

INSPECTION REPORT

CLIFTON-UPON-TEME PRIMARY SCHOOL

Clifton-upon-Teme

LEA area: Worcestershire

Unique reference number: 116669

Headteacher: Mrs D Mitchell

Reporting inspector: Mrs Christine Huard
27290

Dates of inspection: 1st - 3rd July 2002

Inspection number: 198210

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 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Pound Lane Clifton-upon-Teme Worcestershire
Postcode:	WR6 6DH
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs P Wojciechowski
Date of previous inspection:	October 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
27290	Mrs Christine Huard	Registered inspector	Mathematics History Physical education Religious education	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well pupils are taught How well the school is led and managed What the school should do to improve further
19664	Mr John Bayliss	Lay inspector		How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works in partnership with parents
21904	Mrs Diane Gale	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Geography	The quality of the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils Special educational needs
27369	Mrs Carolyn Powell	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Science Information and communication technology Music	Equal opportunities

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6-9
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10-12
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	12-14
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	14-16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	16-18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	18-19
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	19-21
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	21
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	22-25
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	26-40

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Clifton-upon-Teme is a small village primary school situated in an attractive rural village outside Worcester. The 64 pupils attend from the local area, which, in social and economic terms, is above average. Children join the reception class in the September following their fourth birthday and their attainment on entry is broadly average. Overall, there are more girls than boys, with the biggest imbalance in Year 4 where there are seven girls and only one boy. There is great variation in the size of each year group, the smallest being Year 1, with two pupils and the largest being the Reception year with 13. All the pupils in the school are of white ethnic origin, and there are none for whom English is an additional language. Four pupils, six per cent, are eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. Nine pupils, 14 per cent, are identified as having special educational needs and this is also below average. Additional support is provided for pupils who have severe difficulties with learning. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is at the heart of the village community and provides a good education, with many very good features, for its pupils. The pupils attain standards that are above average overall, because the teaching is good and they work hard. Pupils have very good attitudes towards their work, which have a positive impact on their achievements during lessons and over time. All pupils achieve well because staff value all pupils equally as individuals. The pupils are prepared well for life in a culturally diverse society. The leadership and management of the headteacher are outstanding, and she is supported well by her staff, and by particularly knowledgeable and active governors. Everyone works well together to fulfil the school's aims, enabling it to provide good value for money.

What the school does well

- The leadership and management of the headteacher are excellent. She is supported very well by the senior staff and governing body.
- Standards are above average overall, and pupils achieve well.
- The teaching is good for all pupils in Years 1 to 6 and pupils learn effectively because they behave well, have very positive attitudes towards their work, and have strong relationships with each other and the adults in the school.
- Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good.
- The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is very good and enhanced by an excellent range of activities outside school.

What could be improved

- The children in the Reception year have made insufficient progress this year because the provision is unsatisfactory.¹

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be distributed to the parents and carers of all pupils in the school.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in October 1997. Since then, the school has improved significantly and has a very good capacity for further improvement. The school has, overall, improved the standards it was achieving at that time in national tests by identifying relative weaknesses and taking prompt and effective action to address them, as, for example in science. Standards in information and communication technology remain above those expected, and there has been good improvement in other subjects, such as art, music and dance. The role of the governors has improved greatly. They are now fully involved in all aspects of the school's development planning and have a good understanding of the financial arrangements. They show a true understanding of the term 'critical friend' and offer guidance and encouragement in a constructive and helpful manner. The monitoring of the curriculum has improved and co-ordinators now have the opportunity to observe some lessons and also make a detailed analysis of teachers' planning and pupils' work. The assessment systems used by the school are useful, uncomplicated and practical, and give the headteacher a clear picture of overall standards. The provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved and teaching assistants, as well as teaching staff, work together to ensure that the needs of these pupils are appropriately met. The school has made improved arrangements for children in the Reception class since the previous inspection. However, there are issues concerned with the organisation and teaching, which require attention. The school is aware of these and has already started to address them.

¹ The school has already included this aspect in their school improvement plan for the coming year.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools ²
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	B	D	B	C
Mathematics	B	A	A	B
Science	A*	C	D	E

Key	
Very high	A*
Well above average	A
Above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E
Very low	E*

In 2001, the school's results in the national tests at the end of Year 6 were above average in English and well above average in mathematics although they were below average in science. In comparison with similar schools, they were average in English, above average in mathematics, and well below average in science. Results over the last five years have fluctuated, as is common in very small schools. The trend of improvement, overall, is broadly in line with the national picture. There is a continuing trend of improvement and the pupils achieve well. Standards are average in English, and above average in mathematics and science. The school exceeded the targets it set for English and mathematics in 2001, and is likely to meet, and probably exceed, the targets set for 2002. There is no discernible difference in the achievements of boys and girls.

The group of pupils taking the tests at the end of Year 2, in 2001, was particularly small. Overall, the results showed that the standards attained were well below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment in science showed standards to be well below average. The results were low because a high percentage of pupils in the group had special educational needs. When compared with similar schools, the results were very low in reading and mathematics and well below average in writing. In the Reception year, children achieve standards, which are below those expected in all six areas of learning, although there are some strengths, such as in the children's speaking skills.

Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Gifted and talented pupils are also provided for well. Pupils attain well overall in the other subjects. Standards in art, information and communication technology, and music are above what are expected. There has been good progress made in art and design, music and dance, since a teacher with skills in these particular areas was appointed. In design and technology, geography and history, standards are in line with those expected at the end of Year 6. It is not possible to make an overall judgement about standards in physical education as no lessons were observed, other than in dance. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	These are very good. The pupils enjoy being in school. They are keen and enthusiastic to learn. Pupils try hard, settle well to the tasks set and take pride in the presentation of their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good around the school and in lessons. The school rules are simple, realistic and understood by all pupils. Very good support is provided for the very few pupils with behavioural problems, which enables them to learn effectively. The very good behaviour supports the learning of all.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils in all classes are encouraged to take responsibility for a number of tasks in the classroom and around the school. They fulfil these efficiently and maturely. Relationships between pupils and with adults are very good. Pupils work

² 'Similar schools' are defined by the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals; this measure has been found to be significantly related to the levels of attainment normally found in schools nationally.

	and play very well together.
Attendance	This is excellent. Punctuality is also very good. Both these factors have a positive impact on pupils' learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Unsatisfactory	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 overall quality of teaching is good. In many lessons, particularly in Years 3 to 6, it is very good. Judgements are based, not only on lessons observed, but also on the examination of pupils' work. Teachers are confident, have good subject knowledge and present this in a way that stimulates and excites the pupils. Their own enthusiasm is frequently reflected in the pupils' responses. Teachers challenge their pupils by providing interesting and original tasks at an appropriate level to match the abilities of all the pupils. They encourage their pupils to research independently in order to increase their knowledge. All teachers show respect for their pupils' opinions and ideas, listening carefully to what they have to say and encouraging other pupils to do the same. The pupils learn effectively because they are interested, are trusted to work sensibly, collaborate efficiently, and listen to each other. They take a pride in what they are doing, at whatever level they are working, and their teachers celebrate their achievements with them. Staff provide on-going encouragement, and pupils are valued for themselves, which raises their self-esteem.

English and mathematics are usually taught well and the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are consolidated effectively across the whole curriculum. Teaching is matched well to the needs of pupils of all abilities, and lessons are planned which are exciting and challenging to all. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good, as is that of gifted and talented pupils. However, although the teaching seen during the inspection in the Reception class was satisfactory, it is clear that over time it has not been. The knowledge and understanding of the requirements for children of this age are insecure. The tasks set are often insufficiently challenging and not based on on-going assessments of pupils' progress. The school has already identified this weakness and is taking positive action to address it.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. A broad and well-balanced curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of visits and visitors to support specific topics or areas of learning. The curriculum is supported by an excellent range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The pupils' needs are identified carefully, targets are set and work is matched well to pupils' needs. Pupils are supported well in their learning by the teaching assistants.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Provision for pupils' personal development is supported very well by the strong ethos of the school, the good role models provided by the staff, and very good relationships between pupils and adults. The school develops pupils' moral and social awareness highly effectively, and particular improvements have been made in pupils' cultural awareness.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. The school is effective in promoting the health, safety and well being of its pupils. The positive friendly atmosphere makes a strong contribution to providing a caring learning community. The school monitors pupils' academic progress and their personal development effectively.

Parents think very highly of the school, are supportive in many ways and appreciative of the care the school accords its pupils.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher provides very strong and effective leadership and is supported well by her staff who carry out their own management roles effectively. There is a strong spirit of teamwork and commitment among the staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governors are knowledgeable and work very effectively. They manage the school efficiently. They are actively involved in the school and support its development. They question what it does sensibly and are very aware of its strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school analyses its results, teaching and curriculum very thoroughly and takes effective action to improve. It consults widely on its further development. The written development plan is particularly clear, outlines current priorities very well, and communicates the school's long-term vision effectively.
The strategic use of resources	Good overall. Funds are directed to priority areas and their use is controlled and monitored well.

The management of the school ensures it obtains best value in its spending decisions, by questioning what it does, and ensuring that the funds are spent wisely. The school has sufficient qualified teachers and support staff. The quality of resources is generally good, and they are used well. The accommodation is sound and the school makes very good use of the space it has available.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school is a 'family school' and their children love coming to it. The school is very approachable. Staff listen to, and act on, any concerns raised. The teaching is good and the children make good progress. The behaviour is very good. The school has very high expectation of the children in terms of behaviour and work. The children are encouraged to be responsible and become more mature. The school is very well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The parents did not identify any areas of concern and were overwhelmingly supportive of the school.

The inspectors support parents' positive views, although the provision for children in the Reception class is unsatisfactory. The inspectors acknowledge that this has already been recognised by the school and is being addressed.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children enter the Reception class with broadly average attainment, although, within this, there is a wide range of abilities. However, during their time in the Reception class, the children make unsatisfactory progress, and many of them do not achieve as well as they should, because the range of activities provided for them does not match their attainment sufficiently well. Because of this, the majority of them will not meet the expected goals in all the areas of learning³.
2. In the national tests for pupils at the end of Year 2, in 2001, results in reading, writing and mathematics were well below the national average. When compared with similar schools, results were well below average in writing and very low in reading and mathematics. A very small group of pupils took these tests and the results reflect the percentage of pupils with special education needs in this particular group. When compared with the results of tests undertaken by these pupils when they started school, they achieved well. Pupils at the end of Year 6 attained results that were above the national average in English and well above average in mathematics, although below average in science. Compared with similar schools, results in English were average, mathematics above average, science well below average.
3. It should be noted that the number of pupils undertaking the national tests and tasks is very small compared to most schools. Each pupil counts for a significant percentage of a year group. Therefore, the performance of just one or two pupils can alter results significantly, from year to year, producing quite large differences in the results achieved.
4. Until 2001, the results of tests at the end of Year 2 reflected the school's trend of improvement, with steady gains having been made since the previous inspection, although with some inevitable fluctuations, because of small numbers involved. Until 2001, the trend of improvement exceeded the national trend. Although the girls performed better than the boys in the reading and writing tests in Year 2, the performance of boys and girls is now broadly the same throughout the school.
5. The provisional results of national tests in 2002 confirm that standards attained by pupils in Year 2 have risen again. The standards of work achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6, both during the inspection, and by studying pupils' earlier work, exceeded expectations in mathematics and science. In English, the standards were average overall, because, although there were considerable strengths in reading, speaking and listening, standards in writing were broadly average.
6. Standards in English in Year 6 are average overall, although pupils' reading skills are above average. Writing standards are average, because pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length. In Year 2, pupils are achieving average standards in their writing. Reading is above average, throughout the school, because it is taught systematically and pupils have ample opportunities to practise their reading skills. Pupils achieve well in English, because their progress is monitored carefully, which enables teachers to ensure their needs are met effectively. Standards in speaking and listening are above average throughout the school. The pupils are articulate and learn to be confident speakers, using a wide range of vocabulary in order to express their thoughts.
7. Pupils are attaining above-average standards in mathematics across the school. They achieve well because the numeracy strategy is taught well, classes are set challenging targets, and the staff are confident and knowledgeable. There is thorough coverage of all areas of the mathematics curriculum, with the subject being used well across other subjects.

