

INSPECTION REPORT

CALCOT JUNIOR SCHOOL

Reading

LEA area: West Berkshire

Unique reference number: 109932

Headteacher: Linda McCulloch-Smith

Reporting inspector: Mr D J Curtis
20893

Dates of inspection: 21st – 24th January 2002

Inspection number: 198278

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

© Crown copyright 2002

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Curtis Road Calcot Reading Berkshire
Postcode:	RG31 4XG
Telephone number:	0118 9428727
Fax number:	0118 9455587
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Colin Lee
Date of previous inspection:	October 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr D J Curtis 20893	Registered inspector	English Information and communication technology Physical education	How high are standards? (The school's results and achievements) How well are pupils taught?
Mrs H Barter 9052	Lay inspector		How high are standards? (Attitudes, values and personal development) How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mrs S Storer 30785	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology	
Ms L Thorogood 29988	Team inspector	Science Geography History Equal opportunities	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
Mrs M Farman 22452	Team inspector	Music Religious education Special educational needs	How well is the school led and managed?

The inspection contractor was:

TWA Inspections Ltd
5 Lakeside
Werrington
Peterborough
PE4 6QZ

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
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
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	12
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	14
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	18
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	19
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	22
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	23
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Calcot Junior School is situated to the west of the Borough of Reading, but is in the unitary authority of West Berkshire. It takes pupils from the ages of 7 to 11 years. There are 304 pupils on roll in 12 classes, with 156 boys and 148 girls; this is an above average sized primary school. There are a small number of pupils from ethnic minority families; none are at the early stage of learning English as an additional language. There are 38 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs; as a proportion this is below the national average. There are four pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need; as a proportion this is similar to the national average. Thirty-two pupils are entitled to free school meals; as a proportion this is below the national average. Standards on entry are average. In recent years, the number of pupils who enter or leave the school at times other than of normal admission/transfer has increased. In the last two years, there has been a 75 per cent turnover in the teaching staff.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Calcot Junior School is a good school, with many strengths. Teaching is good and contributes successfully to the attitudes, behaviour and personal development of pupils being very good and a significant strength of the school. Standards in English are above average. In music and physical education, standards are good. The leadership and management of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior management team are good. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in English are above average, with those in music and physical education good.
- The attitudes, behaviour and personal development of pupils are very good.
- Teaching is good.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- Curriculum provision, including extra-curricular activities, is good.
- Leadership and management are good.
- The procedures for the care and welfare of pupils are good.

What could be improved

- Standards achieved by more-able pupils in mathematics.
- The consistency of pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their work.
- The school's communication with parents.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was previously inspected in October 1997. It has made good progress in addressing the key issues from the previous inspection. The school now has a much stronger approach to school development planning, with the senior management team and governing body fully involved in planning and evaluating the impact of their spending decisions on standards achieved by pupils. Curriculum provision has improved, with clear and detailed schemes of work in place which meet National Curriculum requirements. Pupils' independent research skills have improved, particularly in the use of reference books, CD-ROM and the Internet. Trends show standards in the school to be above average.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

Similar schools are those with more than 8 per cent and up to 20 per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals.

The school's results in 2001 reversed the previous trend of year-on-year improvement in mathematics and science. However, in science four pupils who were expected to achieve the nationally expected Level 4 or above were absent on the day of the test. Standards have improved in English since the previous inspection, with those in mathematics maintained. In science, standards have fallen, but in 1997 pupils in Year 6 benefited from being taught by a science specialist and from the many opportunities to attend science events outside school.

Current inspection findings judge standards in English to be above average, with those in mathematics and science average. In English, standards are good as the result of high quality teaching. Standards in science are improving as the result of good teaching and effective management of the subject. Standards in mathematics are not high enough because more-able pupils are not sufficiently challenged.

In information and communication technology, standards meet national expectations. Standards in religious education meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in music and physical education exceed expectations for pupils of this age because of good teaching. In art and design, design and technology, geography and history, standards meet expectations for pupils of this age.

Pupils the school identifies as having special educational needs in reading, writing and number skills make good progress in their learning. They mainly achieve standards in line with the agreed targets on their individual education plans.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good; pupils work hard in lessons and enjoy being in school. They show interest in their work and are keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good; pupils behave well in lessons and when moving around the school. At break and lunchtime behaviour is good.
Personal development and relationships	Very good; pupils relate well to each other, to their teachers, to the headteacher and to all adults whom they meet, including learning support assistants and parent helpers. Pupils work well in pairs and in small groups, with many examples of boys and girls working together successfully.
Attendance	Good; there is little unauthorised absence and pupils arrive at school punctually.

Pupils' attitudes to school and to their work in lessons are a strength of the school. During the inspection, in 80 per cent of lessons pupils' attitudes and behaviour were good or better.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching in lessons observed during the inspection was good and it has a significant impact on the good standards achieved in English, music and physical education. In addition, good teaching contributes successfully to pupils' very positive attitudes and very good behaviour in school. During the inspection, no unsatisfactory teaching was observed.

Where teaching is good, teachers show good subject knowledge which is passed on to pupils with interest and enthusiasm. Teachers make good use of resources to support pupils' learning, including learning support assistants. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good and teachers have high expectations of behaviour. However, there are inconsistencies in teachers' expectations of pupils' handwriting and presentation skills.

The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good; teachers and learning support assistants support them effectively in lessons.

The teaching of literacy is good overall. Key skills of reading and writing are taught successfully, including reading for information. Skills in spelling, grammar and punctuation are taught well; there is a strong expectation that pupils should use dictionaries in lessons to help with spellings.

The quality of teaching and learning in numeracy throughout the school during the inspection was good. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and teach the basic skills well. Most planning is thorough and meets the needs of most pupils, although within the top set (ability group) more-able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good; the school is meeting the National Curriculum requirements for the teaching of all subjects. The effectiveness of the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good; the co-ordinator for special educational needs provides effective support which enables these pupils to make good progress. Pupils' individual education plans are of good quality.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good for spiritual and cultural development, with very good provision for social and moral development. Effective provision makes a strong contribution to pupils' very good attitudes, behaviour, personal development and relationships.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The day-to-day care for and support of pupils are good, particularly in child protection and ensuring that pupils are happy and safe in school. The school is using effectively the results of its assessments to plan pupils' future learning.

The school has a satisfactory partnership with its parents, although a significant number have concerns about aspects of the school's communication with them. Provision for extra-curricular activities is good, with pupils having the opportunity to attend a wide range of sporting and musical activities. The school looks after its pupils well, particularly with regard to health, safety and their individual well-being. Good use is made of the local community and partner institutions.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good; the headteacher, ably supported by her deputy headteacher and senior management team, has a clear vision and determination to lead the school forward.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil all of their statutory responsibilities. They are dedicated and hard working, and provide very good support for the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good; the school has a clear understanding of its strengths and weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	Good; the school uses its resources and additional funds/grants to support pupils' learning effectively.

The staffing, accommodation and resources in the school are adequate to support pupils' learning. The school applies successfully the principles of best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • The school has high expectations of their children. • Teaching is good. • Their children make good progress at school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons. • To be better informed about their child's progress. • The school working more closely with parents. • The amount of homework their children receive.

Ten parents attended the meeting with the registered inspector prior to the inspection and 87 (29 per cent) questionnaires were returned. Inspection findings support the positive views of parents. In relation to improvement, inspection findings judge that, currently, the school is not communicating information to parents as successfully as it should. Inspection findings do not support the other areas identified for improvement; the provision for extra-curricular activities is good; the provision of homework is similar to that found in other schools. The homework given to pupils is judged to support their learning effectively.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The results of 2001 National Curriculum assessments for pupils in Year 6 were above average in English and average in mathematics and science. In comparison with those in similar schools¹ nationally, the results were above average in English, average in mathematics and below average in science. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5² was above average in English, average in mathematics and below average in science. Results in science were affected by the absence on the day of the tests of four pupils whom the school predicted would achieve the expected Level 4 or above.
2. Taking the years 1999 to 2001 together, the trend shows standards to be above average in all three subjects, with no significant difference between them. However, there are variations within individual year groups, with standards in 1999 being higher in mathematics and science. In addition, trends show no significant difference between the standards achieved by boys and girls. Standards in the school are affected by an increasing number of pupils who join or leave the school at times other than of normal admission and transfer. In addition, since 1999, there has been a 75 per cent turnover of teaching staff in the school.
3. Current inspection findings judge that the school is sustaining the standards achieved. In English, standards are above average, with more-able pupils achieving good standards in both reading and writing. In mathematics, standards are average, but more-able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged to achieve their full potential, and teachers' planning does not consistently address their learning needs. In science, standards are average and improving as the result of good teaching linked to pupils being taught in sets (ability groups). In addition, as a result of good teaching, the standards achieved by more-able pupils are improving rapidly.
4. By the end of Year 6, standards in information and communication technology meet national expectations, with pupils showing good progress in linking their literacy skills with the word processing of a wide range of imaginative writing, especially poetry. Standards in religious education meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. In music and physical education, standards are good and exceed expectations for pupils of this age. In art and design, design and technology, geography and history, standards meet expectations.
5. Across the school, pupils successfully apply their literacy skills when working in other subjects. Reading for information, including library books, the Internet and CD-ROMs, is a strong feature of their work. Writing skills, particularly the use of spelling and punctuation, are used accurately in science, geography and history. Pupils apply their numeracy skills well when recording the results of science investigations and in the use of databases in information and communication technology.
6. Pupils the school identifies as having special educational needs in reading, writing and number skills make good progress in their learning. The school uses a suitably wide range of school-based and national tests to determine pupils' needs. It draws up individual education plans with specific, clear and achievable targets. The school identifies needs at an early stage, places pupils on a register of special educational needs and agrees targets for improvement as need demands. There is provision for regular and

¹ Schools with more than 8 per cent and up to 20 per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals.

² It is the national expectation that by the age of 11 pupils should reach Level 4 or above in the National Curriculum assessments.

frequent reviews of targets as necessary. This ensures that targets are accurate and relevant to pupils' individual needs. Pupils mainly achieve standards in line with the agreed targets on their individual education plans. The targets for pupils who have statements of special educational need provide close links with their statements. Regular reviews indicate that they make good progress towards achieving these targets. Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties make equally good progress towards achieving their individual targets. Standards are below average for the pupils' age, but they achieve well and make good progress in their learning.

