

INSPECTION REPORT

BREACHWOOD GREEN JMI SCHOOL

Hitchin

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117119

Headteacher: Mrs Rosemarie Bethel

Reporting inspector: Ms Vreta Bagilhole
17517

Dates of inspection: 2nd - 4th July 2001

Inspection number: 207586

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Oxford Road Breachwood Green Nr Hitchin Hertfordshire
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Wood
Date of previous inspection:	22 nd September 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17517	Ms Vreta Bagilhole	Registered inspector	English History Geography Religious education Aspects of education for children in the Foundation Stage	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
8919	Mr John Kerr	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
18936	Mrs Carol Frankl	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Music Physical education Special educational needs	
1068	Mrs Jan Allcorn	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Information and communication technology Equal opportunities	How well is the school led and managed? 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

Breachwood Green Junior Mixed and Infant School is a rural village school that takes pupils up to the age of eleven. There are four mixed age classes, two for each key stage. It has a mixed intake of children, some coming from the village of Breachwood Green, the surrounding hamlets and villages and some coming from nearby Luton. The school is smaller than other primary schools. The number on roll is 103 and the average class size is 26. Six per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is below average. Most of the pupils are from a white UK heritage. There is a small proportion of pupils of white European heritage who speak English fluently. The pupils live in privately owned, rented and local authority housing in the area. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs (37 per cent) is above the national average. The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs (1 per cent) is average. The children start in the reception class in the September of the academic year in which they are five. Most have attended a playgroup or nursery locally before starting school. The attainment of the pupils on entry to the reception class is average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is a happy and thriving community, where relationships between staff, children, parents and the local community are very good. It is an effective school. Standards in mathematics are high and those in English and science are good. The headteacher has led the school well through a challenging year because of difficulties in recruiting appropriately qualified and experienced staff. This has been due to temporary job share situations, maternity leave and staff sickness. She and the permanent staff of the school have managed very well. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in English and science are above average and those in mathematics are high.
- The pupils are very productive and independent workers. They thoroughly enjoy their work and are very involved in activities.
- The leadership provided by the headteacher is good and she has been successful in maintaining the stability of the school during the staffing difficulties in the last year.
- The school has excellent links with parents.
- The playground activities and supervision are very good.

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology are not high enough by the time pupils leave school at eleven years of age.
- The quality and use of marking and day to day assessment by teachers is unsatisfactory and, because of this, pupils do not have a good understanding of their own achievements.
- The school has been unable to maintain the breadth and balance of the curriculum for pupils in Years 5 and 6 due to long-term staff absence and recruitment difficulties.
- The school does not meet statutory requirements in swimming.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in September 1997. It has made good improvement since then. Improvement in the standards it achieves is good and there is greater consistency in progress for all pupils, particularly for those who are more able. Good improvement has also been made in the quality of teaching. Pupils' records in English and mathematics are being consistently used to guide planning. Monitoring the standards of attainment and the depth to which some subjects are taught has improved significantly. The governors have satisfactorily developed the monitoring of the implementation of the school development plan and the evaluation of initiatives as they relate to the quality of education and value for money. However, marking is still not used sufficiently to show

pupils how they can improve their work. Overall, the school is in a good position to make further improvement.

STANDARDS

Test results need to be treated with caution because of the large differences in year group size, which often contain less than 10 pupils. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests the school's performance in mathematics was very high in comparison with the national average and with those of similar schools. The school was in the top five per cent of all schools nationally in 2000. Standards in mathematics have been rising significantly as a result of the subject being a major focus in the school development plan over the last few years. As a result, all pupils are highly motivated in the subject and pupils who have special educational needs are doing very well. However, because they find literacy skills more difficult, those pupils with special educational needs do not do so well in English and science. This has affected the picture given by the test results in English and science, which show that standards in both these subjects for the year 2000 are well below average by the age of eleven. Inspection evidence finds that, overall, by the time they leave the school, pupils' attainment in mathematics is high and their performance in English and science is above average. Pupils, including those who have special educational needs and who are gifted or talented, make good progress, except in information and communication technology where the progress and standards of pupils are not good enough by the time they leave the school. This year the progress of pupils in Years 5 and 6 has been affected by weaknesses in the breadth and balance of the curriculum, due to recruitment difficulties brought about by the long-term illness of a member of staff.

In other subjects, standards are above average in religious and physical education in both key stages and in history at Key Stage 2. Standards in art and design, geography, music, design and technology are in line with those expected nationally for pupils by the end of each key stage. The children in the reception class make good progress and, by the time they leave reception, they have exceeded the standards expected for children in the Foundation Stage in all areas of learning except creative development, which they attain satisfactorily.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good: The pupils thoroughly enjoy all that the school provides and become very involved in their activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good: Pupils are very polite and respectful throughout the school day. The school has a policy to include pupils whose long-term behaviour is unacceptable. Three pupils have, however, been excluded during the past year for an accumulation of unacceptable behaviour. These were fully justified.
Personal development and relationships	Very good: Pupils form very good relationships with their teachers and with each other.
Attendance	Very good: Attendance at the school is very good, being well above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	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.

The quality of teaching and learning, overall, is good. The pupils are very productive and independent workers and this is strength in learning throughout the school. Ninety three per cent of teaching is satisfactory or better and 17 per cent is very good or better. Seven per cent of teaching in the school is unsatisfactory.

Teaching in English, including literacy, is good. It is very good or excellent in Years 3 and 4. Teaching in mathematics, including numeracy, is good. It is very good in Year 2. The teaching of science is good in Years 1 to 4 and unsatisfactory in Years 5 and 6. Teaching for children in the Foundation Stage is good in all areas of learning, but there are some unsatisfactory features in language and literacy. The teaching in history, music, religious and physical education and special educational needs is good; in these subjects and areas; pupils make good progress. The teaching in small groups of pupils with special educational needs is very good. Teaching of information and communication technology is satisfactory in Key Stage 1, but unsatisfactory, overall, at Key Stage 2. Little or no teaching of art and design, geography and design and technology was seen during the inspection, but evidence of pupils' work and teachers' plans indicates that it is at least satisfactory, overall. The main strengths in teaching are in the planning, management and organisation of lessons. Very good use is made of resources. The main weakness in teaching is in the teachers' use of day to day assessments of the pupils' work and in using these assessments to help the pupils overcome difficulties and improve. Marking consists mainly of ticking pupils' work. Pupils do not sufficiently understand or know on a regular basis about their individual targets for improvement other than in their annual reports. These reports are very good. The quality of teaching in Years 5 and 6 has been affected this year, particularly in science, due to the temporary teachers' lack of understanding of the requirements of the programmes of study.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory for children in the Foundation Stage and good at Key Stage 1 and in Years 3 and 4. It has been unsatisfactory in Years 5 and 6 this year because of staffing difficulties. The strengths of the curriculum are the good range of visits and visitors to the school. The school does not meet statutory requirements in information and communication technology and swimming.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good: Pupils receive extra support in a small group situation and this is effective in helping them to take part in all subjects of the curriculum, not just English.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good: Opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. There is particularly good provision for pupils' moral and social development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good: Staff know the children very well and provide a safe and friendly environment in which pupils make good progress in their learning and development. Procedures for monitoring behaviour and attendance are very good. Assessment procedures are good in English, mathematics and science, but need developing in other subjects.

The playground activities and supervision are very good. Pupils enthusiastically use the playground equipment that the school and parents have recently funded. This has a very good impact on pupils' physical, social and moral development and contributes very well to the happy environment of the school. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is excellent. They are highly satisfied with what the school stands for, the standards achieved at both key stages and the way the school encourages their children to mature. There is a strong sense of community locally and a commitment to see the school thrive at its centre.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good: The high commitment, enthusiasm and hard work of the headteacher make a significant contribution to the school's good achievements and its happy working environment. She has led the school well through a difficult year. Her senior teacher has been on leave of absence and another teacher has been on long term sick leave. Half of the classes have been covered by supply or temporary appointments. There have been difficulties in recruiting appropriately qualified and experienced new permanent staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory: Governors are very supportive of the headteacher and committed to the school. They conscientiously undertake their role. Statutory requirements are mostly met, except National Curriculum requirements for information and communication technology and swimming.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good: Since the last inspection, governors and members of staff have worked effectively to improve provision and practice, with the result that standards have risen.
The strategic use of resources	Good: The day-to-day use of resources is good. All finances are targeted well at the identified priorities on the school development plan. The principles of best value are applied well. Resources and the accommodation are good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and are making good progress. • The school expects their children to work hard and achieve his or her best. • The school is helping their children become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some are unhappy about the amount of homework. • The range of activities outside lessons.

Inspection evidence agrees with the positive views of parents. Some parents at the pre-inspection meeting said they thought that the time allocation of homework had not been made sufficiently clear. The provision for extra-curricular activities is good. In this respect the concerns shown by some parents are not justified.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards are higher than at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils are achieving well. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress, except in information and communication technology where the progress of pupils is not good enough. The rigorous assessment systems in English and mathematics have accurately identified gifted pupils in both key stages. These pupils are being well challenged in lessons. Pupils in Key Stage 1, who are the most able, are doing very well. This year, these pupils have attained the levels expected for eleven-year-olds in reading and writing by taking the extension tests. However, this year, the progress of pupils in Years 5 and 6 has been affected by weaknesses in the breadth and balance of the curriculum, due to recruitment difficulties brought about by temporary job share situations, maternity leave and staff sickness. The school has set challenging targets for performance in national tests in English and mathematics and is on course to meet them. There is little difference between the performance of boys and girls.
2. Children start in the reception class in the September of the academic year in which they are five. Local authority tests on admission place their attainment as average. Most children have benefited from pre-school education before they start school. The children make good progress and, by the time they leave reception, they have exceeded the standards expected for five-year olds in all areas of learning except creative development, which they attain satisfactorily.
3. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests for both key stages, the school's performance in mathematics was very high in comparison with the national average and with those of similar schools. The school was in the top five per cent of all schools nationally in 2000. Preliminary results for this year indicate that the school is maintaining this performance. The 2000 tests also show very high standards in writing at Key Stage 1 and well above average standards in reading. Standards have been well above the national average for the last three years. Test results in this school need to be treated with caution because of the large variances in year group size, which contain significant differences in the proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The effect of one additional pupil can be considerable. Inspection evidence finds that by the age of seven, standards of attainment in reading and writing are above average at the end of Key Stage 1 and that standards in mathematics are high. In the 2000 national tests at Key Stage 2, standards in English and science were well below the national average and those of similar schools. This year group contained pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties who had been excluded from the school. The school did well to motivate them into returning to school and achieving very well in mathematics, but their performance in English and science, was not as good as in mathematics. Inspection evidence shows that, overall, standards in Key Stage 2 are above average in English and science and that standards in mathematics are high.
4. This year the school has introduced an extra writing lesson a week and there are also booster classes for Year 6 in literacy on two days a week. Both these initiatives are having a good impact on standards. However, inspection evidence shows that although the standards in mathematics are high in most aspects of the subject, pupils' skills in being able to apply their mathematics to problem solving situations and investigative work are less well developed and are not high enough. This is because the curriculum for pupils in Years 5 and 6 has been narrow for a good proportion of this school year. The same is also true for science where the progress of pupils in Years 5 and 6 this year has not been good enough in investigative skills, obtaining and presenting evidence and evaluating it.
5. In other subjects, standards are above average in religious and physical education at the end of both key stages and in history at the end of Key Stage 2. This is an improvement from the previous inspection. The strengths in religious education and history are due to the rich

curriculum that provides good learning opportunities for the pupils. The strength in physical education is due to good teaching and the opportunity for pupils to participate in a wide range of activities and competitive sports activities. However, the school is not meeting statutory requirements for swimming at present.

6. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with national expectations for pupils age seven, but they are not high enough for pupils aged eleven and progress is unsatisfactory. This is because pupils are not covering fully the National Curriculum programmes of study and statutory requirements are not being met. At the time of the last inspection, the use of information and communication technology by the school was good. Since that time, hardware difficulties and staff turnover have led to the school not moving forward quickly enough to meet the challenges posed by continually improving machines and software. This has affected the quality of the curriculum at both key stages.
7. There are no major strengths or weaknesses in other subjects and standards are similar to those found in the last inspection. In music, standards are typical for eleven-year-olds, but music is not such a strong feature of the school as it used to be.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development continue to be strengths of the school. They thoroughly enjoy all that the school provides and become very involved in their activities. They are very productive, working independently with a very positive approach. This is beneficial to their good progress. They form very good relationships with their teachers and with each other. This results in a well-developed work ethic, which, in turn, means that pupils recognise qualities in each other. For instance, in physical education, pupils encourage the efforts of the group to improve individual performances. Pupils with special educational needs form constructive relationships with their peers and contribute equally to the life of the school.
9. Children joining the school for the first time adapt quickly to the school routines and show an interest and curiosity in all they do. They concentrate well and are confident in answering questions and generally persevere to finish their tasks. They are eager to join in class work and work well on their own or in small groups. They form good friendships and learn to share resources and toys. Parents confirm that their children are happy to come to school.
10. Behaviour is good. Pupils are very polite and respectful throughout the school day, for example while waiting for adults to pass through doors first. Most pupils respond well to a high level of challenge. They are eager to answer questions, giving thoughtful consideration to new ideas. They listen well and become very involved with their work. There are few distractions in class and poor behaviour rarely disrupts the learning process. Occasionally, pupils call out their answers, instead of taking their turn and become a little noisy and excitable. As they mature, they are given more opportunities for personal studies and research. This can form part of their homework, such as history research, or practical work in science where pupils are keen to start and plan their research. They need very little supervision. The behaviour of pupils with special educational needs is generally good. They have a positive attitude to learning and work hard to improve their performance.
11. Pupils' positive relationships with each other and with adults in the school make a significant impact on their personal development. They are courteous to adults whether staff, visitors or volunteers in class. Pupils of all ages mix well in the playground where older pupils are responsible for the younger ones. This they do in a very natural way, setting a good example of how to care for each other. This creates a very happy atmosphere in and around the school where there are very few signs of tension.
12. There have been 7 temporary and one permanent exclusion in the last year, all involving three pupils. All cases have been for an accumulation of unacceptable behaviour and were fully justified. Two of these pupils have since left the school.

13. Attendance at the school is very good, being well above the national average. Parents are very co-operative, so almost all absences are accounted for. Pupils are punctual in the morning, which gives an efficient and purposeful start to the day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. The quality of teaching and learning is good, overall. The pupils are very productive and independent workers and this strength is throughout the school. Of the 30 lessons observed, 3 per cent were excellent, 14 per cent were very good, and 50 per cent were good. Twenty six per cent were satisfactory and 7 per cent were unsatisfactory. The unsatisfactory teaching occurs in science in Years 5 and 6 because temporary teachers have a lack of understanding of the requirements of the programme of study. One lesson in communication, language and literacy in the Foundation Stage was also unsatisfactory. Teaching has improved since the last inspection. However, the improvement in the marking of pupils' work to guide pupils in the next steps in their work has been unsatisfactory. This aspect of assessment still has shortcomings. This also affects the pupils' daily learning, as they are not as aware as they should be of how well they have done and how they can improve.
15. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well. Both have been well adapted by the school to improve standards. Time is devoted to writing outside the literacy hour. This enables pupils to demonstrate expertise in writing for different purposes, such as formal letters or posters. Literacy is well developed in other subjects, for example in geography when pupils write good accounts of their educational visits. In religious education, pupils write a letter to a friend about fasting during Ramadan. To improve standards further there are weekly booster classes for pupils to improve their literacy and numeracy skills. In numeracy, the teaching observed during the inspection was uniformly good and in one case very good. A particular strength of the teaching observed is the mental mathematics session, which is having a very good impact on standards. During discussion with the pupils, many of them said that mathematics was their favourite subject. This was displayed by their high level of motivation in lessons.
16. The teaching in history, music, religious and physical education is good and pupils make good progress. However, music is not so strong a feature of the school as it was in the last inspection. Little or no teaching of art and design, geography and design and technology was seen during the inspection, but evidence of pupils' work and teachers' plans indicates that it is at least satisfactory, overall.
17. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good in all areas of learning except creative where it is satisfactory. The few unsatisfactory lessons in language and literacy include the use of inappropriately sized text to read books with to the whole class and discussion sessions on the carpet taking too long for this age of child. However, it is clear from the scrutiny of the teacher's planning and the children's work that all other aspects of language and literacy are taught well and the teaching enables the children to make good progress.
18. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach is good in most subjects. Teachers have a particularly good knowledge of English, mathematics, physical and religious education. Teaching of information and communication technology is satisfactory in Key Stage 1, but unsatisfactory, overall, at Key Stage 2. Little direct teaching of information and technology skills was observed, although teachers' planning and discussion with pupils indicates that pupils have regular opportunities to use computers for their work. However, the teaching of information and communication technology skills is not yet systematic enough and has suffered from staff turnover and a lack of training. Pupils at Key Stage 2 have not made sufficient progress over the last year. There is unsatisfactory teaching in science this year in Years 5 and 6, because of a lack of understanding of the requirements of the programme of study. Similar weaknesses were also observed in this class in teaching investigative and problem solving work in mathematics and planning and evaluating in design and technology.
19. Teachers' planning is thorough and makes appropriate use of national guidelines to ensure the consistent development of skills. Lessons are very well prepared and very good use is made of resources. Resources for physical education are particularly well used in lessons and also

on the playground. The visit of a Sikh gentleman has also greatly enhanced the teaching in religious education and there has been very good use of visiting drama and musical companies. There have been weaknesses in the planning for Years 5 and 6 this year. Although planning exists, there was no evidence during the inspection that this has been effectively implemented in mathematics, science and design and technology.

20. Teachers use a very good variety of teaching methods and keep a brisk pace to lessons. No time is wasted and lessons start promptly. Teachers manage their classes very well and there is always sufficient and challenging work. All ages and abilities of pupils organise themselves very well. When tasks are given they get out their work, find what they need and display a very good level of independence. In a history lesson in Years 1 and 2, the pupils settled very quickly into groups, discussed the task of finding evidence from photographs and were soon able to present it to the rest of the class. Most pupils in Key Stage 2 can settle to writing or recording very efficiently and produce a good level of work in the time available. In all lessons pupils have very good levels of concentration and are able to apply themselves well.
21. Teachers have high expectations of all their pupils, including those with special educational needs and the more able pupils. They plan work accordingly. However, they do not share their expectations with the pupils on the precise nature of what each pupil needs to do to improve. Work is marked, but just ticked and praised and presents no further challenge to the pupils. This was also identified at the last inspection. Teachers do encourage pupils to succeed and have clear targets in English and mathematics. However, they do not share these sufficiently with the pupils on a day to day basis. Discussions with pupils found that they do not sufficiently understand or know about their individual targets for improvement, even though they are clearly given once a term and in their annual reports. Occasionally, the learning objectives for lessons are far too general and not precise enough, so the teacher cannot guide the pupils' learning sufficiently.
22. Teaching for the most able pupils is good. The rigorous assessment systems in English and mathematics have accurately identified gifted pupils and these pupils are being well challenged in lessons. They are also entered for extension tests where they have achieved a good level of success. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs in withdrawal sessions is very good. The teacher has a very good understanding of the difficulties the pupils are experiencing and she plans rigorously to enable them to make good progress. However, a specialist scheme is used and, although effective, is narrow in its approach. In lessons, classroom assistants all know what they are expected to do with these pupils and enable them to make good progress.
23. Teachers set homework regularly. It is sufficient and of a good standard, further extending the taught curriculum at home. Some parents at the pre-inspection meeting said they thought that the time allocation had not been made sufficiently clear.

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

24. The school provides a satisfactory range of learning opportunities for pupils, overall. Nevertheless, whilst there are many strengths in provision there are also some important weaknesses. The curriculum for the reception children is appropriate. It is good at Key Stage 1 and in Years 3 and 4, being well planned and delivered. However, in Years 5 and 6, the curriculum over the last year has been too narrow. The range of learning opportunities in the school does not fully cover statutory requirements in information and communication technology and swimming. Hardware difficulties have adversely affected the quality of the curriculum in information and communication technology at both key stages, but this situation is beginning to improve.
25. Strengths of the curriculum are the good range of visits to places of interest and the varied range of visitors to the school. These provide added depth to pupils' learning, particularly in history and religious education and their understanding of the world outside their village school. Provision for pupils' personal development is good. They leave the school at eleven years of age able to take full advantage of the opportunities available in secondary school and

adult life. Physical development is also good, with an emphasis on a healthy life style and a high level of participation in sporting competitions.

26. Following the last inspection, the school put in place clearer and more consistent planning procedures to ensure that work in lessons fully meets the needs of all pupils, especially the older pupils, in each mixed age class. This was supported by a clear two-year cycle of activities in subjects to give a consistent and progressive experience to pupils as they move through the school. In English and mathematics, the introduction of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy has been effective and these strategies give good guidance to teachers for meeting the needs of all pupils within mixed aged classes. During the inspection, pupils' learning needs were appropriately met in the lessons observed, although the scrutiny of work in mathematics and science identified too often the same work for pupils of different abilities in Years 5 and 6.
27. New government requirements for the National Curriculum introduced in September 2000 are satisfactorily being put in place, although progress has been slow because of teacher turnover. Teachers' planning is mostly based on nationally or locally suggested schemes of work. However, statutory requirements for information and communication technology are not being fully met and results in pupils not achieving high enough standards in this subject by the time they leave the school at eleven years. At the time of the last inspection, the school's use of information and communication technology for pupils' learning was good. Slower progress than the school would like has been due to the absence of key staff and difficulties in putting in place up-dated-systems to meet new requirements. National training has, therefore, been delayed and, consequently, strategies for the progressive development of pupils' skills as they move through the school and the use of computers to support other subjects of the curriculum are not well enough in place. The school made the decision to suspend swimming over the last two years whilst implementing the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. This means it is also not meeting statutory requirements for physical education.
28. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage children provides a sound start for pupils' future learning. It appropriately takes into account the national strategies for literacy and numeracy towards the end of the school year and prepares them well for Key Stage 1 work in these subjects. However, planning for these pupils is not yet taking sufficient account of the early learning goals for children in the Foundation Stage in all the six areas of learning. Learning opportunities for Year 1 and Year 2 pupils are good.
29. During this school year, pupils in Years 5 and 6 have not had sufficient opportunities to cover the full range of learning experiences set out in the National Curriculum. Since January 2001 work in English, mathematics and science has been predominately test papers. Standards in practical work in science and applying their mathematical knowledge in real contexts are not as good as they are in other aspects of the subjects.
30. The curriculum is considerably enriched by the number of visits undertaken by pupils and by visitors to the school. Residential visits by Years 3 and 4 to Nortonbury Farm and Years 5 and 6 to the Isle of Wight not only develop pupils' skills in geography and history, but also provide opportunities for pupils to develop independence and responsibility. Theatre group visits, a performance by a local string quartet, who also talked about their instruments to pupils, and speakers from different religions and cultures all make a positive contribution to extending pupils' knowledge and understanding of their own and other cultures. Extra-curricular activities include a number of lunchtime clubs for sport and recorders and a high level of participation in sporting competitions. The school choir sings in the local music festival. Links with the local village community are good. For example, pupils take part in church services and the local vicar is a frequent visitor to the school. The school is a contributor to the village magazine. The school's links with other local schools has a positive impact on the curriculum. It provides opportunities for staff to observe good practice elsewhere, to share training and more recently to employ between them a computer technician to maintain their computer systems on a cost effective basis. Outside the local area, a pen-pal link was established earlier in the year with a school in Grenada and Year 3 and 4 pupils are currently setting up an email link with a small village school in Scotland. Year 1 and 2 exchange email with a school in the Channel Isles.