³ The areas of learning for children in the Reception year are, personal, social and emotional development, language literacy and communication, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development.

8. Pupils' attainment in science is above average throughout the school. It is taught well and achievement is good because the curriculum is built around investigative and experimental activities
9. Overall, there has been a good improvement in the standards attained since the previous inspection, Pupils are achieving well in mathematics and science and in some aspects of English. The school's targets for pupils' attainment in English and mathematics, in 2002, are challenging, but achievable.
10. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well in relation to the targets set in their individual education plans. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection, where the availability of support from teaching assistants was lacking. Standards achieved by higher attaining pupils are very good, because stimulating and challenging extension activities are provided for them enabling them to be challenged to fulfil their potential.
11. Overall, pupils achieve well in relation to their attainment when they first enter the school. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is above the expected standard. Pupils are gaining a wide experience in all elements of the subject. Pupils' attainment in art and design is above what is expected. Standards in music have improved considerably since the previous inspection and now exceed the levels expected. Standards in design and technology, geography, and history, are similar to those in other schools. In religious education, pupils are meeting the objectives of the Locally Agreed Syllabus, by the end of Year 6, and there are considerable strengths in much of the work covered. It was not possible to make an overall judgement about standards in physical education, because lessons were observed only in dance. The standards reached in this aspect were above those normally seen.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. The pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are very good and make an important contribution to their learning. These high standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. The inspection team agree with parents that their children are happy, secure, and grow in confidence as they move up the school.
13. Pupils' attitudes to the school are very good throughout. The pupils in Year 6 talk with affection of their years in the school. They like its small scale and sense of security, and the way that as one pupil said, 'everyone knows everyone and we all play together'. Pupils appreciate the individual attention that the teachers are able to give, and find their work, and the exciting range of activities, interesting and challenging. Pupils are attentive, keen to answer questions, and the older pupils enter into discussion and debate enthusiastically. Pupils undertake tasks eagerly and work hard to complete them. The pupils with special educational needs have the same very good attitudes towards their learning and towards others. When working individually or in a small group, they show an increasing level of confidence. All pupils persevere with challenging tasks and enjoy the results.
14. Pupils' behaviour is very good around the school and in the playground. Parents are right to be pleased with the very good standard of behaviour in the school. During lessons, pupils are polite to staff and to each other. This same courtesy is extended to visitors who are greeted with smiles and offers of help. All pupils play harmoniously in the playground and there are no signs of aggressive behaviour. There has, recently, been one temporary exclusion. This was supported by the appropriate procedures and entirely justified.
15. The quality of relationships within the school is very good, and the school is a harmonious and supportive community. The teachers and support staff know and understand pupils' individual needs and treat pupils with respect and sensitivity. As a result, pupils develop very positive relationships with adults and other pupils. They collaborate well together, when necessary, and respect and applaud the efforts of others. This was exemplified in a music lesson when the pupils in Years 5 and 6 volunteered to sing solo parts of the new song they were learning, and their efforts were sensitively recognised by other pupils. Lunchtimes are sociable and pleasant, and pupils make good use of the playground equipment available, sharing and taking turns. All

aspects of their very busy school life, including the excellent provision for pupils' personal and social education, promote very good relationships.

16. The personal development of pupils is very good. The wealth of learning opportunities provided helps them to understand the beliefs and values of others, and to develop their ideas of citizenship. Pupils talk sensitively of the understanding they have gained from their contact with a school for deaf in the Ukraine. They are aware of environmental issues and take their role as 'eco-police' very seriously, ensuring that the school environment is kept neat and litter free. They also demonstrate a sense of responsibility, through their roles as members of the school council, and have initiated many ideas for improvement. This sense of responsibility permeates school life and shows that the pupils are developing into caring and concerned individuals. Pupils throughout the school enjoy taking day-to-day responsibility and are always happy to be a 'helping hand'. Older pupils welcome younger children to the school and enjoy responsibility, such as the paired reading with younger pupils. A strength of this area of their development is the confidence that pupils show in expressing carefully considered opinions. They make choices and show independence and initiative very well, both in the classroom and through all other aspects of school life.
17. Pupils' attendance is excellent overall. The high level of attendance reported when the school was inspected in 1997 has been improved further. Levels of unauthorised absence are negligible and there is no evidence of truancy. Punctuality in the morning is good. When instances of lateness occur, they are of a minor nature and are not disruptive to lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

18. The quality of teaching is was good overall. Twenty lessons were observed during the inspection and ranged from very good to satisfactory. Of these, teaching was very good in four, good in eleven and satisfactory in five. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. The overall quality of teaching and learning has improved significantly since the previous inspection, when teaching was unsatisfactory in three per cent of lessons and was very good or better in only eight per cent of lessons. This improved teaching has had a positive impact on pupils' learning and has been instrumental in raising standards across the school.
19. The teaching seen in the Reception class during the inspection was satisfactory. However, it is evident, from the children's work, and from the progress they have made, that this has not been the case through much of the year. The learning experiences provided for the children are unsatisfactory. They do not fulfil the requirements of the revised national guidelines for children of this age and fail to stimulate or challenge the children sufficiently. The range of activities offered to the children is too narrow and does not help them to make links between the different areas of learning. The result is that children's understanding is limited, and they are not sufficiently motivated, because the activities are not relevant to their needs and interests. Activities are poorly structured and do not ensure the consolidation and development of skills. There is too little opportunity for these children to develop independence. Effective use is made of the member of support staff, who provides unobtrusive and useful help.
20. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good in Years 1 to 6. The pupils benefit from good individual education plans, and the teachers take these targets into careful consideration when planning work. The individual plans are working documents, which are checked regularly to ensure the criteria for the targets are being addressed. Teachers ensure that these pupils are fully included in all subjects across the curriculum. They make certain that these pupils are prepared well for new learning in literacy by, for example, providing help for them in recognising and understanding the vocabulary that is to be used. Additionally, teaching assistants are effective in helping pupils with special educational needs, including those with a statement of special educational needs, to make progress. Their knowledge and support provide valuable assistance to teachers in all year groups, reflecting the improvement in teaching provision. Teachers forge good relationships with pupils with special educational needs, and this contributes greatly to their self esteem and desire to achieve.
21. The school has identified the more able pupils and provides them with teaching in all classes that meets their particular needs. Tasks are designed to be challenging, but fun, and to extend the

thinking of these pupils. Where it is appropriate; for example, in mathematics, pupils are moved to work with older pupils in another class, where the challenge is greater and extends thinking further.

22. Teaching is planned well, and is motivating and exciting, with the result that pupils have an enthusiasm for learning. The good rapport between the teachers and the pupils makes learning fun and enjoyable, because the approach is interesting, lively and convincing. This was particularly evident during a dance lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6, based on the topic of a Victorian street scene. Firm discipline, mixed with considerable humour created a relaxed and enjoyable working atmosphere. The use of recorded video footage refreshed pupils' memories of how far they had reached in preparing their dance sequence and ensured a brisk and purposeful start to the lesson. The music selected enhanced the quality of pupils' movement and their sensitivity very effectively. Pupils worked well in their groups, experimenting with movements, levels and space, and encouraged by praise and useful comment from the teacher.
23. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum is good. Staff have a good knowledge of what is covered in all subjects in each year. They have a very good understanding of the abilities and achievements of pupils at every stage of their development, because they work so closely together and the quality of monitoring and assessment is good. Because teachers consistently display high levels of competence, pupils can acquire knowledge and skills at a rapid rate. For example, in a mathematics lesson, pupils in Year 2 could explain the principles of halving and doubling numbers. A good knowledge of number bonds and early tables skills enabled them to work out the halves of 22 and 26, quickly and accurately. They were then able to consolidate and extend their skills through a variety of games and activities, which were stimulating and fun as well as enabling them to learn effectively.
24. The teaching of the basic skills of numeracy and literacy is good. Correct terminology is used throughout. The skills of literacy and numeracy are reinforced effectively through their use in other subjects. For example, pupils in a Year 3 history lesson wrote a diary of a Roman slave, describing their part in the preparation and serving a feast in a nobleman's house. Their writing showed an understanding of the need for brevity and the use of personal comment gave it liveliness and individuality. Pupils are taught how to use the library and the school's classification system. This enables them to carry out their own research efficiently and independently. Skills in information and communication technology are also taught well. Pupils can use the Internet to assist their research and have opportunities to practise their skills in order to become more efficient at using equipment, such as digital cameras and video recorders, as well as computers.
25. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils' achievements. Teaching methods are effective and highly appropriate and involve a range of different strategies. Wherever possible, firsthand experience is provided. For example, when the pupils in Years 1 and 2 were studying forces, they were invited to use a range of toys and equipment to find out which force was required in order for them to move or work effectively. This immediately set the tone for the lesson and pupils were instantly interested and motivated. Teachers challenge and probe the extent of pupils' knowledge continuously. They encourage them to think for themselves and expect them to research independently when they are not sure about a piece of information. Pupils are carefully directed to where the appropriate information they will require may be found, and many of the displays around the school show a range of books that offer such information.
26. Time is used very well in most classes. This results in a brisk pace to pupils' learning and was a strong feature in nearly all lessons. Most teachers make clear to pupils how long they have to complete each task; this ensures that concentration is sustained and is particularly effective when pupils are working in pairs or groups.
27. Class management is very good overall. There is a good rapport between teachers and pupils. There is a very good balance of firmness and praise. However, because pupils are encouraged to be so involved in their own learning, there is a need for a high degree of understanding of the need for self-discipline. This is taught well from an early stage and managed very sensitively by teachers.

28. The quality of day-to-day assessment is good. Teachers constantly assess pupils' learning during lessons. Marking is used effectively and ensures that pupils understand how successful they have been. Suggestions for improvement are useful and followed up well by pupils. Whole-class sessions at the end of each lesson give the teacher a very good overview of pupils' understanding of what has been learned. A particularly good feature is the way in which pupils are taught to evaluate their own work, and that of their classmates, making constructive and useful comment.
29. Homework is set on a regular basis. It is consistently set in all classes, there is an understanding that it will be completed, and pupils are very well aware of what is expected of them. It supports class work well and involves parents effectively in their children's learning.