7. Inspection evidence confirms that the school sets realistic and challenging targets for its pupils. Evidence is consistent with the school having the leadership, management and quality of teaching that will allow it to meet its targets.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Since the last inspection, pupils have maintained their very positive attitudes towards school and their very good standards of behaviour. They continue to make very good progress in their personal development, especially in the quality of the relationships that they have with one another and with adults. The positive and inclusive atmosphere of the school is very strong and has a significant impact on the quality of pupils' learning.
9. Although a few parents are concerned about occasional incidents of anti-social behaviour in the playground, most feel that behaviour in the school is good and that pupils are helped to become mature and responsible. Parents are pleased that their children like coming to school and say that they are happy and get on well with each other.
10. Pupils' attendance is very good, being well above the national average and with very little unauthorised absence. With few exceptions, pupils come to school regularly and on time. There is very little disruption to their learning and this has a good impact on their standards of achievement.
11. Pupils have very good attitudes to their learning and to the activities provided in school. In lessons, they work hard, are interested in what they are doing and are well motivated. They are confident when answering questions and contributing to discussions. They concentrate very well and are alert because teachers use humour and dialogue which interests them. For example, in English, pupils in Year 5 enjoyed the humour of the story of 'Lazy Jack' and were very keen to suggest ideas to develop the story further. Pupils enjoy the range of extra-curricular activities provided. They are enthusiastic about netball and football, apply themselves well in the drama club and show great interest in problem solving in the mathematics club. The high levels of enthusiasm and interest that pupils show in all aspects of school life are reflected in the good progress that they are making.
12. Pupils' behaviour throughout the school is also very good. They are calm and attentive in lessons. They behave well even when space is restricted, for example in the computer suite. They respond well to the established routines for behaviour and are thoughtful towards others. The behaviour of pupils in Years 5 and 6 is never less than very good in lessons. Some of the younger pupils in Years 3 and 4 are less mature and occasionally disrupt lessons because they are too noisy and do not listen to the teacher.
13. At lunchtimes, pupils are sociable and well mannered. In the playground, they behave well and enjoy a variety of games. There is very little anti-social behaviour because pupils know that staff deal seriously with it. However, as a response to some isolated aggressive behaviour, there have been four temporary exclusions in the past year involving four pupils, two of whom have now left the school.

14. The relationships that pupils have with each other and with adults are very good. There is a great deal of mutual respect in a relaxed atmosphere. This develops pupils' maturity and gives them the confidence to contribute in lessons. Pupils' personal development is very good. They listen well to others and value the contributions that they make in lessons; for example, in a religious education lesson, pupils in Year 5 listened very respectfully to a pupil who was describing his grandparents' war medals. Pupils work well together. They are willing to take turns and to discuss ideas such as planning together in pairs to make 'dance machines' in a Year 4 physical education lesson. Pupils develop very good personal responsibility as they check their own work and consider how they can make improvements. In all year groups, pupils enjoy taking responsibility for classroom tasks, and those who are elected as 'School Councillors' take their roles seriously as they consider ideas from their classes. Pupils say that they enjoy coming to school, that they find most of their work interesting and that they particularly enjoy the clubs on offer.
15. Most pupils with special educational needs are secure within their class groups. The teachers ensure that pupils' work matches their needs. This enables pupils to relate well to their classmates and to adults. Their good relationships give them confidence to explore new areas of learning and to join in all school activities. Most pupils take considerable pride in their work and achievements. A very small minority of pupils, mostly boys, present potentially disruptive behaviour. They are less positive in their attitudes to work and learning. The school applies its behaviour policy effectively to ensure that these pupils become aware of when their actions are unacceptable.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The previous inspection judged the quality of teaching to be 'satisfactory or better in 97 per cent of lessons observed, with 11 per cent very good or better'. Three per cent of lessons were judged to be 'unsatisfactory'. There were no key issues for the school to address in relation to the quality of teaching.
17. Current inspection findings judge that teaching is good and that it has a positive impact on the good standards achieved in English and on the improving standards in science. In addition, good teaching makes a significant contribution to pupils' very good behaviour and very positive attitudes to learning. During the inspection, the quality of teaching was good or better in 73 per cent of lessons observed, including 24 per cent which were very good. Three lessons were judged to be excellent. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection.
18. The teaching of literacy is good, with 40 per cent very good or excellent, and it has a significant impact on the good standards achieved in English. Throughout the school, pupils are taught in sets (ability groups) for literacy and a significant strength is the quality of planning within each year group. Detailed planning ensures that, although pupils are covering the same aspect of literacy within a lesson, the work is matched carefully to the learning needs of pupils within each set. As a result, pupils of all abilities make very good progress in lessons and over time. Lesson introductions are interesting and stimulate pupils' enthusiasm, and this has a significant impact on the quality of work they then produce in the lesson.
19. The teaching of numeracy is good and is beginning to have a positive impact on standards. However, there has been a significant turnover of teaching staff in the last two years. Currently, teachers' planning for more-able pupils is not consistently challenging. Although pupils are taught in sets (ability groups), there is insufficient variation in planning within the 'top' sets to meet the learning needs of the most able pupils.

20. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. All teachers and members of the support staff provide a very good level of support for pupils with special educational needs. This makes a positive contribution to the good rate of progress in the pupils' learning. Pupils have challenging, practical and clear targets. The targets are easy for staff, pupils and parents to understand and teachers can work towards them within a normal classroom setting. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs usually takes place within the classroom. This gives pupils full access to the school's curriculum and ensures they are included in all class activities. Class teachers have realistically high expectations of pupils. They plan work that closely matches pupils' identified needs and targets. This ensures that pupils achieve their targets and helps raise their self-esteem. The effective management of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties promotes good learning.
21. In the best lessons, teachers show very good subject knowledge which they pass on with interest and enthusiasm to pupils. Lesson introductions are interesting and exciting, and they capture immediately the attention of the pupils, with the result that enthusiasm for learning is maintained throughout the lesson. For example, in a Year 5 literacy lesson, the teacher read the story of 'The Tortoise and the Baboon' with such brilliant expression and enthusiasm that pupils were spellbound. In addition, this was an excellent example of a teacher 'modelling' how to read a story to an audience. In the same lesson, the teacher shared the learning objective with the class, which was, 'to compare fables from different countries' and at the end of the lesson referred back to it by asking, 'Have we addressed this?' Because of this, pupils were fully involved in the lesson and were very enthusiastic when contributing to the discussion.
22. In the best lessons, pupils are supported effectively by teachers and learning support assistants. Pupils are given very clear expectations of what they should achieve and no time is wasted. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson on writing paragraphs, the teacher told pupils, 'You have to write a story plan, with bullet points for five paragraphs. You have 25 minutes to do it'. By the end of the time allocated, every pupil had completed the task to a good standard. Throughout the session, the teacher supported and challenged pupils in their thinking and understanding, particularly those who were still insecure in the writing of paragraphs.
23. Teachers use the final or plenary part of the lesson successfully to reinforce the main teaching points and to assess the gains in knowledge, skills and understanding made by pupils in the lesson. For example, in a Year 4 literacy lesson, pupils shared with the rest of the class the sub-headings they had given to paragraphs in a piece of writing on hibernation. The teacher ensured through careful questioning that all pupils made a contribution and she was able to say to the class, 'You've done well and worked hard. You've got a good understanding of sub-headings now'. In most lessons, the plenary session gives pupils good opportunities to apply their speaking and listening skills, particularly in talking to the rest of the class as their audience.
24. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good and this contributes significantly to pupils' very positive attitudes to learning. Lessons are interesting, hard work, but also fun for pupils, with teachers using humour effectively to motivate pupils to learn. Resources are used effectively, including computers and overhead projectors for demonstration and explanation. Learning support assistants are used effectively by teachers to support pupils.
25. Marking is inconsistent and this is linked to inconsistency across the school in relation to teachers' expectations of pupils' handwriting and presentation. Teachers do not always follow the school's handwriting policy, for example by allowing biros to be used. In addition, they do not always remind pupils of the importance of good handwriting when

presenting their work. There are many good examples of constructive marking which guides pupils in their learning. However, this is not consistent across the school.

26. Homework is used effectively to support pupils' learning. It links clearly to work completed in lessons. For example, in Year 6 after a literacy lesson on paragraphs, the English homework was to write a short story with five paragraphs. Such homework allows pupils to consolidate key skills and teachers to assess pupils' understanding. In Year 3, when the teacher announced the spelling homework for the week, there was a resounding 'Hooray!' from the class.

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

27. The school has maintained a broad and balanced curriculum since the last inspection. The key issue concerning the provision of a curriculum overview has been addressed, and each year group has plans that show the whole year's provision and which indicate links between subjects. There are distinct allocations of time for all subjects and clear expectations of what pupils will learn. A satisfactory act of collective worship takes place every day. However, no music is played when pupils enter or leave the hall, neither during the inspection did pupils sing in collective worship; there are missed opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual development.
28. The school has successfully implemented the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy and is effective in teaching basic skills. An area of inconsistency is the extent to which literacy skills are promoted in other subjects such as geography or science. Teachers do not always take advantage of opportunities to enhance reading and writing skills outside English lessons. Information and communication technology is used effectively to support learning across the range of curriculum subjects.
29. The school has responded positively to changes in the National Curriculum effective from September 2000. Detailed schemes are now in place for all subjects, based on the revised National Curriculum and drawing on government guidelines and commercially published schemes. Religious education is provided according to the recommendations of the locally agreed syllabus. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection.
30. The good provision for pupils to learn about personal, social and health education reported in the last inspection has been maintained. The governing body has decided that sex education should not be taught as a separate subject, but should be included within the science curriculum. Drugs and health education are addressed through dedicated sessions, and visiting speakers from local community groups contribute to the teaching of these topics. Pupils learn about citizenship in a variety of contexts and the school council gives them an opportunity to develop a sense of responsibility and think about the needs of others. Aspects of personal, social and health education are also delivered successfully through the curriculum for other subjects, including physical education, science, and design and technology.
31. Teachers successfully modify their weekly plans to meet the range of abilities in their classes. For instance, plans indicate where additional help will be given to less-able pupils or extra work with a higher level of challenge will be offered to pupils of higher ability. However, this is inconsistent in mathematics, where the learning needs of more-able pupils are not always met successfully in lessons. Work is adapted to match the needs of those pupils with individual education plans. Pupils with special educational needs receive a good level of support where necessary from classroom assistants. Provision for more-able pupils includes the opportunity to attend 'master classes' (special

courses of advanced study in mathematics and science) run in co-operation with a local secondary school.