31. Overall, all pupils have equal access to all subjects of the curriculum and the chance to achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. Individual education plans are in place for pupils on the register for special educational needs. Requirements for pupils with a statement of need are implemented well. Pupils with weak literacy skills receive extra support in small group situations and this is effective in helping them to take part in all subjects of the curriculum, not just English. However, there are no numeracy targets in pupils' individual education plans and no specialist lessons for pupils with below average numeracy skills. Booster classes in Year 6 included all nine Year 6 pupils, not just those requiring additional support, the intention of this extra provision. Some specialist support lessons require pupils to miss the same lessons each week and such arrangements limit pupils' opportunity to do some subjects such as music and art in Year 2. The school needs to look at ways to address this issue without losing the benefits of the extra literacy support sessions. The provision for gifted and talented pupils is satisfactory and the school is beginning to develop good policies in this area. Pupils are entered for the extension papers in the National Curriculum tests and achieve considerable success.
32. Pupils' personal, social and health education is well developed through assemblies, religious education and circle time. Time is clearly set aside for this within the curriculum and is well planned by staff. Issues such as healthy eating are explored through a design and technology project on making a healthy sandwich, which looked at different breads and fillings. Work on the seaside in Year 2 highlights the damage the sun can do to eyes and the skin. Year 6 pupils attend annually a programme called 'Crucial Crew' put on by the local authority services and the police. This covers first aid, how to say 'no' to drugs and personal safety. Appropriate opportunities exist within the curriculum for education on the dangers of drugs and for sex education for older pupils.
33. Opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. There is particularly good provision for pupils' moral and social development. Assemblies cover themes of friendship, helping our neighbour, supporting the oldest members of the community, respecting different cultures, and looking after the environment. Pupils are given the opportunity to make up their own classroom rules and teachers encourage good behaviour and attitudes by their own good actions and responses to pupils. Year 1 and 2 pupils, through good teaching, learn to respect the living world around them. They talk intelligently about how their actions, such as moving rocks, can affect adversely the life of seashore creatures. The school actively encourages the pupils to participate in fund raising events for charities and pupils often suggest causes to support. Pupils enthusiastically use the playground equipment that the school and parents have recently funded and this has a very good impact on pupils' social and moral development. In lessons, pupils have plenty of opportunities to work together and on their own. These are well managed and not only support the development of pupils' social skills but also their learning. Local senior citizens are regularly invited into the school, for example at Christmas and pupils take harvest festival parcels to their homes. All pupils in Key Stage 2 participate in the school residential trips.
34. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory and some good examples of how this is promoted were observed during the inspection. Religious education makes a significant contribution to this aspect of the school's work. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 reflect on what is happiness. Writing by Year 5 and 6 pupils shows a great deal of thought about 'who is God'. Some pupils wrote about quite complex issues such as why God allows disease and lets millions of people die in the Holocaust. A number of teachers take advantage of opportunities for pupils to appreciate wonder in the world around them through studying animals, such as snails in reception, and by responding to how a picture makes them feel in Year 2. Assemblies include a daily act of collective worship and give pupils opportunities to reflect on the meaning of 'friendship' through stories such as the Good Samaritan and to thank God for the beauty of the world round them. There are good links with local churches.
35. Pupils' cultural development is good. Religious education makes a strong contribution to pupils' understanding of other cultures, religions and beliefs. Visitors from other faiths talk to pupils about their faith and way of life, for example a Sikh storyteller. Pupils search the Internet for information about different religions. They visit different places of worship. Pupils'

awareness of racism and prejudice is raised through discussions on issues such as racism in football and at the Olympic games. The headteacher has a good awareness of the importance of such discussions in a predominately white area. Girls and boys are equally valued and take equal roles within the school. School sports teams and clubs are mixed. The school's choice of a reading scheme was determined by its positive images of different cultures and races, boys and girls and people with disabilities. In English and music, pupils study African-Caribbean culture. Visits by theatre groups, whose performances encourage pupil participation, and the opportunity for pupils' to learn instruments, take part in the choir and put on school performances provide suitable occasions for pupils to develop their creative knowledge and skills.

36. Since the last inspection, the school has made satisfactory progress in improving the learning opportunities it provides for pupils. Better planning procedures and curriculum organisation help teachers to meet the needs of all pupils in the mixed age classes. The successful implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy has improved standards in these curriculum areas. However, because of staff turnover in the last two years, the development of the use of information and communication technology and the revision of schemes of work to meet new National Curriculum requirements have not been as fast as the school would like. It is well aware that better monitoring of the curriculum is needed in the next year to ensure that pupils receive the full range of learning experiences to which they are entitled.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. The provision for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils is good. Staff know the children very well and provide a safe and friendly environment in which pupils make good progress in their learning and development. Parents find it easy to approach teachers if they have a concern about their children's progress or welfare. Behaviour is well managed throughout the school, as is attendance.
38. Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic performance and personal development are good. The school keeps good overall records of pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science, which are carefully analysed and used in staff discussions. For instance, this analysis indicated the need for more extended writing. In addition, it identified one gifted pupil and a pupil who needed support with learning difficulties. There are also good records kept of athletic achievement, which parents keep up to date on the school board.
39. Procedures for assessing pupils' academic performance are satisfactory. The headteacher and teachers have established a good rigorous system for monitoring standards of attainment in English mathematics and science. Targets are set for all pupils and a close watch kept to check that they achieve them. However, there are no equivalent systems in other subjects. Monitoring of progress in information and communication technology is insufficient; for example, there is no checklist of key skills or targets. Therefore, the school cannot ensure consistency of provision between classes in this subject. Portfolios of work are kept with samples of work in many subjects, but these are not used to guide future planning. They are merely a collection of unmarked pieces of work. Procedures in the Foundation Stage do not assess and record the progress of pupils and link them to the early learning goals. Initiatives such as personal targets have been started, but these have not been progressed. Pupils are unclear as to the purpose of these initiatives and have derived little benefit from them. In English, mathematics and science, the use of assessment information is good. However, in other subjects it does not clearly guide the future planning of lessons so that teachers can build on what has already been taught. Pupils with special educational needs have individual education plans, which are reviewed each term.
40. Procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour are very good. The school's behaviour policy reflects the aims of the school and the high expectations of good behaviour which are adopted by all staff. Parents support the school in this. Staff encourage good manners and a sense of self-discipline amongst pupils and give them increased responsibility as they grow older. Teachers' high expectations of behaviour and pupils' positive attitudes ensure that lessons proceed with purpose and at a good pace.

41. In the relatively few occasions when behaviour is not of a high standard, staff act quickly and effectively. The school has a policy to include pupils whose long-term behaviour is unacceptable. Pupils who have been excluded for unacceptable behaviour are still encouraged to return and take end of key stage national tests. Senior management, staff and parents act together to support such pupils, ably assisted by outside agencies.
42. Procedures for monitoring pupils' attendance are very good. Parents co-operate, so almost all absences are accounted for. Parents are also co-operative in seeing that their children arrive at school on time. The school sends prompt reminders if explanations for absence or repeated lateness are not sent automatically.
43. Procedures for child protection and promoting pupils' well being and health and safety are good. The health and safety policy of the school is thorough. Staff and governors carry out routine checks, including risk assessment checks of premises and equipment. Defects are quickly dealt with. All staff are fully aware of the child protection procedures. Accidents and injuries are treated promptly, records kept and parents informed.
44. Pupils' personal and health education is covered in a well-devised programme which includes sex education and drugs awareness appropriately for pupils' ages. Pupils throughout the school are encouraged to discuss matters of health and safety and, for older pupils, life after school. The programme encourages pupils to look after themselves and to consider the needs and opinions of others. There are wide opportunities for pupils of all ages to be aware of the world beyond the village. The school invites visitors into school, including parent volunteers, artists and supporters. This widens the educational opportunities offered to pupils and helps to develop their social awareness. The school works closely with visiting professionals, including educational psychologist and behaviour support specialist.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is excellent. They are highly satisfied with what the school stands for, the standards achieved at both key stages and the way the school encourages their children to mature. There is a strong sense of community locally and a commitment to see the school thrive at its centre.
46. The quality of information for parents is very good. The general newsletters are of a high quality. Parents are well informed of the curriculum being covered by their children. Pupils' annual reports are personal and give details of what pupils' know and can do and there are clear comments on their intellectual and social development. Parents' comments on the reports are supportive of the annual assessment. Parents are invited to attend reviews and are shown individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs. The school gives parents very good quality information about their children. Where appropriate, pupils have a specific home school link book, especially for pupils with behaviour problems.
47. Regular meetings with teachers enable parents to make a valuable contribution to their children's learning at school and at home. Pupils' reading records provide a good home school link in the younger classes. Pupils with special educational needs have a specific home school link book, particularly for pupils with behaviour problems. Parents of these pupils are invited to regular review meetings. They are shown education plans and targets for their children and able to make comments and contributions to them.
48. There is an active parents association which raises substantial funds for the school. These are generally used for particular projects, such as resources for playground activities, which improve the education provided by the school. Parents and other volunteers regularly help in class and around the school, hearing pupils read and helping with school activities. This is much appreciated by the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. Breachwood School is a happy and thriving community, where relationships between staff, children, parents and the local community are very good. It is an effective school. The school's main aim, to provide for the full development of each child according to need, is well met. Equality of opportunity for all is reflected throughout its work. Pupils enjoy their school, have very positive attitudes towards learning and work hard. Above average standards, particularly in mathematics, show good progress in learning for not only the most able pupils in the school, but also for those with special educational needs.
50. The high commitment, enthusiasm and hard work of the headteacher make a significant contribution to the school's good achievements and its happy working environment. She has led the school well through a difficult year. Her senior teacher has been on leave of absence, another permanent teacher has been on long-term sick leave and half the classes have been covered by supply or temporary appointments. There have been difficulties in recruiting appropriately qualified and experienced new permanent staff. In spite of a number of advertisements and salary incentives, not all vacancies have yet been filled for September. This has taken up a considerable amount of time. In addition, the headteacher has had to oversee major electrical cabling works and take on a large amount of extra teaching commitment. Understandably, the management of some aspects of the school's work, particularly the monitoring of teachers' delivery of the curriculum and the clarification of future priorities, has not been as good as in previous years. However, standards have been maintained.
51. The school has had appropriate priorities for action since the last inspection and these are set out in its ongoing school development plan. This is annually reviewed and updated. Priorities continue to reflect the key issues for action from the previous report and the school has made good progress towards their achievement. However, priorities should now focus more precisely on current needs and developments, with outcomes clearly based on improvements in pupils' learning. The school needs to look forward and clearly define a manageable number of priorities for its size and current, difficult staffing situation. The connection between subject development plans and whole school priorities is not yet clear enough. Each teacher has a number of curriculum areas for which they are responsible and a high proportion of the teachers has recently taken on new areas. Not all subject leaders have had the opportunity to get to grips fully with their new roles. Better monitoring of classroom practice has been identified rightly as a priority for all subject leaders next year.
52. Management of information and communication technology is a concern. It is currently shared by the headteacher and senior teacher. The headteacher has successfully overseen the purchase and installation of the new computers this year and the senior teacher, on returning from leave of absence, has done an audit of the software received with the new computers. However, with the senior teacher leaving at the end of this term to work nearer home, considerable responsibility continues to rest with the headteacher. No one else has yet been identified to take on the role of subject leader. Given the headteacher's other responsibilities and the demands of the information and communication technology co-ordination role in the coming months this is not a satisfactory situation.
53. The monitoring of pupils' standards and progress in English and mathematics is a strength of the school. Good use is made of National Curriculum test results and other appropriate testing procedures to confirm that all pupils are achieving as well as they should and to identify where additional support is needed. This has had a positive impact on pupils' achievements in these subjects. Monitoring of standards and pupils' progress in other subjects is currently less rigorous, because of the turnover in teachers' curriculum responsibilities and insufficient assessment and recording of the skills pupils have acquired.
54. The implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy has been a success. Very good monitoring by the headteacher and senior teacher of classroom practice in the first two years identified clearly areas for further development. These included more opportunities for extended writing to improve pupils' standards in English by the age of eleven years. This has been achieved in the last year, with provisional National Curriculum test results for summer 2001 showing a significant improvement on last year's results. However, monitoring

