

INSPECTION REPORT

**ROBERTSWOOD COMBINED AND NURSERY
SCHOOL**

CHALFONT ST PETER

LEA area: Buckinghamshire

Unique reference number: 110360

Headteacher: Mrs B. Kember

Reporting inspector: Peter Sudworth - 2700

Dates of inspection: March 4th-7th, 2002

Inspection number: 198519

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary with Nursery

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3-11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Denham Lane,
Chalfont St Peter
Buckinghamshire
Postcode: SL9 0EW

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Robert Taylor

Date of previous inspection: 10th November, 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2700	Peter Sudworth	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology; French; Geography; Special educational needs; Equal opportunities; English as an additional language.	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught?
9744	Peter Brown	Lay inspector		Pupils attitudes, values and personal development; How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
18524	Ann Shaw	Team inspector	Music; Design and technology.	
21910	Gordon Longton	Team inspector	Science; Physical education; Religious education.	
22669	Tom Prosser	Team inspector	Mathematics; History.	How well is the school led and managed?
28007	Fiona Ruddick	Team inspector	English; Art and design.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
2749	Gay Wilkinson	Team inspector	Foundation Stage.	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Robertswood Combined and Nursery School is situated in a semi-rural residential area about half a mile from the centre of Chalfont St Peter. There are 435 boys and girls on roll aged between three and 11 years, including 78 part-time children in the Foundation Stage. The school is two-form entry, representing an increase in admissions since the last inspection when it was one and a half form entry. The school's catchment has also changed since the last inspection and includes a higher proportion of pupils with special needs. Whilst most of the pupils who attend live in Chalfont St Peter, the school draws from a wide area. Thirty per cent of the pupils come from outside the school's traditional catchment area. Most pupils are of white United Kingdom origin but about one-tenth of the pupils are of different European or other ethnic groups. Thirteen of the school's pupils speak English as an additional language and three are at an early stage of learning English. About 20 per cent of the pupils are on the special needs register, about the national average, and include several pupils in the Nursery. Of these, 25 pupils have more complex learning difficulties, including five who have statements. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below the national average. Few pupils change schools during the academic year, although several more change schools at the end of academic years. Eight pupils joined and 12 pupils left the school during the course of the last academic year. The school caters for a small number of travellers. Two were on roll at the time of the inspection. Most of the children who attend the Nursery transfer to the main school and they commence the Reception class part-time until the beginning of the term after their fifth birthday. Attainment on entry to both the Nursery and the Reception class is above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Robertswood Combined and Nursery School is a good school in many respects with some significant strengths but pupils' progress is slower in Years 1 and 2 overall. Standards in English, mathematics and science are above expectations by the end of Year 6. Parents are very involved in the life of the school and show much interest in their children's education. The quality of teaching is good overall but best in Years 5 and 6 where pupils make very good progress. The leadership and management of the school are both good. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, history, physical education and religious education are above expectations by age 11;
- The quality of teaching in Years 5 and 6 enables pupils to make very good progress in these classes.
- Pupils' attitudes to school, attendance, their relationships with one another and the good level of behaviour help to foster a good learning atmosphere.
- The leadership and management of the school, including the work of the governing body, give the school a clear sense of purpose and direction.
- The school's links with parents and the parental support for their children and the school contribute to the progress which the pupils make.
- The very good provision for pupils' moral development and the good provision for pupils' social development help pupils' level of maturity.

What could be improved

- The overall quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 and pupils' achievements in mathematics, writing and science by age seven.
- A written policy for the Foundation Stage and the completion of a scheme of work.
- Record keeping systems for the foundation subjects and the use of assessment in planning work.
- The arrangements for monitoring teaching and learning.
- The arrangements for the withdrawal of special needs pupils for group tuition to ensure they do not miss their curriculum entitlement and the match of work to the needs of these children in some class lessons.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Sound progress has been made since the school was last inspected in November, 1997. Standards have improved in art and design and are now at expected levels. Current standards in Key Stage 1 in writing and mathematics standards at Key Stage 1 are not as high. The school has developed better curriculum planning systems and schemes are now in place for all subjects, although there is some confusion when pupils are withdrawn from class for special needs and they miss other important work. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is better developed. Improvements have been made in record keeping and assessment systems but further improvement is still needed and in their use. Resources for art and design, music and religious education now reach satisfactory levels. Appraisal arrangements and performance management systems have been introduced in line with government recommendations. Given the current staff the school has good potential to make further improvements.