32. The school meets the requirements of the Code of Practice³ for pupils it identifies as having special educational needs. There is a detailed register of these pupils in place. It lists pupils in order of priority. The school reviews the register regularly to ensure that it reflects the current needs and provision for pupils. Individual education plans and statements of special educational need are clear, specific and easy to follow. All teachers ensure that pupils with special educational needs have a suitably wide range of learning opportunities within the curriculum. The provision within and outside the classroom is good. It ensures that all pupils, including those with the greatest need, have full access to the National Curriculum.
33. The school has a commitment to equality of opportunity and a well thought out policy document has been produced. In practice, pupils and staff all experience equality of opportunity in all aspects of school life. For instance, a bright pupil with writing difficulties was voted onto the school council in the role of secretary. In order to enable her to fulfil this role, an electronic dictating machine has been provided for her use. Social as well as educational inclusion is an important feature of the school.
34. A good range of extra-curricular activities is available and supports the curriculum. At the present time, opportunities include drama, poetry, music, mathematics, craft and sports, including football and basketball. Almost half of the pupils in the school take advantage of these opportunities. In addition, a French club and basketball coaching by members of the 'Reading Rockets' (the local professional basketball team) are available at a small cost. A range of visits to enhance curriculum provision is offered each year. These include day trips to museums and field centres and, in addition, pupils in Year 4 and Year 6 benefit from the opportunity to go on residential visits to activity centres, which give additional experience in aspects of outdoor pursuits and environmental studies.
35. Links with the community outside the school are very good. A range of visitors is welcomed into the school and they contribute to aspects of the curriculum and enhance pupils' learning. Forty employees of a local financial services group visit the school to listen to reading in Year 4. This has helped to raise standards in reading and offers the pupils a wide range of adult role models. The local superstore accepted the secondment of a member of staff from the school to work shadow one of its managers. This resulted in the production of some good, new learning resources by this teacher, as well as offering him an opportunity for personal and professional development, leading to enhanced skills in staff management and leadership. The headteacher is an active member of the area 'Education Business Partnership', and the school benefits from involvement in a range of its initiatives and is supported by its funding. Elderly people from the community are regular visitors to school end-of-term productions and visits from local clergy enhance spiritual provision.
36. Positive relationships have been forged with other local schools, including the infant schools which most pupils come from and the two most popular secondary schools they go on to. Links include teacher and pupil visits, sharing of resources for teaching and learning and the sharing of facilities and specialist staff to enhance the opportunities for the most able pupils. These very good links ease the transfer from stage to stage in the pupils' education. The school also has links with the local university and accepts trainee teachers for placement.

³ Code of Practice: This gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

37. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is highly valued and well established in the school. Moral and social development are very good throughout the school and spiritual and cultural development are good. These remain strengths of the school and contribute significantly to the very good attitudes and behaviour of pupils across the school.
38. Pupils' spiritual development is good throughout the school. Collective worship provides opportunities for pupils to reflect on important themes such as 'friendship' and 'kindness'. The use of music and singing is not a strong feature of assemblies and do not support the spiritual dimension of acts of worship. In lessons, sensitive teaching promotes regular opportunities for pupils to think about and empathise with others. For example, in Year 4, pupils talked about their concern for the victim in the story of the 'Good Samaritan'. In Year 5, pupils shared their own intimate and personal thoughts about things precious to them, 'My teddy is special to me because I've had him ever since I was born. He's been loved a lot'. Speaking and listening are planned into all lessons and teachers create an atmosphere of mutual respect where pupils feel safe to share their feelings and thoughts. Religious education lessons serve to promote spirituality throughout the school and engage pupils in thinking about the way people express their beliefs across the globe. For example, pupils in Year 3 understand that the Christian faith is a world faith and know that the splendour or simplicity of a church allows anyone to think and pray to God. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
39. Provision for moral education is very good. The school prides itself in teaching the difference between right and wrong. Every opportunity is taken to teach pupils respect and appreciation for each other. In lessons and after-school clubs, pupils are very well behaved and show consideration for each other and their teachers. Consistent and high expectations from staff promote a calm and secure environment. As a result, pupils are confident, courteous and well mannered as they move around the school. They contribute towards making the school a warm and friendly place to be. For example, in the dining hall pupils enjoy a shared meal and boys and girls and pupils across year groups mix comfortably. They welcome visitors and clear away after themselves.
40. Provision for social development is very good and is reflected in the high quality relationships between pupils and staff. Assemblies create a sense of corporate identity as year groups and as a whole school. As a result, pupils gain a strong sense of community belonging and have joined together to raise money for local charities. School monitors and house captains take on responsibilities. In lessons, teachers encourage self-discipline, and personal, social and health education sessions enable pupils to explore issues to do with friendship, growing up and healthy eating. The school council is a very effective way for pupils to show initiative and take on responsibility. The group is well led by a chairperson and supported by a secretary and class representative. Regular meetings are conducted professionally with agendas and minutes. The council is successful in meeting the needs of pupils set within a supportive school community.
41. Provision for cultural development is good. The religious education curriculum, art and music contribute successfully towards promoting an awareness and understanding of local traditions. For example, the 'Reach for the Stars' project involved the local community in an exploration of space through drama, music and art. The range of artefacts and instruments in school promotes an understanding of the cultural diversity of society. The school celebrates world festivals including Diwali and Chinese New Year. As a result, pupils' experiences are enriched. A lunchtime French club successfully promotes pupils' understanding of the language and the Euro. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42. The school is a happy place where staff know pupils well and provide a caring and inclusive environment in which pupils are relaxed and calm. Since the last inspection, the school has continued to offer pupils very good educational and personal support and guidance. This has a very good impact on their standard of achievement, attitudes to learning, behaviour and attendance. Parents are pleased with the standard of care offered to their children and most feel that they can talk to the school about any concerns that they may have.
43. Since the last inspection, the school has improved its procedures for ensuring the health and safety of pupils. Staff and governors have completed training and carry out regular checks and health and safety assessments of the building and site. Pupils are cared for well if they are unwell or hurt themselves by the trained first aiders. Staff know the pupils well and show good concern for their welfare. Child protection procedures are sound. The school follows the local area guidelines and ensures that staff know how to report concerns. The headteacher has received appropriate child protection training in her role as designated teacher. However, other members of staff have not received training which would enable them to fulfil this role in her absence.
44. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' attendance are good. Registers are completed correctly and registrations are prompt. This encourages pupils to come to school on time. The school makes good use of the education welfare service to follow up the very small number of pupils whose attendance and punctuality give cause for concern.
45. Pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school because staff have very good expectations of them and are consistent in their approach to any lapses. School and classroom rules are clear and reinforced with pupils so that they know what is expected of them. The school has acted positively on some incidents of bullying by training all staff, including midday staff, in behaviour management techniques and providing pupils with opportunities to discuss bullying in personal, social and health education lessons. It has used exclusion appropriately to give clear messages about unacceptable playground behaviour and uses the behaviour support services well to assess and support individual pupils with behaviour difficulties.
46. All the members of staff have information about any medical problems that pupils have. This ensures that pupils receive the necessary care and attention they may need. The members of staff encourage pupils with special educational needs to become independent in their learning and social skills. They take all available steps to promote self-esteem and self-confidence. Teachers use assessment effectively to identify needs at an early stage. They chart and track pupils' achievements and progress systematically. There is provision for pupils to move up and down the register as their needs change. The school identifies gifted and talented pupils. It keeps careful records of pupils' success and plans future steps carefully.
47. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good. Since the last inspection, the school has achieved consistency in its record keeping so that all teachers are clear about what to assess and when. Regular programmes of testing and analysis in English and mathematics are well established for each year group and are used effectively to track pupils' progress in sets and as individuals as they move through the school. Good use is made of data to analyse trends in performance, for example between boys and girls, and to compare results with other schools. Subject co-ordinators for science and information and communication technology are making good progress in developing assessment to match the schemes of work. In other subjects of the

curriculum, teachers keep good records of pupils' achievement which help them to report to parents at the end of the year.

48. The school now makes good use of the assessment data available to it. There is a thorough analysis of individual, class and set strengths and weaknesses which teachers use to place pupils in sets for English, mathematics and science and when planning lessons. Information from annual testing is carefully analysed to assess where pupils have gaps in their understanding and to alter planning to reinforce specific areas, for example problem solving in mathematics. Careful tracking of individual pupils helps teachers to identify those who are at risk of underachieving and to place them in Additional Literacy Strategy, Springboard and Booster groups where their progress is carefully monitored. Subject co-ordinators are currently developing new portfolios of pupils' work to help staff to assess their levels of achievement more accurately. The analysis of pupils' recorded work, for example for mathematics sets in Years 3 and 4, is used effectively to identify weaknesses such as presentation skills.
49. Good use is made of day-to-day assessment by teachers to assess pupils informally and to set targets for them to work towards in literacy and numeracy. Teachers know their pupils very well and help them to make good progress by discussing their work with them and reminding them of what they need to do next. Marking in pupils' books, however, is inconsistent and does not always help pupils to understand why a piece of work is good or what they could have done to achieve at a higher level. Teachers support pupils' personal development very well by setting high expectations for work and behaviour, and rewarding their efforts with stars, house points and certificates. This helps to raise pupils' self-esteem and has a very positive impact on the quality of their learning and their personal development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

50. The quality of partnership that the school has with parents is satisfactory. Many parents support the school and its work, and express satisfaction with the education that their children receive. They are particularly pleased with:
- the fact that their children like coming to school;
 - the quality of teaching that their children receive;
 - the high expectations that the school has of their children.
51. Since the last inspection, the school has improved the information it gives to parents about what is being taught and in the prospectus and governing body's annual report, although some parents still feel that the quality of communication is not good enough. A significant minority of those parents who completed the questionnaire were critical of:
- the information that they receive about their children's progress;
 - the way in which the school works closely with them;
 - the range of activities provided outside lessons;
 - the amount of homework that their children receive.
52. The inspection team agrees fully with parents' positive views and confirms that the good quality of teaching has an impact on the very good attitudes that pupils have towards school. The range of activities provided outside lessons is good, but parents were not as well informed as they could have been about why these did not begin until the start of this term. The inspection team finds that teachers make good use of homework in lessons to enrich pupils' learning. However, it acknowledges that parents have wide-ranging views about the amount and frequency of homework that they would like their children to do.
53. Since the last inspection, the school has improved the quality of annual written reports on pupils' progress. Teachers make good use of the assessment information available to

them to tell parents what pupils know, understand and can do, the levels at which they are achieving and what their children need to do next to improve. However, although the school says that it encourages parents to speak to teachers about any concerns, a number of parents are critical of the formal opportunities available to them to speak to teachers and to see their children's work. Pupils' annual reports are sent to parents less than one week before the end of term, which does not give them sufficient time to see teachers about any concerns that they may have. Parents may see their children's work in English, mathematics and science at the autumn consultation meetings and meet the relevant set teachers. However, some parents are confused about these arrangements and others say that they have not seen their children's books. The school arranges informal opportunities for parents to meet staff and the headteacher, such as at coffee mornings and after class assemblies, but some parents do not see these as an opportunity to discuss their children's progress.

