited the school in many ways. For example, the playground has been

recently re-surfaced, a millennium garden established and the long lease of an adjacent field granted.

28. The school has extended links with the international community through the use of government funding and has established links with schools in Denmark and Greece. The school benefits from the services of a post graduate French student from Mauritius, funded by the British Council, who is supporting pupils' learning of French and the French lifestyle. The school plans to extend this link to include e-mailing to a school in Mauritius.
29. The school has developed very strong links with other schools in the area including a partner secondary school. Planned visits by pupils, sharing of resources and an exchange of teacher expertise have culminated in a successful music festival and science fair. During the period of the inspection, the headteacher of a local secondary school, a senior teacher and two past pupils of Wraxall School visited to take an active part in the daily act of collective worship.
30. Overall, the school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. During personal, social and health education lessons, pupils are encouraged to consider values and beliefs. Through the religious education syllabus and linked assembly themes, pupils gain knowledge and insight into issues affecting values and beliefs that enable them to reflect on their own experiences and feelings. Opportunities to support pupils' spiritual development occur frequently. For example, there were occasions during the inspection in collective worship, when the singing, the orchestra and a lit candle brought a sense of spirituality that enabled the pupils to be reflective.
31. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. The principles distinguishing right from wrong are promoted well and consistently by all school staff, who are themselves very good role models. Behaviour is consistently good, both within and beyond the classroom. The few incidents of inappropriate behaviour are responded to positively and consistently well. Pupils are reminded regularly of the need to show respect, be well mannered, helpful, caring and polite by all members of the school community. All pupils are well aware of the high expectations of the school's aims and behaviour code.
32. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Pupils often work collaboratively in pairs or larger groups in lessons and are encouraged to work co-operatively and take responsibility for their work and helping others. In consequence, pupils work very well together. Pupils are given good opportunities to exercise responsibility and undertake a number of regular duties in all classes and also act as 'buddies' to new pupils. Older pupils also assist with assemblies, setting up the computer suite and assisting the lunch-time supervision arrangements. The school council meets regularly and involves representatives from Years 1 to 6. It enables pupils to play a practical part in the running of the school and gives them valuable opportunities to develop confidence and expression. This includes involvement with relevant parts of the school development plan. This helps them to see how each can play a valued and useful part in the running of the school. Adults and children relate very well to each other. Residential visits give pupils opportunities to relate to each other and adults in a less formal context. Regular fund-raising for charity at home and abroad helps pupils to see that they have responsibilities towards a wider society.
33. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good and this shows an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils have appropriate opportunities to learn about Western European traditions and they develop an understanding of the diversity of other cultures. A good range of visits and visitors has provided pupils of all ages with a good awareness of their own culture. They visit museums and places of interest. Multicultural development is promoted through literacy lessons, studies of contrasting communities in geography and the study of other world faiths in religious education. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are learning about promoting inter-racial tolerance in citizenship lessons.

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

34. The school provides a very caring and supportive environment based on its Church of England ethos of respect for all those within its community. Parents speak very highly of the way in which the staff of the school promote a strong sense of community where everyone is valued. Its provision for pupils' health, welfare and guidance makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal and academic development and its strengths have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils are very well supported and encouraged to develop their individuality. The teachers know their pupils very well. They closely monitor pupils' personal development and work sensitively to support their pastoral needs.
35. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. The teachers' good knowledge of individual pupils is reinforced by a weekly recording system, co-ordinated by the headteacher, which builds into comprehensive profiles of all pupils. The headteacher works closely with teachers and support staff so any difficulties are rapidly dealt with. Additionally, the school reward scheme acknowledges special effort, thoughtfulness for others and taking responsibility for their work and life in school. Personal success is celebrated in school assemblies and classrooms. During the inspection, the respect pupils have for their teachers and the support staff was noticeable. In turn, teachers respond to pupils respectfully. Teachers encourage pupils to care for each other and to show particular kindness and patience for those younger than themselves.
36. A very good feature of the school is the way that all pupils have full access to the school's curriculum and resources. The emphasis is always upon inclusion and all pupils are enabled to take part in the activities that the school offers. Outside agencies are used when necessary and there is good provision for specific cases of need.
37. The school seeks to ensure that pupils have equal opportunities. There are good systems in place to support the academic and personal development needs of pupils with special educational needs and these pupils make good progress. The school generally caters well for higher attaining pupils and in most lessons they are suitably challenged to develop their skills further. In some lessons, pupils do not have the confidence to tackle more complex tasks and demonstrate an over dependence on the teachers and support staff for help with their work and provision of resources. This then limits the progress that they make. The entry process into the school and the later transition into secondary school, are well planned for and handled sensitively.
38. Procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour and eliminating any oppressive behaviour, are good. This is reflected in the orderly atmosphere in the school. The comprehensive behaviour policy provides clear guidelines and procedures for promoting good behaviour and dealing with any disruptive pupils or incidents of bullying. It clearly highlights the school's expectations and identifies the responsibilities of pupils, staff and parents. There is a good balance of rewards and sanctions, with staff offering a consistent approach to behaviour management. Pupils are involved in reviewing the rules and boundaries and know what is expected of them.
39. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good and are reflected in the good levels of attendance of pupils in the school. Parents are fully aware of their responsibilities regarding the need to ensure that their children attend school regularly and on time. They call in promptly to inform the school when their children are away ill. The previous inspection report stated that attendance was good and that unauthorised absence was rare. Since then, the situation has improved even further. Attendance levels are currently well above average and there is no unauthorised absence.
40. The school has very good systems in place for child protection and ensuring pupils' health, safety and welfare and very good procedures and guidelines for child protection. The headteacher, as co-ordinator for child protection, ensures that all staff are well aware of the processes involved and changes to the legislation. Well-established systems are in place to



take care of pupils who may fall ill during the day and there are effective procedures to meet the medical needs of pupils. A sufficient number of staff are qualified to provide first aid.

41. There is a comprehensive health and safety policy and effective procedures in place to address the issues of safety and security of pupils in the school. The headteacher, premises officer and the health and safety governor undertake regular health and safety checks and risk assessments and report back to the governing body. All the health and safety issues raised in the last inspection have been dealt with. In particular, the playground has been resurfaced. The governing body take their responsibilities in this aspect of their work very seriously. The school crossing patrol plays a particularly important role in ensuring pupils' safety when they cross the very busy road outside the school.
42. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory overall. In the nursery and reception classes, baseline assessment is effective in identifying children's individual needs. There are good procedures to assess the progress of pupils over the longer term in Years 1 to 6 and the information gained is used appropriately to set targets for the school and individual pupils.
43. The monitoring of academic progress for pupils with special educational needs is good. Individual education plans ensure that the work builds in small steps and contributes to good progress. The review process for pupils at higher stages on the special educational needs register, including those with Statements of Special Educational Need, is thorough and keeps all interested parties informed about progress.
44. The use of assessment information to inform planning is broadly satisfactory in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Although there is insufficient guidance to help teachers to plan precisely for the steps that pupils will need to take in order to reach the longer-term targets that have been set for them. There is less use of assessment to inform planning in the non-core subjects. As a result of this and the lack of precise guidance for the progression of skills in the schemes of work currently in use, pupils of different ages and attainment levels in the same class often tackle work at a similar level. There are some good examples of skilled questioning during the course of lessons to evaluate pupils' levels of understanding and put right misconceptions prior to the introduction of new work. Marking is inconsistent between subjects and classes. Although there are examples of detailed marking, which gives helpful information to pupils on what they are doing well and what they need to do to improve further, this is not always the case. Long-term targets are set with pupils, but there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own work so that they know how well they are progressing. Lesson objectives are regularly shared with pupils and this helps them to understand the purpose of what they are doing.