of teaching and learning has not been as effective this year because of the additional pressures on the headteacher's time and the absence of the senior teacher.

55. Governors are very supportive of the headteacher and committed to the school. They satisfactorily and conscientiously undertake their role. The last inspection report stated that governors should improve their skills in monitoring the school development plan and in evaluating value for money in new initiatives. Governors have clearly developed a better understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses since the last inspection, particularly as to standards in the core subjects and where areas are in need of improvement. They attend in-service training days to keep themselves informed of the work of the school, but still need to develop further their ability to question the work of the school, particularly when reviewing the progress of the school development plan. Better procedures are in place to monitor the cost of initiatives and their effectiveness.
56. Governors' commitment to the school is reflected by their decision to undertake a self-evaluation programme to improve the effectiveness of their work. Statutory requirements are mostly met, except National Curriculum requirements for information and communication technology and swimming. The Governors' Annual Report to parents is an informative and friendly document, but there is no evidence of reporting on the progress of the Ofsted action plan since the last inspection.
57. Financial management is good, with the school making appropriate provision for possible future increases in costs or decreases in income as a result of changing pupil numbers. Governors and the headteacher recognise that in a small school these can have a considerable effect on the budget. The under spend from the budget is to be used for maintenance work and staffing contingencies. The school development plan is appropriately costed and careful consideration has been given to the costs of new computer equipment and the machines to buy. Money for pupils with special educational needs and in-service training is appropriately spent. Governors and the headteacher carefully compare the school's costs for staffing, maintenance and resources and the pupils' performance with those of similar schools. The principles of best value are applied well. The school uses the local authority's service for maintenance and supplies, cutting down administrative time. However, the further development of the skills of staff in the school office could produce some savings and relieve the headteacher of some administrative tasks.
58. Resources and accommodation are well used. Very good equipment and resources in mathematics and physical education make a positive contribution to the standards pupils achieve. More globes and atlases would support work in geography and materials for work in art and design are not sufficient to cover all aspects of the subject. Outdoor play equipment is very good and well supports the very good behaviour and relationships shown by pupils during breaks and lunchtime sessions. There is a very good policy for the use of the play equipment, which pays attention to safety, clothing and supervision issues. Display around the school is very attractive and creates a pleasant learning environment for pupils. The supply of books is satisfactory, although there is no large library space for pupils to learn library skills. The number of up-to date computers is now acceptable, but until recently was not good enough. This has contributed to pupils not making enough progress in the development of their information and communication technology skills.
59. Difficulties in appointing appropriately qualified staff has significantly narrowed the range of learning opportunities for the oldest Year 5 and Year 6 pupils in the last year. The governors and headteacher work hard to appoint good teachers and have very rigorous appointment procedures, including watching prospective appointments teach. They provide good support for staff to develop their skills and are very supportive of new staff, although monitoring needs to be more rigorous. However, the number of applicants for vacant posts has been low and few teachers are available locally to cover long term absences. The school is a centre for teacher training and regularly takes responsibility for graduate trainees as well as students. The previous employment experiences of graduate trainees can give the school an extra dimension to its work, for example in the use of information and communication technology.

60. In spite of recent staff turnover and difficulties in appointing appropriately qualified teachers the school has made good progress since the last inspection. National Curriculum test results and overall standards have improved. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been well implemented. The school has successfully met new government requirements for the appraisal of teachers and home-school agreements. Planning is much more consistent. However, some areas for action from the previous report have not progressed as fast as the school would like. The continual change of subject leaders has delayed improvements in the assessment of pupils' attainments and progress for subjects other than English and mathematics. Marking and feedback to pupils on how to improve is not consistent enough. However, because of the current good standards being achieved by pupils, particularly in recent National Curriculum tests, the pupils' good personal development and the overall effective use of its finances, the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

61. The school should:

- i. Improve the progress pupils make in information and communication technology by:
- clearly defining the management role for next year;
 - ensuring that statutory requirements are fully met;
 - identifying for each year group opportunities to develop skills in using data-handling, word-processing, multi-media and spreadsheet packages across the subjects of the curriculum;
 - reviewing subject-specific software and identifying where it supports pupils' learning.

(Paragraphs 117-122)

- ii. Improve the quality and use of marking and day to day assessment by teachers by:
- discussing and sharing learning targets for individual pupils so that they have a good understanding of what they need to do next to improve in their work;
 - including in the marking of pupils' work more comments on how it might be improved;
 - developing these new systems across all curriculum areas;
 - monitoring teachers' planning to ensure that learning objectives are clearly stated in all lessons and clear to communicate to pupils.

(Paragraphs 14, 54, 60, 75, 85)

- iii. Maintain the breadth and balance of the curriculum for all pupils by:
- carefully monitoring the curriculum and teachers' planning where there are temporary teachers in the classroom
 - identifying areas of weakness in temporary teachers' subject knowledge and taking appropriate action;
 - ensuring that all temporary teachers are made aware of all school policies, particularly in relation to behaviour.

(Paragraphs 1, 4, 29, 79, 87, 103)

- iv. Ensure that statutory requirements are met in swimming.

(Paragraphs 27, 127)

Other weaknesses, which should be considered by the school, are:

- To develop assessment systems in subjects other than English, mathematics and science in order to build on what pupils already know.

(Paragraph 39)

- Ensure that the teaching in the reception year takes sufficient account of the content of the national guidelines for the Foundation Stage.

(Paragraph 62)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	30
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	14	50	26	7	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

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)	103
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	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	38

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	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	3.3
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	11	5	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	11
	Girls	-	-	-
	Total	16	16	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (100)	100 (93)	100 (100)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	11
	Girls	-	-	-
	Total	16	15	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (100)	94 (100)	94 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

- Please note that data for girls has been omitted at Key Stage 1 because there were less than ten in the year group.
- The table showing performance at the end of Key Stage 2 has been omitted due to the small number of boys and girls taking the tests.

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	87
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	69

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
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	£
Total income	241,143
Total expenditure	243,942
Expenditure per pupil	2,515
Balance brought forward from previous year	22,558
Balance carried forward to next year	19,759

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	103
Number of questionnaires returned	48

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	31	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	67	31	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	73	27	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	48	13	0	0
The teaching is good.	63	33	4	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	48	42	8	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	19	8	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	77	23	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	54	33	13	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	79	17	4	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	52	44	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	42	23	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

62. The children enter the reception class in the year in which they are five. A classroom assistant supports the class teacher. At the time of the inspection there were sixteen children in reception. Children and parents are well prepared before they enter school with several school visits. Parents are given clear guidelines for helping their children in the transition from home to school. There are appropriate opportunities for learning outdoors. Attainment on entry to the school is average. Baseline assessment is rigorous and follows a local authority scheme. The children make good progress and, by the time they leave reception, they have exceeded the early learning goals in all areas of learning, except creative development, which they attain satisfactorily. Since the last inspection, the quality of teaching has remained good, overall, although there are some unsatisfactory features in language and literacy. Provision is still good, although the teaching does not take sufficient account of the content of the national guidelines for the Foundation Stage. The teacher plans to the National Curriculum. Assessment of the basic skills of reading and spelling does take place. It is clear that the early learning goals are considered, but these are not recorded in the teacher's planning or assessed. A good example of this is in the provision for outdoor play where the children play safely on wheeled toys, displaying a growing confidence. They also have opportunities for climbing and balancing and travelling under, over and through equipment.

Personal, social and emotional development

63. Standards in personal social and emotional development are good and children make good progress in this aspect of their learning. Consistent messages are given to children from the time they enter school about the importance of valuing each other and appreciating achievement. The children are made to feel that their ideas and contributions are valued. Children soon learn to think independently and to behave sensibly. They are good at working at the computer and will ask questions to help them progress. They are very confident, happy to take turns and work well alongside other children. Moral and social development is good. Children are taught to respect each other, and distinguish between right and wrong. The children show enthusiasm for all the activities and experiences provided. Awe and wonder were observed when the children looked at a snail through a magnifying glass. Opportunities for reflection are given at the end of lessons and in assemblies. The children respond well to the good teaching. A very good feature of the teaching is the value placed on what the children have to say during discussions in lessons. Responsibility and independence are encouraged as the children help in clearing up the classroom at the end of activities. The children sustain concentration, answer questions confidently and explain what they are doing clearly to visiting adults.

Communication, language and literacy

64. The children make good progress and exceed the early learning goals by the time they leave reception. The children's speaking skills are good. They speak in long clear sentences. When discussing the effects of a storm, they are quick to make their contribution, using sentences such as 'It might blow the roof off'. In music, they are equally quick to describe how Mr Wolf is feeling and use words such as 'grumpy', 'happy' and 'joyful'. They write about how a hedgehog crosses the road. The children are good listeners and follow instructions well. However, on some occasions, they interrupt the teacher and speak out of turn. The children show respect for and enjoy books and show a deep interest in talking about the plot. They predict what might happen next in the story. They make good progress in linking sounds to letters and their handwriting is becoming well controlled and legible. Writing is very well developed and many children attain high standards by the time they leave reception. They use their writing skills in many other aspects of their work in class, such as in mathematics and history. They use capital letters and full stops. The lower attaining children start the year making marks on paper and soon progress to a clearly written sentence. The more able

children are writing stories by the end of the year and working well within early National Curriculum levels. The class composes a poem called 'I remember', each child adding their own thoughts, such as 'When I hold the shell to my ear I remember the feel of sand on my feet.' Teaching is good, but there are some unsatisfactory features. The main strength in the teaching is the high expectations of the teacher and the classroom assistant. Pupils' work in all areas of language and literacy shows progress being made at a good pace throughout the year. Leading through questions, the teacher encourages a lively debate and extends vocabulary of children of all abilities through the discussion. However, the teacher's planning does not always clearly identify learning objectives and marking does not show the pupils how they can do better. In the unsatisfactory lesson inappropriate sized text was used to read books with to the whole class and the discussion session on the carpet took too long for this age of child.