54. The inspection team finds that the school is keen to encourage parents to speak to teachers about their concerns and that teachers make themselves available to speak to parents whenever possible. However, in the light of parental concerns and confusion, inspectors find that there are shortcomings in the quality of communication with parents. The school is aware that this is an area that needs to be reviewed and further developed.
55. Parents' involvement in their children's learning and school life is satisfactory. Most parents are supportive of school events and attend sports events, plays and concerts. A meeting to explain the Numeracy Strategy was well attended and the school plans to hold further curriculum evenings, for example for mathematics. Although few parents are able to regularly help in school, many hear their children read at home. Parents who are members of the governing body give very good support to the school and provide a good link between the school and the parent body. The school is well supported by the active Parents' Association, which holds fundraising and social events with Calcot Infant School and which encourages parents to participate in school life.
56. The school invites all parents of pupils with special educational needs to attend meetings to discuss the progress and achievements of their children. It encourages parents to contribute to pupils' individual education plans. The school informs parents of their children's progress and maintains effective links with them.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

57. The headteacher provides good leadership for the school. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when leadership was only satisfactory. The strong senior management team plays an active part in all aspects of school development. This gives very effective support to the headteacher. The subject leaders have increased responsibility for planning, developing and monitoring their subject areas. This makes a positive contribution to the steady improvement in standards and pupils' achievement. There is a strong sense of teamwork within the school. The headteacher ensures that members of staff have opportunities to develop their own skills to improve the pupils' education. This includes teaching and working with the whole age range of pupils. All members of staff work closely together to construct the school development plan. This is a useful tool that clearly identifies priorities for improvement. It makes close links between educational needs and spending limitations. The headteacher and senior management team regularly monitor progress towards the identified priorities. These improvements reflect the commitment of the headteacher and all members of staff to giving the pupils an effective curriculum. The headteacher communicates well with staff and governors, but is less successful in dealing with parents. This leads to an element of dissatisfaction. There is clear reflection of the school's aims in its everyday life. This is particularly evident in the respect pupils show for each other and adults. The school's

organisation and management are smooth and efficient. This enables the teachers to teach effectively and the pupils to learn well.

58. There is very good support for the school from the governing body. It has positive relationships with the school and maintains a friendly but professional and critical approach. This enables the school to step back and look carefully at the quality of education it is providing. The governing body has a very clear overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses. It monitors spending very carefully for its effect on standards and achievement and is fully committed to providing quality education for all pupils. There has been a very significant improvement in the involvement of the governing body. They have a clear overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses and set clear targets to improve the headteacher's performance. The governing body works closely with the headteacher and staff to take effective action to correct any areas of weakness. This contributes to the teamwork and to improving teaching and learning.
59. The management of arrangements for pupils who have special educational needs is good. This echoes the findings of the previous inspection. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs is very knowledgeable and supportive. This is a great benefit to the school and gives parents a very well informed source of advice. The co-ordinator for special educational needs is relatively new to the post and is continuing the previous good practice. The school makes effective use of the specific allocation for pupils with special educational needs. It analyses and costs the budget carefully to ensure that pupils have the maximum benefit. The co-ordinator is a full-time class teacher and has one afternoon a week to deal with matters concerning special educational needs. This contributes to the good provision for pupils. The support assistants for special educational needs give an effective level of help to the class teachers. This high quality support enables the pupils to achieve well. The school takes care to include all pupils who have special educational needs in classroom and out-of-school activities. This increases their self-esteem and ensures that they play a full part in the life of the school.
60. The day-to-day management and administration of the school are efficient and effective. Procedures are unobtrusive and do not interrupt the smooth running of the school. The administrative assistants are competent and know what to do in the case of emergencies. This high level of support enables the teaching staff to maintain the focus of attention on their work with pupils.
61. There has been a significant improvement to the financial planning arrangements of the school since the previous inspection. There are efficient and effective long-, medium- and short-term plans. The finance officer monitors spending very carefully and makes very good use of technology to administer the school's budget. This ensures prudent and careful management of the finances available to the school. The school has clear systems for evaluating the effectiveness of spending and makes regular reports to the governing body. The finance committee checks spending proposals closely to ensure that they support educational priorities. There is clear identification of these in the well-developed long-term plan. This anticipates future needs very effectively. The school has a clear system for competitive tendering and has recently taken over the running of its canteen. There are clear definitions of the responsibilities of the governing body, its committees and those of the headteacher and members of staff. The headteacher ensures that all members of staff have clear information about the budget and expenditure. There is full implementation of the recommendations in the latest audit report. The governing body compares standards with those of other schools and targets spending well to raise standards. The application of the principles of best value is good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

62. The number and qualifications of teachers and support staff are good and meet the demands of the curriculum. All staff understand their role within the team and co-ordinate areas of responsibility effectively. In recognition, the school met the 'Investor in People' standard in March 2000. The school gives good support to pupils with special educational needs and deploys learning support assistants well. As a result, pupils make good progress. The school has taken over successfully the management of its school meals and cleaning services. The school also shares effectively the role and responsibilities of caretaker. Pupils enjoy a hot meal and a clean school; this contributes to an appropriate learning environment. The administration of the school ensures the smooth day-to-day running of the school and supports financial management effectively. The school has shifted from staff appraisal to performance management. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Newly-qualified teachers are well supported by induction tutors, leading mathematics and literacy teachers and mentors, and team colleagues. They are encouraged to attend courses and receive good guidance and training from the school. As a result, they are reflective about their teaching and confident in the support provided. The school has experienced a high turnover of staff in the last two years, but is addressing the induction of all staff effectively.
63. The quality of accommodation is satisfactory. The governors, headteacher and staff effectively delegate site care and maintenance duties and are active in assessing the use and safety of the premises. Outside agencies and a wealth of volunteer support from governors have resulted in improvements since the last inspection. For example, a new library has been located in a kitchen conversion and partitioning has created an effective teaching space for small group work. Cloakroom space is limited and the school is aware of the cramped conditions. The spacious outdoor area is zoned effectively for playing during break and lunch. New benches have been located on a patio area, providing a quiet location in which to meet. The grounds are used successfully for physical education and the outdoor swimming pool provides the opportunity for all pupils to learn to swim. The governors are active in seeking support from the local education authority to improve the quality of accommodation. This has resulted in a decision to reduce the size of the school meals kitchen to create additional space and a decision to improve disabled access. The use of carpeting and blinds in classrooms creates attractive learning environments. The school uses the design of the building well to locate year groups together, which effectively supports teamwork and the teaching of sets.
64. Educational resources across the curriculum are satisfactory. The new library is well stocked with adequate fiction and non-fiction books. A teaching assistant is assigned to the weekly care of the library. As a result, the area is open at lunchtime and effective guidance is given to support pupils' choice of books. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Learning resources are located appropriately in the year-group areas. A good selection of reading materials is accessible to pupils, supporting their reading development. New mathematics resources are stored in each block to include a useful range of equipment, books and teaching materials. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The school has an ICT-suite and a computer in each classroom. However, classroom-based computers are not always used consistently.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

65. In order to raise standards and improve the quality of education, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
- (1) in mathematics, improve the quality of teachers' planning for more-able pupils to ensure that they are consistently challenged in their learning; (paragraphs 3, 19, 31, 78 and 85)
 - (2) improve the consistency of pupils' handwriting and presentation skills by rigorous monitoring of the school's handwriting policy and improving the consistency of teachers' marking; (paragraphs 25, 49, 72 and 78)
 - (3) improve the quality of communication with parents, particularly with regard to information on how well their children are learning. (paragraphs 51, 53 and 54)

In addition, the governing body may wish to include the following for possible inclusion in its action plan:

- improve the quality of the daily act of collective worship by including more opportunities for pupils to listen to music and to sing; (paragraphs 27 and 38)
- improve the consistency of teachers' expectations that pupils should apply their literacy skills when writing in other subjects. (paragraph 28)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	71
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	45

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	3	14	35	19	0	0	0
Percentage	4	20	49	27	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	304
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	32

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	38

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.7
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	42	37	79

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	30	28	36
	Girls	34	30	34
	Total	64	58	70
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (74)	73 (74)	89 (86)
	National	75 (75)	73 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	28	32	33
	Girls	30	36	34
	Total	58	68	67
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (81)	86 (75)	85 (87)
	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	4
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	0
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	283
Any other minority ethnic group	14

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	1	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	3	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: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	25

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	155

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	600,482
Total expenditure	599,485
Expenditure per pupil	1,868
Balance brought forward from previous year	23,070
Balance carried forward to next year	24,067

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	9
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	9
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.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 28.6%