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				Key
	All schools			Simila school	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	A	A	A	C	well above average A above average B
Mathematics	B	A	B	C	Average C below average D
Science	C	B	C	E	well below average E

By the end of the Foundation Stage the majority of children exceed the expectations for children entering Year 1 and make good progress in most aspects of their learning. Pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 reach at least the expected standard in all subjects in both key stages. Progress is best in Key Stage 2 because of the overall better quality of teaching, particularly in upper Key Stage 2 in which pupils often make very good progress. Currently standards in reading, speaking and listening, physical education and religious education are above average by ages seven and 11. Pupils speak confidently and listen politely. Writing standards are good by Year 6 and pupils write purposefully across the curriculum. Spelling and handwriting standards are good by age 11 with significant improvement in both spelling and presentation in

upper Key Stage 2 but they are variable in Years 1 and 2. Standards in design and technology and history are above expectations by Year 6. Standards in science are improving because more attention is being given to scientific investigation. Current standards in science overall reach the expected level in Year 2 but in Year 6 a significant number of pupils are expected to reach the higher level. Standards in mathematics are currently in line with expectations by the end of Year 2 which continues the comparatively weaker performance of this subject in recent years against the other tested subjects and indicates some underachievement in this aspect of work at this age. However, by age 11, pupils have made substantial gains in their skills, aided by good teaching and, on occasion, some separate provision for very able pupils, including specialised work which helps them to achieve well. The school exceeded the targets set by the Local Education Authority in 2001 for Year 6 pupils in mathematics and English in the national tests.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils show very good levels of interest in their work and they enjoy school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in class and around the school is good. The majority of pupils are courteous and polite. Pupils answer politely in class and listen to one another's points of view.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils develop a good sense of maturity and a respect for one another. Relationships amongst the pupils and between the staff and pupils are very good. Pupils are supportive of one another.
Attendance	Very good. Well above average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Satisfactory	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.

Teachers have good subject knowledge and research the lesson content effectively. They structure learning effectively and revise well on previous lessons to remind pupils of the stage of learning that has been reached. Planning of lessons is sound overall but teachers do not always consider how the needs of different groups will be met, particularly for those pupils who are not as capable. Overall insufficient use is made of assessment in lessons to plan for different needs, except for able pupils. By contrast good provision is made for pupils who have higher prior attainment in Years 3-6. The majority of teachers manage their pupils very well. They have very good relationships with them and there is mutual respect between teachers and the pupils. This gives the pupils confidence to contribute answers, to take part in discussion and to seek help when they are stuck. Lessons begin promptly and pupils settle down to work quickly in most classes. A good atmosphere is created for learning. Good use is made of resources in many lessons and these are well prepared beforehand. Teaching assistants are used purposefully in lessons. The teaching of special needs pupils in the specialist withdrawal arrangements is usually of good quality. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is sound in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. The more able pupils are not being stretched enough in mathematics in Key Stage 1 and pupils' achievements in writing could be better in Key Stage 1. Teachers make good use of homework to extend the learning throughout the school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a suitable range of curriculum coverage, which includes the teaching of French in Years 5 and 6. There is a good emphasis on English and mathematics teaching. There is some inequality of opportunity and pupils sometimes miss important aspects of work when they are withdrawn from lessons for specialised work. The provision of extra-curricular activities is good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good for pupils who have complex needs and sound in other respects. Specialist teachers and teaching assistants work with pupils who find learning difficult and they often work with small groups, although the withdrawal arrangements need refinement. The individual education plans are of good quality and are reviewed regularly in conjunction with parents. Class teachers sometimes do not plan work which is well matched to these pupils' needs and capabilities.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Sound. Teachers and teaching assistants assist the pupils with their understanding, although at times more individual attention and intervention would enable these pupils to make better progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for pupils' moral development is very good and it is good for their social development. Satisfactory provision is made for pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Record keeping and the monitoring of pupils' academic progress are satisfactory overall but assessment is not always used as effectively as it might be to inform the next stage of learning, except for pupils with complex learning needs.

Links with parents and parents' support for the school are considerable strengths. A significant number of parents are volunteer helpers in school. The parent body raises considerable sums of money to support the school and parents take much interest in their children's education. Parental support for the school is greatly appreciated by the staff and governors.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher gives good leadership and is very well supported by the deputy headteacher who provides a positive role model to others by his classroom practice. Systems for monitoring teaching and learning need some refinement. The newly appointed assistant headteacher is helping to develop and implement school policies.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is very effective in its work and fulfils its statutory responsibilities. It is well organised and takes its duties very seriously. Four governors help in school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school evaluates effectively the results of tests and takes action on the analysis. It reviews progress of the school development plan at regular intervals.
The strategic use of resources	Good use is made of staff. Learning equipment is used effectively in lessons. Budget planning is carefully considered and spending analysed regularly.

The staffing complement, including special needs support and teaching assistants, is good. However, the school has difficulties in recruiting staff when vacancies do occur due to the high cost of housing in the area. Accommodation is good overall. Amounts of learning resources are satisfactory and there is a good provision of books and a well resourced library. The school considers best value when making purchases.