Mathematical development

65. The children's mathematical development is good and, by the end of the reception year they have exceeded the early learning goals in this aspect of their work and they make good progress. The teaching of mathematical development is good. Group work is well organised to meet the needs of all ability groups. The children count confidently beyond 10 and have a good understanding of the value of numbers. Most can add simple sums and the more able subtract them. In a lesson on symmetry, good use is made of resources and the outdoor area. All children recognise a variety of patterns and name shapes such as circles, squares and rectangles. They construct a block graph of the numbers of pupils in each year group and the more able children arranged their graph in order of size. They answer questions in writing about the information it gives, such as 'Which is the biggest and the smallest class?' They respond very well to the teaching and are keen to do their best. They work hard and record their work neatly.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

66. By the end of their year in the reception class, the children exceed the early learning goals in their knowledge and understanding of the world. The teaching is good and plans a good variety of activities for the children to learn more about the world around them and make good progress. The children label body parts on a picture of a human and also on pictures of a butterfly and a spider, noting that the spider has eight legs. They listen to the sounds around us such as the wind, a car, a drill and a plane. (The school is on the flight path for a major airport.) They are aware of hygiene issues such as washing hands before a meal. They observe snails in the classroom and ask questions such as 'How does it look for food?' and 'What's the hole for?' They children are delighted to look at the snails and make sure that they treat them with care. Then they make snails out of dough. They make the animals from Noah's Ark and paint them. They plan, design and make windmills, dragons and crocodiles out of boxes, glue and paint and write how they could improve them. The children use rough and soft materials such as pasta and fabric to make the three bears. They use construction kits to make trains. The children learn about the passage of time by comparing how they have changed as they have grown. They look at new and old household objects. They draw an island and do a simple map. The children are keen to talk about their work. They are very confident when working on the computer and use the mouse to navigate their way through reading and spelling programmes.

Physical development

67. The children make good progress in their physical development and, by the time they leave the reception class, have exceeded the early learning goals in this aspect of their development. The school has good outdoor facilities, including climbing apparatus, wheeled vehicles and large apparatus. The teaching of this early learning goal is satisfactory. It provides good opportunities for the children to develop a wide range of skills, but, during lessons the transition between activities is slow. The classroom assistant makes a good contribution to lessons and enables a smooth transition for the children from inside to outside. There are appropriate opportunities for the children to play outdoors daily. They are very

confident when using wheeled toys. Boys push the girls on tyres round a track. The children steer a wheeled toy left and right and backwards and forwards. They control balls well and bounce and catch them. They dribble a ball slowly forwards. The children know that exercise is good for them. The children have very good skills of co-ordination in activities such as writing and drawing and they enjoy practising to refine their skills. They hold pencils correctly and use a variety of tools such as scissors in their artwork.

Creative development

68. By the end of the reception year, the children attain the early learning goals in their creative development and make satisfactory progress. Progress is better in artistic activities than in music. The children enjoy singing and join in enthusiastically. When singing the song about Red Riding Hood they use expression well for the different characters. Their knowledge of a range of songs and action rhymes is limited, however. The children enjoy painting and making a simple collage of a seascape and a pond habitat from a variety of materials. They paint a seascape in the style of Turner and add people and boats. The children make careful observations of the world around them and pay attention to colour, texture and tone when painting pictures. The teaching is satisfactory overall. The role play area is used by the children, but the management, use of imagination and organisation of this area is not as good as it could be.

ENGLISH

69. In the national tests in the year 2000, pupils' standards in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 were well above the national average and those of similar schools. Pupils' standards in writing were very high. Standards have been well above the national average for the last three years. Test results need to be treated with care because of the large variances in year group size, which can range from eight pupils one year to sixteen pupils the next. Inspection evidence finds that standards are above average and that they have improved since the last inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Pupils who are the most able have attained the levels expected for eleven-year-olds by taking the extension tests.
70. Test results in Key Stage 2 are also affected by the small and varying size of the cohort and the number of pupils with special educational needs. In the 2000 national tests at the end of Key Stage 2, standards were well below average compared to national figures and those of similar schools. However, half of the pupils were on the special educational needs register, compared to a third this year. This year, preliminary information from test results indicates an improvement. Inspection evidence shows that standards are above average. Following the test results in 2000, the school has sought ways of improving attainment in pupils' writing. The school has introduced an extra writing lesson a week and there are also booster classes for Year 6 on two days a week after school. Both these initiatives are having a good impact on standards. The pupils achieve well and standards are as high as they should be. The school has set challenging targets for performance in national tests in English and is on course to meet them. There is little difference between the performance of boys and girls.
71. Standards in speaking are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils are very effective communicators and speak with accuracy and relevance. During discussions, pupils are good at answering questions and extending the discussion by asking more. Year 2 pupils answer questions well about two different styles of poem. In Years 3 and 4, when asked about what type of relationship a character from a story had with another, a pupil responded by saying 'It says in the text that she was his deadliest enemy'. Year 6 pupils identify and describe nonsense words in a poem, using a good command of spoken English. Pupils are good at making deductions when presented with evidence. In a history lesson in Year 2, pupils easily identified newer and older scenes in photographs by the specific type of clothing being worn and described the reasons clearly. Standards in listening are average. Pupils are good at listening to each other and contributing their ideas. They pay attention to the teachers during lessons. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 listen carefully for animal sounds in music. However,

occasionally pupils stop listening and interrupt the teacher, calling out of turn. This disrupts the flow of the lesson.

72. Standards in reading are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils are confident and keen readers. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, enjoy reading books. There is a good selection of fiction and non-fiction books available in classes and the library. Many pupils read confidently and with good expression and comprehension. Year 2 pupils confidently read out their work to the class at the end of lessons. Most pupils know the works of different authors. In Year 6 one girl justified her choice of a favourite author because the author 'discusses girls' problems in a humorous way'. Pupils regularly take a good selection of books home to read and this is well recorded in their reading diaries. Parents play an important part in encouraging and hearing their children read. Teaching ensures that the pupils have a good knowledge of sound strings in words. All classes spend valuable sessions building up the skills associated with reading. They are good at using the Internet for research in many areas of the curriculum and overcome any difficulties. Pupils in Year 6 used the Internet to find information on Sikhs. They stumbled with the spelling at first and could not do a search on the computer because of it. This did not deter them and soon after exchanging ideas in the group they spelt the word correctly and were able to find the information they needed. Pupils with special educational needs use appropriate strategies, such as building words from letter sounds and using picture and context clues.
73. The pupils write with confidence, fluency, accuracy and understanding and achieve standards above average in both key stages. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Handwriting skills are particularly good which shows very good improvement. Handwriting is well taught and practised throughout the school. By the time they leave the school, most pupils show well presented, fluent and legible handwriting. Capital letters and full stops are used by the youngest pupils and show a good understanding of sentence formation. Year 2 pupils adapt their writing in a variety of ways. They write rules for a happy playtime and write and illustrate their school timetable. They write a 'Missing Person' poster for 'Goldilocks' and a 'Wanted' poster for the 'Big Bad Wolf'. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 write riddles about animals and poems about happiness. They write instructions on how to make a cup of tea and a scene for a play about the 'Gingerbread Man'. By the time they leave the school, they are able to present their thoughts and ideas clearly on paper. Stories show the use of asides to the audience such as 'Maybe they might get back together'. There are many good examples of applying their writing skills in other subjects. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 write well about when they will be old in religious education. They use the computer to write some of their stories.
74. Teaching and learning are good. They are very good or excellent in Years 3 and 4. There are effective strategies for teaching skills in both key stages. The pupils are very productive and independent workers, as a result of the teachers' good planning, management and organisation of lessons. For example, in Year 1s and 2 the teacher has established a good system which helps the pupils build on their knowledge of letter sounds. The pupils know what to do and immediately go into action and hold flash cards up in front of the class. In this way, letter sounds such as 'ea' and 'ee' are very effectively taught. New sounds are added in lessons over time, but the same system is used and the pupils show a good deal of confidence in it. In the excellent lessons in Years 3 and 4, the teacher inspires the pupils. There is a high level of motivation and challenge. In preparing the pupils to write about a character by looking at appearance, behaviour and relationships, the teacher grips the class by producing a handbag. What is in it and what can it tell us about the owner? Objects such as a purse, bus ticket and an unfinished torn letter are taken out of the handbag and the pupils are spellbound. They make very good deductions. The owner does not drive because there is a bus ticket, the name on the letter means the lady is married. Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is good. Lessons are challenging and conducted at a good pace. The teacher challenges the pupils to read a poem with expression and the pupils respond to this well. There is a good level of discussion as to why words are adjectives, adverbs or verbs. Learning objectives are well communicated to pupils in many lessons, but this is not always the case. This year there has been a weakness in the breadth and balance of the curriculum in Years 5 and 6 due to five changes of staff and an overemphasis earlier in the year on completing test sheets.
75. A weakness in teaching in the school is the quality and use of marking and day to day assessment by teachers, which is unsatisfactory. This was also identified at the last

inspection. Teachers do encourage pupils to succeed and do have clear targets, which they plan to. However, they do not share these sufficiently with the pupils. This affects the pupils' learning, as they are not as aware as they should be on a sufficiently regular basis of how well they have done and how they can improve. Pupils are given very good information annually in their reports.

76. The headteacher is managing the subject during the long term absence of the subject leader. Monitoring of teaching and learning has taken place in each class. Tracking of pupils' progress is good and there is a thorough and rigorous system for this. This is an improvement from the previous inspection. All teachers have targets for pupils and improvement is shown for each age group. The school uses published tests in reading and spelling also has begun to use the national optional assessment materials. Pupils' performance is analysed and weaknesses are addressed in planning.