Number of questionnaires sent out

304

Number of questionnaires returned

87

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	43	50	5	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	32	55	7	5	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	29	55	12	1	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	10	53	26	10	1
The teaching is good.	36	54	5	2	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	20	39	34	6	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	46	36	13	5	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	45	49	0	3	3
The school works closely with parents.	21	40	31	7	1
The school is well led and managed.	30	45	13	7	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	32	51	6	3	8
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	10	42	34	7	7

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

ENGLISH

66. By the age of 11, standards in English are above average. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in all aspects of the subject. Standards are good as a result of high quality teaching and the effective management of the subject by the enthusiastic co-ordinator who, in addition, is a leading literacy teacher. There is no significant difference between the standards achieved by boys and girls.
67. Pupils make particularly good progress in their speaking and listening skills. Throughout the school, they are confident in initiating discussions. During the inspection, pupils readily engaged in discussions with inspectors, particularly during lunch, by asking questions, such as, 'Do you like being an inspector?' or 'Do you go to many schools?' and 'What do you think of our school so far?' In lessons, pupils are confident in responding to teachers' questions and in sharing their work with the rest of the class in the plenary or final session. Pupils are confident in asking questions; for example, in a Year 5 writing lesson when the teacher was reading a story, a pupil asked, 'What does the word 'rouse' mean?' Listening skills are good usually because teachers make lesson introductions exciting and stimulating, particularly when reading stories or giving explanations. Pupils follow instructions sensibly. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are particularly strong in paired and small group work. For example, in physical education lessons when pupils plan paired sequences of movement there is a high quality discussion, with pupils really prepared to listen to and value each other's opinions.
68. Progress in reading is good. Pupils enjoy reading quietly to themselves and to an audience. For example, in Year 6, pupils settle to quiet individual reading in the period before registration and many are totally absorbed in their books. In Year 4, pupils are confident in reading a passage from the 'Big Book' to the rest of the class and in reading their own work. Reading skills are good; pupils read accurately, fluently and with good expression. They are confident in explaining the difference between 'fiction' and 'non-fiction' and are very aware of the terms 'author', 'illustrator', 'publisher', 'index', 'contents' and 'glossary'. Pupils give reasons for why they like a particular book or author; for example, 'I like the 'Harry Potter' books by J K Rowling because I like magic and adventure' or 'I prefer non-fiction books. I am really interested in discovering new scientific facts'. Pupils talk confidently about the plot and characters and show good recall of the story so far. They make realistic and well thought out predictions of what might happen next in a story. Pupils apply their reading skills successfully in other subjects and are confident in using reference books, CD-ROMs and the Internet when researching information.
69. In writing, pupils make good progress, particularly in the use of spelling, grammar and punctuation. In many lessons, pupils use a dictionary and/or a thesaurus as a matter of course, needing no prompt from their teacher. By Year 6, pupils mainly use paragraphs and speech marks correctly. They know when and how to use exclamation marks and question marks. Pupils apply successfully these skills when writing in other subjects, including work which is word-processed.
70. Pupils enjoy writing for a range of purposes and for different audiences. The quality of factual and imaginative writing is of a high standard. In Year 3, pupils write letters to 'Santa' and show good skills in retelling familiar stories, for example 'Little Red Riding Hood'. In Year 4, pupils write imaginative poems in the Japanese style of Haiku and produce interesting play scripts of the story of 'Rumpelstiltskin'. In Year 5, pupils show good examples of writing instructions, for example 'How to make a friendly dragon'. They

write imaginative stories for younger children, including 'The Day Kitty Got Lost'. In Year 6, pupils show a good understanding of how to write biographies and autobiographies, with good evidence of drafting and redrafting their work. The quality of imaginative writing is particularly good; for example, in a Year 6 lesson on writing paragraphs one pupil wrote the following as her introductory paragraph on the subject of a theatre:

'After a century it still hasn't lost its splendour. From the outside the grand building looms up ahead and even looks like a castle with big red banners showing what's on next. Lovely brick turrets lined with black fading bricks still look spectacular even though they have started to crumble. As you enter through the whirling doors and the sound of quiet chatter hits your ears, you tread on the luxurious patterned carpet and gaze with admiration at the glass ornaments and carved woodwork. After looking at such masterpieces you enter the enormous hall with thousands of glamorous velvet red chairs on every side of you. You stare with amazement at the extravagant chandeliers with its hundreds of crystals shining down on you and you sit down with wonder on a comfortable chair'.⁴

71. Pupils have good opportunities to write in other subjects, including the use of word processing. For example, in Year 5, pupils write detailed accounts of life as an evacuee in World War 2. They show good skills in combining historical research, accurate spelling and punctuation, with good word-processing skills. In Year 6, pupils produce good word-processed work on the 'Story of a River'. Pupils use desk-top publishing techniques creatively to produce 'newspapers', for example showing how pupils in the school raised funds for 'Red Nose Day'.
72. In the specific skills of handwriting and presentation, progress is more variable. Although they are taught and expected to use joined-up handwriting, pupils are inconsistent in this mainly because teachers are not sufficiently rigorous in reinforcing the school's handwriting policy. In addition, pupils use a range of writing implements in lessons, including pencils and biro, when the school's policy is for the use of fibre-tip pens or cartridge/fountain pens.
73. Pupils enjoy their literacy lessons and work hard because they are involved and interested in their own learning. Teachers share the lesson objective with pupils and, in addition, pupils have their own personal learning targets. In lessons, they work with good application and concentration and they produce good work in the time allowed. Pupils enjoy working together; for example, in Year 5 a group worked successfully on writing the beginning of a 'fable' story, with the teacher acting as their scribe. Within a short time, pupils produced the following story opening:

One day, in a sunny jungle, there was a parrot. Suddenly, a great rumble blasted out of the trees, because a herd of elephants was charging away from poachers! The parrot was really startled, so she took flight through the swaying trees and burst out of the rainforest canopy into the cloudless sky.

As she was flying so fast, her eyes became blurry and she crashed painfully into a tree! Luckily a human was walking below the tree and she fell at his feet, but sadly her wing was broken'.

74. The teaching of literacy is good, with nearly 40 per cent of lessons observed very good or excellent; this has a significant impact on the high standards achieved. Teachers are enthusiastic and confident in their teaching and this is reflected in the pupils' very positive attitudes in lessons. Lesson introductions are a significant strength, with teachers showing very good skills in explaining and demonstrating. Teachers' reading skills are a

⁴ By Caroline Davies, Year 6, reproduced here with her permission.

very good model for pupils as they read with good expression which captures the attention of pupils. In Year 6, the teacher's reading of an extract from 'The Silver Sword' had pupils totally absorbed and enthralled. In lessons, expectations are high and pupils are challenged with effective questioning, for example 'What's the new subject that's been introduced into this paragraph?' Pupils are given clear instructions for their work, including the amount of time allowed; for example, 'You have 20 minutes to continue your story in the style of the story of 'Lazy Jack''. As a result, pupils work exceptionally hard and quietly and produce work of a high standard.

75. Teachers use resources effectively to support pupils' learning; there is a strong expectation that pupils should use dictionaries. Teachers make good use of learning support assistants to support pupils with special educational needs, which leads to these pupils taking a full part in the lesson and making good progress.
76. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. As a leading literacy teacher, the co-ordinator sets an excellent example both to colleagues and to pupils in her own love of and enthusiasm for the subject. The monitoring and recording of pupils' progress as they move up through the school are good. Library provision has improved since the previous inspection and pupils use the school library regularly to change their books and to research information. In addition, many use local libraries.
77. The co-ordinator, supported by the deputy headteacher, runs a successful extra-curricular poetry club after school on Tuesdays. This is attended by 16 pupils, with an equal mix of boys and girls. The club extends pupils' interest in poetry and gives them the opportunity to read poems of their own choice and to write poetry. During the inspection, pupils enjoyed writing limericks and 'nonsense' poems. One pupil was sufficiently motivated by Roald Dahl's anthology of 'Revolting Rhymes' that she wrote in the club and at home, the same evening, her own 17-verse version of 'Cinderella' in Dahl's style. As a flavour the first four verses are:

*'Once, in fairy tale land
There stood a house, big, tall and grand.
In this house there were two girls,
One had straight hair, one had curls.*

*They worked another girl fair hard
The only gave her bread and lard.
This girl they worked, they nicknamed Cinders,
She cleaned, she cooked, she washed the winders.*

*Soon, an invitation came for all,
The prince was giving a grand ball.
The king wanted him to find a bride,
Before he popped his clogs and died.*

*The sisters shrieked with pure delight,
This gave poor Cinderella a Fright!
They squeezed themselves into their best clothes,
They wiggled their fat bottoms and posed'.⁵*

⁵ By Katherine Savage, Year 5

MATHEMATICS

78. By the end of Year 6, standards in mathematics are average. This was also the finding of the last inspection. A decline in standards from well above average to average, as shown in the results of the National Curriculum assessments over the last three years, has focused the school on raising standards. The main factors that impact on standards not being above average are:

- a lack of suitably matched work to challenge the most able;
- inconsistent marking and feedback to pupils about what to do to improve;
- a lack of high and consistent expectations of how pupils should present their work;
- insufficient opportunities across the school for pupils to apply their learning to problem solving; this was a weakness in the last inspection.

79. The school is active in addressing the raising of standards by putting in place the following:

Ways of raising standards:	The impact of these actions on standards :
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting across the school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partly addressing the issue of matching work to pupils' ability
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysing pupils' test papers to find out strengths and weaknesses in learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping teachers to plan appropriate work and set targets for improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sampling children's work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracking progress and identifying strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving teaching by giving teachers feedback about their teaching and areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making the three-part lesson effective across the school

80. There is no significant variation in the standards achieved between boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and are well supported by learning support assistants in lessons. For example, in Year 6 the quality of interaction between the teacher and teaching assistant promotes high levels of motivation, interest and enthusiasm. Individual learning needs are recorded and work is well matched to pupils' ability. Across the school, in the below-average sets, planning is detailed and effective questioning encourages pupils to participate fully in the lesson. Teaching consistently makes reference to basic skills. For example, in Year 3, pupils count in tens from any given two-digit number. In Year 4, pupils play the game 'Feed the Crocodile' by reading numbers and deciding whether they are 'more than' or 'less than' a given number.