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, are expected to work hard and are making good progress. • Behaviour is good and the pupils acquire good levels of maturity and responsibility. • The teaching is good. • They are happy about approaching the school with any concerns. • The school is well led and managed. 	<p>A small minority of respondents state that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children do not get the right amount of homework. • They are not kept well informed about how their children are getting on. • The school does not work closely with parents. • The school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

The inspection team agrees with the positive views of parents in most respects. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 at the time of inspection was sound. One established member of the Key Stage 1 teaching staff was absent during the inspection and a Key Stage 1 teacher had only been in post two weeks before the inspection began. The inspection team feels that the amounts of homework are generally satisfactory and many pupils research their work well. There are some inconsistencies in amounts in the same year group and sometimes pupils feel under pressure in having to get their homework back for the next day. The autumn term parents' evenings do not include individual discussions with parents but there are good arrangements in other respects for parents and school to work together. The range of extra-curricular activities, given the size of the school and the ages of the pupils, is good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. By the end of the Foundation Stage the majority of children exceed the expectations for children entering Year 1 and make good progress in all aspects of their learning. They converse readily with adults. They interact well with one another and play sociably. In the Reception class many know their letter sounds and use these and their growing sight vocabulary to write simple sentences. They can count forwards and backwards to 10 and know the properties of some common two-dimensional shapes and recognise several more. They mix colours in art and design and clap rhythmically to music. They can balance and use their arms outstretched to help them. They manage painting, gluing and writing tools effectively.

2. Pupils reach at least the expected standard in all subjects in Key Stages 1 and 2 and make sound and sometimes good progress. Progress is best in Years 3 - 6 because of the overall better quality of teaching, particularly in upper Key Stage 2 in which pupils often make very good progress and here the quality of teaching is very good. The school's catchment has changed since the last inspection and has a higher proportion of special needs pupils. The distribution of these pupils in the school accounts for significant differences in standards between different years.

3. There has been some variability in results in the last three years in Key Stage 1. On average boys have been doing better than boys nationally in reading and writing but their overall attainment has been slightly below boys nationally in mathematics. Girls aged seven have equalled the national average in mathematics against girls nationally and outperformed them in reading and in writing. Against similar schools Key Stage 1 results in mathematics have been below average. By the end of Year 6 both boys and girls have been significantly outperforming boys and girls nationally in English by well over two terms of progress. The difference has not been nearly so pronounced in science but boys and girls have done better than boys and girls nationally and have performed equally well in the subject. The school's girls are doing better than the boys in English in line with the national difference but in mathematics boys are outperforming the girls by more than the national difference. Against similar schools results in mathematics at Key Stage 2 have been average and overall above average in English but well below average in science. Performance in science has been the major factor in the overall trend of results in Key Stage 2 being below the national trend of improvement. The major reason for the poorer performance in science has been insufficient attention to scientific investigation and the lack of a whole school scheme. These issues have now been addressed and pupils' progress is better. Pupils are gaining knowledge through scientific experimentation and working practically is helping pupils to remember and to reason.

4. Currently standards in reading and speaking and listening are well above average by ages seven and 11. Pupils speak confidently and use a good range of language. They listen politely to others and discuss well in whole class and group situations, for example to put forward the ways water is used in the leisure industry. Most 11-year-olds have a mature attitude to books, read with fluency and good levels of accuracy and read aloud with expression. They sustain their interest in books by borrowing from the school and local libraries and read regularly, including non-fiction books for research purposes and also poetry. Pupils have good comprehension skills. They can find information quickly in books. Writing standards are very good by Year 6 and pupils write purposefully across the curriculum as in science to record their predictions and to communicate their findings. Most seven-year-olds currently are attaining the expected level in writing with approaching one-fifth expected to reach the higher level. Spelling and handwriting standards are good by age 11 with significant improvement in both spelling and presentation in upper Key Stage 2. Standards are more variable in these two aspects in Key Stage 1.

5. Standards in mathematics are currently in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 which, nevertheless, continues the comparatively weaker performance of this subject in recent years against the other subjects and indicates some underachievement in this aspect of work at this age, given the attainment at the end of the Foundation Stage. However by age 11 pupils have made substantial gains in their skills, aided by good teaching and some separate provision for very able pupils on occasion, including specialised work. During their school careers pupils make overall good progress in mathematics, despite the poorer performance in Key Stage 1. This is because of the good progress in Years 3 and 4 and the very good progress in Years 5 and 6. In Years 5 and 6 particularly, pupils' mathematical skills are encouraged by well planned mental work, investigational work in number and shape and the search for relationships.

6. Current standards in science overall reach the nationally expected level in Year 2 but in Year 6 a significant number of pupils are expected to reach the higher level. The better quality of teaching in the subject in Key Stage 2 and the very good range of investigational activities are contributory factors to the now improving standards in the subject for 11-year-olds.

7. Standards are at expected levels in geography, art and design, information and communication technology and music overall by the end of both key stages and pupils in both key stages make sound progress overall in these subjects. Pupils research well in geography to gain more information about their particular studies. There are some strengths in three-dimensional work in both key stages in art and design. Pupils progress well in lessons in information and communication technology and learn new skills quickly. Currently, however, overall progress is somewhat restricted by the lack of computers in classrooms which prevents pupils from practising more regularly and applying their skills across the curriculum, particularly for those pupils who do not have home computers. Pupils have very good opportunities to learn a musical instrument and pupils afforded these opportunities make good progress, although there is as yet no school orchestra whereby pupils can play together. Progress in general class music is satisfactory. Pupils' attainments in history and design and technology are at the expected level in Key Stage 1. Attainment in history is above expectations in Year 6 because of the relevance of the work and the opportunities to study a good range of evidence, such as the study of census material in history, which brings meaning and purpose and a questioning approach to their work. Pupils make good progress in this subject between Years 3 and 6, particularly in Years 5 and 6. In design and technology pupils develop a good understanding of materials and their uses. They design carefully and thoughtfully and evaluate their completed design and products critically and honestly. They produce a very good standard of work in Years 5 and 6 often the result of very careful researching, for example of bread products, before making bread and designing their own packaging. The shelters designed by Year 6 pupils have many original features.