MATHEMATICS

77. By the time they leave school at eleven years, pupils' standards in mathematics are high. Given their average attainment on entry to the school, pupils achieve well. This is reflected in the well above average performance in national tests by eleven-year-olds over the last three years. The school was in the top five per cent of all schools nationally in 2000 and results were very much better than those of pupils in similar schools. Provisional results for 2001 support the overall high standards observed during the inspection. Improvement in standards in mathematics has been very good since the last inspection.
78. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make good progress and build well on the good start they receive in their Foundation Stage. Seven-year-olds, currently at the end of Key Stage 1, are attaining at levels well above those expected for their age. Most can count to 1000 and are developing a good understanding of place value for both three and four digit numbers. They are confident in adding numbers up to ten and beyond. They count confidently in twos, fives and tens, and the most able pupils are beginning to have a good quick recall of their multiplication tables up to five and beyond. In summer 2000 results were very high putting the school in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally. They were also well above those of similar schools. The current high standards being achieved are well supported by provisional National Curriculum test results for summer 2001.
79. Standards for current eleven-year-olds are high. Nearly all pupils are working at least at the level expected for their age and a high proportion above this level. However, the progress they have made is variable across the different aspects of mathematics, ranging from very good in number to satisfactory for problem solving. Pupils currently in Year 6 have well above average number skills, above average skills in work on the properties of shape and the measurement and calculation of angles and in handling data and average skills in being able to apply their mathematics to problem solving situations and investigative work. Number skills are very secure. There is good, quick recall of times tables and pupils tackle easily mental calculations involving the use of multiplication by numbers greater than ten. Pupils confidently work with numbers to two decimal places and understand and use readily the relationship between percentages, fractions and decimals. However, their problem solving skills are less well developed and are not high enough. This is because the curriculum for pupils in the top class has been narrow for a good proportion of this school year. For the six months up to the National Curriculum tests, Year 6 pupils spent the majority of their mathematics lessons doing practice test papers. Whilst this enabled them to do well in the National Curriculum tests, it did not develop their problem solving skills and ability to interpret results. Opportunities to look for pattern and find algebraic formulae in lessons were limited. Year 5 pupils also spent a considerable amount of their time doing tests, even though they do not take National Curriculum tests for another year. This deprived them of full access to the National Curriculum for mathematics.
80. Pupils effectively use their numeracy skills in other areas of the curriculum, such as time-lines in history and in survey work on favourite and healthy sandwiches. However, they are less well used in science. Work on symmetry is well used in art and design. The development of pupils' speaking and listening skills receives good attention. In mental mathematics sessions pupils explain how they undertake mathematical calculations and the good use of question

and answer throughout teaching activities encourages pupils to express ideas clearly. This was better in Years 1 to 4 than in Years 5 and 6, where pupils were less confident in explaining their strategies for finding different nets for an octahedron. Teachers make sure that pupils can read, write and understand key technical words such as digit and polyhedra. However, a weakness throughout the school is that there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to record work in exercise books and to write about what they have found out. There is a high emphasis on the use of worksheets, which do not encourage pupils to set their work out accurately and neatly and to explain clearly the processes used.

81. Throughout the school, no significant differences in the performance of girls and boys were observed. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, particularly when supported in lessons. Nevertheless specific learning needs in mathematics are not identified in individual education plans for pupils on the special educational needs register and there is no specialist teaching for these pupils. Booster classes are available for all pupils in Year 6. The last inspection identified a need for harder work for older able pupils in the mixed aged classes. Although their needs were well met in lessons during the inspection, the scrutiny of pupils' work for this year indicated that too often, the same work is being set for pupils in the same class.
82. The teaching that pupils receive in mathematics is good, overall, although the work scrutiny indicated some unsatisfactory practice for Year 5 and 6 pupils in the first six months of this year. The teaching observed during the inspection was uniformly good and in one case very good. A particular strength of the teaching observed was the mental mathematics session. This is a key feature of The National Numeracy Strategy and has been implemented very effectively by the school. The strategy has had a very positive affect on the teaching of mathematics, overall. It supports teachers in making better provision for both the higher and lower attaining pupils in each group. As a result, pupils' learning in the lessons observed was always good and in one instance very good. The teacher clearly directed her questions to either Year 1 or Year 2 pupils to meet their current learning needs, but the Year 1 pupils benefited from listening to the harder questions asked of Year 2 pupils. They began to understand and work with numbers over a 1000 and they were very well stretched.
83. A particular strength of the teaching is good planning and organisation. Lessons are well structured with very good short mental mathematics starters and clear introductions to the main activity. Tasks set are appropriate for different ability groups and allow the teacher and other supporting adults to introduce new ideas to one group of pupils or to work with those having difficulties in their learning without being interrupted. Lessons end with a plenary in which pupils recap on what they have done. Teachers make lessons interesting and use practical resources effectively to make the work easy to follow and to understand. For example, in a Year 1 and 2 lesson, the use of digit-books, that allow pupils to make numbers up to four digits to show the teacher, involved all pupils in the teacher question and answer session. It allowed the teacher to note who was being successful and who needed further support in reading and writing three and four digit numbers.
84. Pupils have very positive attitudes towards learning and want to do well in mathematics. They are keen and enthusiastic in lessons and work hard. They take full advantage of the learning opportunities provided for them and work well both independently and in groups. Year 6 pupils are currently enjoying investigative work on polyhedra, a different experience from test papers. Year 1 and 2 pupils respond enthusiastically to the teacher's questions during their mental mathematics sessions.
85. The subject leader for mathematics has successfully led training and developments for the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy within the school. Future priorities now need to focus on the use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in mathematics and on better feedback to pupils on how well they are doing and how they can improve. A suitable range of computer software is beginning to be used by pupils on an individual basis and Year 6 pupils have successfully used the BBC web site revision pages. However, marking in pupils' books and on worksheets provides little feedback and work could be better annotated to indicate where help and support are required. Pupils' overall standards are well tracked and pupils' portfolios include an assessed piece of work each term. Although

the teaching seen at the time of the inspection was good and pupils achieve well in National Curriculum tests, there needs to be a greater monitoring of the curriculum. This would ensure, in a time of high staff turnover, that all pupils experience the full range of learning opportunities required by the National Curriculum and that their needs are being fully met.

SCIENCE

86. In the 2000 National Curriculum teacher assessments at the end of Year 2, standards were in line with the national average and those of similar schools. Results at the end of Year 6 showed that those standards were well below the national average and with those of similar schools. Trends over the last three years show that the school's performance in science fell below the national average. This year group contained pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties who had been excluded from the school. The school did very well to motivate them into achieving very well in mathematics, but their performance in science, was not as good. This affects the overall picture shown by the data.
87. Inspection evidence shows that standards are above average. There has been good improvement in the standards this year and more pupils are attaining higher levels in both key stages. Standards have also improved since the last inspection. This is due in particular, to an improvement in the pupils' ability to investigate, problem solve and carry out practical activities. The school prepares pupils very well for the science tests. However, the progress of pupils in Years 5 and 6 has not been as good as it could be this year, because they have had insufficient opportunities to engage in the full science curriculum.
88. The curriculum offered to pupils in Key Stage 1 and the early part of Key Stage 2 is good. All pupils in Key Stage 1 and in Years 3 and 4 experience the full range of science attainment targets, which for the younger children are appropriately linked to other areas of the curriculum and their every day lives. All pupils in Years 1-4, including those with special educational needs make good progress. In Years 5 and 6, however, the range of pupils' learning experiences are narrow, because the curriculum lacks breadth and balance. There is insufficient coverage of investigation and practical science. The progress of pupils in Years 5 and 6 this year has not been good enough in investigative skills, obtaining and presenting evidence and evaluating it. This is because the temporary teachers' subject knowledge has been insecure and the behaviour management of the pupils has not always been consistent.
89. By the age of seven, pupils respond to suggestions and put forward their own ideas about how to find the answer to a question. Standards of investigation and problem solving are very well developed. Pupils investigate a pond habitat, doing observational drawings of the insects and labelling them well. Pupils are encouraged by the teacher to ask for and experiment with a range of components that make up a circuit. Pupils work out what equipment they need to complete an electrical circuit to make a bulb light up. They are able to put together the wire, battery and bulb in the correct sequence by questioning and trial and error to complete the circuit. They recognise why it is important to collect data to answer questions. They record their results effectively using labelled diagrams and the more able write a brief written description of how the circuit works.
90. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 communicate in a scientific way what they have found out and suggest improvements in their work. They know the difference between animals that eat meat, animals that eat plants and those that eat both. Pupils recognise that scientific ideas are based on evidence. They can explain how plants make energy from the sun. They apply this knowledge well to their learning about food chains. They have a good understanding and knowledge of the mini beasts found in our environment. The standard of presentation incorporating the use of clearly labelled diagrams is generally good.
91. By the age of eleven, pupils have a very good knowledge of life processes in humans and animals. However, an analysis of pupils' work in Key Stage 2 shows that pupils in Years 5 and 6 have had limited experience of practical science, as a great deal of time in science lessons has been spent in taking practice test papers. Because of their lack of practical work they find it difficult to explain scientifically the choices they make when they sort things found in soil into groups. In discussions, pupils can identify organic and inorganic matter found in soil, but

find it hard to apply this knowledge when asked to classify materials found in a soil sample which they are investigating. This is due to weaknesses in teaching during the year.

92. Pupils in all classes have good attitudes to science. They show a keen interest and enthusiasm. A real enjoyment of lessons was apparent during the inspection. Pupils are anxious to take part in the lessons and are eager to answer questions and contribute ideas for discussion. Their behaviour in lessons is good. The pupils work extremely well together, sharing both ideas and resources, and treat equipment sensibly and safely. They have a good awareness of how important their behaviour is to the safety aspect of experiments.
93. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory, overall, in Key Stage 2. There is good teaching in Years 3 and 4. Teaching has been unsatisfactory in Years 5 and 6 this year, because the teachers' subject knowledge is insecure and the behaviour management of the pupils is not consistent. The good teaching has a number of strengths that account for pupils' progress. Teachers have good subject knowledge that helps structure discussion sessions that stretch pupils' imagination and scientific enquiry. In a Year 3-4 lesson, pupils are able to relate their knowledge about animal eating habits to the new topic of food chains. Pupils are given opportunities to find out for themselves how to solve particular problems. Pupils have very good levels of concentration and are able to apply themselves well in lessons. Teacher plan creative practical work that challenges pupils' thinking, allowing them to set up and conduct their own ways to solve problems. Sessions at the end of lessons allow time to reinforce the use of scientific language to evaluate the learning objectives and to check pupils' understanding and to explain it. There is a good use of the resources available. Teachers prepare useful aids to help pupils sort and categorise material in soil. There has been little development in teaching the skills of scientific enquiry, which does not feature strongly in pupils' work.
94. Assessment, both of pupils' progress and to inform teachers' plans, is good in all classes except Years 5 and 6. The progress of pupils is monitored against the termly targets set by teachers, which reflect the National Curriculum level descriptors. In Years 1 to 4, teachers set learning outcomes for lessons and assess pupils' progress and attainments against these. This is good practice, but is not consistent throughout the school. In Years 5 and 6 all assessment has been done through practice test papers this year. This affects the balance of the science curriculum. The vast majority of the work in pupils' books is copies of the tests taken.
95. The subject leader is enthusiastic and has a good understanding of the role. She has successfully completed training opportunities and shared information with all staff to the benefit of planning and delivery of the curriculum. However, no monitoring of teaching and learning has taken place that would have identified the weakness in the curriculum in Years 5 and 6. The school had identified a weakness in the teachers' assessments at Key Stage 1 because of staff insecurity in assessing the higher levels. Effective training has taken place this year to enable teachers to clearly identify Level 3. Information and communication technology is not used for data analysis or presenting graphs and charts of the results of investigations.