81. Progress in number work is consistently good throughout the school for the following reasons.

- Each lesson begins with a mental warm-up that promotes mental arithmetic. In Year 5, pupils multiply numbers by 10 and 100 with increasing confidence, applying doubling and halving methods. In Year 4, pupils add two numbers together using their knowledge of making 10. They recall '4+6=10' and '40+60=100' quickly and confidently.

- Each lesson builds on previous learning, which promotes an understanding of numbers. In Year 3, a lesson on giving change from one pound followed on from work on counting forwards and backwards in tens to 100. In Year 6, work on the use of the 'commutative law', using the same numbers but changing the operation, built on from simple calculations to decimal calculations.
 - Each lesson is delivered in three parts, the mental warm-up, the main activity and the plenary. This promotes whole-class teaching on a common theme and encourages pupils to participate throughout the lesson in mathematical thinking. In Year 3, counting in tens leads on to a money game. Pupils are actively engaged in mental addition and subtraction using coins, which enables them to work out the required change. The plenary, at the end of the lesson, is used effectively in all sets to discuss the strategies employed by pupils and clarify teaching points.
 - Teachers across the school teach pupils effective methods for working out calculations. In Year 5, pupils solved word problems by using and applying a sequence of small steps to include extracting key words, estimating, calculating and checking the answer. As a result, pupils work methodically and successfully. In Year 4, pupils solve 'magic square' grids quickly and accurately as a result of applying the method taught by the teacher.
82. Progress in shape, space and measures is good. In Year 6, pupils understand the properties, position and movement of shapes. They identify and measure obtuse, acute and right angles. They understand symmetry and recognise where a shape will be after reflection and translation. In Year 5, pupils calculate and measure the perimeter and area of shapes. In Year 4, pupils estimate and measure shapes using centimetres. They use information and communication technology skills successfully to extend shape work and link this to art and work on repeated patterns. In Year 3, pupils use standard and non-standard measures to estimate and record area. They successfully use a grid to draw and estimate area. They know the properties of two- and three-dimensional shapes.
83. Progress in data handling is satisfactory. Data handling across the school is linked effectively with other subjects. In design and technology, pupils in Years 3 and 5 make tally charts and block graphs to illustrate favourite foods. In Year 4, links with literacy enabled pupils to interpret a range of graphs and statistics in non-fiction books. This led to pupils constructing their own charts to support research skills. In Year 6, the use of information and communication technology is instrumental in supporting the presentation of a range of graphs showing average findings to include the 'mean', 'mode' and 'median'. The planning of data handling within the strategy often leaves little time for this area of mathematics to be taught thoroughly. Consequently, evidence of data handling ranged from communicating, representing and interpreting, with little reference to using and applying data handling in problem solving.
84. The quality of teaching is good and sometimes very good to excellent, and makes a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils work co-operatively and industriously, showing the ability for sustained concentration. They are well motivated and enthusiastic about mathematics. Good and better teaching includes:
- high expectations of pupil behaviour, particularly in Years 5 and 6, which ensure that pupils work hard and enjoy mathematics. Tom, in Year 4, said 'I love maths' after persevering with an addition calculation and winning the game;
 - opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively. For example, in Years 3 and 4, the effective use of games promotes confidence and enables pupils to learn from each

other. In Year 6, pupils work together and apply long and short 'partitioning' to multiplication calculations. This motivates pupils to work in support of each other and, in competition, to see who gets the right answer first;

- an emphasis on speaking and listening throughout the lesson. Pupils are expected to talk about the strategies they use to work out mathematical calculations. This promotes understanding and the successful use of strategies. In Year 4, pupils talk about 'rounding up' and 'adjusting' numbers to make it easier to 'hold them in their head';
- effective questioning that maintains a brisk pace to the lesson. The effect of constant questioning allows the teacher to assess understanding and enables pupils to actively participate in the lesson. In Year 6, good teacher questioning in the warm up resulted in pupils using inverse operations to check work, for example '0.75 times 4 = 3' so '3 divided by 4 = 0.75'. The pace of questioning maintains pupils' interest and promotes sustained concentration.

85. The impact of such good teaching on raising standards is not currently evident due to the high turnover of staff in the last two years and the lack of rigorous and systematic matching of work to challenge the most able. The school is working effectively to induct new staff and is aware of the need to make provision for the most able during the daily mathematics lesson.
86. The co-ordinator for mathematics is effective in knowing the needs of the school. As a leading mathematics teacher herself, she has a clear understanding of the three-part lesson and has been very successful in embedding the structure throughout the school through training and monitoring. She works hard to analyse performance data and uses this to assess the pupils' strengths and weaknesses. The organisation of sets and the 'Booster' and 'Springboard' groups are effective ways of supporting learning. New resources are now in place and are adequate and used effectively. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

SCIENCE

87. The results of the 2001 National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 6 were close to the national average. Compared to that in schools in a similar context performance in science was below average. The proportion of pupils reaching Level 5 was below expectations.
88. The previous inspection report judged standards to be 'above national expectations'. The school recognises the need to work towards improving standards to regain this position. The school is making sound progress towards achieving this aim and standards are now judged to be average. The initiatives that have been implemented or planned include:
- ability sets for science teaching across all age groups;
 - a new scheme of work;
 - an analysis of test results to identify areas of learning in need of strengthening;
 - new assessment and tracking methods;
 - the compilation of a portfolio of pupils' assessed work;
 - specialist lessons at a local secondary school to enhance provision for the most able.

89. At the start of their time in junior school, pupils make satisfactory progress as they begin to build on their knowledge and understanding of the scientific world. For example, pupils in Year 3 develop a clear understanding of living and non-living things, recording features of items in each category. Their responses are valid, confirming their understanding. They study healthy eating, looking at both digestion and the effect of a range of foodstuffs on the body. Appropriate links are made with health education issues. In Year 4, pupils conduct experiments to discover how sound travels and how the ear receives it. They construct ear trumpets from card and evaluate the effectiveness of different shapes and sizes. They show awareness of the need to ensure 'a fair test' when deciding to exclude an example made using more than one sheet of card. They are encouraged to hypothesise, drawing upon what they already know about sound. They work in groups and with their teacher and carefully measure the distance away from the sound source for each trumpet evaluated. Working in ability groups, they decide how to record their findings. The less-able pupils are guided by their teacher and record their answers on a prepared worksheet. Pupils use correct scientific vocabulary when explaining their investigations and they reach good conclusions based on the evidence from experiments.
90. In Year 5, pupils learn about micro-organisms, living processes and the environment. They know how to observe carefully and record their work in a variety of ways, including tables, charts and diagrams. Pupils learning about food chains demonstrate good levels of knowledge and understanding when playing a game involving linking themselves as a component in the food chain with others in the group: 'I link with you because you are a predator and I am your prey!' The written work of less-able pupils occasionally demonstrates unscientific guesswork in the conclusions they draw, but careful marking ensures that misunderstandings are corrected.
91. Pupils in Year 6, learning about the effects of forces, successfully conduct experiments to investigate the effects of a range of barriers to stop a moving vehicle. A very able pupil concludes, 'Gravity is pulling the car down the ramp, but the barrier makes an opposing force'. On completion of the activity all pupils, including those with special educational needs, reach appropriate conclusions and explain their thinking. Pupils independently suggest entering results into a computer program which will give a graphical representation of data. Numeracy skills are used effectively during science lessons as pupils use a range of tables, charts and graphs to record information.
92. By the end of Year 6, pupils demonstrate a wide range of accurate knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas. They know appropriate scientific vocabulary and use it in discussing their various science activities. They interpret information from experiments, books, charts and tables and draw conclusions based on evidence. Throughout the school, pupils extend their understanding of the principles of fair testing, but in some of the younger classes teachers direct much of the work and pupils have few opportunities to select materials or equipment and devise for themselves tests that require controls and variables. As a result, progress is constrained, particularly for the more-able pupils. Insufficient attention is paid to the development of literacy when pupils record their work in science. Teachers do not always take the opportunity to reinforce the teaching of basic literacy skills and when marking books occasionally ignore errors in Standard English.
93. Both boys and girls have a good attitude towards science, which has a positive effect on progress. They listen carefully and work together purposefully to conduct practical investigations. They share resources, equipment and materials with care. This means that lesson time is used efficiently and good use is made of learning opportunities.

94. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was good. Lessons are thoroughly planned in line with the new scheme of work. Joint planning across ability sets within year groups ensures that pupils cover the same areas of learning. Teachers have high but realistic expectations, display personal enthusiasm and good subject knowledge and assess progress carefully, using the new assessment and tracking package introduced this year. Skilful use of questioning and discussion enables teachers to retain the involvement of pupils of all abilities and assess progress within lessons. The effectiveness of some lessons is reduced when pupils are required to record on the basis of teacher direction and they have insufficient opportunities to make their own decisions about how an investigation could be conducted.
95. The organisation and management of science are good. The co-ordinator is an enthusiastic advocate for the subject and gives strong and effective leadership in promoting science throughout the school. He has devised a clear policy statement and a comprehensive new scheme of work, and implemented a new assessment model which includes tracking of individual pupils' attainment. A portfolio of work matched to the levels pupils are expected to achieve in the National Curriculum is in preparation. Firm plans have been made for additional classes to take place in the local secondary school for those pupils who will benefit from advanced work. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to identify areas of weakness in learning by analysing errors in practice tests which will take place shortly. Resources for science are good and meet the needs of the planned curriculum. They are well organised and maintained.