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

45. The school's partnership with parents is excellent. The parents' meeting and the results of the parents' questionnaire show that parents hold the school in high regard and appreciate the caring and supportive environment that it provides. They feel the school is open to them and that the staff are approachable and willing to listen to their comments. They also feel that there have been significant improvements since the last inspection, particularly in the quality of teaching.
46. The quality of information provided for parents is very comprehensive. Information regarding the school and its activities is detailed both in the handbook for parents and the governors' annual report to parents. Ongoing contact and information about forthcoming events is maintained through regular newsletters. Curriculum information is circulated to parents each term, enabling them to see what their children will be covering during the course of the year.
47. Parents from all parts of the community feel that the school is very accessible and appreciate the fact that they can talk to staff at the start and end of the day. They welcome the open door policy and the way the school encourages suggestions and takes any concerns they have seriously, dealing with them promptly. The school is proactive in seeking parents' views of the

school. For example, it has sent out a questionnaire, analysed the results and acted upon them. It also seeks parents' views as part of the process of planning for school improvement. The school is particularly anxious to ensure that all parents have an equal opportunity to take part in the life of the school. For example, it organises a crèche to help parents to attend meetings held in the evening.

48. Most parents reported that they are kept well informed about the progress that their children were making. Some parents who responded to the parents' questionnaire had concerns about the information that they receive about homework and the quantity that is set. The findings of the inspection are that there are systematic homework arrangements, which provide parents with the opportunity for valuable involvement in their children's education. The majority of them do so enthusiastically. The amount of homework that is set is appropriate for the ages of the pupils and procedures for informing parents about homework are satisfactory. For example, they are set out clearly each year in a newsletter.
49. A significant minority of parents who responded to the parents' questionnaire was dissatisfied with the school's provision of information on their children's progress. The inspection team does not agree with this view. The annual reports to parents are generally good. They cover all subjects with detailed general comments. They have considerably improved since the previous inspection and provide a good balance of comments on strengths and weaknesses. They provide clear descriptions of pupils' attainment and detailed descriptions of what pupils know, understand and can do in the core subjects. They also include guidance on future improvement. Although the amount of detail varies, reports are generally good. Consultation evenings are held twice a year providing opportunities for parents to review their child's progress and achievements. Targets are discussed in the autumn term with both parents and pupils. Additional opportunities for informal discussions with staff are available throughout the year and may be initiated by parents or teachers. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed about their child's progress and are involved in the review processes.
50. The school has a strong sense of community and in particular there are very good connections with the church community. Parents are invited to school events and services and these are generally well attended. The parents' association is very effectively run by a committed group of staff and parents. A number of fund-raising and social events are successfully held each year. These are well attended and generate additional funds to help to purchase resources for the school. Parents have also been proactive in raising significant funds to support improvements to the school building and site.

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

51. The leadership and management of the school are very good. The school benefits from the strong and principled leadership of the headteacher who is deeply committed to the school and its community. She has clear aspirations for the school, which reflect the school's aims and give a clear sense of educational purpose and direction of the school's work. Her hard work and determination to improve the quality of education that the school provides has been a significant factor in the improvements that the school has made since the last inspection. This is particularly reflected in the good standards of teaching, which are now evident throughout the school and which have a significant impact on the good progress that pupils make. Roles and responsibilities have been delegated well so that staff work as a collaborative team, sharing their combined strengths and expertise for the benefit of the school. Leadership is evident at every level in the school and all members of the school community, including staff, governors, parents and children, know that their work is valued and that they have an important part to play in the school's development. The senior management team comprising the senior teacher and Chair of Governors provide effective support, which is focused on improving provision and raising standards in all aspects of school life. The strong Christian ethos, in which the unique nature of each individual is emphasised, underpins the values of mutual respect and trust that pervade the school.

52. The governing body give very good support to the school and their role in monitoring its work has improved considerably since the last inspection. They have a clear view of where the school should be going and make a very effective contribution to the strategic direction of the school. Governors are highly committed to the school, hold the headteacher in high regard and have developed a trusting relationship with staff. Their combined strengths and expertise are used well for the benefit of the school and, in addition to carrying out their official duties, they give generously of their time to support the school in practical ways. The Chair of Governors, who works in close partnership with the headteacher and visits the school regularly, ably leads them. The chairs of committees carry out their responsibilities efficiently and meetings are always well attended. Governors with responsibilities for monitoring aspects of the curriculum are well informed about their subjects. The positive and constructive approach they take to school development has a beneficial effect on both the academic and pastoral life of the school. In summary, the governors have a good awareness of the school's performance, know the challenges that it faces and ensure that the statutory requirements are met.
53. The school's arrangements for monitoring and evaluating its own performance are good. The headteacher analyses the results of both national and non-statutory tests and assessments. The senior management team are fully involved in the analysis of data and the results are shared with governors. There are clear systems and procedures for school development planning, which involve all members of the school community. Priorities for development are identified accurately as a result of consultations with members of the school community, analysis of assessments and test results and monitoring of teaching and learning. The school improvement plan is located firmly within the school's long-term strategic aims and is a useful tool for development. The school has identified appropriately challenging targets for improvement and has taken effective action to meet them. Developments in the curriculum are generally managed well. The subject co-ordinators, most of whom have been in post for a relatively short period of time, inevitably carry a heavy load because of the small size of the school. They generally have good understanding of the subjects they lead because of their intrinsic commitment to the school and also opportunities given for them to be released from their class teaching commitments to monitor planning, sampling of work and observation of lessons.
54. The school is administered well. All those within the school community are kept well informed about current issues. All visitors to the school are made to feel welcome and day-to-day matters are dealt with calmly and efficiently. This makes an important contribution to the calm and orderly atmosphere that is prevalent throughout the school. The administrative officer provides effective support, which ensures finances are efficiently managed. The budget is very well planned to ensure that it is used to meet the school's priorities. It is prudently managed so that the best possible use is made of all the funding available to the school. The school benefits from additional funding streams from the diocese, the governors and the 'Friends of the School' association. This enables governors to target their spending on major developments, which are part of longer-term strategic goals. A good example of this is the recent improvement to the building. There are clear and comprehensive budget reports and governors apply the principles of best value well when considering expenditure. For example, the headteacher does not have a teaching commitment because they feel that they get better value when she has the time to carry out her leadership and management responsibilities. Governors debate expenditure rigorously. The strategic financial management of the budget is very good and ensures that there are sufficient funds to sustain developments. For example, the large carry over that currently appears in the budget is earmarked for further work that has been carried out on the building and school site and also to ensure the continuity of teaching in an uncertain funding situation.
55. All staff have a clear understanding of equal opportunity requirements and consistently put them into practice. The school is particularly sensitive to practical aspects of inclusion, such as funding of visits and ensuring pupils with disabilities or special educational needs receive the support that they need to access the curriculum. The school's ethos of respect for the individual ensures that every child is valued and supported according to their needs. The school also does all that it can to meet the varying needs of parents and to enable them to take as full a part as possible in their children's education. For example, a crèche is usually available to help those

parents who have young children to attend meetings. The headteacher is the special educational needs co-ordinator and she gives good support to the teachers in this role and ensures that resources are appropriately chosen to reflect the needs of pupils. The school's ethos is reflected in the harmony within the school across lines of gender, age and attainment level.