8. Standards in physical education are above expectations by ages seven and 11 because of the variety of activities taught, including the good provision for extra-curricular sporting activities, the good facilities for sport and physical education and the mature attitudes of the pupils in lessons combined with good and enthusiastic teaching. They are also above expectations in religious education because of the serious attention given to the subject and the inventive approach to considering world faiths, such as the participation of local church leaders in responding to pupils' requests about the purpose and qualities of leadership.

9. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress overall. The early intervention for pupils who are not making progress and those who learn more slowly pays off. The special educational needs co-ordinator tackles more complex needs effectively and two part-time teachers and the teaching assistants work effectively in support of small groups of readers. In class lessons, pupils sometimes do not make as much progress as they might because the work is often not sufficiently matched to their needs, particularly in English. There is sometimes insufficient support for the pupils who have English as an additional language in class lessons and they sometimes do not know what they have to do then they copy

what others are writing. No obvious differences were noted in the overall quality of work of pupils of different ethnic groups. Traveller pupils are making sound progress overall, though this is affected by absences, but it is the Local Education Authority's policy not to provide any extra help for them until the year of the national tests. Overall, the progress made by gifted and talented pupils is sound. It is good for instrumental tuition and in Year 6 mathematics but pupils who show good ability in Key Stage 1 are insufficiently stretched. Pupils have good opportunities to apply their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. This is a strength of the school and judgements are similar to those at the time of the last inspection. Pupils of all ages display a very positive attitude to school in all of its various facets. They are enthusiastic about lessons, their teachers, and about the wide range of extra-curricular activities that are provided. Pupils display much pride in their work and in their various achievements. They engage in school activities with enthusiasm and vigour. Clubs are well attended and significantly contribute to the high level of pupils' enjoyment of school life.

11. Pupils' behaviour is good. In class they settle down very quickly and remain attentive. When teaching is particularly innovative and stimulating, behaviour is often very good. Movement around the school is brisk, orderly and well mannered. During break- and lunch-times, pupils are well behaved and play constructively with due respect for other people and property. During the course of the inspection no oppressive behaviour was observed at any time.

12. Pupils are polite and courteous to each other, to members of staff, and to visitors. Their friendly disposition helps to create a warm and welcoming atmosphere, which is a particular characteristic of the school.

13. Pupils relate very well to one another and also to adults. They show care for each other and, where necessary, provide comfort and support. Relationships with teachers and other members of staff are very good. They seek help and advice where appropriate, and converse confidently with adults.

14. Pupils display a good level of awareness of the feelings and beliefs of other people. This sensitivity is encouraged effectively and developed by the school, particularly through the medium of circle time.

15. Pupils throughout the school display a good level of initiative and responsibility appropriate to their age, an example being their involvement in charitable fund-raising. A monitoring system is used, and older pupils accept significant responsibility for younger pupils and act as 'buddies' to children just starting school.

16. Levels of attendance are very high and significantly exceed national averages. Unauthorised absence is low and significantly below the national average. Pupils' punctuality is very good and, consequently, classes commence on time and without disruption. Registrations are completed quickly and efficiently. The high levels of attendance and punctuality are amongst the school's strengths and contribute to the quality of learning the school provides.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

17. A total of 91 lessons was observed during the inspection. Of these 96 per cent were satisfactory or better. Two-thirds were good or better. One quarter of all lessons were very good and two per cent were excellent. The quality of teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 2 but best in Years 5 and 6. In these classes the pace is brisk and often lively and pupils are frequently challenged to think for themselves, to make suggestions and to share ideas. It is sound in Key Stage 1. The overall quality of teaching is very similar to that at the time of the last inspection.

18. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good overall. The management of children is good. In addition to the initial Nursery profile and baseline assessment, all the Foundation stage staff regularly observe, assess and record examples of children's learning across all aspects of the curriculum. These assessments provide early identification of pupils with special educational needs, as well as being used to support individual children's progress.

19. Teachers have good subject knowledge and research the lesson content effectively so that they can deal with questions which arise during the lesson. In a Year 5 lesson about sensing temperature and light in information and communication technology, the teacher's knowledge of the programme was a major factor in the good progress which the pupils made. She was able to challenge the pupils with good quality questioning and probe their level of understanding and take them on further with their learning. Teaching was good overall in Key Stage 1 in science, history, physical education and religious education and in the one observation in art and design. In other subjects the teaching was sound. Very occasionally lessons were unsatisfactory due to lack of knowledge, the pace or lack of balance between the different elements of the lesson which led to insufficient progress being made. The overall quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 in all subjects except geography was good overall with significant amounts being very good. Teaching observed in geography was sound. Marking of work is up-to-date but could sometimes be more developmental in helping the pupils to improve.