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

30. The curriculum planned for the children in the Reception class has changed significantly since the previous inspection and there have been changes in national guidelines. As yet, the school has not taken steps to plan the specific curriculum for children in the Reception year in line with the Early Learning Goals⁴. This is unsatisfactory, as it means there is insufficient structure to the activities planned for the children of this age group.
31. The overall quality of the curriculum is one of the school's many strengths, and the quality and range of learning opportunities are very good. The school has comprehensive, established policies and schemes of work in all subjects. This good improvement ensures that the issues of the previous inspection have been addressed successfully and means that the planning processes have improved. An appropriate structure of planning ensures that the pupils' skills and knowledge are developed progressively, as they proceed through the school, and takes account of the mixed-age classes. The school does not miss any opportunity to enrich and enhance the curriculum, with the consequent benefit to all pupils.
32. The curriculum is broadly based and well balanced in the range of subjects taught, and meets the needs, aptitudes and special needs of all pupils. Provision for all subjects meets the requirements of the National Curriculum, as well as those in the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. The schemes of work guide planning successfully and the previous weaknesses in music, dance, art and design, and investigative skills in science, have been rectified effectively. The curriculum for subjects other than English, mathematics and science is planned carefully, throughout the school, in half-termly blocks. Careful consideration is given to how the planning will incorporate the national guidelines and address the needs of the mixed-age classes effectively. The school carefully incorporates what is appropriate for its pupils, and in addition ensures that the results of assessment are used to inform the future planning of the curriculum.
33. Good strategies are evident for the teaching of literacy. The school has embraced the National Literacy Strategy enthusiastically, but carefully employs flexibility in planning so that the needs of all pupils can be met. There are planned opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills across other areas of the curriculum, and this has a beneficial impact on their achievements. A weakness, however, lies with limited opportunities for pupils to undertake sustained or extended writing where they can develop and practice their skills further. The strategies for teaching the skills of numeracy are good. Skills are reinforced on a regular basis and taught in a well-planned and structured way, with good challenge for the higher-attaining pupils. The increasing use of information and communication technology is carefully integrated into planning, and has a good impact on learning in other subjects.
34. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, and shows good improvement since the previous inspection. Policies and procedures meet statutory requirements, and the school is ready to meet the demands of the revised Code of Practice for special educational

⁴ The Early Learning Goals set out what children should achieve by the time they reach the end of the reception year in primary school.

need. Teachers plan work that is matched well to the targets of pupils' individual programmes, and ensure that these pupils are supported in all other subjects, so that they gain in knowledge and understanding across the curriculum. The targets of pupils' individual education plans are concise and manageable and allow for step-by-step progression. The targets for pupils with emotional and behavioural problems also indicate clearly what pupils need to do to improve. The pupils know their targets, as they are involved in the setting of them. Regular reviews and efficient record keeping show that pupils frequently make good progress through the small steps identified in their targets.

35. The school has a very good policy for promoting the development of its gifted and talented pupils, ensuring that their particular needs are met and they are appropriately challenged and extended. Their particular skills are documented very well, and if the pupils require additional support in other areas, for example, with their behaviour, this too is noted and provided.
36. The learning of all pupils is enriched by a range of extra-curricular activities, which give opportunities for both sporting and cultural activities, including French. The school has been awarded the 'Education Extra Award of Excellence' in recognition of the excellent range of extra-curricular activities and this is well justified. The staff give their time willingly to enable pupils to benefit from these extra opportunities, and further opportunities are provided by visitors to the school. An example of this was an African drumming session, where a number of pupils showed intense concentration and eager delight at their learning experiences. The varied opportunities make an important contribution to pupils' personal development as well as enhancing their skills in different areas. The range of educational visits and the number of visitors to the school have an additional impact on pupils' learning. Younger pupils use the local environment well to enhance their understanding of texture and pattern in art. They also visit places further afield, such as Bristol, and the Malvern Hills, and older pupils have the opportunity to participate in a residential visit to France. Visitors to the school add a further dimension to pupils' learning across the curriculum. For example, contributions from visiting artists show pupils a range of interesting and challenging techniques. Such initiatives are beneficial and ensure that pupils' learning is enhanced and extended, thus contributing to a rich and stimulating curriculum.
37. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is excellent. The school gives high priority to this aspect of the curriculum, and it contributes much to the ethos of the school. This aspect is thoroughly embedded in all learning and activities, and ensures that pupils' personal development is very good. The school has implemented a range of policies, which are all interlinked, so that pupils benefit from the many areas planned. For example, the very good policy for personal, social, and health education is linked with citizenship, and the global education policy. The school has an appropriate, sustainability policy that puts an emphasis on citizenship and working towards an understanding of the quality of life globally and locally. The implementation of these policies has a realistic impact. For example, pupils benefit from regular contact with schools in France and Czechoslovakia, and develop their understanding of wider issues through contact with a school for the deaf in the Ukraine. At a local level, pupils have a strong awareness of environmental issues, and the appointment of 'eco-police' reinforces their understanding of the need to care and value the natural world. Health education, healthy relationships, drugs, and sex education, and personal relationships, are also carefully addressed as part of the overall provision. The school's achievements and initiatives have been widely and justifiably recognised by the awarding of many certificates, which are proudly displayed. Regular personal and social education lessons provide very good opportunities for the discussion of issues of personal and wider importance.
38. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning, and the school's relationships with partner institutions are excellent. The school has numerous links with its local community, and these links are greatly valued. Strong links have been maintained with the local church and the vicar often visits the school to take assemblies. The school participates regularly and eagerly in village activities, such as Maypole dancing at the school May Fair. A toddler group appreciates being able to use the school building, and the school has close ties with the local Early Years Centre. This very good relationship particularly helps the younger children, when they move into full-time education. Similarly, there are excellent close links with the local high school. Not only are there opportunities for pupils to take part in 'taster' days before moving to the school, but also there is an on-going relationship, so that pupils can participate in activities such as the tag rugby

competitions and African music events. This close relationship also helps to ensure the smooth transfer of records as pupils move to the next school, including those of pupils with special educational needs. There is excellent communication between schools in the areas, and the school benefits from its commitment to working with the local schools, as well as the Beacon Schools Group. This provides opportunity for teachers to meet together and agree on the levels of achievements reflected in pupils' work. These links also enable the co-ordinator for special educational needs to meet with others for mutual discussion and development.

39. Very good provision is made for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. This is an improved picture from the previous inspection when spiritual and moral provision was good, and cultural provision was satisfactory.
40. Values and beliefs are taught well in religious education lessons, and, although there is no planning across the curriculum to identify likely opportunities that may arise in other subjects, the all-embracing ethos of the school ensures that this aspect is addressed well. Most subject policies refer to this aspect. An appropriate atmosphere is set for acts of worship, through the focus of a cross centrally placed on a table, together with a Bible. Surrounding displays encourage pupils to reflect on others who do not have such advantageous opportunities. The Rector who visits to take regular assemblies created a spiritual moment in an assembly during the inspection. Pupils were asked to reflect on the passing of time and to sit motionless for 30 seconds, reflecting on the time that is lost, for example, by watching television. Assemblies are planned well and include a chosen piece of music.
41. There is a strong moral code. It is part of the fabric of the school and is implicit in the expectations that teachers have of their pupils. Class rules and school rules are discussed and displayed at the start of each school year. They usually focus appropriately on what pupils can do, rather than what they should not. The school promotes honesty, fairness and respect for others, and the staff are very good role models for these values.
42. All pupils are given opportunities to take responsibility and these are extended for Year 6. Teachers strongly encourage pupils to show courtesy and awareness of others. There are frequent planned opportunities for pupils to work and discuss together in pairs and groups in many subjects, for example during science when conducting experiments. There is a good response to charitable events with many certificates and photographs displayed as recognition of the high regard in which the school holds this aspect of pupils' provision.
43. The cultural provision made for pupils is a significant improvement to that found at the time of the previous inspection. The school makes every effort to encourage pupils to explore their own culture and a wide range of cultures around the world, some by first-hand experience and others by e-mail. Pupils visit places of worship and study several major religions. The school is active in music, dance and drama. Different aspects of culture, both past and present, are reinforced through literacy and history lessons, supported by visits to a wide range of places including museums.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

44. The school's provision for the health and safety of its pupils is very good. When it was last inspected, the school had a number of strengths, but a few weaker elements. In particular, there was a need to improve provision for pupils with special educational needs, especially those with behavioural problems. The school has addressed this issue very positively and there are now no concerns about the level of support provided. Overall, the school provides very caring and supportive surroundings in which the pupils feel happy, secure, and able to concentrate on their learning. The commitment of staff and governors to putting the needs of the pupils first is very successful.
45. The school actively promotes the pupils' well being. Detailed welfare policies, which are specific to the school, underpin its commitment to the care and support of its pupils. Mid-day supervisory staff relate well to the pupils. Their conscientious support during lunchtimes has a positive effect on behaviour and safety. Teachers readily accept responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of their pupils. First aid arrangements and those for fire safety are good. The school's

procedures for dealing with pupils who become ill or suffer accidents are very secure and the inspection provided considerable evidence to support the view of parents that the school caters very well for all children whatever their needs or abilities.

46. The school's procedures for child protection are very good. The designated member of staff has received relevant training, is suitably experienced and very conscientious. She has ensured that all members of the school staff, both teaching and non-teaching, are aware of their obligations with regard to the proper support of the pupils in their charge.
47. The school has very good procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance and good behaviour. At their heart is recognition of the importance of being sensitive to the needs of the pupils as individuals. Registration procedures are efficient. The school's records of attendance are properly maintained. The school's rewards and sanctions policy, which is well understood and accepted by the pupils, is consistently implemented. There is effective liaison with parents when necessary.
48. Arrangements for the monitoring and supporting of pupils' personal development are good. A range of both formal and, particularly, informal procedures is used to track the development of the pupils as individuals. Good use is made of the information that is assembled to ensure that the personal needs of each individual are met. The pupils are helped to be increasingly independent, self-confident and knowledgeable about themselves, and to understand what constitutes healthy and safe living. There is clear evidence that the school's arrangements for pupils to show initiative and accept responsibility, which include 'reading buddies', which is where older pupils read with younger ones, and through being prefects, members of the school council, and 'eco-police', are successful. The pupils grow in confidence and maturity as they progress through the school.
49. The school has improved its procedures for the assessment of pupils, and these are now good, with particular strengths in Years 1 to 6. The school has drawn up and successfully implemented a whole-school assessment policy, which identifies procedures in assessment and recording to inform planning, so that teachers ensure that work is matched to the needs of pupils. National tests are supplemented with further standardised tests in each year group, and the results are used effectively to track individual and group progress, particularly in English, mathematics and science. In addition to this, other assessments are used regularly to monitor pupils' progress in areas such as reading and spelling. Half-termly assessments designed by the teachers help to support judgements. Efficient procedures for assessment across the non-core⁵ subjects have been established. The early identification by the school of pupils whose performance is giving cause for concern enables it to ensure that appropriate support is made available.
50. The school makes good use of the information gained from assessments. The analysis of the results of formal testing highlights the various issues for the school, and the information is used well to identify priorities and direct curriculum planning. This is exemplified by the school's priority to improve pupils' achievement in writing at the end of Years 2 and 6. Assessment also helps to identify pupils with learning difficulties, as well as those who are gifted or talented. It is used effectively to evaluate progress and plan the next stage of pupils' learning. Assessment is used effectively to give pupils individual targets to achieve in English and mathematics. These targets are shared with pupils and with parents and reviewed each half term, when new targets may be set. Similarly, pupils with special educational needs are helped to meet targets in behaviour and learning, through well-structured programmes that are assessed and reviewed regularly. The school rigorously compares the results of national and optional tests with targets set for individual pupils in order that teachers can modify their planning to meet the needs highlighted. Co-ordinators also collect samples of pupils' assessed work to enable them to keep track of progress made.
51. The school's procedures for monitoring pupils' academic achievements are good. These enable staff to monitor the progress made by different groups of pupils on an individual basis. There are rigorous systems for monitoring pupils with special educational needs. The school has

⁵ The non-core subjects are those other than English, mathematics and science.

established clear and manageable strategies for recording the results of assessment throughout the school. The use of a well-devised, colour-coded system and tracking sheets give a comprehensive picture of what individuals and groups have achieved. Pupils' records and profiles highlight areas of underachievement, help to set short-term targets for the next step in their learning and provide information for parents. There are efficient systems for the transfer of information between classes, and as pupils move to the next school.