56. There are sufficient teachers and collectively they have the experience and expertise to cover the subjects of the curriculum and the age and attainment range of the pupils. The school also makes very effective use of expertise within its community. There are good procedures for staff development and induction, which make a significant impact on the quality of teaching. Performance management procedures are very good and are used well to identify the training needs of individual members of staff and to contribute to the school's main priorities for improvement.
57. The accommodation is satisfactory overall and recent improvements have made a significant impact on the quality of the learning environment. The development of the well-organised computer suite is already having a significant impact on improving standards. Although the school makes the very best use of its accommodation the cramped nature of the hall limits the movements of pupils in physical education and the small size of the playground inhibits outdoor play and games. The school has compensated for this by making use of other sports facilities in the area and so has been able to maintain broadly satisfactory standards in physical education. The school has recently acquired an adjacent field to augment its outdoor provision. The school benefits from the services of a handyman who has improved the general maintenance of the building. There is good use of display throughout the school to support, inform and celebrate learning. The school has a satisfactory range of good quality resources to support and enrich the curriculum in all subjects.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

58. In order to improve the quality of teaching and learning even further, the headteacher and governors should include the following issues in the school's post inspection plan:

- (1) develop the precision of assessment and marking so that there are consistent systems in each subject, which:
  - i. guide the accuracy of planning for the different needs and attainment levels of pupils in each class;
  - ii. help individual pupils to understand the next steps in learning and what they need to do next to improve their work.

(paragraphs 42, 44, 75, 76, 78, 82, 95, 99 and 104)

- (2) improve pupils' skills of independent learning so that they have the key skills and strategies to:
  - i. organise their own resources and equipment;
  - ii. make informed decisions about methods and materials that they will use in their work;
  - iii. solve the problems they will meet in learning and in life;
  - iv. reflect on and critically evaluate their own work and identify ways to improve it.

(paragraphs 13, 14, 15, 16, 25, 62, 81, 87, 93, 103 and 108)

In addition to the key issues above, the governors should also consider the following less important weaknesses for inclusion in the school's post inspection plan:

- review the schemes of work that are used for each subject to ensure that:
  - i. they fully meet the needs of the school;
  - ii. they give clear guidance on the progression of skills.

(paragraphs 21, 76, 99, 104 and 108)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Number of lessons observed	27
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	12

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	0	6	15	6	0	0	0
Percentage	0	22	56	22	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 three percentage points

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	87
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	19

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.1

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	5	6	11

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

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
*Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	N/a	N/a	N/a
	Girls	N/a	N/a	N/a
	Total	10	10	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (100)	91 (100)	91 (100)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	9	7	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
*Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	N/a	N/a	N/a
	Girls	N/a	N/a	N/a
	Total	14	12	16
*Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (93)	75 (93)	100 (93)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
*Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	N/a	N/a	N/a
	Girls	N/a	N/a	N/a
	Total	15	13	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	94 (93)	81 (93)	100 (86)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

*\*This data is not given because there are fewer than eleven of each gender.*



**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	74
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)	5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18
Average class size	22

**Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	79

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*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	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

**Financial information**

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	270,644
Total expenditure	264,748
Expenditure per pupil	3,352
Balance brought forward from previous year	34,705
Balance carried forward to next year	40,601

**Results of the survey of parents and carers**

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	79
Number of questionnaires returned	40

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	32	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	55	40	2	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	60	40	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	18	52	18	2	10
The teaching is good.	78	20	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	42	20	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	30	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	40	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	52	45	2	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	58	40	2	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	68	30	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	58	32	8	0	2

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

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

59. Children are admitted to the reception class in the September of the school year in which they become five. Induction arrangements are good and include opportunities for the children to visit the school before they start. There is a range of very well organised opportunities for parents to find out about the school and the curriculum. Most children have attended some form of pre-school provision prior to starting school, including local pre-school playgroups and nurseries. The school has good links with these groups.
60. There is a wide spread of attainment on entry to the reception class, but overall, children's language, mathematical and physical skills are broadly in line with those expected for children of a similar age. However, the personal and social skills of a significant minority of children are below that expected for children of a similar age. Children make good progress in relation to their starting points whilst they are in the reception class, to reach standards that are a little above those expected for their age by the end of the reception year. The majority of children are well prepared for the curriculum for Year 1 and 2 pupils. This is because of the good teaching they receive. The school provides a well-planned curriculum, which is soundly based on the national guidance for young children. There are good arrangements to ensure that children gain the basic skills of literacy and numeracy.
61. The school has recently enlarged its accommodation and is already making good use of it to create the rich environment for learning that young children need. A small, secure outdoor area augments the indoor accommodation. The teacher of the Year R/Y1 class works in close partnership with the Year 2 teacher. This ensures that reception age children have the opportunity for well-focused teaching, which includes opportunities for children to learn through play and talk, as well as more formal teaching of the basic skills.

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

62. Children have a wide range of personal, social and emotional skills on entry to the school, but for a significant minority their development in these areas is not as high as that expected for children of a similar age. As a result of the good teaching they receive, the majority of children develop a sense of belonging and gain in confidence when speaking in their class group. They develop a good awareness of themselves in relation to others, to respect the views and feelings of others and learn to form good relationships with their classmates. Children enjoy the interesting activities that are provided and this helps them to feel secure and happy in their surroundings. They are, however, often over dependent on adults around them for help and support and so do not acquire some of the important positive attitudes to learning that they need. For example, a sense of competence and control in the course of learning, a willingness to persevere when things are difficult and the ability to make informed decisions and choices in the course of their work. They begin to learn the language of feelings and emotions during the course of whole-class sessions when all are given a chance to speak about personal issues; for example, how they feel about their family. The development of children's social skills is good. Children are encouraged to use the conventions of courtesy and politeness from an early stage and activities that help them to get to know each other, both formally and informally, are encouraged. The teacher models the language of social conventions and consistently encourages co-operation and politeness through a range of activities that promote collaboration through play and talk. However, there are limited opportunities for children to make informed decisions and choices about the activities in which they will take part. The majority of children behave well. They understand something of the differences between right and wrong and are developing an understanding of the consequences of their actions on others.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