20. Teachers structure their teaching well in sequence and revise well on previous lessons to remind pupils of the stage of learning that has been reached. Planning of lessons is sound but teachers do not often give a clear indication of the assessment focus. Medium- and weekly-term planning is sound but there is not enough detail about how the needs of different groups will be met, particularly for those pupils who are not as capable. By contrast good provision is made for pupils who have higher prior attainment.

21. Most teachers usually manage their pupils well. They have good relationships with them. There is mutual respect between teachers and the pupils and the pupils adopt a mature approach to their learning as a result. This gives the pupils confidence to contribute answers, to take part in discussion and to seek help when they are stuck. Year 5 pupils showed good independence and co-operation when groups devised their own dance and then performed for the other groups in turn. In a small minority of classes the working atmosphere is too noisy and the quality of learning suffers because pupils are not concentrating enough.

22. Lessons begin promptly and pupils settle down to work quickly in most classes. This ensures a good atmosphere is created for learning. Good use is made of resources in many lessons and these are well prepared beforehand, as in science investigations and for art and design activities so no time is lost and the pace of working is maintained. Instructions are usually clear and allow for a smooth transfer between activities but sometimes tasks are not explained well enough and pupils are then unsure what they have to do.

23. Teachers make good use of the teaching assistants and they are used purposefully in lessons supporting those pupils who have special educational needs or who require other support. A significant number of parents and governors give valuable support in helping with groups of pupils, sometimes helping to stretch more able pupils, as in mathematics in Year 6, or with pupils who have emotional difficulties or to give pupils practice in reading. Members of staff appreciate this extra help very much.

24. The teaching of special needs pupils in the specialist withdrawal arrangements is usually of good quality. The special educational needs co-ordinator has good knowledge of special needs and her own teaching observed was consistently of a good quality. Pupils with particular disabilities are well supported. The work of the two other part-time special needs teachers is good overall, although at times pupils are not seated so they can see the words and numbers correctly and they are looking at words and numbers upside down which compounds their difficulties. The individual education plans are well written with clear targets and guide the teaching and they are reviewed at regular intervals. In general class work pupils often receive good adult support but the tasks are not always sufficiently well matched to the pupils' needs in literacy and numeracy and the pupils sometimes struggle as a result. On occasions pupils are withdrawn

from a literacy lesson to do numeracy and vice versa with the result that pupils miss their entitlement for the day in either mathematics or English. Traveller pupils are well supported by the school and given good support, although pupils with English as an additional language sometimes do not understand the task and end up copying the work of others. The school indicates that it receives no support from the Local Education Authority for pupils with English as an additional language.

25. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is sound in Key Stage 1. It is good in Key Stage 2. Teachers do not follow the literacy and numeracy strategies as thoroughly as intended. For example, opening plenaries in literacy are often too long and pupils are sometimes cramped on the carpet and begin to wriggle through discomfort. Pupils occasionally cannot see the text being discussed. Planning for different needs is not sufficiently precise in some classes in both literacy and numeracy. The higher attainers are not challenged enough in mathematics in Key Stage 1 and mental work is sometimes sluggish in both key stages, except in Years 5 and 6. Some teachers make good use of mathematics across the curriculum. In science, for example, teachers get pupils to calculate and to measure, as when pupils were finding out which soils contained the most air and in information and communication technology when pupils calculated the differences in the amount of light different colours of plastic let through. Pupils use literacy to good effect across the whole of the curriculum. Teachers ensure that pupils write accounts in their own words, as when they wrote imaginatively as prophets in religious education. The lack of classroom computers at the time of the inspection prevented good use of information and communication technology across the curriculum.

26. The quality of questioning is variable. In the best lessons pupils are frequently asked to explain their ideas with questions such as 'Why?' and 'How?'. In some lessons the pace of questioning is too slow resulting in a slow pace to lessons, particularly in Key Stage 1 mathematics, and insufficient progress being made.

27. Teachers make good use of homework to extend the learning in school. Reading is a regular feature and pupils research to good effect to support their work in school as when they did a careful analysis of their individual water consumption in Year 5 and in their research into mountainous zones in Year 6. These activities assist with the pupils' progress and in the interest they take in their work.

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

28. The quality and range of learning opportunities for pupils in the Nursery and Reception classes and for pupils in Years 1 and 2 are generally sound and they are good for pupils in Years 3 to 6. The quality and range of the curriculum in the Foundation Stage are sound and teachers' use government guidance as a basis for planning. As yet there is no policy or scheme of work to support the planning process, as the school is in the very early stages of developing these. The curriculum for the children in both the Nursery and the Reception class is provided through a balance of play, adult-led activities and whole-class adult-directed activities. Whilst children are supported well in adult-led activities there is little adult intervention in children's play, other than that related to management, and therefore opportunities for learning are not always realised. In the Nursery the children are free to choose from either the adult-led tasks or those play activities that have been pre-selected by the adults. In the Reception class children are generally directed to activities. During the period of the inspection children were not observed to have enough opportunities to make decisions about resources for themselves, in either the Nursery or Reception class.