52. In addition to this, all teachers know their pupils and their achievements well. There is good communication between teachers and with the pupils. Because of the small numbers, teachers are able to discuss and assess pupils' work with them in an informal manner, and explain what needs to be done to improve. This action has a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

53. The school's partnership with parents is very good. The good links with parents reported when the school was last inspected have been developed further and the concerns that a few parents had at that time have been addressed.
54. Parents are very supportive of the school, which they feel is an excellent one. They are very satisfied with the work done by the school and with the information that it provides. The response by parents to the pre-inspection parental survey, and at the parents' meeting, was overwhelmingly positive, with no significant negative views. This is an improved picture since the previous inspection. There is now unanimous agreement amongst parents that their children like school, that they make good progress, behaviour is good, teaching is good with high expectations, that the school helps children to become mature and responsible individuals, and they are also very pleased with the range of extra-curricular activities provided. Comments such as 'This is a family school' and 'I think it's fab here' were typical of the remarks made. Inspection evidence finds much support for these parental views.
55. The school's partnership with its parents is very good. The involvement of parents, and other helpers, makes a positive contribution to the quality of learning provided by the school. Home-school links are supported by a home-school agreement that provides for a commitment, by all, to the improvement of standards. Parents and other helpers are always made welcome, whether visiting the school seeking information and guidance, or to support the school by offering to help in its day-to-day activities. Parents are encouraged to participate actively in the work of the school. Those that are able to help, do so in a variety of ways including help with the library, with displays, support in the classroom, or with extra-curricular activities, on school trips and visits. Parents support the fund-raising events, organised by the Friends of Clifton, which provide very welcome additional funds, as well as fostering relationships between home and school successfully.
56. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are pleased with the information and support they receive, and appreciate how well their children are fully included in all that goes on. They affirm that pupils feel no stigma at being withdrawn for extra support. Parents are involved in the review of their children's progress, and a range of outside agencies support the school when appropriate.
57. The overall quality of information provided by the school is very good. There are regular opportunities, both formal and informal, for parents to meet with teachers to discuss attainment, progress and the curriculum. The headteacher and class teachers are very ready to meet parents whenever they can.
58. Regular newsletters to parents, from the headteacher, class teachers and parent governors, are very well planned, informative and helpful. They are much appreciated by parents who feel that the quality has improved in recent years. The school prospectus is a well-organised, comprehensive document, with good use being made of illustrations and pupils' comments to enliven the document. This, together with the well-produced governors' annual report to parents, gives parents a very wide range of information presented in a friendly style. Annual reports on pupils' academic and personal progress are of good quality, because they are written clearly and succinctly. Statutory reporting requirements are met fully.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

59. The leadership and management of the school are very good overall. The headteacher provides outstanding, clear leadership and, together with the staff and governors, has worked very hard to successfully address the issues arising from the previous inspection. She has succeeded in making the school the heart of the village community. The headteacher and staff, together, ensure that the school runs smoothly and efficiently.
60. There is a very successful and comprehensive programme of monitoring. This includes regular lesson observations and the systematic examination of teachers' planning and pupils' written work. These activities have contributed to the ongoing improvements in the curriculum, and quality of teaching and learning, as well as enabling the school to identify priorities for future development. Teachers receive good quality feedback on their work and are able to develop their practice through a well-structured programme of staff development. The headteacher has a clear picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and uses this information effectively to develop action plans for improvement. There is a shared desire for pupils to achieve high academic standards. However, there is also a commitment to the development of all pupils as individuals. A highly positive learning environment has been developed and maintained. This, combined with pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour, makes a significant contribution to their learning.
61. The arrangements for performance management are good. All staff have development interviews with the headteacher, which take into account school and personal priorities. Appropriate targets are set and any training needed is arranged. Regular reviews track the progress made and decisions taken as to whether any reinforcement is required. All training and costs involved are appropriately recorded in the school development plan.
62. All teachers have significant management responsibilities for at least two aspects or subject areas. Their roles have been developed and consolidated well. There is very good communication between staff, and school procedures are followed consistently. Co-ordinators carry out reviews of their subjects on a regular basis, using a range of monitoring activities well. They have the opportunity to observe lessons and work alongside colleagues, as well as examining pupils' work and scrutinising planning, in order to identify what needs to be improved. Their ideas are incorporated into the whole-school improvement plan.
63. Whole-school improvement planning is very good. The plan is a working document, which is updated and added to, as objectives are met or amended. The school reviews the achievements and progress made the previous year, effectively, and this forms the basis for future development. The school's monitoring programme also identifies priority areas for improvement clearly. Action plans are drawn up, setting out staff training needs, associated costs, and relevant success criteria. The staff and governors review the progress made towards targets through their cycle of monitoring, with progress reports given regularly to the governing body. The plan incorporates appropriate development points for the subjects due for review in that school year. The budget implications are fully built in. The plan has a suitably long-term perspective, taking appropriate account of future planned developments.
64. At the time of the previous inspection the school had a number of governors who took a keen interest in the school, offering support in a variety of ways. However, the governing body's role in helping to provide strategic direction to the work of the school was underdeveloped. Governors lacked an effective means of obtaining an overview of standards and provision. The position is very much improved now, and governors have implemented systems to enable them to have a clear understanding of standards. This means that they are more able to fulfil their role of providing strategic direction to the school. The present governing body is very capably led by its chair. There is effective support from all governors, and they work closely with the headteacher. The governors now play a very significant part in planning and guiding the school's development. There is a sharp focus to its work as a critical friend. A number of initiatives, in particular the very effective 'governor of the month' system, have been introduced, and these have directed attention to a range of supportive activities. Governors are properly involved in the work of the school, both as members of various committees, and as individuals. They undertake their responsibilities for literacy, numeracy and special needs, as well as link activities, efficiently. Governors have a very

good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school through the comprehensive reports from the headteacher. Whilst being supportive, they challenge effectively what the school is doing and how it might do better, fully fulfilling their statutory duties.

65. In spite of the limitations of the time available to her, the co-ordinator for special educational needs manages the provision for special educational needs very well, and provides effective leadership. She ensures that the governor for special educational needs is regularly and fully informed. The administration systems are efficient and the organisation of documentation is meticulous. The school's policy for special educational needs is in line with the requirements of the revised Code of Practice. Pupils' individual education plans are reviewed regularly and targets are clear, so that the progress of individual pupils can be measured. The school's procedures ensure that pupils with a statement of special educational needs receive their entitlement.
66. The school's financial planning and monitoring procedures are organised very well. There were recommendations made as a result of the school's most recent financial audit and these have been implemented appropriately. Administration arrangements are secure, with the school secretary supporting the work of the school quietly and effectively.
67. There is very good liaison between governors, the headteacher and staff in formulating the budget. Governors take an active part in setting the budget. They take decisions with confidence, because of their individual expertise and the detailed information provided to them by the headteacher. There is very effective corporate decision making that ensures that the financial resources available to the school are properly targeted to improving standards throughout the school. In order to meet the school's priorities, expenditure has recently been higher than income. As a result, there has been a reduction in the amount of money the school holds in reserve to protect it against unexpected happenings. Rightly, the school puts an emphasis on using its financial resources for the benefit of the pupils currently in school, with expenditure being targeted to directly benefit their learning by maintaining staffing levels, providing additional learning resources, and creating a stimulating working environment. Planned levels of financial reserves are somewhat lower than recommended, but the headteacher and governors have proper regard for the use of them. It is expected that pupil numbers are sustainable and may show a small increase, so that the future is secure. The use of the specific and additional funds allocated to the school is well focused. It has a positive impact on the quality of provision for the pupils who are well supported.
68. The school makes very good use of new technologies. In addition to the use of computerised administration systems, the school has moved positively to promote the teaching of information and communication technology. It has embraced the use of the Internet with its own e-mail address, and an award-winning website.
69. In order to ensure best value, all elements of the school's spending are evaluated to ensure that the most economic and effective quality of education and support is provided for the pupils in its charge. This is a very considerable improvement since the previous inspection, when governors' strategies for obtaining an overview of standards and provision in subjects were weak. A variety of statistical information is used to monitor the quality of learning and identify priorities for development. The findings are fed into the school's improvement plan and, subsequently, into budget priorities.
70. There is a good range of staff to teach the curriculum and the learning resources are also good overall. The accommodation is satisfactory, being attractive, clean and well maintained, having been extended since the previous inspection. Support staff are a valuable asset to the school. The classroom assistants have a central and valued role. Administration staff, caretaking and cleaning staff are also recognised by the school for the importance of their contribution. Teaching assistants are used effectively to support pupils with special educational needs. They are aware of the targets in pupils' individual programmes and provide good support. They work closely with the teachers, and their deployment and knowledge has ensured that the issue from the previous inspection has been fully addressed. The teaching assistants now have a good impact on the learning of pupils with special educational needs.

71. The accommodation is satisfactory, although the hall is small in relation to the needs of the pupils, for example, for pupils Year 6 when involved in gymnastics. The outdoor provision is good, and will improve even more, when the outside area is developed further, using a grant from the county as part of the 'grants to improve Worcestershire countryside' initiative. Work on the garden and pond area has already begun. Learning resources are good and have improved since the previous inspection, and, in some areas, such as in information and communication technology, and literacy, quite significantly. The Friends of Clifton group make a very good contribution in terms of resources.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

72. In order to improve the already good quality of education still further, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

Improve the provision for children in the Reception year by⁶:

- ensuring that the policy document is up-to-date, accurate, and based on the recommended curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage⁷;
- planning an appropriate curriculum for children in the Reception year, based on the stages set out in the nationally recommended documentation;
- improving the quality of teaching in the Reception year, by establishing an appropriate monitoring programme and providing support as and when required;
- establishing appropriate assessment procedures for children in the Reception year, and using these to ensure that they support short-term planning, so that tasks are closely matched to children's attainment.

(Paragraphs 1, 19, 30 and 73 – 92)

⁶ The school has already included this aspect in their school improvement plan for the coming year.

⁷ The Foundation Stage relates to children from the age of three to the end of the reception year.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

20

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

11

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	4	11	5	0	0	0
Percentage	0	20	55	25	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	64
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	9

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	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	1.5
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Note: The table showing the results of tests and tasks taken by pupils at the end of Year 2, in 2001, has been omitted, because the year group was very small, totalling 10, or fewer. Similarly, the numbers of boys and girls attaining Level 4, and above, are not shown because there were 10 or fewer pupils in each group.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	6	7	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	-	-	-
	Girls	-	-	-
	Total	13	13	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100 (63)	100 (88)	100 (75)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	-	-	-
	Girls	-	-	-
	Total	12	13	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	92 (75)	100 (88)	92 (75)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	51
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	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16.4
Average class size	21

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	39

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0
Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0
Number of pupils per FTE adult	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0.0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0.5

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	197,197
Total expenditure	198,147
Expenditure per pupil	3,196
Balance brought forward from previous year	8,805
Balance carried forward to next year	7,855

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	64
Number of questionnaires returned	28
Percentage of questionnaires returned	44

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	79	21	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	68	32	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	46	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	61	7	0	0
The teaching is good.	64	36	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	57	36	7	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	82	14	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	29	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	54	39	4	0	4
The school is well led and managed.	61	36	4	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	68	32	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	89	11	0	0	0

Other issues raised by parents

The parents were overwhelmingly supportive of the school.