63. Assessments of children's early literacy skills, made during their first term in the reception class, show that their performance is generally at about the level expected for children of this age. As a result of good teaching, children make good progress in relation to their starting points, learn well and attain standards that are a little above those expected for their age by the end of the reception year. Most children develop their vocabulary so that they can name and classify objects, make increasingly elaborate statements and retell their experiences. However, their speaking skills are in advance of their listening and about one half of the children find it difficult to listen carefully during whole-class discussions and to respond appropriately to instructions. Higher attaining and more confident children are keen to answer questions and also ask questions of their own, or pass comments. When they do they express their ideas clearly and well. When children are more reticent and not readily drawn into discussions the teacher sensitively ensures that children are involved, engaging with them individually when they say little.
64. All children enjoy sharing stories and poems with their teacher. They follow the events in stories closely as the plot unfolds when they listen to stories being read aloud. They look closely at the illustrations and can use them to find out more about the characters and their feelings. As a result of these experiences, children learn that pictures and words are symbolic ways of preserving meaning. The higher attaining children are already very aware of how books work and turn readily to them. A few recognise some key words on sight and know something about the sounds that letters make. Evidence from pupils' records show that the majority of children develop a satisfactory awareness of phonics, which enables them to accurately read words in simple texts by the end of the reception year.
65. When account is taken of their starting points, all the children are making sound or better progress in letter formation and handwriting. By the end of the reception year most can form their letters accurately and write their own name neatly. Many are able, with help, to compose and write down short, simple statements and sequences of ideas. Higher attaining children can use their knowledge of letter sounds to build simple three-letter words and make very plausible attempts at spelling the words they need to convey their own ideas.

## **Mathematical Development**

66. When children enter the school at the age of four, their mathematical development is at about the level expected for their age. As a result of good teaching, they learn well and make good progress so that by the end of the reception year the majority attain levels that are a little above those expected for their age. They confidently count up to at least ten; some can count beyond that and are quite secure in combining numbers of objects and counting accurately how many are in the full set. Most children can recognise numerals from one to nine and write them accurately. Many children have a limited mathematical vocabulary when they start school. By the time they reach the end of the reception year they can talk about how they arrive at the answer to number problems such as 'one more' or 'one less' than a given number up to twenty. Many children can identify simple two-dimensional shapes such as a square, circle and triangle and recognise the language of position. They create simple patterns; for example, printing with two-dimensional shapes to depict different number sequences and patterns.

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

67. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is a little above the levels expected for their age by the end of the reception year. Children learn well as a result of good teaching that ensures a wide range of opportunities for learning, including formal input, practical play experiences and visits to places within the locality and further afield. Children begin to gain an early understanding of places of the wider world as a result of discussion on 'Brunel the Bear' and the places that he visits. They become increasingly aware of the area in which they live and of the services that people who live in the area provide. They have an early understanding of the passing of time and their place within it as a result of reflecting on changes in themselves since

they have been born and in making careful observations of old and new toys such as teddy bears.

68. Children demonstrate good standards for their age when making models from construction equipment and using computers. They follow instructions carefully and demonstrate good hand and eye control when controlling images on screen using a mouse. They are also able to control a programmable toy by giving it the correct instructions for the direction and distance they want it to travel.

### **Physical development**

69. The physical development of children varies widely on entry to the school. Whilst many are at the level expected for their age, a significant minority are below. They make good progress and learn well whilst they are in the reception class as a result of the good teaching they receive and the regular opportunities that they have to develop their co-ordination and physical skills. They benefit from suitable opportunities to develop their manipulative skills when using construction toys and when painting, drawing and cutting. Appropriate use is made of the hall for physical education, which involves the children in more formal activities in preparation for the curriculum in Year 1. There are regular opportunities to work and play in the small outdoor area where children develop the co-ordination of their larger movements by playing on tricycles and other large toys. This also contributes to their understanding of time, distance and speed. Although most children listen carefully and respond appropriately to instructions, a significant minority find this difficult and appeared not to understand or to hear when working in whole-class sessions in the hall. However, as a result of patient reminders of what was required, children eventually responded appropriately and showed a developing control over their bodies as they moved in various ways to portray their imaginative ideas of the movement of an owl or a cat as part of their work inspired by 'The Owl and the Pussycat'. They show a growing awareness of their own space in relation to others and are beginning to control the speed of their movements and to develop confidence when balancing.

### **Creative development**

70. Teaching for children's creative development is good and, as a result, children learn well and make good progress to achieve standards a little above those expected by the end of the reception year. They respond well to opportunities to express their ideas when singing, painting, role-playing and moving and dancing to music. They learn a good range of songs by heart, and sing them enthusiastically at an early stage. Children have the ability to make up their own imaginative stories when using the role play areas and small world equipment, but there is a paucity of resources to develop these skills. They are taught the skills of mixing paint and brush control and go on to use these skills in creating imaginative representations of what they see, hear and feel. There are ample opportunities for children to explore a range of different media and to use them for mark making and to compose their own pictures and patterns.

### **ENGLISH**

71. Most pupils enter Year 1 with standards in English that are slightly above average. The profile of each year group changes as new pupils join the school, particularly in Years 3 to 6, but in spite of this, pupils achieve well and reach standards that are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection and is a direct result of the good teaching that all pupils now receive. Pupils with special educational needs also achieve well and many attain average standards, as a result of well-targeted support.
72. By the end of Year 6, the speaking and listening skills of most pupils are above average. Pupils speak clearly, ask questions, follow instructions, sequence events and have a good vocabulary. Most pupils listen attentively to their teachers and each other and show interest in what is being said. They express themselves clearly and confidently when sharing their ideas. For example, during a literacy lesson in Years 1 and 2, pupils used intonation and expression well when reciting the poem 'Spaghetti, Spaghetti'. Year 5 and 6 pupils confidently discussed with the

teacher the use of alliteration and repetition when reading 'The Highwayman'. Several pupils were speaking in well-constructed sentences of a good length when answering questions and saying prayers during collective worship. In Year 6 most pupils communicate fluently, express their ideas confidently and adapt their form of speech to their audience's needs. For example, when Year 6 pupils were reading aloud 'Beowulf' they communicated their ideas about imagery clearly to each other and adults. Pupils use standard English and grammar correctly. Teachers patiently encourage those pupils who have special educational needs, using praise effectively so that they have the self-assurance to make verbal contributions and take a full part in the lessons.