29. In Key Stages 1 and 2, the requirements of the National Curriculum are well met. A good proportion of curriculum time is devoted to literacy and numeracy activities, providing the pupils with a strong foundation of skills from which they can proceed to secondary school. There is a wide range of learning opportunities, including French and extra music. However, the order of activities, sometimes demands a great deal of pupils' concentration spans. Very often literacy and numeracy take up the entire morning's teaching time in two separate lessons. Curriculum provision has been strengthened since the last inspection by the adoption of schemes of work which ensure a full coverage of the National Curriculum

Programmes of Study and these are carefully planned for by term and age group in each subject. Some subjects are bracketed together on the long-term plan and rotated, as when art and design alternates with design and technology. As a result, because art is not taught regularly, pupils do not always have the opportunity to develop their skills consistently in the subject.

30. The needs of pupils with learning difficulties are generally well met in each phase of the school, particularly when they are withdrawn for special help from the teaching assistants and special needs teachers. Sometimes the tasks set for these pupils in lessons are inappropriate because the planning does not reflect their needs and they are given inappropriate tasks.

31. There are good opportunities for extra-curricular activities, including sport for boys and girls, French, music, dance, drama and a craft club. These clubs gain greatly from the high level of voluntary support from teachers and parents. The school choir regularly performs out of school in many venues, including the Royal Albert Hall, which greatly enriches the pupils' opportunities to learn about the world and develop their confidence. In addition, the school arranges many trips to museums, galleries, castles and other places, which add to the pupils' knowledge of, and interest in, their studies. Year 6 pupils make an annual residential visit to Brittany. The high level of parental contributions to all these activities is greatly appreciated by staff.

32. In the main pupils have equal access to the curriculum provision and to extra-curricular opportunities. However, boys and girls are very often segregated for football and netball skills teaching in games lessons in the autumn and spring terms, although they often come together in the summer term games lessons for cricket and rounders activities. Occasionally there is evidence of some gender stereotyping, for example where all the boys were given blue card and the girls yellow to make their Mother's Day handprint cards, instead of each child being allowed to choose. On some occasions pupils with special educational needs are withdrawn for the whole of a lesson for extra support which is not always in the same subject. For example, some pupils had literacy support while the rest of the class were doing numeracy and vice versa. By withdrawing pupils from the whole lesson, they are not given the opportunity to contribute as part of the class or to learn from others in the whole-class sessions.

33. The provision for personal, social and health education is good. There is an appropriate policy for this aspect and each class has time allocated when issues arising in this area can be discussed. The statutory requirements for drugs and sex education policies are fully met and they form an integral part of the good personal, social and health education programme. A dental hygienist visits the school to make pupils aware of the need for dental health. Health visitors teach Year 6 pupils about human development and there is an opportunity for discussion. The school makes use of video material for this aspect and is currently reviewing this part of the provision.

34. The local community makes a very significant contribution to the pupils' learning with beneficial effects on the quality of provision. Some local businesses sponsor events, provide advertising funds or donate resources, such as paper. The school has good links with the local Business Enterprise Council. Two of the nearby Universities send students to the school. Close links have been formed with the local Epilepsy Centre which some pupils visit to sing, chat or have tea. There are good relationships with most of the other primary schools in the area and also with the secondary schools to which the pupils transfer. Year 6 pupils take part in inter-school sports days and football, netball and cricket leagues with great success. Many of the students from the secondary schools undertake their work experience in the school.

35. Overall the school makes good provision for pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is an improvement on the last inspection. The school fulfils its aims and states very clearly in its prospectus the attitudes and values it wishes to promote.

36. Opportunities for developing spiritual awareness are satisfactory. The school fulfils statutory requirements for daily acts of worship. The quality of these is satisfactory. During some there are opportunities for pupils to reflect upon moods and scenes that music creates. However, occasionally the music is merely background music and pupils are not informed about the composer or referred to the piece. Moments of spirituality occur during lessons. Pupils gasped when they saw the measurements of light on the monitor during sensing work. The beauty of the spring flowers in the school gardens helps the pupils to appreciate the beauty of nature. However, there is no whole school consistency in the planning of work to promote the development of pupil's spirituality across the curriculum, although it is mentioned in the history, music and science policies and it is included amongst the school's aims.

37. The ethos of the school provides for very strong moral development. The school is very well ordered and class rules are displayed prominently. Pupils show respect for people and property and hold teachers in high esteem. Pupils recognise right from wrong. During class lessons opportunities are provided for pupils to consider moral issues and some very good writing in Year 6 undertaken during the inspection demonstrated the high moral position they take when considering issues of war, pollution and opposing religions.

38. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop socially, for example the residential visit to Brittany, which extends both their social and cultural development, participation with other schools in musical events and sporting fixtures against other schools. Behaviour is good in and out of school. Pupils work well together in activities and tasks set by the teachers and co-operate effectively with one another. Boys and girls work well together in class. Two pupils, working in a group of three, were very sensitive to the needs of a disabled pupil during an information and communication technology lesson and helped the pupil with much kindness and a very mature approach. Pupils help at lunch-times and take their responsibilities seriously. They learn to respect and value one another's points of view. Pupils enjoy school, they share resources happily and value their friendships and the activities presented to them both in and out of school. Music, drama, art and sports clubs after school foster and develop pupils socially. Pupils make visits to places of interest. Pupils participate in the bi-annual County music festival of singing at the Royal Albert Hall, London. The school supports several national and local charities and pupils realise the importance of thinking of others.