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

73. At the time of the previous inspection, children were making satisfactory progress. However, the children have made insufficient progress during the past year. This applies to all children, as none have been identified as having special educational needs or being gifted and talented.
74. The physical arrangements for these children have improved significantly since the previous inspection. Where, before, the children were taught together with pupils in the infants, they now have a classroom, teacher and support assistant assigned to them. Although this represents an improvement in terms of staffing and accommodation, the teaching allocation is part-time. The support assistant works between the Reception and Years 1 and 2 classes, and teaches the children in the Reception class during the afternoon session. For some subjects, such as music, the children in the Reception class join the pupils in Years 1 and 2 in their lessons. On these occasions, the curriculum provided is inappropriate for these young children.
75. There are 13 children in the reception class attending full-time. They are admitted in the year in which they are five. Most children have had pre-school experiences; the vast majority transferring from the nursery on the same site. The school has good links with parents, and information is provided and visits arranged, prior to children starting school. A well-organised induction process ensures that the children arrive and settle happily. An early assessment of children's competencies shows that they enter school with levels of attainment that are broadly average, considering the small numbers in the Reception class each year. However, the current intake represents a stronger picture than previous intakes over the last four years. In the lessons seen during the inspection, the children made satisfactory progress, but, over time, considering their level of attainment when they started school, their achievement is unsatisfactory.
76. Children reach levels of attainment that are below those expected for children of this age, by the end of the Reception year in all areas of learning. Aspects within some of these areas are stronger; for example, children's speaking skills are good, due to the experiences they bring with them.
77. The school has rightly identified the need to improve the provision for children in the Reception class, and work has already begun. The curriculum, at the present time, is unsatisfactory because there is insufficient clarity in all aspects of planning. All areas of learning are included, but these are a mixture of various models and do not represent a coherent plan to promote good progress over time. The curriculum, although providing some stimulating experiences, is not sufficiently broad and balanced in the range of learning opportunities provided.
78. The school has also identified the need to develop assessment procedures, to ensure that planning and teaching is appropriate for children of this age. Assessment at the present time is not used effectively to ensure that the children are not taught things that they already know. An early assessment is made as children enter the reception class and ability groups are organised but, overall, assessments are not specific enough to enable staff to provide work at the right level, measure the progress children are making and set them suitably challenging, short-term targets, involving informed observations. Profiles showing children's progress are insufficiently relevant because they do not reflect the appropriate curriculum, or show progress over time.
79. The co-ordinator and the headteacher have involved a considerable number of support agencies in order to improve the provision in the Foundation Stage and, although some progress has been made, particularly in the physical resources, there is still much to be done.
80. Although, teaching was found to be satisfactory in the lessons seen during the inspection, teaching is judged to be unsatisfactory overall, because the knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the Foundation Stage curriculum are insecure. However, the school is already taking positive steps to improve this. The evidence from studying children's previous work shows that the teaching is often too prescribed and directed, and, therefore, children have not had

enough opportunities to develop initiative and independence. Activities are not matched well to the needs of the children. This means that children do not learn enough in order to make good progress. Support staff make a significant contribution to the Foundation Stage team.

81. The outside area for children in reception is satisfactory and the school is planning to make improvements to enhance the provision. Resources indoors are sufficient, but need further organisation to enable children to extend their learning opportunities in the way they select and manage resources for themselves in all areas of learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

82. Most children start with well-developed personal, social and emotional skills. Although they make satisfactory progress in most areas, by the time they leave the Reception class, most are still not achieving the Early Learning Goals in their independent learning. The children are not given sufficient opportunities to develop their independence in the organisation of their work and in their selection of resources, although they are confident in the understanding of daily routines. Children enjoy their time in school, but, when they are presented with things that they already know and provided with little challenge, some become restless and do not concentrate as they should. They take turns and share the resources fairly. Children work well, especially in groups, when activities have a clear focus and are purposeful. For example, they plan the route of 'Handa's' journey sensibly, following the story of 'Handa's Surprise'. They share ideas sensibly and make reasoned suggestions in small groups. The children are developing a sound awareness of their own culture and the culture and beliefs of others.

Communication, language and literacy

83. Standards of attainment overall are below the levels expected for children of this age, by the end of the Reception year, with the exception of their speaking and listening, which are at the level expected and are satisfactory. The children maintain their good start in speaking and listening skills, making satisfactory progress. However, children's writing and reading skills are developed insufficiently through the Reception year, resulting in unsatisfactory progress in these areas. Considerable time is spent on consolidation and repetition, rather than challenging the children to make progress in their learning by building upon what they already know.

Speaking and listening

84. Children express themselves confidently when answering questions in groups, for example, when sharing accounts of their holidays. Most children are well organised in their ideas and give clear explanations. Planned opportunities to extend children's speaking and listening skills are insufficient, for example, in aspects of drama, poetry, rhymes and songs.

Writing

85. Most children form the shapes of their letters correctly. They make a good attempt at writing, but few use their knowledge of letter sounds to write everyday words or more complex sentences. Not many children use punctuation in their writing, although most can write their first names accurately. Writing is not practised regularly enough to promote good progress. An area in the classroom is available for writing, but not as a 'free choice' activity.

Reading

86. Children contribute well in group activities, recognising sounds at the beginning and, sometimes, at the end of words. However, some children are experiencing things that they already know and understand. They join in the group-reading sessions, using books such as 'Handa's Surprise' and read together, understanding the story. The higher-attaining children and children of average ability know the books they like. They recognise familiar words, but the books that are provided do not present them with any challenge, as they are too easy. The lower-attaining children share books, but are not inspired, because they receive too little support and encouragement.

Mathematical development

87. Most of the children are not yet meeting the Early Learning Goals in mathematics. This represents unsatisfactory progress in relation to their attainment on entry to the school. From looking at children's previous work, it is clear that tasks are repetitive, with the children too often consolidating what they already know, and with which they feel confident. In the lesson observed, where teaching was satisfactory, it was clear that teaching and learning over time had been unsatisfactory. The children successfully counted forwards and backwards from five, and from ten, and progressed to counting forwards and backwards to 20. Nevertheless, some children were unable to record numbers accurately asking, 'How do you write five?' and, when writing 10, asking, 'How does it go?' Other children added groups of bricks together, accurately, but were unsure how to write the number and others observed were unable to count 10 bricks accurately. Support staff assisted well in the lesson.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

88. Children start school with a sound knowledge of the world around them. However, they have not built on these experiences sufficiently and have made unsatisfactory progress, so that they are unlikely to meet the Early Learning Goals in this area by the end of the year. Although a range of experiences are planned, they are not used as starting points in the curriculum to develop children's early skills in science, history, geography or design and technology, for example, visits to places of interest, as well as other opportunities to develop an awareness of the local area, are good features of this aspect of learning and the school uses both effectively. Photographic evidence shows the children's visit to the village garage, and how they re-enacted their experiences in the Reception class outdoor area. During 'science week', the children learned about sea creatures, during a visit to the 'Sea Life' centre in Birmingham, and learned about materials that are waterproof and objects that float and sink. Photographs also show a nature hunt, during the autumn term, when children look for mini-beasts. All these activities contribute positively to children's understanding of elementary scientific processes and concepts.
89. Children make imaginative constructions using blocks, but have too few opportunities to build and construct using a wide range of objects. They do not select tools and there are no planned opportunities for the children to learn a range of techniques in order to assemble and join their models. Children operate the programmable robot in their planning of a journey for 'Handa'. They use the computer competently, performing simple functions correctly. When making a fruit salad, the children identify the fruit and help to cut it up safely.
90. The children are taught about other cultures and traditions, through a range of books, visitors and experiences throughout the year. Children's own culture is represented in their celebration of festivals and celebrations. These activities make a sound contribution to the children's developing awareness of a range of other cultures, faiths and beliefs.

Physical development

91. The children are unlikely to meet the standards expected in this area of learning by the end of the Reception year. The outdoor area does not provide sufficient opportunities for climbing and balancing and there are few wheeled toys. Children play with small apparatus, such as balls, during playtime, and photographic evidence shows them jumping and rolling in the hall, as they move in various ways. They use tools, such as scissors, with care, but some lack the necessary skills, requiring time to refine and consolidate them. The children use knives competently as they make their fruit salad with the support assistant, paying good attention to the safety of using the tools.

Creative development

92. Standards are below those expected in this area of learning, and the children are unlikely to meet the Early Learning Goals by the time they start Year 1. The amount of time allocated is too low and there are too few sessions involving art. Children do not have enough opportunities to communicate their thoughts, ideas or feelings or to use a wide range of materials imaginatively.

Opportunities for children to use their imagination in art, design, music, role-play and stories are insufficient. Paint is not available on a regular basis in order to allow children to try out colours and experiment with their own ideas. The children's musical development is unsatisfactory. They sing songs and rhymes, but planned sessions are inappropriate, as they join with pupils from Years 1 and 2. Musical instruments are not available for children to experiment with on a regular basis. Imaginary role-play activities include a grocer's shop and a bus, but there are not enough opportunities for children to organise and manage real life situations.

ENGLISH

93. Standards of attainment are in line with the national averages at the end of Years 2 and 6. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection report. Although standards have generally been maintained, test results fluctuate from year to year. Such variations are due to the differing sizes of the year groups and the differing abilities within these year groups, including the number of pupils with special educational needs. However, pupils' achievements overall are sound. They attain standards above the national average in speaking and listening, and reading. Standards in writing are in line with the national averages overall, however, the strategies pupils use to ensure their spelling is accurate are good. A weakness in writing lies with the lack of opportunity for sustained writing, so that the pupils can practise and extend the good skills they are learning. The higher-attaining pupils are recognised and suitably challenged, and the progress of pupils with special educational needs is good due to the good support they receive, both within the class, and through the additional help they receive when they are withdrawn to work in small groups. During the inspection there was no noticeable difference between the achievements of boys and girls. All pupils have equal access to all aspects of the subject.
94. By the end of Year 2, pupils demonstrate that they are good listeners, who follow instructions well. They speak in clear sentences and have a wide vocabulary. They are articulate and confident speakers, using their wide vocabulary to express fully what they wish to say, with the correct vocabulary needed for descriptions and explanations. By the end of Year 6, pupils speak clearly and confidently across many areas of the curriculum. Teachers provide many good and varied opportunities for pupils to enter into lively debate and discussion, with the result that pupils are not afraid to express opinions and question what they hear. They also show a good ability to listen to their teachers and to each other with respect, valuing the ideas of others. Opportunities for drama and performance contribute much to pupils' confidence in using their speaking skills.
95. By the end of Year 2, standards in reading are above the national average overall. The pupils enjoy reading and talk enthusiastically about the books they read. The lower-attaining pupils demonstrate a good grasp of basic reading skills, and use this successfully to help them to improve their reading. The higher-attaining pupils read with expression and good attention to punctuation. They know how to locate information from a book's index or contents page. The overall good standard of reading is also reflected in the competent way that pupils read different texts and new words that they meet. This was exemplified when pupils in Year 2 enjoyed reading words connected with 'tongue twisters' during the literacy hour. Pupils make good progress throughout Years 3 to 6, and maintain the good reading standards. Their good reading ability is demonstrated with the ease that they read from a variety of texts in literacy and other subjects. By the end of Year 6, pupils have developed a critical enjoyment of reading. Higher-attaining pupils know the works of a wide range of authors, and compare and contrast different styles. During discussion, one pupil explained how she preferred 'realistic action books to the fantasy of Harry Potter stories'. Pupils are encouraged in their enjoyment of reading by the teaching strategies that are used. Teachers recommend authors to them, and pupils are encouraged to write critical reviews. This makes a good contribution to their appreciation of a wide range of styles. All pupils know how to locate information from the school library, and this is used well to develop their independent research skills. They are also gaining good experience in obtaining and using information through information and communication technology.
96. The quality of pupils' writing shows that they make good progress in spelling by the end of Year 2. They spell a range of familiar words accurately, and they make recognisable attempts at more complex words. The lower-attaining pupils earnestly endeavour to use what they know about letter sounds to help them with their spelling and make good progress. Pupils appreciate the

different styles in writing, and how words can be used to creative effect. This was exemplified by pupils' delight in recognising alliteration and tongue twisters in poetry, when a higher-attaining pupil wrote 'Carl chomping crackers, crunching carrots and crisps'. The higher-attaining pupils enjoy the challenge that teachers provide through such tasks. Pupils' attention to basic punctuation is sound, and they write clear and coherent sentences, which was in evidence in their writing based on 'Stone Soup'.