73. By the end of Year 6, the reading skills of most pupils are above average. The higher attaining pupils read with fluency and expression and talked confidently about books, authors and characters. They could explain how to find a book in the library and research a topic. In Year 2, the most able readers read fluently clearly enjoying the story of 'Mrs Frisby and the Rats of Nimh'. In Year 6, the most fluent readers pronounce complicated words correctly, compare books and authors, discuss plots and characters and express opinions about how the story influences the listener. Some of the higher attaining pupils read fluently with good expression. Most of these pupils give an accurate account of the story so far and describe plots of stories they have read before. Some older pupils have not yet developed the appropriate skills to draw reasons and conclusions from their reading, or look for meaning beyond the literal. Nevertheless, pupils give considered reasons why they chose a book to read, some making reference to their favourite authors, recommendations of friends and, in the case of non-fiction books, the fact that they relate to a particular interest. Those pupils with special educational needs make good progress with their reading skills. Pupils have useful home-school reading diaries. When these are used well, they enhance pupils' learning, however, many are used as a record of what has been read and do not always say how the pupil can improve. Many pupils use dictionaries and thesauri confidently. Pupils use their reading skills well across other subjects of the curriculum. For example, they spend time researching the Egyptians and mummification in history and the Yanomami Indians of the rainforest in geography.
74. In all classes, pupils write for a wide variety of purposes and audiences and, overall, writing skills are above national expectations. The recent improvement in writing in the juniors is a reflection of the school having identified spelling and handwriting as areas to develop in literacy. Many pupils in Year 1 form letters accurately, spell simple words correctly and express themselves clearly. In Year 2, pupils successfully use sequences of short sentences and pictures when writing instructions on how to make a cup of tea. Year 3/4 pupils are able to write a report based on their trip to Caerleon. In Years 5/6, pupils successfully identify similes and metaphors and use connectives, phrases and clauses to make complex sentences. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 use joined handwriting effectively and some use pens. Pupils' spellings are largely correct and their non-fiction writing is well structured and shows a good range of vocabulary. Pupils apply their literacy skills well in other subjects; for example, when using information books in the course of research projects for history and writing letters to local associations to support their environmental enquiries. They make good use of information and communication technology to support their work in English. For example, Year 3 and 4 pupils wrote poems, prayers and thank you letters using a word-processing package and made good use of 'spell check' to identify and correct their mistakes. Standards in spelling and grammar are generally above average.
75. The quality of teaching is good overall. This is an improvement since the last inspection and is having a significant impact on improvements in pupils' learning. Teachers plan their lessons in line with the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy. Where teaching is best, there is good reference to the learning objectives at the start of the lessons. Skilful questioning is used effectively to revise and review work covered in previous lessons, before building on this to extend pupils' learning. Pupils' contributions are valued and used well to illustrate teaching points. Teachers give clear instructions and explanations and routines and procedures are well established so that pupils know exactly what to do and time is not wasted as pupils move from whole-class to independent or group work. Teachers manage behaviour well and most lessons move at a good pace. The quality of marking varies between classes. Where it is best it makes

judicious use of praise and gives helpful and constructive comments, which help pupils to improve their work. The school is aware of the need to develop this good practice more consistently throughout the school.

76. The school has an appropriate policy statement for English and this has been recently reviewed and updated. The school uses a published scheme of work for English that sometimes results in an over use of worksheets. It now needs to be reviewed so that it meets the needs of the school and incorporates up-to-date national guidance on the development of reading and writing skills. The use of assessment information to inform planning is broadly satisfactory, but there are a few occasions when an over dependence on the published scheme and a lack of guidance to help teachers plan precisely for the steps that pupils will need to take in order to reach the long-term targets, leads to less challenging work being set for some higher attaining pupils. They then make satisfactory rather than good progress. Although targets are set with pupils, there are insufficient opportunities for them to review and evaluate their own work so that they know how well they are progressing towards them.
77. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The school has identified the need to raise standards in writing as a high priority and this has had a positive effect. The co-ordinator and headteacher have undertaken some monitoring of the effects of the National Literacy Strategy on pupils' attainment through direct classroom observation and this has led to improved learning. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to challenge the higher attaining pupils and has recently written part of the school improvement plan to ensure that school based concerns, especially those relating to writing, are addressed. Resources for English are satisfactory overall.

## **MATHEMATICS**

78. On entry to Year 1 at the age of five, the mathematical knowledge and understanding of pupils are broadly in line with the standards expected for their age. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average. The profile of each year group changes as new pupils, a high proportion of whom have special educational needs, join the school in Years 3 to 6. Current work shows that standards are above average by the end of Year 6. Most pupils make consistently good progress and achieve well as they move through the school as a result of the good teaching they receive. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. The school is particularly successful at raising the attainment of lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. Higher attainers make satisfactory progress overall. Standards would be raised even further through the development of guidance to help teachers to plan more precisely for the steps that pupils will need to take in order to reach their longer-term targets. There is also a need to set more challenging investigative work at the higher levels.
79. The good progress that pupils make is evident in their work and is a result of a sound grasp of basic numeracy skills and a secure factual knowledge of number, shape and measure. Their satisfactory knowledge of mathematical facts, such as addition and subtraction, multiplication and division, odd and even numbers and place value and their ability to count in a range of different ways, contributes to the speed and accuracy of their calculations. By Year 2, pupils understand that addition is the inverse of subtraction. They are able to subtract nine or 19 using number grids and they can work out complicated word problems. They count in tens from 34 to 74 and they use multiples of five. They use everyday language to identify and describe the features of familiar two-dimensional shapes. Higher attaining pupils can recognise a hexagon and explain that it is a six-sided shape. All groups of pupils are able to make good progress over the lesson time and develop their knowledge and understanding of money. They calculate using all coins for values over £1.
80. Year 3 pupils use their knowledge and understanding of addition and subtraction to investigate combinations of numbers, which will make one hundred. Year 4 pupils show that they are adept at using a variety of methods to solve problems in their inverse operations. They are also able to calculate the time using analogue and digital clocks. Year 5 and 6 pupils worked well with mental addition problems. They explained clearly their strategies for subtraction and reported

their calculations to the class in a lively evaluation session. Year 6 pupils work competently with ratios and find percentage or fractional quantities of numbers. They measure angles to the nearest degree, calculate the angles in triangles and have a good knowledge of the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes. They are familiar with handling data in different ways and they can interpret graphs; for example, they use graphs to calculate the amount of water in a bath and the most frequently used letter in the alphabet. An impressive feature of their work is the way in which mathematical skills are applied to other subjects. Good cross-curricular links are established with history when pupils use their numeracy skills to calculate troop levels at the Battle of Bosworth in 1485. Also, they develop their measuring skills in a project on the 'Mary Rose'.

81. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has been a key feature of the school's success in raising standards. The teaching of mathematics is good throughout the school and has improved since the last inspection. Teachers show a good understanding of mathematics, which means that they make clear teaching points and answer pupils' questions accurately. Teachers expect pupils to concentrate in lessons and this has a positive effect on the quality and quantity of work produced. Most teachers organise their lessons well and use a variety of strategies to keep pupils interested. Effective use is made of probing questions to help pupils to clarify their ideas. Teachers manage pupils well, treating them with respect and giving value to their contributions. As a result, pupils are attentive and committed. There are limited opportunities for pupils to make more informed decisions and choices in the course of their work in mathematics; for example, by selecting and organising their own mathematical equipment and methods and deciding how to best represent their findings. A feature of several lessons was the way in which pupils rejoiced in the achievement of others, underlining the good relationships within the lessons. Learning support assistants provide good support to lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs and this helps them to achieve well in lessons. The use of information and communication technology is satisfactory and opportunities are being developed to extend the range of support given to pupils. Homework and an after-school club are used effectively to engage pupils in their learning and give them opportunities to consolidate their skills.
82. Although there are examples of detailed marking that gives helpful information to pupils on what they are doing well and what they need to do to improve further, this is not always the case and greater consistency is needed. Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall, but they are not sufficiently precise to guide planning and there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own work so that they know how well they are progressing. Lesson objectives are regularly shared with pupils and this helps them to understand the purpose of what they are doing.
83. The leadership and management of mathematics are satisfactory. The co-ordinator provides appropriate leadership and direction in order to raise standards. The monitoring of teaching is generally satisfactory. Accurate analysis of national tests, pupils' work and other assessments has led to well-targeted support for lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs.