ART AND DESIGN

96. Standards in art are satisfactory. During the inspection, no art lessons were observed due to the organisation of the school timetable. The evidence used and evaluations made are based upon discussion, display and work scrutiny. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, have the same opportunities to achieve in class and make adequate progress. There are no significant differences between boys' and girls' achievement. The scheme of work for art and design is timetabled in half-term blocks alternating with design and technology. This ensures that an appropriate range of art and design experiences are provided. Cross-curriculum links are used effectively, particularly as art and design features in all technology projects. For example, in Year 3 the 'purse' project enables pupils to use colour and pattern to decorate purses. In Year 5, pupils show good skills when they design a company logo using art and design skills.
97. Pupils make satisfactory progress. They use a range of media to good effect, including paint, pastels, pencils and collage. Pupils explore and develop ideas from direct observation and use sketchbooks to record drawings. Examples in the portfolio show detailed and well-formed observational drawings, using pencil and watercolours, of flowers and plants. The consistent application of information and communication technology in design is not made full use of across the school. However, in Year 4, pupils use computer-generated pictures to create patterns linked to work in mathematics on repeating patterns. A range of work in Year 5 shows the effective use of craft and design linked to a topic about the Egyptians. Pupils make the mask of Osiris and Tutankhamun's headdress using card and paper skilfully. Pupils use their knowledge of Egyptian colour and design to decorate costumes and neck bands and apply effectively the hieroglyphic alphabet to create interesting and eye-catching designs. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of artists and designers from a range of cultures and periods are good, for example Indian art and the making of Rangoli patterns.
98. Teachers use the work of artists effectively as starting points for investigation, which promotes an understanding of how different media are used. For example, in Year 3 pupils understand primary and secondary colours developed through the work of

Kandinsky. As a result, they made vibrant abstract pictures using paint and collage. In Year 4, the impressionist painter Monet is used to encourage pupils to use line and colour in their own work. This promotes a range of paintings in the style of Monet to be painted using different brush strokes. A collaborative arts project between Theale Green Community School, Calcot Junior and Newbury Contemporary Dance Company combined the performing of expressive arts together successfully. It resulted in a series of imaginative paintings based on the theme of 'Reach for the Stars'. This work is displayed in Year 6 and shows an impressive use of colour and pattern.

99. The co-ordination of this subject is unsatisfactory and lacks a thoughtful and consistent approach to monitoring and evaluation across the school. Display in the school shows a range of subjects, but many of these are adult-led and used as teaching aids. Not enough emphasis is placed on the display of actual art and design work composed by the children. Examples of work show that many pupils have good ability. Some observational drawings and paintings show a confident application of the media. Opportunities for these pupils to work independently and express their own ideas are not planned into the scheme of work. This was an area for development highlighted in the last inspection.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

100. Standards are satisfactory by the end of Year 6 and pupils, including those with special educational needs, make steady progress. Boys and girls achieve equally well. Pupils make sufficient gains in knowledge, skills and understanding as they move through the school. By Year 6, pupils are engaged in projects that require the full range of skills to include art and design work. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
101. A detailed scheme of work supports teachers' planning effectively and ensures that a variety of experiences are provided across the school, for example food technology in Years 3 and 5, work with fabrics in Year 4 and structures in Year 6. As a result, progress throughout the school is satisfactory. Pupils develop, plan and communicate their ideas systematically by producing sketches and drawing plans. Pupils are encouraged to think about materials, the sequence of making and any aesthetic qualities intended to make the product attractive and useful. For example, in Year 3, pupils design picture frames paying particular attention to the aesthetic qualities of the frame and the use of a range of materials from feathers to sequins and dried flowers. In Year 6, pupils develop good ideas through a series of plans showing the dimensions, location and side elevations of shelters. In Year 5, pupils were effectively engaged in a 'Biscuit Making Company' incorporating marketing, advertising and packaging. The planning stages of this extended topic supported effectively pupils' thinking and time management.
102. Pupils work successfully with a range of tools and components to include cutting and joining materials like scissors, glues and threads. The use of a sewing machine was effectively employed as pupils in Year 6 added interiors to their shelters. Opportunities for evaluating products are linked to pupils' knowledge and understanding of how effective the materials and components had been. The emphasis on speaking, listening and group work in lessons encourages discussion and often results in pupils making adjustments to designs. For example, in Year 6, the 'Anderson Shelters' had to be 'strong and habitable'. The structures of frames and the covering materials were written about in books with reference made to the difficulties related to strength, comfort and disguise. Pupils noted, 'We added paper to make it stronger' and 'We put grass on the top but it was untidy'. Information and communication technology is not used consistently or effectively throughout the year groups.

103. Only three lessons were seen during the inspection, but from this evidence, combined with the work sample and portfolio of pupils' previous work, teaching is judged to be satisfactory. Effective planning is based on previous learning and the appropriate sequencing of lessons ensures that all pupils make sound progress. Teachers explain and instruct clearly and this enables pupils to understand the purpose and use of the design. Teachers encourage paired and group work that promotes co-operation and teamwork. For example, in Years 5 and 6 the biscuit making and shelter making are collaborative projects. Market research is used effectively to support design work and make valuable links with other subjects, for example history and the use of mathematics in data handling. Pupils enjoy design and technology and work well together. They listen to the teacher and each other and talk about their ideas enthusiastically. The effective use of learning support assistants encourages pupils to succeed and promotes confidence when they talk about their work.
104. The recently appointed co-ordinator is active in monitoring and evaluating the work taking place across the year groups. Through working alongside colleagues, the co-ordinator is effective in assessing resources and the suitability of the scheme of work set in place since the last inspection. This is an improvement since the last inspection. A portfolio of photographic evidence from each year group has been collated to include a range of examples from each level. Teachers use this to support the assessment of work and ensure that links with other subjects are made, with resources carefully matched to each topic.

GEOGRAPHY

105. The standards reached by 11-year-olds are satisfactory and similar to those found in the last inspection. Pupils develop geographical skills by recording their observations after visits in the local area. They understand the relationship of distances and give clear directions, for example 'Over the motorway bridge, and about three miles up the road'. They build on previous studies of the area to comment on the way places have changed; for instance, by increasing traffic and the demise of the traditional local manufacturing industries in textiles, biscuit making and the production of agricultural equipment. Pupils later broaden their understanding to study the wider world.
106. Geography is integrated well with other curriculum subjects. For example, in Year 5 the geography of the modern River Nile is linked with historical study of the Ancient Egyptians and in Year 3 a study of weather systems links with science and mathematics as pupils make measurements and record results. A school journey to Ross-on-Wye facilitates work on comparing and contrasting environments within the United Kingdom.
107. Pupils in Year 6 know how to identify key features on blank maps, for example seas and mountains, and they have an understanding of scale. On a world map they identify the exact location of areas they have studied, such as the island of St Lucia in the Caribbean. They describe features of the island, such as the beaches, the volcano and the tropical rainforest, and have a sound knowledge of the lifestyle of the local population. They discuss differences between a tropical environment and their own, including what grows there, what farms produce, animals and insects that live there and features of the climate. By Year 6, pupils, including those with special educational needs, use geographical vocabulary independently. For instance, in a lesson about rivers all pupils discussed the route of a river, noting the source, meanders, ox-bow lakes and tributaries.
108. The teaching of geography is good. Since the last inspection the long-term plans for geography have been revised and a new scheme of work has been developed. This ensures that pupils make progress in developing skills and concepts, building effectively on what has already been covered. These are significant factors in the positive effects there are on pupils' learning. Questioning individual pupils in class and the marking of

homework are used to assess pupils' understanding and meet their needs. Pupils who have special educational needs progress as well as others because they are given effective support by learning assistants or the teacher. Planning for geography lessons includes relevant and meaningful practical activities, such as the measurement of temperature, wind direction and rainfall over several days. Information and communication technology is used to supplement the resources for geography and pupils describe how they use the Internet to research topics for homework. Pupils display enthusiasm and interest as they work on their geography topics.

109. The management and co-ordination of geography are satisfactory. A good range of resources are available and have been well organised by the co-ordinator. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to further enhance the provision of suitable reference material for research and investigation using information and communication technology, as funds become available.

HISTORY

110. The amount of evidence available during the week of the inspection was limited to an analysis of work in books and on display, photographic records and discussions with pupils. No history teaching was seen during the inspection, so no detailed judgements can be made about the quality of teaching.
111. Standards of work seen and the level of knowledge and understanding displayed by pupils are satisfactory and consistent with expectations for their age. This represents a fall in standards since the last inspection. The decline in standards is a result of the combining of time for the teaching of geography and history due to pressure on the timetable. This means that history disappears from the timetable for half a term or a term at a time, interrupting the development of the skills of historical research and understanding, and reducing the time spent teaching the subject.
112. Pupils throughout the school study the past in a variety of contexts. They learn about Greek, Roman and Egyptian civilisations, and in doing so develop an understanding of why these societies were different and why the people lived as they did. A visiting historian organised an event known as 'Roman Day' in which pupils were encouraged to dress in togas and enjoy Roman-style food. Similarly, in Year 5, pupils benefited from an 'Egyptian Day'. They also study developments in Great Britain over time, and compare life in the Victorian times with that in Tudor England. Visits to the local museum, a Victorian school and Ufton Court supplement the curriculum and give an additional dimension to pupils' learning through presenting opportunities for them to examine history through primary sources.
113. In Year 6, pupils study World War 2 and compare life in the 1940-1945 period with the way it is now. The change in the role of women is highlighted and the lives of evacuee children are contrasted with those who remained in London during 'The Blitz'. Pupils consider thoughtfully the lifestyle changes between then and now, and the influence of World War 2 in bringing them about.
114. Pupils demonstrate a sound knowledge of the methods of historical research used by historians to establish facts about the past. They know about archaeology, carbon dating and document-based research. They cite the Internet, textbooks, electronic encyclopaedias and museums as sources for their own historical research. They show enthusiasm for history and both boys and girls are confident in discussing their learning. The books in most classes show examples of careful presentation and neat illustration. In some classes, the work of lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs is less well presented due to lower-level literacy skills.