97. By the end of Year 6, pupils' standards in writing are average. The progress of pupils in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory overall, but with good progress again in the development of spelling. Pupils are confident in using and spelling a wide range of vocabulary. In Year 3, the lower-attaining pupils are benefiting from the support they are given to improve their basic writing skills. Teachers' encouragement in developing pupils' use of interesting vocabulary and writing for different purposes, results in some interesting and descriptive work. Pupils in Year 4 use their knowledge of persuasive texts to write informative and appealing leaflets to encourage visits to a Sea World. The work of pupils on display shows that they are able to use words well to capture atmosphere. In their poems about the churchyard, a pupil wrote 'Flowers dance and sway in breeze, grass drinks the falling rain'. On writing about 'Bristol Cityscape', one pupil began 'Day begins with hustling and bustling'. By the end of Year 6, pupils demonstrate, through their worthwhile project of compiling a school newspaper, their knowledge of the use of language, and their skills in note taking, drafting and recording. They show that they are able to produce interesting and accurately punctuated work. However, although all pupils practise their writing skills across the curriculum, and they write imaginatively, there are insufficient opportunities for them to write at length, and become involved in their own stories or to produce an extended piece of informative writing as further development of more advanced writing skills. Although most pupils use a legible and consistent joined style of writing, not all pupils' work is as neat in presentation as it could be.
98. The teaching of English ranges from satisfactory to very good, and is good overall. Teachers are skilful in teaching the basic skills of English to enable pupils to make good progress. A strength of the teaching is the strategies used, which motivate and interest the pupils. These help the pupils to take responsibility for their learning, but ensure that they build on their skills and knowledge. Teachers have good subject knowledge and this enables pupils to understand the purpose of what they are learning. Teachers make good use of assessment, thus ensuring that they carefully plan work that matches the needs of pupils of all abilities. Teaching assistants are used effectively to provide support, and carefully planned tasks for pupils with special educational needs enable them to make good progress. Other tasks, requiring pupils to work together, encourage pupils to listen and to take each other's views into account. The most effective teaching shows good pace and a suitable balance of tasks. The teaching is only satisfactory when the pace is slowed because the teacher is talking too much.
99. In one very good lesson observed, the teacher planned a worthwhile range of activities, closely linked with information and communication technology. The class teacher and the information technology specialist worked closely together to provide learning experiences in both subjects that were active and purposeful. This resulted in interested and involved pupils, who listened and worked with sustained concentration. Overall, the teachers use effective questioning to challenge pupils and encourage their thinking skills. Homework is used effectively, particularly in Years 5 and 6, to support and extend what pupils are learning in the classroom. Marking is satisfactory, but, in most cases, teachers provide good oral and constructive feedback to pupils on their work.
100. The strategies for the teaching of literacy are effective. The use of individual targets helps pupils to understand what they need to do to improve their work. Teachers ensure that pupils use their literacy skills consistently across the curriculum, and there are useful systems to ensure that this element is planned carefully. This also contributes to pupils' understanding of the need to use and apply the skills they are learning in a range of contexts. The Additional Literacy Strategy, the Early Literacy Strategy, and after-school Booster Classes, have also helped some pupils to improve their skills. Good use is made of information and communication technology, both for drafting work and planning, such tasks as the newspaper project. In Years 5 and 6, it is used at the appropriate level to extend the knowledge and understanding of pupils of all abilities. The school has a suitable range of books to encourage wider reading, and pupils in Years 3 to 6 use the library as a source of information. However, the library is not used regularly, on a timetabled basis, to enable the pupils to browse and seek books for themselves.

101. The systems for the assessment of pupils' work are good. They enable teachers to plan work to match the needs of pupils and also to set regularly reviewed targets. The analysis of pupils' attainment has enabled the school to identify key areas for development, and this includes the further development of pupils' writing skills. The subject is led well by a committed and knowledgeable co-ordinator. The policy for English is clear and comprehensive, and the co-ordinator has ensured that careful planning of the subject meets the needs of the mixed age classes.

MATHEMATICS

102. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are above average. Pupils enter the school with average ability in mathematics and all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented, achieve well and make good progress. Results in the national tests in 2001 were well below average for pupils in Year 2, and well above average for those in Year 6. Standards in mathematics fell slightly after the previous inspection but have shown a good improvement since 1999. Standards achieved by boys and girls are broadly similar and the inspection noted no discernible differences between the two.
103. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented effectively. Test results have been analysed and the school has worked successfully to maintain high standards. A number of areas have shown improvement and pupils have successfully developed their competence in solving mental mathematics problems. Appropriate targets are set on a year group basis from which individual targets have been developed. These are shared with pupils and parents and reviewed on a regular basis.
104. In Years 1 and 2, pupils show a good understanding of addition and subtraction facts using numbers up to 100. Many undertake computation of numbers to 20 confidently in their heads. In Year 2, the higher-attaining pupils show a good understanding of place value to one thousand. They are beginning to recognise the links between addition and subtraction operations, and check their work by using inverse operations. They use their number skills and knowledge of number bonds effectively to solve simple problems. The pupils name common two- and three-dimensional shapes correctly, and some recognise shapes that are symmetrical. They classify objects and record their results appropriately.
105. In Years 3 to 6, pupils build well on their previous learning. The mental mathematics sessions at the start of lessons are brisk and pupils are becoming confident at mental computation. The mental arithmetic tasks invariably relate to the main topic of the lesson. For example, in Years 3 and 4 one session seen involved using multiples of five, but the teacher matched this carefully and cleverly into the work being tackled relating to time and calendars. The tasks set in the main part of the lesson are stimulating and inspiring for the pupils and they are fascinated by the challenges set. In Years 5 and 6, the higher-attaining group were very successful in a challenging task of investigating patterns and relationships between numbers. They discovered the relationship between square numbers and the product of numbers within a set number grid. They were well motivated by the activity and were delighted with the final result. In Year 6, pupils explain the range of mental strategies they have used. They identify very quickly whether a sum is likely to be right, by using estimation, and by drawing on their knowledge of number facts and operations.
106. Pupils enjoy their mathematics lessons and put a lot of effort into their work. They take a pride in their work and the standard of presentation of their work is good. Pupils make good progress and achieve well throughout the school. Pupils are grouped highly effectively within the classroom and tasks are matched to their needs very well. Support staff are very well briefed and work very well with their groups of pupils. In order to provide extra support, the 'Springboard' programme of work has been established successfully and the teaching assistant working with these pupils is extremely competent, enabling pupils to make good progress.
107. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subject. Lessons are planned well and the learning objective is clearly identified. This is shared

with pupils who are able to explain clearly what they are learning. Teachers prepare for all lessons very well and the materials needed for the lesson are readily available. Teachers make good use of resources. For example, the use of individual whiteboards in the mental mathematics sessions enables teachers to check pupils' responses quickly, and ensures that all pupils take part. Teachers make very effective use of information and communication technology, using appropriate programmes to reinforce and extend learning. Pupils are usually set challenging tasks, which encouraged them to work productively. A characteristic feature is the very good questioning, which challenges pupils and stimulates their thinking. There are good review sessions at the end of lessons and these encourage pupils to review and explain their work. This helps pupils to share their understanding as well as making links with the next stage of work.

108. Teachers manage their pupils very well and this ensures the success of lessons. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Good use is made of teaching assistants, who work mainly with small groups of lower-attaining pupils to support and reinforce the objectives of the lesson. The class teachers give the assistants good guidance. Pupils receive homework tasks that support the work they do in school effectively.
109. The subject co-ordinator provides effective leadership. She has had good opportunities to monitor teaching and planning, and staff have received guidance on the teaching of numeracy sessions. There is a good range of resources to support the mathematics curriculum. Good procedures for assessing and recording pupils' progress are in place, as is the analysis of national tests. These help teachers to meet pupils' needs appropriately. Year group targets are based upon analysis of assessments. Overall, the school has made good progress since the previous inspection.

SCIENCE

110. Pupils' attainment in science is above average at the end of both Years 2 and Year 6. This is a significant improvement on the findings of the previous inspection, when standards were found to be average, and pupils made sound progress. All pupils make good progress over time, in all aspects of their knowledge and understanding, in their investigative skills, and, in particular, the way in which information and communication technology is used to support lessons in science.
111. The overall improvement in science is attributable to a number of considered strategies adopted by the school in order to raise standards. Throughout the school, the mixed-age classes are taught successfully, through a rolling programme of science units that provides for all ages in one class. The pupils receive a broad curriculum that consists of a wide range of scientific aspects, resulting in a good range of scientific knowledge. The time allocated to the teaching of science is good, allowing pupils sessions of a sensible length in which to work. Lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are fully included in all lessons. They are well supported and, consequently, also make good progress. Higher-attaining pupils, especially those in Years 3 to 6 are presented with good challenges in order to extend their thinking and help them learn how to solve scientific problems.
112. Standards in investigating and exploring are good and provide a sound basis for the science curriculum throughout the school, because teachers have devoted considerable time to improving this area of science. Pupils have made significant progress in learning how to conduct investigations. The planning and assessment of investigating and experimenting has been a focus area for the improvement of the curriculum. Teachers' confidence has strengthened and, consequently, standards are improving in this aspect of science. By the end of Year 2, pupils are confident in the process of predicting and finding out, using the correct scientific terms. They investigate and test for example, how the direction of a ball can be changed by a force. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 test this theory, using hockey sticks and balls as part of their investigation involving pushes and pulls. As a result of good teaching, pupils are encouraged to test suggestions, both inside and outdoors, using a variety of resources including bicycles and a go-cart. Pupils record investigative results well and in a variety of forms, including writing, drawing pictures, creating tables and charts and using the computer. A good example of this is a graph showing the results of a timed experiment to see how quickly ice melts when heated. Pupils at the end of Year 2 have a

good understanding of a fair test and, in Year 6, pupils give clear explanations of a fair test and understand that only one variable can be changed at a time. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good level of knowledge and understanding in all aspects of science.

113. Throughout the school, pupils display a good range of knowledge of life processes and living things. At the end of Year 2, pupils understand that plants, animals and humans have certain minimum requirements to sustain life. They know, for example, that a plant will die if deprived of water. The higher-attaining pupils make connections between different elements of their knowledge. Younger pupils talk confidently about habitats and the results of varying temperatures, while older pupils explain the term 'habitat' more fully, discussing environmental issues, such as noise and pollution, and their effect upon a habitat. Pupils in Year 6 show a good understanding of the complexities of a food chain and conduct research using a 'key' to distinguish various animals and insects.
114. Standards of attainment in the aspect of learning about materials and their properties are good at the end of both Year 2 and 6. In discussions, the younger pupils demonstrate 'shiny' and 'see-through' as properties of paper. Pupils group materials together, according to the properties that they can observe or measure easily, such as whether they are rough or smooth, flexible or stiff. Older pupils make good observations and record them in their books. They know the difference between solids, liquids and gases, and apply this knowledge to explain what happens when water vapour condenses on a cool surface. They work together in investigations, both verbal and to a lesser degree written, when investigating the separating of solids.
115. The concept of a force is developed well from the end of Year 2. Pupils know that forces can be either a push or a pull, and explain how to construct a simple electrical circuit using a battery and bulb. In Years 3 and 4 the well-focused teaching enables pupils to make significant progress in their scientific knowledge and understanding, and in their use of information and communication technology to record results. By the end of Year 6, pupils develop this further in an investigation to measure the force involved when stretching an elastic band. They use their knowledge of forces such as gravity, friction, and air resistance, to describe the movement of objects or an object floating or sinking. The higher-attaining pupils know that, when an object is still, all the forces acting on it are balanced. Teachers plan effectively to provide challenging activities for the higher-attaining pupils, with the lower-attaining pupils being supported well by classroom assistants, who make each step more accessible.
116. Although there has been good progress since the previous inspection, links with literacy in the way pupils plan and write reports is an aspect being monitored by the co-ordinator, having been identified by the school as an area for improvement. A strong feature, particularly in the results and conclusion stage of an investigation or experiment, is the way in which numeracy and information and communication technology are used and seen as a natural development in the interpretation of scientific results, for example, in the construction of graphs and using them to find information. The library is used well to promote pupils' learning when they use its resources to research a science topic. 'Science week' plays an important part in the promotion of science in the school. Many aspects of science are covered during the period and, although exhausting, the end results were applauded by the pupils in Year 6 as 'great!'
117. As was found at the time of the previous inspection, the co-ordinator provides good leadership and has identified areas for development. The targets for improvement have been managed effectively and contribute to the high standards achieved in science.