## SCIENCE

84. Only one science lesson was seen during the inspection, but evidence from this and pupils' work indicates that pupils achieve well and attain above average standards by the end of Years 2 and 6. This represents a good improvement since the last inspection and is due to the improved provision for science throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and receive good support from the class teachers and learning support assistants. No significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls were observed.
85. There is good teaching of the key scientific vocabulary and essential facts and this harnesses the pupils' enthusiasm to learn and helps them to articulate their understanding. The pupils' very positive attitudes to the subject make a considerable contribution to their progress in lessons. Very effective links are made between science and pupils' personal, social and health



education, which adds interest and relevance to lessons. For example, in Year 2, pupils investigate a day at the doctor's and they learn safety in regard to taking medicines. In Year 2, pupils know and can write about the different kinds of teeth and they show a good understanding of healthy eating habits. Year 2 pupils' work on bones in the body and food groups is sufficiently detailed to ensure good achievements in pupils' knowledge and understanding. They make effective use of information and communication technology to prepare suitable graphs on their favourite foods. They measure accurately and record their findings in tabular form. Higher attainers appreciate that creatures and plants live in a range of habitats.

86. In Year 3, pupils are developing an understanding of materials and their properties and they carry out appropriate experiments to test for magnetic forces. By the end of Years 5 and 6, pupils show detailed knowledge of forces such as gravity and air resistance. Through discussion, they prepare and implement a fair test, demonstrate their ability to eliminate variables, select appropriate materials and make reasoned predictions based on earlier experience. They know how to measure in Newtons and to record their findings accordingly. Pupils apply their numeracy skills well in the course of their scientific investigations; for example, working out fractions and percentages easily. In discussion with visitors, pupils use appropriate scientific vocabulary to describe the main functions of the most important human and plant organs and to compare patterns in the life cycles of animals and plants.
87. At the time of the last inspection it was stated, 'Pupils carry out a wide range of investigations, but do not always design enough of their own experiments'. By the end of Years 5 and 6, pupils respond well to the teachers' high expectations and are good at asking perceptive questions and solving problems. There are, however, too few opportunities for pupils to ask their own scientific questions, follow their own lines of enquiry and make informed decisions and choices about investigative methods. Use of resources are limited. This is recognised by the co-ordinator and included in the school's action plan for this current year.
88. The overall quality of the teaching is good and has improved since the last inspection. Work is well planned and resources are carefully prepared to prevent any unnecessary delays in the transition from whole-class instruction to practical activity. In the lesson seen, there were good strategies to involve all pupils in discussions and to ensure that all had opportunities to participate in tasks. The teachers' secure knowledge of the subject is evident in thorough planning that ensures that pupils are covering a wide range of work over the year. Some evidence was noted of pupils using information and communication technology (ICT) in science. The school has recognised that this is an area for future development now that the school's provision for ICT has improved.
89. The co-ordinator, who was recently appointed to the role, has made a good start. She has monitored the subject and accurately identified the areas that need to be improved. The science curriculum is balanced and it makes a sound contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Assessment procedures are broadly satisfactory, but there is scope for more detailed guidance to inform planning for the different ages and attainment levels of pupils, particularly in the skills of scientific enquiry. There is an after-school club run by the co-ordinator where pupils were observed doing the work of detectives and experimenting with fingerprinting techniques. This makes a positive contribution to pupils' understanding of the application of scientific skills to everyday life and the world of work.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

90. Pupils' achievement in art and design is satisfactory and standards, which have been maintained since the last inspection, are in line with national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6.
91. By the end of Year 2, pupils have experienced a range of media, styles and materials and have a satisfactory knowledge of line, colour and pattern making. Pupils' observational skills develop well. For example, in Year 3 they use model viewfinders to record first-hand observations and

explore ideas. As a result of these careful preparations, they draw precise pictures. In Year 5 and 6, pupils use a variety of shapes, line and colour to convey emotional feelings in abstract paintings. They design graphic and realistic coats of arms that reflect different aspects of their family life. The portfolio of one gifted pupil contains a range of artwork on different aspects. There are detailed drawings of the school building, creative images of alien spaceships, as well as a memorable family coat of arms.

92. Throughout the school, art and design is carefully related to other curriculum areas and this is a strength of this subject. There are effective displays of healthy eating diets and lessons in literacy. Year 5 and 6 pupils design colourful pictures in the Tudor style of portraiture. In Year 5 and 6, pupils prepare meaningful drawings and pictures based on the theme of 'rules for living and working together'. This helps to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils throughout the school.
93. Only two lessons were observed and so there is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching. However, in the lessons observed, teaching was at least satisfactory and there were some good features. These included good subject knowledge and the use of well-prepared resources to support the learning objective of the lesson. High expectations of behaviour and constant encouragement were effective in encouraging pupils to evaluate, modify and improve drawings so that, by the end of the lesson, the majority of pupils demonstrated a sense of creative achievement. However, pupil's skills in the selection of the methods and processes that they use and in the preparation and organisation of their own resources, are not sufficiently developed.
94. Pupils enjoy art lessons and they work hard to improve artistic skills. Most pupils display a real enthusiasm for art and design and they behave well. Pupils with special educational needs were well integrated into the lessons observed and some display a genuine talent for artwork.
95. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of her role, but she is relatively new to the post. She understands clearly the priorities of the subject and has a good subject knowledge. She recognises the need to modify the scheme of work to meet the needs of the school and to establish a clear progression of skills in the subject. Individual teachers assess work satisfactorily, but there is insufficient consistency between classes. The use of information and communication technology to support the subject is in the early stages of development.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

96. No lessons were observed during the inspection, but there were many examples of pupils' completed work on display. From these and discussions with pupils and the co-ordinator, it is judged that attainment is broadly in line with the standards expected at the end of Years 2 and 6 and that achievement by pupils is satisfactory.
97. Particular strengths are in the planning of work and the making of products. In Years 1 and 2 pupils generate ideas by drawing on their own experiences and use talk, pictures and models to develop and communicate their ideas. They select tools, techniques and materials from a range suggested by the teacher. They learn to shape, mark out and cut a range of materials and combine them in various ways. They begin to understand how to use materials in different ways to make them stronger; for example, folding card to reinforce their models. They also demonstrate an early understanding of how mechanisms can be used in different ways; for example, using wheels and axles and joints to create movement. Pupils develop their planning skills further in Years 3 to 6. They generate ideas for products after thinking about who will use them and for what they will be used. For example, Year 5 pupils have combined materials to create musical instruments, which are proudly displayed in the school hall. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 have undertaken investigations into bread making and also prepared a Christmas cake, created a box to put it in and investigated marketing strategies. They develop their understanding of more complex mechanisms; for example, pupils in Year 3 show an understanding of how pneumatic systems work when making moving monsters. Throughout the school, pupils show a good awareness of food safety and hygiene. Pupils' skills of self-

evaluation are less well developed and there is limited use of control technology because the recent improvements in provision for information and communication technology have not had time to become thoroughly embedded.