39. Opportunities for developing cultural awareness are developed satisfactorily. Pupils are taken to museums and heritage centres, where they learn about the life-styles of people and customs from the past and present. Observations of life in other countries are promoted during curriculum studies and through library research. There is a weekly French club for Year 4 pupils in addition to a weekly French lesson for Years 5 and 6 pupils. Tolerance and appreciation of different faiths are taught during the religious education programme of study. During art and design lessons pupils have the opportunity to reproduce patterns of tiles and Eastern architecture, as observed in a study of mosques. Music from different countries is played frequently and the school possesses a number of non-European instruments, including a set of African drums. As yet there is neither planning nor co-ordination of cultural development in the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. As at the time of the last inspection, the school takes good care of the pupils and implements health, safety and welfare procedures effectively. Documented risk assessments are completed prior to external visits and in relation to potential hazards within the school itself. Detailed assessments were completed to cover building operations on the site and also for the new classroom, which is separate from the main building. First-aid procedures are good, and accidents are properly recorded and investigated. Fire prevention and control procedures have been established and are effective. The school has good links with external agencies, particularly the local fire authorities and the police.

41. Health and safety matters are monitored effectively through the Premises Health and Safety Committee, and regular safety inspections are carried out. The school has adopted the Buckinghamshire Health and Safety Policy but this is not supported by a policy which details organisational arrangements and specific responsibilities within the school itself.

42. Child protection procedures are good and fully meet statutory requirements. The headteacher has designated responsibility for child protection issues and in-school training has been given to members of staff. Teachers are fully aware of their responsibilities for child protection and perform their role with sensitivity and diligence.

43. Educational and personal support for pupils is good. Pupils are provided with effective feedback as to their progress and are given good guidance as to how they can continue to develop both academically and socially.

44. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good and contribute significantly to the high levels of attendance achieved. The school is very proactive in publicising the importance of regular attendance. Unexplained absences are investigated rigorously and the attendance records of regular absentees are monitored regularly.

45. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are effective. Children, staff, parents and governors collaborate in the development of the school's behaviour management policies which ensure a common philosophy and approach. The school encourages good behaviour through positive reward and recognition, and this strategy is effective in promoting good standards of behaviour.

46. The school, both within the classroom and through assemblies, actively discourages all forms of oppressive behaviour. The school reacts quickly and effectively in the rare instances when oppressive behaviour is identified.

47. Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall. The school has made good progress in meeting the key issue regarding assessment identified in the previous report. The school now makes very good use of information from national and other tests to monitor progress in English, mathematics and science for all pupils, and to identify pupils or groups of pupils who are not achieving as highly as they should. This information is used well to adjust the curriculum and teaching to improve pupils' progress, for example through additional teaching in mathematics. In science, the school identified the need to provide more opportunities for pupils to carry out investigative work and develop the pupils' understanding of scientific language. This is now having a significant impact on the pupils' attainment and progress. Formal assessments throughout the year in English, mathematics and science help teachers to 'track' and predict pupils' progress and set whole school targets.

48. Assessment in most other subjects has not yet been developed, although teachers in Year 4 have started to keep records of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in all subjects and assessment in the Foundation Stage is increasingly being used to inform planning of work. The lack of a structured system of assessment in the foundation subjects means that the curriculum is not always being well matched to the needs of all pupils, especially those who find the work quite difficult. In general, assessment knowledge is not always used effectively in planning the next steps in learning for groups of differing ability. Sound procedures are in place to record pupils' personal development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

49. Parents' positive views are endorsed by the inspection team which finds that the partnership with parents is a major strength of the school, as at the time of the last inspection. Parents hold the school in very high regard. They believe it provides a very good education delivered within the framework of a safe and secure environment. Teachers are seen as approachable and helpful, with effective support being provided by classroom assistants and parent helpers. Behaviour is seen to be good, with the personal development of pupils being encouraged effectively. Parents believe that the school keeps them very well informed, particularly in respect of their children's progress. Parents state that the school is well managed and led, both through the headteacher and governing body.

50. Links between the school and parents are very good. Members of staff are friendly and easily approachable, particularly at the end of the school day. Urgent queries or problems can, therefore, be resolved quickly and informally.

51. Parental involvement in the school is very good and makes a positive contribution to the quality of learning. Parents regularly assist within the school, bringing with them a wide range of skills and expertise. Practical help is also given with school visits and fund-raising activities. The Parent Teacher Association is highly effective in both fund-raising and in organising a wide range of social activities which consolidate effectively the partnership between school and home. This partnership is formalised and consolidated through the home-school agreement which details the respective responsibilities of the school, parents and pupils themselves. Virtually all parents have signed and returned the agreement.

52. The school provides very good quality and quantity of information to parents. Regular newsletters are published which are informative and attractively presented. The school brochure contains comprehensive information about every aspect of the school and is friendly and helpful in tone. The Governors' Annual Report to parents provides a very good summary of activities and results during the previous academic year and provides all information required under statutory provision.