ART AND DESIGN

118. It was not possible to see any lessons for art and design during the inspection. Judgements are therefore made on the basis of work seen, teachers' planning, and discussions with pupils and staff. This shows that, by the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are above those commonly found in most schools. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were found to be similar to those in other schools. The improvements in standards are due mainly to the impact of the knowledgeable leadership of the co-ordinator. It is also due to improvement in teachers' expertise, which was a weakness in the previous inspection. The achievement of all

groups of pupils is good. It is clear from discussions with pupils that pupils of all abilities have full access to the art and design curriculum. The various talents of pupils are recognised, including those with special educational needs.

119. By the end of Year 2, pupils make bold pictures and images to a good standard. There are interesting examples of pupils' responses to a variety of ideas. For example, after considering the work of Andy Goldsworthy, pupils created their own designs from a collection of natural materials from the local environment, and floating these in water. The attractive result of their efforts contributed much to their good awareness of shape, pattern and texture. Pupils also become aware of different textures, by examining the surfaces of buildings and re-creating what they discover, using clay to create decorative tiles. Their collection of textures is also imaginatively used to create 'lunar' landscapes. Pupils mix paint and use a range of colours, effectively, to create different tones.
120. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have the opportunity to use a wide range of media. Their work shows that their creativity is developing well, alongside the gains they make in their knowledge and in the development of the necessary skills. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 make eye-catching sculptures using an interesting collection of metal, wire netting and various types of screws. By the end of Year 6, pupils create pictures which capture warmth and movement, as was seen in the display of their paintings of images of Africa. They sketch images such as local cottages, and, using techniques such as linocuts, use these as a basis for creating pictures. Their awareness of line and tone is good and they understand what to aim for when drawing. They explain, for example, how they look for light and shade when making observational drawings. All pupils use sketchbooks well and this aspect has improved satisfactorily since the previous inspection.
121. Although no lessons were observed, it is obvious from talking to pupils, and from the displays of art seen, that teaching and learning throughout the school are good and allow for creativity and independence of thought, as well as the exploration of a wide range of media and techniques, and the good development of skills. Pupils are confident artists, who are proud of their achievements. They also benefit from their experiences with visiting artists. This is well exemplified by the attractive mosaic on the school wall to celebrate the Millennium. Every year, the school has an artist in residence, such as a potter, which adds a further dimension to pupils' learning. They learned rag-rug techniques from a textile artist. This resulted in four, powerful images of earth, air, fire and water, being expertly executed in a range of materials. The school's achievements in art and design have recently been recognised through a Gold 'Artsmark' award, of which it is justifiably proud. Information and communication technology is used well to support pupils' learning in the subject. For example, in Years 1 and 2, pupils make self-portraits, using pencils, and also information and communication technology, and then compare the two images. Pupils' literacy skills are used satisfactorily for evaluating their work.
122. The new art co-ordinator has considerable expertise and enthusiasm for art and design and is committed to ensuring that pupils enjoy a wide range of experiences. He offers much valuable support and advice when necessary. The policy for art and design provides good guidance for the subject and the school now bases its planning on the national model guidelines, which it adapts to meet its own needs. Pupils are regularly assessed, ensuring that teachers' expectations are raised and they have good knowledge of pupils' achievements. There has been an improvement in pupils' knowledge of a range of artists, since the previous inspection, and their knowledge of other forms of art is extended further, by events such as the African Arts Week. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development by developing their appreciation of art from their own and other cultures. Resources are satisfactory, and the school ensures that it provides a range of materials to meet the needs of specific topics when the need arises. There are a reasonable number of relevant reference books in the school library and pupils are encouraged to use these to further their own research and gain ideas for their own work.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

123. No teaching of design and technology was observed during the inspection. However, from looking at teachers' planning and pupils' work, and holding discussions with pupils and staff, the

indications are that most pupils reach standards that are similar to those attained by pupils in other schools by the end of Years 2 and 6. All pupils achieve satisfactorily as they move through the school. Pupils with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils also make satisfactory progress. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.

124. Work on display shows that pupils in Years 1 and 2 make their working models carefully after examining a range of mechanisms prior to making their own. For example, before constructing their models to illustrate the nursery rhyme 'Ding Dong Bell', they experimented with winding mechanisms, using construction kits and other objects. They then used a combination of their own ideas and teacher's guidance to create their own working models. The completed results show that, at the end of Year 2, pupils are able to select and use an appropriate range of materials to make their models. They use tools and join materials competently to make a strong construction. Their written suggestions for improving their models show that they are able to evaluate their work realistically and sensibly, describing what they would change to improve their product. When making puppets, their design sketches are sound and they describe the skills they used to make their puppets appropriately.
125. By the end of Year 6, pupils fully understand the step-by-step processes involved in design and technology. In discussions about their work, pupils state firmly that 'the first thing is to make the plan'. Their original plans show satisfactory attention to detail and their designs are creative. They understand the need to consider the purpose of what they are making and to take this into consideration when choosing their materials. This was demonstrated well by pupils when describing how they had made their bridges. They know the merits of using a variety of resistant and non-resistant materials, such as wood and card, and the importance of accurate measuring. The completed products are attractive and show the good use of a range of skills. Pupils' written evaluations show that many are giving careful consideration to what they have learned.
126. Although no teaching was observed during the inspection, the evidence from pupils' work shows that teachers have the necessary expertise to ensure sound teaching and learning across the subject throughout the school. Teaching is successful in ensuring that opportunities are provided that allow pupils to develop their own ideas and think independently, alongside the acquisition of skills and knowledge. Pupils are given an interesting range of experiences across the subject. For example, in food technology, younger pupils make pizzas and sandwiches, while older pupils enjoy their experience of making spaghetti bolognese or chocolate cake. Pupils of all abilities speak with enthusiasm and interest about what they learn. For example, a pupil with special educational needs explained in detail the need for precise measuring and accuracy when constructing his bridge.
127. The pupils use their literacy skills satisfactorily to plan and evaluate their work. Pupils' numeracy skills are promoted through accurate measuring and calculation, when developing designs, and in the making process. Information and communication technology is used satisfactorily when, for example, pupils seek information on the different types of bridges around the world. A weakness identified in the previous inspection was the lack of a scheme of work. This has now been rectified. The knowledgeable co-ordinator ensures that planning is adapted to meet the needs of the school. The planning of topics for the mixed-aged classes ensures the development of skills and knowledge as pupils move through the school. In addition, the school ensures that pupils are assessed regularly, so that strengths and weaknesses in learning can be identified. Resources are satisfactory overall and organised efficiently.

GEOGRAPHY

128. As it was not possible to observe any lessons during the course of the inspection, judgements are based predominantly on discussions with pupils and teachers, and looking at pupils' work and displays around the school. The previous inspection report indicated that pupils' attainment was in line with expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils' attainment is at a similar level, and the achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. An improvement in the subject is the development of a scheme of work based on the national guidelines. This now ensures that there is progression and breadth to what pupils are learning.

129. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a sound knowledge of the local area. They produce simple maps to show a route around the school, and of the local environment. After a close look at their own environment, they identify the important features and their favourite place in the locality. Their knowledge of the wider world is developed well through their study of an Indian village. This study also increases their understanding of maps and the use of keys, as they make a collaborative map showing the main features of Chembakolli. They successfully compare their own locality with what they discover about Chembakolli.
130. Pupils at the end of Year 6 have a sound recall of the knowledge gained through geographical studies. They show they are familiar with maps and atlases, by identifying key features on a world map. Pupils' mapping skills are developed well, and pupils pinpoint locations through the use of grid references. When discussing their work on rivers, they use correct geographical terms such as 'meander' and 'erosion'. Their skills of enquiry are sound. The pupils conduct surveys and use the results to make comparisons and form their own opinions on the merits of different localities and environments. This was exemplified by their detailed study of Bristol, and the comparison with their rural environment.
131. Literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are used well to develop skills in geography. For example, writing skills are used when pupils write their own thoughts on what is special or what is a problem in living in contrasting environments. They consider descriptive words for the two localities. These kinds of opportunities ensure that the subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' overall literacy skills. Skills for numeracy are developed in Year 2 by the use of a tally chart to record the number of vehicles passing through the village; pupils in Years 3 and 4 consider and compare temperatures throughout the world and make graphs to show their findings. Information and communication technology provides sound opportunities for research and comparisons, and for producing the results of mathematical investigations such as temperature charts.
132. Although no teaching was seen, the evidence shows that teachers have sufficient subject knowledge to ensure that pupils' learning is extended through a good balance of skills and knowledge. Teaching over time is satisfactory. Teachers provide opportunities for curriculum enrichment such as their good use of educational visits and fieldwork. This is a strength identified in the previous report. Younger pupils explore their own locality, while older pupils undertake a residential visit to Bristol. Pupils' learning is also greatly enhanced by the worthwhile links to schools in France and Czechoslovakia. They are made aware of environmental issues, through the school's eco-policy, and are proud of their status as 'eco-police'. Teaching ensures that pupils' interest is generated and that pupils are confident in their knowledge, as well as developing firm opinions on various geographical and environmental issues.
133. The management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and has provided a comprehensive policy statement. The development of the new scheme of work ensures a good range of topics that are carefully planned for the mixed-age classes. Assessment procedures are good. While the satisfactory standards of the last report have been maintained, the subject has not yet had sufficient opportunity for further development or high priority on the school development plan. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to give the subject a higher focus in order to extend pupils' knowledge and skills even further.

HISTORY

134. Standards in history are similar to those attained by pupils in most other schools at the end of Years 2 and 6. There is sound coverage of the history curriculum, and achievement, overall, is satisfactory throughout the school, with many good features, such as the use of work in history as a stimulus for other subjects, such as art. Pupils with special educational needs and higher-attaining pupils are appropriately provided for in class, and the tasks set are matched well to their attainment levels. This enables them to achieve appropriately.
135. Younger pupils, those in Years 1 and 2, have been learning about the great fire of London. Pupils have been given the opportunity to observe pictures and photographs carefully and pose questions. They can explain how the fire started and the role that people such as the Lord Mayor

and King Charles played in the events of 1666. They are enthusiastic and show very good recall. They relate the events accurately with great relish and can explain succinctly why the fire spread so quickly. They show a good understanding of the consequences for the City of London.