98. There is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about teaching. Planning shows a secure knowledge of the requirements of the National Curriculum. Much of the work planned is very similar, however, there is insufficient information to show how it will support the progression of skills for the different ages and levels of attainment in each class. Pupils have very positive attitudes to the subject. They speak with knowledge and enthusiasm about activities undertaken over a year ago. This reflects a very positive response to the wide-ranging demands made by teachers. Many of the finished products show high expectations on the part of the pupils and teachers in terms of imagination, suitability for the purpose and presentation.
99. The co-ordinator has worked hard to monitor the curriculum and give informal support to individual teachers. She is keenly aware of where the subject needs further development. Teachers' long-term planning is based on a published scheme of work, but this now needs to be refined in order to reflect the particular needs of the school and give clear guidance on the progression of skills. Assessment procedures do not provide teachers with sufficient information to inform planning for pupils' differing needs. As a result, achievement in the subject is satisfactory rather than good.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

100. The last time the school was inspected, standards in geography were in line with expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6. During the course of this inspection only two geography lessons were seen, but evidence from these and pupils' work indicates that these standards have been maintained since the last inspection and that pupils' achievement is satisfactory.
101. By the end of Year 2, pupils are able to use simple plans and, for example, can locate the school and the school grounds by looking at maps of the local area. They have broadened their knowledge and understanding of places beyond their locality as a result of imaginative teaching, which has involved pupils in following the travels of a character called 'Floppy', around the world. For example, in discussing an impending visit to France pupils have found out how Floppy will get there, what he will eat and what he is likely to see. Their appreciation and understanding of the lifestyles of the people who live in France has been extended by worthwhile opportunities to work with a French student who is able to impart first-hand knowledge of the way of life in France and how it differs from life in this country.
102. In Year 3 and 4, pupils continue to develop their knowledge of map work and are able to read Ordnance Survey maps of the local area with increasing accuracy. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good knowledge of local places. This is due to good teaching, which strongly emphasises fieldwork. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of environmental change and their appreciation of the application of geography to environmental, social and political issues is good. They achieve well when carrying out geographical enquiries because good teaching encourages them to pose their own questions and make decisions about how to present their findings. For example, when investigating the effects of the development of a new supermarket on other amenities in the area pupils carried out their own surveys, examined local statistical data and compared contrasting views of both young and older people in the area. Older pupils have also investigated the likely effects of a proposed overhead conveyer system from a local quarry and sought out the opinions of local groups who were both for and against the development. Pupils make use of the knowledge and skills gained in the understanding of local issues to further their understanding of more complex worldwide issues; for example, the environmental and ethical issues surrounding mining in the Amazon forests and the impact that such developments have on the local indigenous population. Pupils develop a sound understanding of the physical processes involved in the shaping of land; for example, the water cycle. Opportunities to study a river in the local area, further consolidate this understanding. There are very good opportunities for older pupils to apply their mathematical skills in the course of geography. For example, in Years 3 and 4 they plot routes using grid references and in Years

5 and 6, they plot the profile of a local river as well as its rate of flow. Pupils make satisfactory use of their information and communication technology skills in geography. For example, pupils have compiled their own 'travel brochures', which include information that has been gleaned from a CD-ROM or from the Internet about a wide range of countries.

103. In the two lessons in Years 3 to 6, teaching was good. The lessons were very well planned and clear explanations and skilled questions ensured that pupils of all levels of attainment were involved in the lesson. Appropriately challenging work was set at a range of levels in order to ensure that pupils had access to learning and that their knowledge and understanding would be moved on in the course of completing the tasks. Ongoing interaction during the course of lessons helped most pupils to overcome misconceptions and constantly encouraged them to think for themselves. However, in some instances pupils gave up very quickly when they met a difficulty and were over reliant on the teacher for help.
104. The subject is well managed and an appropriate nationally recognised scheme of work is in place to ensure coverage of the subject and provide a framework for planning. The scheme does not fully meet the needs of the school and gives insufficient guidance on the progression of skills. Assessment procedures are inconsistent and not sufficiently rigorous to give teachers the precise information that they need to inform planning and this means that progress in the subject is mostly satisfactory rather than good.

## **HISTORY**

105. Although only two history lessons in Years 1 and 2 were seen during the inspection, the evidence from these and pupils' work indicates that pupils' achievement is satisfactory and that standards are in line with those expected by the end of Years 2 and 6 and have been maintained since the last inspection.
106. Pupils throughout the school develop a satisfactory sense of chronology as they progress through the school. For example, most pupils in Year 2 are able to recognise the features of toys that suggest that they are old, coming from a time before they were born and say something about how they are different from the toys of today. As they move through the school they locate different periods and events in British history correctly on a timeline and use correct dates and terms relating to the passing of time. They acquire a satisfactory understanding of the differences between the ways of life for people who lived a long time ago. For example, in Years 1 and 2, pupils know something of what it would have been like to be a child in Victorian times. In Years 3 and 4, children are developing their understanding of the way of life in Ancient Egypt and develop their understanding of the contrast between the Celtic and the Roman way of life. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 develop a sound understanding of why certain important characters in British history, such as Henry VIII, acted as they did. Pupils make appropriate use of a range of sources of evidence for finding out about history, including information books, computer based data banks and visits to historical sites both locally and further -afield. There is less evidence of pupils applying the information finding skills that they acquire by asking their own questions and following their own line of historical enquiry. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support their work is being developed in line with the use of the new ICT suite.
107. There is insufficient evidence to give an overall judgement about the quality of teaching, but in the lessons seen, teaching was good. There were lively and informative explanations and good use of a range of resources to illustrate teaching points. Lessons were well planned with clear learning objectives, although much of the work seen is similar for pupils of different ages and abilities in the same class.
108. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The school has adopted a nationally recognised scheme of work, which supports planning and ensures the coverage of the subject. However, it gives insufficient guidance on the progression of skills, particularly in regard to how the subject is to be taught in mixed-age classes. The school recognises this and the need to modify the scheme to make it fit the school's needs is recognised in the school development plan.