ART AND DESIGN

96. Standards are in line with those expected nationally for pupils by the end of each key stage. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection and judgements are based on teachers' planning, pupils' work in folders and on display around the school, and in other subjects of the curriculum.
97. Pupils make sound progress throughout Years 1 and 2. By the age of seven, pupils successfully learn to mix and match colours. They experiment confidently with the primary colours to find the different effects that mixing them produces. Drawings of holiday souvenirs show care and sound observation. Year 1 and 2 pupils were observed to work with great care and concentration to produce very effective work in the style of the pointillists. Colours were clear and the work showed good creativity. Some pupils effectively experimented with a mixture of chalk and paint to produce the effect they wanted. One pupil with special

educational needs produced a particularly good piece of work. Pupils make good progress in the use of a range of materials for collage work, such as tissue and shiny paper. Year 1 pupils draw well and drawings of the school buildings, comparing the old and new parts of the school, show careful observation. Year 2 pupils are able to use a computer paint program to create a background of sand, sea and sky on which they superimpose drawn people.

98. Sound progress is made throughout Key Stage 2, particularly in the use of colour and tone when painting and in drawing from observation. Observational drawings of 'Liquorice Allsorts' by Years 5 and 6 show good use of enlargement and reduction to give different perspectives. These drawings have then been carefully coloured and this makes the sweets seem very real. In Years 3 and 4, paintings of mini-beasts and how the surrounding world looks show good use of different tones of one colour. They also give a clear sense of the size of a mini-beast by showing background grasses much enlarged. In Years 3 and 4 there is good use of pupils' art and design skills in other subjects of the curriculum. For example, poems about colours are well illustrated and the good use of drawing and colour on cardboard sandwiches, part of a healthy eating project, make them a very effective part of the display. However, the opportunity to use information and communication technology for a pamphlet design was missed.
99. Teaching and learning are good. Only one lesson of art was observed. The lesson was well planned. The teacher used an appropriate painting in the pointillist style to introduce pupils to the pointillist technique. It showed simply and clearly the effect created by the pointillist school. The subject matter was also well chosen to reflect topic work on the seashore. Good questioning by the teacher encouraged the pupils to reflect on the result produced by the painter and they were able to appropriately describe it as peaceful. The teacher's careful introduction and demonstration of the pointillist technique enabled pupils to settle quickly and confidently to their task and produce high quality paintings. They thoroughly enjoyed the session.
100. There is some clay work in Key Stage 1, but three-dimensional work is limited. Printmaking is underdeveloped, although pupils in Year 3 and 4 have done some stencilling onto material. The use of information and communication technology is at an early stage.
101. At the time of the last inspection, art and design was identified as a strength of the school. Although overall standards are not as high, art work on display around the school is of good quality and significantly contributes to the pleasant learning environment of the school. Since the last inspection, the national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been put in place and they have taken up a greater proportion of curriculum time. Nevertheless, the policy and schemes of work for art and design have not been revised since 1997. A new subject leader has just been appointed. She rightly intends to adapt and develop the nationally suggested schemes of work for art and design to the needs of the school. An outline of the two-year cycle to be followed by each class has already been produced. A particular focus will be to ensure that the pupils make progress in the development of their skills in all aspects of art and design as they move through the school. Currently there is no assessment procedure. Practical resources are low and need to be updated.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

102. One lesson was seen during the week of the inspection in Years 3 and 4. Judgements in this subject are made on the additional evidence of analysis of pupils' work and discussions with teachers and pupils. Standards in both key stages are average and are similar to those found at the last inspection.
103. The curriculum in Years 5 and 6 is too narrow. This is because of weaknesses in teaching in the last year due to recruitment difficulties and the lack of effective monitoring. Pupils have too few opportunities to design, evaluate and improve their work. There was no evidence seen of design and evaluation of work in this class.
104. By the age of seven, pupils' books show evidence of planning and communicating design ideas and refining and improving them. Those of younger children also show working

- drawings and good attempts at evaluating their products. Pupils are able to make masks, using recycled materials. They have researched and designed a carnival mask, exploring the use of a variety of materials and experimenting with different ways to construct and secure the masks. They use recycled materials and cut eye and mouth holes measuring carefully to ensure it fits their face. They add their own design to make the mask personal to them. They evaluate their work and say what they would do to improve it. In food technology, they explore different ways of using fruit and taste and smell it.
105. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 make good progress in their learning when they put together simple systems to demonstrate how to use air pressure to make a simple puppet move. They can explain how the pneumatic system works and more able pupils can adapt it to improve the way their models work. They design and make Christmas cards and, in food technology, they plan and make healthy eating sandwiches. They use the computer to record their work. By the age of eleven, pupils have experienced using plastic to make masks of animals. They make models of cars from wood, some with moving parts, wheels and axles. They make lighthouses and crocodiles and make a circuit to provide a light or flashing eyes. After a circus workshop they make a model of a parrot and balance it on a stick. They make clowns, operated by strips of wood to enable moving arms and legs.
106. The quality of teaching and learning in the lesson observed was good. The teacher planned the lesson appropriately and provided stimulating and challenging opportunities to which the pupils responded with enthusiasm. Effective questioning at the beginning of the lesson checked pupils' initial understanding. Once this had been achieved the teacher then developed the pupils' knowledge of different ways to construct moving models, using air pressure devices. There was a good level of challenge and time for pupils to think about their own design ideas. Pupils showed a good level of interest in the subject and worked well together in pairs during the lesson. This combination of effective teaching and enthusiastic learning meant that pupils made significant gains in improving their skills.
107. Teachers' planning in Years 1 to 4 is thorough and makes appropriate use of national guidelines to ensure the consistent development of skills. Although planning exists in Year 5 and 6, there was no evidence during the inspection that this has been effectively implemented. Teachers have an appropriate amount of expertise and there has been a good level of training for teachers in the subject. However, with the high turnover of staff that is taking place, it will need further reviewing and updating. Assessment of pupils' work is weak. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory.

GEOGRAPHY

108. No lessons were observed during the inspection and judgements are based on teachers' planning and pupils' work in folders and on display around the school. Standards of attainment at the end of key stages are appropriate for seven-year olds. Standards in Years 3 and 4 are good. However, a significant amount of work for Years 5 and 6 had been misplaced because of the changes in staffing and reorganisation of the classroom. From the small amount of evidence obtained during the inspection from discussion with pupils and work on display, standards by the age of eleven are at least average, if not better. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Standards are similar to those found at the last inspection.
109. Pupils in Key Stage 1 study a plan and photographs of their school. They walk round the school and make observations about the ceilings, windows and the roof. They find the school, local villages and towns on a map. They use their literacy skills well when they write about memories of a seaside holiday and find the similarities and differences between a seaside town and their environment. They find Great Yarmouth on a map and look for symbols for various buildings and places of interest. They talk about the effect of weather on a seaside holiday. They bring in souvenirs such as a fridge magnet or a piece of coral and write about them. They list the outdoor activities that are available in Great Yarmouth.
110. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 make good progress in their knowledge of maps. They use an Ordnance Survey map of the area to find all the locations and villages. They place major cities such as Cairo and Rome on a map of the world. During a residential visit, they use

maps to find their way to local landmarks such as the farm and the toy museum. They study the effects of a motorway on wild life, pond life and farming. They study the effects of weather on a pond and discuss the water cycle. They find out about weather conditions round the world. They use holiday brochures to prepare a talk to the class about their chosen holiday destination, identifying similarities and differences in lifestyle and the weather. Years 5 and 6 complete a major topic linked to their residential trip to the Isle of Wight and compare it to their village. They study erosion, cliff formation and coastlines. They write good accounts about their trip. They compare the weather in different parts of the world such as India and Australia. Pupils have a good recall of their trip and were able to use suitable geographical terminology describing the physical features of the Isle of Wight. They respond with enthusiasm to the subject. Appropriate use is made of the Internet for research in both key stages.

111. The school follows the national guidelines. In the recent past, the school has been associated with national developments in the geography curriculum. The subject leader has identified appropriate targets in her action plan, such as identifying how school trips link to the geography curriculum. However, assessment has not been addressed.

HISTORY

112. Standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 are appropriate for seven-year olds, and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Attainment at the end of the Key Stage 2 is above the level expected of eleven-year-olds. This is a good improvement since the last inspection when pupils' attainment was in line with national expectations throughout the school.
113. Pupils in Key Stage 1 use common words and phrases relating to the passing of time. They study houses through the ages and do a timeline of homes from the caveman to today. They visit museums and look at artefacts, such as old household appliances. They compare life at the seaside between 1900 and 2001. They talk about the different types of entertainment available in 1900, such as a walk along the promenade, a penny arcade and performing fleas on the pier. Pupils can select from their knowledge of history and communicate it in a variety of ways. They make good progress in their use of vocabulary. A more able pupil describes moving pictures as 'optical wonders'. They find evidence from photographs. The pupils can identify a picture from each period, using clothes and buildings as evidence. They are quick to do this and immediately equate a parasol as being from 1900.
114. At Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress. By the age of eleven, pupils have studied all the major topics in the National Curriculum. They know about the key features, including the everyday lives of men, women and children in Ancient Egypt. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 draw a map of ancient Egypt. They know about the work of Howard Carter and how pyramids were constructed. They investigate canopic jars and mummies. They have a good knowledge of the Roman civilisation and find out about the Roman army and mosaics. They compare the strengths of Roman civilisation with that of the Celts. Pupils have a good sense of chronology. Younger pupils do a time line of the pharaohs from Djoser to Tutankhamun. Older pupils use diaries as historical evidence. They can construct Queen Victoria's family tree and know about her large family by studying an old photograph. They compare this to a poor family at the time. They write in copperplate. Pupils use dates and historical vocabulary to describe the periods studied. They understand the main features of Britain since 1950 and record dates such as Queen Elizabeth II's accession, when Britain joined the Common Market and the first landing on the moon. They use primary and secondary sources to find information about fashion and the electronic revolution. They do detailed research for homework on a study of their choice. Appropriate use is made of the Internet for research in both key stages.
115. Teaching and learning throughout the school enable the pupils to develop a good sense of chronology, to acquire knowledge and understanding of people and periods in history and to use sources as evidence to find out about the past. Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are thoroughly prepared and there is a good use of resources, including video programmes, which give a taste of how it really was to the pupils. The pupils are very motivated and show

a keen interest in history. They are very productive and independent workers when using photographs to find evidence. There is a good use of questioning which extends the pupils' thinking. All teachers plan a good range of visits to historical places of interest. Visits such as those to a Roman city and the British Museum have a good impact on the pupils' learning and enjoyment of the subject.