115. Teachers in each year group plan together and devise lessons drawn from the new scheme of work. This ensures that all pupils cover the same work. Teachers maintain some records, but the assessment and recording of progress and attainment are not well developed.
116. The subject co-ordinator is effective in her role. Since the last inspection the scheme of work for history has been rewritten. This represents an improvement in the provision for the subject. Resources for history, including a range of artefacts, are adequate and information and communications technology is used to supplement printed resources.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

117. By the end of Year 6, standards meet national expectations. There is no significant variation between the standards achieved by boys and girls. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in their learning.
118. Pupils have good opportunities to use and apply their literacy skills, particularly in word processing and using desk-top publishing programs. The correct use of punctuation, including paragraphs and speech marks, is a strong feature of pupils' work in Year 5 and Year 6. Pupils show good skills in word processing, including editing and spell-checking their work. They combine text, borders and clip-art effectively when presenting their work. There are good examples of writing linked to the study of the Second World War in Year 5 and to the study of rivers in Year 6. Links with numeracy are satisfactory, with pupils in Years 3 and 4 creating their own databases of factual information, for example of pupils' heights and weights. In Years 5 and 6, pupils make satisfactory progress in the use of spreadsheets to calculate formulae. They create good 'newspaper style' front pages, for example, showing how pupils in the school raised funds for 'Red Nose Day'.
119. By the end of Year 6, pupils are secure in the key skills of 'logging on' and 'logging off' on the school's network; they know how to load, save and print their work. They are successful in sending e-mails and logging on to the Internet. Pupils and parents are very aware of the school's Internet access policy and the school's network does not allow pupils to access any unsuitable websites. In one lesson observed, pupils in Year 6 were quick and confident in accessing the BBC website to get the local weather forecast for Reading for the next day in response to the teacher's question, 'Will it be raining when we have games tomorrow?' In the same lesson, pupils made good progress in assessing the quality of webpages for 'text', 'graphics' and 'animation' in preparation for future lessons when they will be making their own multi-media pages. Currently, there are fewer opportunities for pupils to work in the aspect of control and modelling, but the co-ordinator's action plan addresses this aspect.
120. Teaching in the lessons observed during the inspection was good, particularly in whole-class information and communication technology lessons. Teachers' confidence has improved as the result of the successful completion of NOF (New Opportunities Funding) training. There is more inconsistency across the school in the use of classroom-based computers to support pupils' learning in other subjects. In good lessons, teachers show confidence and good subject knowledge, which are enthusiastically passed on to pupils. As a result, pupils enjoy learning, with a significant strength being the quality of discussion between pupils when, for example, they are planning a database or evaluating a website.
121. The subject is managed effectively by a dedicated, hard working and knowledgeable co-ordinator. There is a detailed policy in place. The school has adopted the QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) scheme of work, but it has been adapted to

meet the needs of each year group within the school. The co-ordinator has worked hard to overcome reliability problems with the school's network. He has a strong vision for the future of the subject and recognises the areas for development, including maximising the use of the school's 'ICT-Suite' and an annual program for updating hardware and software.

MUSIC

122. Standards in music exceed expectations for most 11-year-old pupils. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection. The new subject leader is continuing to maintain high standards and pupils' interest and enthusiasm. The scheme of work covers all elements of the National Curriculum for music. It provides clear support and guidance for teachers. This ensures that the pupils continue to develop step-by-step progress in learning and acquiring musical skills and knowledge. During the week of the inspection there was no music or singing in the school assemblies. This limits the opportunities for pupils to appreciate music and to sing as a school community. Work in lessons makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development.
123. Throughout the school, pupils achieve high standards in singing. They sing enthusiastically, melodically and with clear enjoyment. In Year 5, pupils sing songs from the 'Beatles' confidently and accurately. All pupils have ample opportunities to develop their composing skills. The teacher encourages them to listen to contrasting pieces of music and compose pieces that reflect different moods. They evaluate their own and others' compositions and suggest ways to improve. The teacher constantly reminds the pupils to think of suitable adjectives to describe the feelings that the music evokes. This makes a positive contribution to pupils' literacy skills and develops their understanding of how composers create mood. Standards improve steadily from Year 3 to Year 6. The school makes effective use of the specialist skills of a visiting pianist and specialist instrumental teachers. This ensures that pupils receive consistently good provision. Most pupils reach above-average levels of attainment in singing, performing and composing because of the emphasis on teaching musical skills and techniques. The recently formed recorder club develops further pupils' skills of instrumental playing and the ability to read music.
124. All the pupils are enthusiastic about their work, behave and concentrate well and enjoy their music lessons. They listen attentively to each other and their teachers and show a lot of respect for each other's efforts. Pupils in all classes have high levels of perseverance and work hard to produce work of good quality. There is a very effective level of support for pupils with special educational needs. This enables them to make good progress in developing musical skills and knowledge. They work confidently and achieve standards similar to those of their classmates. The school ensures that all pupils have opportunities to play a musical instrument and that there is no financial disadvantage.
125. The teaching of music is consistently good. This is having a significant effect on pupils' standards and learning. It confirms the findings of the previous inspection. Resources for music are readily accessible for use by staff and pupils. There is a good supply of musical instruments, books and recorded music. These increase pupils' awareness of the diversity of society by including western and non-western music. The school makes effective use of information and communication technology to support work in music. This is soon to be boosted by the provision of a music studio. Pupils in Year 6 benefit from the opportunity to take part in the 'Reading Schools Concert' and to listen to professional musicians. This gives them valuable opportunities to share their musical skills and to develop enjoyment of music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

126. By the age of 11, standards exceed expectations for pupils of this age. There is no significant variation between the standards achieved by boys and girls. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning. By the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils meet the national expectation of being able to swim 25 metres unaided.
127. Pupils apply their speaking and listening skills particularly well in physical education. In dance and gymnastics, pupils are encouraged to plan and perform sequences by working in pairs or small groups. The quality of discussion in the planning stage is of a high quality, with notable strengths in the way in which pupils listen to and value each other's opinions. This also applies when pupils have the opportunity to evaluate each other's performance.
128. Pupils across the school know the importance of a warm-up and cool-down at the start and end of lessons and understand the importance of exercise in keeping fit and healthy. In warm-ups, pupils show a good awareness of space, change of direction and working at different levels. They respond immediately to the teacher's 'stop' command and are aware of the importance of doing this for their own safety and the safety of others.
129. In dance, pupils work exceptionally hard in planning sequences of movement. In Year 3, they perform good sequences to the Beatles' song 'Hello Goodbye', in which they show opposite movements, involving repeated patterns and clear sequences of movement, including holding moments of stillness. In Year 5, in work linked to the study of the Tudors, pupils perform the dance 'Kemp's Jig' in which they show slow, graceful movements which reflect the tempo of the music. They are confident in planning and performing to Elizabethan music their own version of the 'Pavanne' dance.
130. In gymnastics, pupils in Year 4 plan and perform good sequences in which they transfer their weight from 'patches' to 'points' and link them with moments of stillness. Pupils successfully transfer floor sequences to work on the apparatus. In Year 6, pupils produce good floor sequences, involving four different types of jump. In their pairs, pupils show good use of symmetry and repeating patterns to improve the quality of their performance. They transfer these sequences to the apparatus and the quality of their work is good. They are sensible and very aware of safety when putting the apparatus out or away.
131. The quality of teaching is good and has a positive impact on the high standards achieved, especially in dance. Lessons begin with a rigorous warm-up and proceed at a good pace, with a strong emphasis on activity. Teachers give clear instructions; for example, in a Year 5 dance lesson, pupils were told, 'You will need to listen very carefully to the music. You have five minutes to plan your steps. I'll come round and help you'. During lessons, teachers move round the hall constantly praising and encouraging pupils, with a strong emphasis on improving individual skills and technique.
132. The subject is effectively managed by the co-ordinator, who has been in post since September 2001. Resources are adequate for the teaching of the subject and pupils benefit from the school's own swimming pool in the summer. Pupils have the opportunity to take part in extra-curricular activities and competitive matches in football, netball, cricket and athletics. The school holds an annual sports day which is enjoyed by parents and pupils.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

133. The school is continuing to maintain standards similar to those at the time of the previous inspection, which identified the need to improve the monitoring of pupils' progress. There has been an improvement here because the school uses the results of assessment to plan future work. It measures the progress pupils make towards the achievement levels in the locally agreed syllabus and reports on these to parents. There has been an improvement in the quality of teaching, which is now good. The newly appointed subject leader ensures that the curriculum follows the guidelines of the locally agreed syllabus. This gives all year groups enough opportunity to study different practices and beliefs in suitable depth. The careful planning provides good progress in acquiring knowledge and understanding. This, and the good teaching, ensures that pupils develop a sound understanding of different religions, cultures and beliefs.
134. By the age of 11, most of the pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of Christianity and other world religions. They identify similarities and differences between a range of religions and beliefs, such as Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism and Sikhism. The teachers ensure that all pupils have opportunities to acquire a suitable depth of understanding of the different beliefs. For example, pupils in Year 3 increase their understanding of the fact that Christians worship in many different ways. Skilful teaching ensures that the pupils respect different customs and practices and know the importance of symbols such as a cross. Teachers build carefully on pupils' experiences and understanding. This enables the pupils to develop clear thinking skills and the ability to express their thoughts clearly. An example of this is in Year 5 when pupils explain what is special to them. One girl says, 'The first is my family because without them it's like part of me missing. The other one is my Bible because I'm a Christian and I like reading it'. The analysis of work shows that by Year 6 most pupils have a clear understanding that all religions have a set of rules by which believers live. They apply this knowledge to their own code of conduct in school. Work in personal and social education lessons gives pupils time to think and reflect. This enables them to develop their own ideas about themselves, their beliefs and their religion. It makes a positive contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
135. The support for pupils with special educational needs is effective. It enables them to take a full part in religious education lessons. This makes a valuable contribution to developing self-esteem and includes all pupils in discussion. The teachers ensure that all pupils make good progress in their learning. They plan interesting work that makes pupils want to learn. The vast majority of pupils respond well to work in religious education. They value and respect the ideas and opinions of others and are confident in sharing their thoughts. There are a small, but significant, minority of pupils who become restless and do not concentrate. This slows their learning and progress. Most pupils are eager to learn and enjoy the challenge in their work. The younger pupils do not apply their writing skills very effectively to produce interesting pieces of work about religious events. The presentation of this work is careless and marking is inconsistent. The school is aware of this and is actively seeking ways to improve marking and pupils' presentation of work.
136. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers are confident in the subject and prepare their lessons carefully and thoroughly. They provide clear and specific learning objectives, share these with the pupils, and plan challenging and interesting activities. They give careful thought to providing a calm and reflective atmosphere in the classroom for the teaching of religious education. This helps pupils to think and contemplate, and makes a positive contribution to their spiritual development. The teachers ask thought provoking questions. For example, a class of Year 4 pupils is asked to think about the feelings of the injured man when the Samaritan helps him. One pupil says, 'I was grateful because I thought he was my enemy'. This lesson provokes much thoughtful reflection on the meaning of friendship. All teachers keep records of the areas of work that pupils cover

and the progress they make. The school is successful in meeting all the issues from the previous inspection.