Assessment is satisfactory, but it is not consistent. A manageable assessment system is required, which can be used to aid progression in learning as children move through the school. The lack of a secure assessment system and guidance on the progression of skills contributes to standards being satisfactory rather than good.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

109. At the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The school has only recently been equipped with a computer suite so pupils have had limited access to equipment until recently and their starting points were below average. The majority, including those with special educational needs, achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. The key factors in this improvement are the addition of an information and communication technology suite and the increased confidence of staff in teaching the subject. This is the result of effective targeting of funding for equipment and training and the expertise of the subject leaders whose guidance to colleagues is highly appreciated. Clear priorities for the subject have been identified with all developments being effectively monitored and evaluation used judiciously to improve provision and standards.
110. The school has adopted the national guidance for its scheme of work and this is ensuring that there is an appropriate balance between the different elements of the subject and that skills are developed systematically. As they progress through the school, pupils demonstrate increasing confidence with the functions of the computer. They learn to select appropriately from menus and to use the computer to support their learning in other subjects. For example, in Years 1 and 2, using the 'Write Away' programme pupils could identify and underline words in the text they were reading on the computer screen. Pupils can save and retrieve their work and have a growing confidence and familiarity with information and communication technology. As they progress through the school, pupils master increasingly complex tasks. They learn to improve the appearance of their work by selecting appropriate fonts and can use their draft work to compose and edit on the computer using the 'spell check' facility. In Years 5 and 6, pupils work in pairs to evaluate the Internet home pages and to note the features they think are helpful. This is a preparation for designing their own -multimedia page. The school provides pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum that systematically develops their knowledge and understanding effectively. By the time they leave school, pupils are developing an understanding of the importance of technology in the modern world and how it affects their lives.
111. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They are enthusiastic about the subject and use computers and other equipment responsibly. They work well individually and in pairs, concentrating on their task and responding well to their partners. They readily take turns and willingly help each other. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is good. They listen well and carry out the tasks with enthusiasm. When they do not understand the task, or do not have the necessary skills to carry it out they actively seek support from each other and other adults who are helping in the classroom. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in every activity.
112. The quality of teaching is good overall and planning is satisfactory. Teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn from each activity and strike a good balance between the direct teaching of skills and allowing pupils to try out their new knowledge in the course of English, mathematics and geography. There are plans to develop the use of ICT in other subject areas. Teachers organise their lessons well, thinking carefully about pupil groupings and the use of learning support assistants.
113. The subject is well led. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. She has produced a very good action plan for the future development of the subject, based on a thorough appraisal of the school's current strengths and needs. The school is well placed to further improve standards in information and communication technology because of the vision of the co-ordinator, the enthusiasm of all the staff and the commitment of teachers to develop their personal computer skills. The newly opened computer suite has enlarged the space available for teaching and learning, however, the room is somewhat small for a complete class of 30 pupils.

## **MUSIC**

114. Pupils' attainment in music is above that expected at the end of Years 2 and 6. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when it was judged to be satisfactory. The quality of singing across the school is very good. During assemblies and in hymn practices pupils sing a wide range of hymns and songs. They sing with enthusiasm, enjoyment and commitment as a result of very good teaching, which helps them to understand and bring out in their singing the meaning of the words. They listen carefully to instructions and explanations and respond appropriately, especially to the idea of singing with expression. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well and make good progress as they are given opportunities to join in singing and music making with instruments.
115. The school makes very effective use of the local authority peripatetic music service. Nearly one third of the pupils at the school take some form of instrumental tuition. Because of this the school is able to have an orchestra comprising brass, woodwind, keyboard, string and percussion instruments. This greatly enhances musical provision in the school. Pupils are provided with opportunities to sing songs, explore rhythms, use percussion instruments and learn music for the Christmas concert and Easter service as well as composing music in their class lessons. There are many worthwhile and well-planned opportunities for pupils to listen to music and this makes a significant contribution to their musical appreciation and their knowledge and understanding of the elements of music. This is because such opportunities are always well planned; for example, when listening to music in assembly pupils' attention is drawn to the dynamics or timbre of the piece.
116. The quality of the teaching and learning is very good. Music is very well taught throughout the school. Learning objectives are shared with the pupils and effective explanations and demonstrations enable pupils to develop a good grasp of the key elements. The main emphasis of the work is on singing, playing and performing skills with some opportunities for creating and developing musical ideas.
117. Co-ordination of the subject is very good. The co-ordinator has a clear programme for evaluating standards and view of how she wants to improve the subject even further. Her own confidence and enthusiasm for the subject make a significant contribution to the way that music is taught and the standards that are achieved throughout the school.
118. The resources for music are good and include a good range of tuned and untuned percussion and recorders. A member of the local community visits the school regularly to teach the recorder and this makes a significant contribution to the quality of music in the school.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

119. It is not possible to make a secure judgement about standards and achievement in physical education because insufficient lessons were observed during the inspection. Due to the adverse weather conditions during the week of the inspection, outdoor games lessons had to be cancelled and it was only possible to observe dance lessons that were held in the hall. Overall, pupils' progress in these lessons was satisfactory and standards were typical of those expected for Years 2 and 6 nationally. Discussions with pupils indicate that they have a satisfactory knowledge of the skills and tactics required for striking, field and invasion games. Evidence from photographs also showed pupils taking part in field events and gymnastics with enthusiasm and style.
120. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 explore basic skills, actions and ideas with increasing understanding. They remember and repeat simple actions demonstrating increasing control over their movements in activities designed to produce stretching, curling and swaying body shapes as pupils move around the hall space. They explore their movements and combine them in different sequences, linking them well as they change levels, speed and lines of dance and using their arm and leg movements expressively. They describe what they have done, observe and describe

what others have done and use what they have learned to improve the quality and control of their own work. Pupils are aware of the need to warm up and cool down before and after physical activity and have a satisfactory awareness of how exercise affects their bodies. They also understand the need to wear appropriate clothes and that being hygienic is good for their health and safety.

121. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 consolidate the skills that they have learned lower down the school and perform actions with increasing control and consistency. They plan and adapt their compositional ideas; for example, by developing their dance, working in pairs to produce sequences of chopping actions that are developed and extended through the use of different levels and changes of direction. They also begin to place a moment of stillness into their dance routines. They identify what makes a performance effective and suggest improvements based on this information. In a Years 5 and 6 theory lesson that replaced an outdoor lesson that was abandoned because of the weather, pupils demonstrated a good understanding of why physical activity is good for their health and well-being and also showed a good theoretical knowledge of some of the rules, skills and tactics of team games.
122. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and pay appropriate attention to health and safety with clear warm-up and cool-down routines. Lessons proceed at a good pace. Teachers make good use of pupil demonstrations and encourage pupils to assess each other's work and offer ideas for improvement. Pupils respond well to their lessons, working hard and making good progress in dance during the lessons seen. The planned curriculum covers all the required aspects and pupils in Years 2 to 6 have access to swimming lessons.
123. The school hall is somewhat cramped when a complete class of pupils are taking part in dance. The recently acquired playing field adjacent to the school will improve the provision that the school makes for physical education. There are good opportunities for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities that include opportunities for professional coaching for cricket, football and tag-rugby. They also have the opportunity to take part in competitive sporting activities involving other schools.