116. The school has adopted national guidance to ensure that all the requirements of the National Curriculum are covered. There is an action plan identifying development in the subject such as redrafting the policy to include the new scheme of work after the changes in the curriculum. There is no rigorous system of gauging pupils' levels of attainment regularly and frequently. Subject leadership is satisfactory and teachers' plans are monitored.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

117. Standards are in line with national expectations for pupils age seven, but they are not high enough for pupils aged eleven and progress is unsatisfactory. This is because pupils are not covering fully the National Curriculum programmes of study and statutory requirements are not being met. At the time of the last inspection, the use of information and communication technology by the school was good. Since that time hardware difficulties and staff turnover have led to the school not moving forward quickly enough to meet the challenges posed by continually improving machines and software. This has affected the quality of the curriculum at both key stages.
118. By the age of seven, pupils gather information from a variety of sources, including people, books, CD-ROMs and videos. They can confidently log on, word process simple text, save and print their work. They know how to change the size and style of the font they are using. They can access the Internet and are learning to search for information. They are confident users of information and communication technology. All Year 2 pupils have a computer at home and some have used the Internet to find further information on Great Yarmouth, which they are currently studying as part of their work on the seaside. Year 1 and 2 pupils are able to use a paint programme effectively to reproduce backgrounds of sand, sea and sky on which to add their own drawings. Although in previous years they have controlled simple machines, such as the floor turtle, by programming them, this is not currently possible. The machines are in need of repair. Overall progress is sound, but pupils could achieve higher standards by having a good knowledge of the hardware and software in school and being able to discuss and improve their work.
119. By the age of eleven, pupils' overall standards are not as good as they should be. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils have had insufficient opportunities to gain the required skills. Progress is unsatisfactory. There is no clear progression in the development of skills in word processing, using a spreadsheet and searching a database between Years 3 and 4 and 5 and 6. The use of computers to control machines or for data logging has been insufficient. However, pupils are confident and enthusiastic users of computers, willing to explore new programs and share information with each other on the best web-sites and games. They explore the Internet with assurance, and can save and print their work. They use a word processing package to draft and redraft their work in English. One pupil was able to export text and pictures and import them into documents. Some Year 6 pupils were observed still using a notepad rather than the more sophisticated word processor with its wider range of menus for word processing tasks. There was no evidence of the use of a desktop publishing package, for example to produce a school newspaper. Able Year 6 pupils remember how to use LOGO to draw squares, but were not fully conversant with the use of the *repeat* instruction to refine and shorten their methods. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is no different from that of other pupils. The school has specific programs to support the needs of pupils with learning difficulties, but there was no evidence of their planned use.
120. Little direct teaching was observed, although teachers' planning and discussion with pupils indicates that pupils have regular opportunities to use computers for their work. Pupils at Key Stage 2 have not made sufficient progress over the last year and this makes teaching unsatisfactory, overall. Teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1. Teachers are looking forward to the national training programme to improve their knowledge, understanding and skills. This

starts in September. Pupils are beginning to use the Internet well to search for information, for example on the Sikh religion in Years 5 and 6. Years 3 and 4 use email, with the teacher appropriately discussing with pupils the advantages and disadvantages of email over other forms of communication. An email link is being established with a very small village school in Scotland. However, the teaching of information and communication technology skills is not yet systematic enough and has suffered from staff turnover and a lack of training.

121. At the time of the last inspection, the use of information and communication technology by the school was good. Since that time, hardware difficulties and staff turnover have led to the school not moving forward quickly enough to meet the challenges posed by continually improving machines and software. Recently purchased computers leave the school with an adequate number. However, the school now has three different types of operating systems and a large range of software, some of which is out of date. It needs to review the most appropriate use of each computer and which software is still useful. Subject leaders have not identified where generic programs such as data-handling, spreadsheet, desk-top publishing, multi-media and word processing packages support pupils learning and how their use contributes to the progressive development of pupils' information and communication technology skills. Subject-specific programs are not yet well matched to schemes of work. Access to the Internet in all classes has been possible only since Easter. The school is not fully meeting National Curriculum requirements for information and communication technology, as pupils are not using computers to control machines. Equipment such as sensors and devices for controlling machines are not in use.
122. Management of information and communication technology is a concern. It is currently shared by the headteacher and senior teacher. The headteacher has successfully overseen the purchase and installation of the new computers this year and the senior teacher, on returning from leave of absence, has done an audit of the software received with the new computers. However, with the senior teacher leaving, considerable responsibility continues to rest with the headteacher. The new subject leader will need to lead and support staff in the school through their national training, audit the use of information and communication technology across the curriculum and ensure that schemes of work are fully in place for the progressive development of pupils' computer skills.

MUSIC

123. Pupils' standards in music at the end of Key Stage 1 are satisfactory. Pupils enjoy singing and composing and are able to work together in small groups to compose pieces to perform in front of their classmates. No lessons were seen in Years 5 and 6 and an analysis of work showed that some pupils have extended their knowledge of the values of notes and composition, pitch and sound patterns. However, there is too little evidence to make an accurate judgement about standards at the end of Key Stage 2. A significant proportion of pupils have instrumental tuition in keyboard, piano and guitar. Standards in these sessions are good. The school has an active choir that participates in local music festivals and concerts. The choir is enthusiastic and able to sing in two parts. There is an annual music concert in the school in the summer term and a regular recorder club. These additional activities provide opportunities for pupils to experience a wide range of musical activities. Music is not such a strong feature of the school now as it was at the last inspection. This is because time spent on teaching music has decreased as the school has rightly focused on provision for literacy and numeracy.
124. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are able to compose group pieces, using tuned and untuned percussion using a variety of long and short notes. They are able to record their work, using agreed symbols. Careful planning by the teacher enables this. Pupils handle instruments with confidence. Pupils sing a range of songs with confidence and expression and most can follow the teachers' directions well. Pupils in Key Stage 2 understand note values, such as crochets, quavers and minims and can use them to create effective simple rhythms, which they notate accurately. They compose and perform different four beat phrases. They listen to the music of Saint-Saens and recognise why the music sounds like particular animals.

125. The quality of teaching and learning in both key stages is good, with some very good teaching in Years 1 and 2. Teachers' planning identifies appropriate songs and instruments for pupils to sing and play. There are planned opportunities for pupils to write down and record their compositions. There are good links to other subjects. In Years 3 and 4, pupils' compositions relate to mini beast work covered in science. Teachers plan appropriately challenging opportunities to compose simple music and to create a range of performing opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their performing skills. Pupils listen to music carefully and pay attention. They work well together in groups or pairs, sharing instruments and appreciating the work of others, being generous with praise when the opportunity arises. They treat musical instruments with respect and handle them carefully. The pupils' behaviour is good. During the inspection, the classrooms were very hot and humid which did cause some inattention by some of the pupils. Due to timetable restrictions during the inspection, no teaching was observed in Years 5 and 6.
126. Subject leadership is good and displays a good vision for the development of the subject. The leader is a skilled pianist and plays in assemblies. However, there is no consistent system for teachers to assess pupils' attainment and progress as they move through the school, although pupils are verbally appraised in lessons and assembly. In order to support staff who feel less confident, the school is using a published scheme, which identifies a clear progression of skills. Resources are adequate but an audit has shown that some are old or rusty and will be replaced. A string quartet has recently visited the school and a percussion group is booked for next term. These provide very good opportunities for pupils to broaden their musical experience.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

127. Standards are above average in both key stages. Standards have been maintained at the good level found in the last inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. During the inspection, lessons were observed in games and athletic activities. The school offers most activities, including gym and dance. However, the school does not meet statutory requirements in swimming. The pupils do attain the standards expected. By the age of eleven most pupils can swim 25 metres and many swim much longer distances. The programme of swimming that used to take place was abandoned because of the large amount of time it took out of the teaching day. A very limited amount of swimming takes place during the residential trips for pupils in Years 3 to 6. No evidence was presented to show that all pupils are assessed in water confidence and safety and that they can swim unaided for a sustained period of time over a distance of at least 25 metres, using a range of recognised strokes and personal survival skills. However, achievement certificates gained outside school are presented in assembly and recorded in the pupils' achievement books.
128. By the age of seven, pupils can throw, bounce and catch different sized balls accurately, including 2 handed chest passes. They have refined their ball control skills, using hockey sticks. They can control a football around an obstacle course and net a basketball. In the playground, they balance and climb, improving their ability to link movements together.
129. By the age of eleven, pupils are competent athletes. They work on improving their scores in a range of athletic events. They are able to identify how to improve and put their ideas into practice. They work well in groups, organising trials, timing themselves and recording their results.
130. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject. Their good organisation and enthusiasm ensures that all pupils participate well. There is a good focus to developing new skills. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher supported the pupils well when introducing the use of hockey sticks to control and direct a ball. The weather during the inspection was very hot and teachers appropriately adapted the activities to take account of the heat, making sure that water was available. Careful planning ensures that pupils understand the importance of warm up before heavy exercise and these activities are usually related to the main teaching activity. The pupils participate well and with enthusiasm. They are able to practise skills with or without teacher supervision. Teachers have ensured that pupils understand the contribution that exercise makes to their health. Pupils work hard and

strive to improve their performance. Activities are well adapted to all pupils' abilities and teachers encourage pupils to work in mixed ability groups where more able pupils encourage and help others.

131. The curriculum is enhanced greatly by the school's use of residential school trips, which support outdoor and adventurous activities. The local authority programme also loans specialist equipment to the school. Parents keep detailed records of athletic achievements which are displayed prominently in school. They update them regularly. There is no similar system for celebrating achievement in swimming.
132. Pupils participate in a wide range of competitive sports activities with local schools and those organised by the county. These include football, netball and athletics. Visits have a good impact on the curriculum and have included a visit to the local rugby club for training. Visitors have provided extra coaching in basketball, football and rugby. The parents are very actively involved in supporting the school sports programme. They are in school regularly to keep the school athletic achievement board up to date and have successfully raised funds to ensure that resources are of a very high standard. Pupils enthusiastically use the playground equipment that the school and parents have recently funded. Activities in the playground have a very good impact on the pupils' skills in physical education. Games played include skipping, hop scotch, the use of hoops, bats and balls, including quieter games like 'jacks'. Provision, with the exception of swimming, is as strong as in the last inspection.
133. The headteacher is the subject leader. Planning is clear, but there is no assessment of what has been achieved in areas other than athletics.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

134. By the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' standards are above those required by the syllabus followed by most schools in Hertfordshire. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress throughout the school. Standards have improved since the previous inspection.
135. Year 2 pupils understand the purposes of celebration and give examples from their own experience, which contributes well to their cultural development. They know that Christians worship God and that the Bible is a special book. They have a good understanding of baptism and know that the school and church are part of the community. They write about special people in their lives such as their grandmother and know about famous people such as St Francis of Assisi. They imagine what heaven is like and draw pictures of it. They have a very good understanding about other religions. They know the Qur'an is special to the Muslims and a few know that it was Muhammad who wrote it. Pupils remember the Guru Granth Sahib after the visit of a Sikh gentleman. They show great interest in studying pictures and photographs of other religious practices. They ask questions such as 'Do they keep the gifts they give the special book'? They draw Hindu Mendhi patterns.
136. Pupils' understanding is deepened and extended in Key Stage 2. Pupils have a good knowledge of the Muslim and Christian faiths. They know the significance of a candle in Christianity and the differences between a high and low church. They attend local church services and have visited the chapel where John Bunyan preached. They draw Islamic prayer mats and write a letter to a friend about fasting during Ramadan. Year 6 deepen their knowledge of world religions. They know why Sikhs don't cut their hair and that the kara (bracelet) is worn because God is all around them. They have visited a Hindu temple. They understand the Muslim call to prayer and pilgrimage at Mecca. They know about a Jewish bar mitzvah and the importance of the synagogue to them. They discuss the meaning of persecution and temptation.
137. Teaching and learning are good. The teachers have high expectations of pupils' attention, application and standards. Relationships are very good, which motivates pupils to try very hard to produce work of a pleasing standard. They are confident to articulate their thoughts and feelings, secure in the knowledge that their opinions will be valued. Lessons are conducted at a good pace with a very effective use of a range of strategies to retain pupils'

attention and interest. Visits to places of worship and visitors to the school have a very good impact on the pupils' learning. Questioning is used skilfully to probe pupils' understanding and to extend their learning, with the result that pupils learn at a fast rate.

138. The headteacher is managing the subject during the long-term absence of the subject leader. There is a rich curriculum, which is broad and balanced in all classes. There are, however, no assessment procedures to track pupils' progress in the subject.