136. The work completed by pupils in Years 3 and 4, shows that literacy and information and communication technology are used effectively in their topic working which they are studying the Romans. They use reference books, effectively, to research the kind of food that would have been used for a feast and how it would have been prepared. Literacy skills, such as note taking, are utilised effectively in pupils' first drafts, before they write up their findings neatly. A useful link is established with geography, when pupils use atlases to identify the countries that, today, correspond with provinces, such as Hispania, Lusitania and Gaul. In Years 5 and 6, pupils are learning about the Victorian period, especially education. Information and communication technology is used well to discover what children in factories would eat and the tasks they had to perform, for example, down the mines. This work has been used further as a stimulus for work in dance, where pupils take on the roles of Victorian street children. Pupils use a wide range of evidence to develop their skills of enquiry and, through their work, they are developing an understanding of events and people and the changes that take place over time.
137. The teaching of history is good. Lessons are motivating and planned well to include interesting challenging tasks. Few worksheets are used and those that are, are highly relevant to the task. Teachers use an investigative approach enthusiastically and display good questioning skills to help the pupils develop their own questioning and reasoning skills. Literacy and information and communication technology are used very well, particularly when pupils carry out their own independent research. Visits and visitors enhance the teaching of history. Pupils learn effectively, because they really enjoy history and the curriculum provided is exciting and motivating. There are some high quality displays of work around the school. For example, pupils in Year 1 and 2 have created a collage of the Great Fire of London. This incorporates many of the important characters involved and accurately depicts key features, such as the thatched houses crammed together in Pudding Lane. Timelines connected to each topic help to develop pupils' sense of change over time.
138. The co-ordinator is highly motivated and knowledgeable. She manages history very well. Appropriate assessment procedures are in place, which are sensible, practical and time efficient to use. There is a good range of resources, including those for information and communication technology. They are used well and pupils are encouraged to develop their independent learning skills by having easy access to the computers and to the library. Although the time allocated to the subject is relatively low, this is overcome by the good integration of history into other subjects, such as art and literacy.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

139. Information and communication technology has improved significantly since the previous inspection when standards were similar to those in other schools at the end of Year 2 and higher at the end of Year 6. Standards are now above those expected for their age at the end of Year 2 and 6. Teachers' knowledge, which was reported as 'sound', is now good, because focused training of good quality has improved both teachers' knowledge and confidence in information and communication technology. The setting up and improvement of the school website has won a highly valued, 'Golden Owl Award,' for this achievement. Since the previous inspection, the school has added to its store of computers. There is an effective timetable in place so that the equipment can be used intensively for the teaching of skills and knowledge through most subjects. The Internet can be accessed from each machine and every opportunity is taken to use this resource to enhance and enliven subjects, including history, geography and English. Information and communication technology is used effectively in subjects such as mathematics and science, where pupils consistently record their results in various ways, for example, in graphs to show pupils' birthdays in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 and 4, pupils use information and communication technology to enable them to record their results in science as part of a lesson, 'to show that rougher surfaces have more friction than smoother surfaces'. This promotes skills in other subjects, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

140. All pupils, even the youngest, become familiar with the vocabulary for information and communication technology, and use the resources as an integral part of their lessons. The school gives good attention to all strands of the subject, so that the pupils make effective progress in all aspects. The support of a visiting teacher extends the opportunities pupils have to practise the skills they have learned and make effective links with other subjects, such as history for instance, a topic about the Great Fire of London was illustrated, very effectively, by accessing an Internet site and watching the visual effects of the fire as it progressed. Through good questioning and effective support, the lower-attaining pupils in Year 5 and 6 make good strides, both in aspects of information and communication technology, and in their historical knowledge. During the inspection, there were many good examples of pupils applying their knowledge and understanding in the classroom. These include the use of calculators in mathematics as well as producing computer-generated graphs, and researching CD-ROMs and the Internet for information in history and geography.
141. Whole-school planning shows opportunities for the use of information and communication technology in almost every subject in the curriculum. In Years 5 and 6, this includes focusing on control, concerning angles and shape properties, using the programmable robot. The digital camera is used well to support other subjects, such as design and technology. The pupils recognise the benefits of using e-mail, especially when communicating with home during a school visit to France. The library serves as an excellent additional research resource. Each pupil has an individual assessment sheet that records their experiences and skills in different aspects of the subject and at various levels. It ensures that gaps in their knowledge are easily identified and rectified.
142. Leadership and management are good. There is a good level of subject expertise and planned opportunities to develop skills further are identified. The school is in a strong position to make further progress.

MUSIC

143. The provision for music has significantly improved since the previous inspection and standards are now above average at the end of Years 2 and 6. All pupils are provided for appropriately and there is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. The status of the arts has been raised, resulting in the 'Artsmark' award being presented to the school. The enthusiasm and diversity in the music curriculum are the direct result of the exuberant leadership and the use of the national guidance, which has significantly contributed to the improvement in the teachers' confidence. The extracurricular opportunities for music are extensive and cover a wide range of instruments, taught both by visiting teachers and by the co-ordinator. Visiting musicians enliven the curriculum, for instance, through an African drumming session, which was well attended. Resources have been significantly improved since the previous inspection when they were reported as unsatisfactory and instruments as 'barely adequate.' There is now a music room, where resources are gradually being increased as funds allow. There is an improvement in the quality of singing, both in lessons and in the music club.
144. Two lessons were seen. In both lessons the good emphasis the teachers placed on the encouragement and involvement of all pupils was rewarded by the way in which the pupils sang in tune, with good expression, pitch and control. The pupils in Year 2 sang with enthusiasm, keeping to the beat. Pupils in Year 6 progressed to competent and complex part-singing.
145. 'The Enormous Turnip' was the focus of a lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2. Pupils composed a song to reflect the story maintaining a good pulse and rhythm. Percussion instruments were played competently to reflect the characters in the story and built to a crescendo as the story came to a climax. The teacher skilfully ensured that all children were involved. Pupils with special educational needs were given aspects of responsibility to successfully focus their attention. The pupils in Years 5 and 6 devised their own words to a song, showing a good awareness aware of the rhythm and tempo. They created a good composition, suitable for a performance in the end of term concert. Pupils' confidence and self-esteem were impressive when performing aspects of their song for others to follow. The teacher's expertise was such that pupils were able to achieve well, resulting in the recording of the final performance of the lesson.

146. The use of information and communication technology in music is an area that the school is developing, but it is in its early stages. The pupils have a limited knowledge of famous composers and recall few opportunities to appraise music, although this is recorded in the subject's planning. Gifted and talented pupils are identified and provided with good opportunities to develop their potential.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

147. It is not possible to make judgement on standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 as only one lesson was observed during the inspection and this was in dance. However, from conversations held with groups of pupils from Years 2, 5 and 6, it is clear that there is full coverage of the curriculum and pupils receive a broad range of opportunities and experiences.
148. In dance, pupils in Year 6 demonstrate standards above what are usually found, due to the well-devised programme closely related to their work in history. Swimming is taught to pupils throughout the school and pupils meet the required standard of being able to swim 25 metres by the end of Year 6. In addition, pupils in Years 5 and 6 visit an outdoor centre to participate in a range of outdoor adventure activities, such as archery and orienteering. There is a well-planned programme of learning that outlines the skills to be improved and the full range of activities to be taught to each age group during each year. The time allocated to teaching the subject is appropriate and means that all areas of the curriculum are covered. A good range of extra-curricular activities supports pupils' development well and contributes to the good standards in the subject.
149. From conversations with, and demonstrations from, pupils in Years 1 and 2, it is clear that they learn a range of gymnastics skills employing the exploration of different ways of travelling and experimenting with different levels and the use of space. Basic skills and range of movements are taught, for example, pupils learn how to execute a variety of rolls competently. Pupils could demonstrate these, carefully expounding the health and safety features they were taught at the same time. The same pupils could demonstrate how to land, and what constitutes an effective 'finish' to a sequence of movements. They showed exceptionally good recall of their learning and were clearly motivated and enthused by their lessons.
150. In the one lesson observed, the teaching was good. There was a very careful selection of the theme, which linked extremely well to the pupils' work, in Years 5 and 6, on the Victorian child's workday. This ensured relevance and a very high level of involvement. These pupils showed an extremely thoughtful response to the music and were totally involved in their work. Sensitive teaching ensured an extremely positive attitude to dance, and all groups of pupils worked hard to improve the quality of their work. The pupils showed a very perceptive approach to a piece of work using strong contrasts between waking up, taking to the streets and their reactions upon meeting their acquaintances. Music was chosen very carefully to stimulate the movement and accompany performance and pupils responded to the differences in mood very well.
151. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, are supported well in activities, so that they improve their skill levels appropriately. Pupils are encouraged to think about their performance, the new skills acquired and the positive health benefits. Extremely good relationships between the teacher and pupils result in very good attitudes and behaviour, so that safety issues are very securely addressed.
152. The co-ordinator manages the subject very effectively. The subject is well planned to ensure that all areas of the curriculum are covered. In addition, the school has received an 'Active Mark' award for 'Sport England'. The quality of resources is generally good. Care is taken to ensure best value is obtained when purchasing resources, for example in selecting the most appropriate and cost-effective venue for swimming.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

153. At the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils attain standards in religious education that meet the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. This represents sound progress since the previous inspection, when the findings were similar. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve soundly. There is no discernible difference in the attainment of boys and girls.
154. Throughout the school, there is extensive coverage of the curriculum and this is a strength of the subject. Younger pupils are familiar with a range of stories from the Bible and are introduced to some festivals from other faiths, such as Hanukkah. They make comparisons between the significance of dark and light and learn about the symbolism of candles, and other signs and symbols in Judaism. In addition, they learn about a range of saints and 'good people', such as St Francis of Assisi, St Bernadette and Gladys Aylward. The richness of the curriculum enables pupils to gain a good understanding of a range of faiths and the rituals connected with them.
155. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn about Islam, and the significance of the Qur'an as the Muslim holy book. They show some knowledge of the Bible as the Christian holy book. They are aware of how Muslims wash before handling the Qur'an and how it is treated. To reinforce pupils' learning, for example, a Muslim visitor came to tell the class more about her faith, and it is clear from the recorded evidence that pupils were very interested and fascinated by what she had to say. From the work examined it is evident that pupils are becoming aware of the similarities and differences between, for example, the faiths of Christians and Jews.
156. In Years 5 and 6, pupils extend their knowledge and understanding of different faiths by learning about Sikhism. They carry out a detailed study and show a good understanding of the five 'Ks' and the rituals and procedures associated with them. They explore festivals associated with Christianity further, and learn about the origin of symbols, such as Easter eggs, Simnel cakes, and Hot Cross buns. They study the feast of Pentecost in some detail, and use strong vocabulary and imagery to describe the coming of the Holy Spirit. Information and communication technology is used appropriately to research various topics, such as the lives of the saints, or the signs and symbols associated with various faiths. Information and communication technology is used where relevant to word-process written work. In addition, pupils in Years 3 and 4 have successfully used an art and design program to devise their own Islamic carpets. The library contains a wide selection of books at a variety of levels, which provide useful and relevant information for pupils, about a range of faiths, beliefs and personalities.
157. No lessons were observed during the inspection. However, it is clear from the work examined that teaching is at least satisfactory. Teachers are confident in teaching facts about religion and have good subject knowledge. From the pupils' work, it is clear that respect and tolerance towards other faiths and religions is embedded within the teaching. Pupils learn effectively and the quality of presentation and illustration is good. Teachers plan their work well, using the scheme of work provided to support the Locally Agreed Syllabus.
158. The co-ordinator for religious education is highly knowledgeable about the subject and has recently won an award for the school, as a result of the good work she has carried out in developing the curriculum for religious education. This has enabled the school to considerably enhance its range of resources, to the benefit of the pupils. The school has very good links with the local church and the vicar regularly attends to take assemblies. These contribute well to the overall spiritual development of the pupils, as does the work in religious education. A range of visits and visitors support the curriculum effectively and pupils have visited the local church, Worcester Cathedral, a local Roman Catholic Church, as well as a Synagogue. These first-hand experiences all help develop the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the faiths they are studying.