53. Pupils' progress reports are clearly expressed and sent to parents annually, providing detailed information of pupils' aptitudes, progress and attainment. They contain good quality feedback about pupils' personal development and areas for possible future development. Parents are given an opportunity to make their own comment on the report.

54. Parents' evenings are held each term and two of these provide a very good opportunity for parents to discuss their children's progress with the class teacher. These are effectively supplemented by information evenings, which familiarise parents with different aspects of the curriculum. The contribution made by parents to pupils' learning at home is very good and significantly contributes to pupils' progress, particularly in reading. The school provides parents with very good practical information as to how they can most usefully support their children's learning at home and creates positive links between school and home.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

55. The headteacher provides good leadership, which has a positive effect on all aspects of school life. She is ably supported by the deputy and the assistant headteacher. The headteacher has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and an informed vision of its future. Her management of the school is purposeful. She has successfully overseen expansion to its present size and is now planning with the governing body for further improvements to the accommodation. She has a determination to raise pupils' standards of attainment by focussing on areas in need of improvement, such as science. The quality of leadership and management is similar to that at the time of the last inspection.

56. The aims of the school are sound and are clearly defined. They underpin the whole of the school's work and life. Within the school, all pupils are valued and cared for and the school is successful in creating positive working attitudes. There is a commitment to high standards and to meeting the needs of pupils of all abilities but as yet this is not always fully met. The school does well in nurturing those with complex special needs. The school is very successful in its aim to establish a close partnership between parents and school. This is clearly seen in the significant financial support provided by the Parent Teacher Association, the wearing of the school uniform by all pupils and in the help provided with their homework and with tasks that support the on-going curriculum.

57. To assist its aim of raising standards, the school is collecting together a good range of data to enable it to monitor and target pupils' progress. The recently introduced tracking sheet is designed to help with this monitoring and the school is considering using information technology to help handle the compiled statistics. The headteacher and subject co-ordinators manage the analysis of statutory and optional national tests which provides useful and detailed information. This information is used well to provide realistic and challenging targets for both school and for pupils.

58. The headteacher is diligent in ensuring the school's registers are monitored. The role and function of the senior management team are unclear in relation to monitoring standards and other developments within the school for there are no minutes or records of their meetings. To be effective this group requires a clear remit and a structure which records its progress and impact on the school development.

59. Sound structures and procedures are in place to monitor standards and teaching. The headteacher monitors teaching in classrooms and also monitors pupils' learning by looking at teachers' planning and checking pupils' written work. Co-ordinators are allocated time for subject management and part of this allocation is to be used to monitor teaching and standards. However, the majority of subjects other than English, mathematics and science are taught during the afternoon sessions and many of the teachers have their non-contact time in the morning. As a result, they cannot monitor teaching and learning. Monitoring of teaching in English, mathematics, information and communication technology and science is sound. Co-ordinators do not use a standard format for recording their observations while monitoring teaching, although one is used when monitoring lessons in respect of performance management. Subject co-ordinators also scrutinise pupils' work and examine teachers' planning, providing help, support and advice where necessary. Members of staff meet regularly to discuss the effectiveness of the curriculum and the results of the National Curriculum tests to help them evaluate pupils' attainment and progress.

60. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is managed effectively. The special needs co-ordinator has a very good grasp of current issues and is aware of the changes in the Code of Practice. She is well supported by the special needs governor. The funds provided by the local authority and the governors to support special educational needs are spent well in ensuring good teacher provision for pupils who have learning difficulties.

61. The governing body is very effective. It is well led and fulfils its responsibilities most efficiently. The governing body has relevant committee structures in place to cover areas such as finance, staffing and curriculum. All governors are involved in the school development plan, which is an effective tool, based on raising standards. Priorities are set and carefully costed for the present year and projections and outline plans are in place for the future. The governors are each linked to a class and a curriculum area and many are regular visitors to the school. They are in a good position to monitor curriculum developments. As a result, governors play a good part in working alongside the headteacher to provide effective leadership for the school. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are prominent in promoting its aims and objectives.

62. Since the previous inspection the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have had a positive impact on improving teaching techniques, contributing effectively to pupils' learning across the curriculum. The main focus of curriculum development has rightly been English, mathematics and science, which are well managed. Teachers have had the opportunity to attend courses for their own professional development and some initiatives have been identified as a result of the performance management interviews, which are now well established within the school.

63. Financial administration is detailed and thorough. Careful records are kept of spending and the school constantly seeks to obtain good value for money. It is careful to ensure that it purchases goods and services at competitive prices and applies the principles of best value. However, the headteacher is committing a significant proportion of her time during the week to oversee and monitor the school's budget. The financial assistant is now settled into her post and is aware of the procedures to be followed and the commitment by the headteacher to monitoring the financial position of the school budget can now be significantly reduced. The school provides good value for money

64. There is a sufficient number of suitably qualified and experienced staff to meet the demands of the curriculum and to provide support for those pupils with special needs and English as an additional language. Members of staff work well together. They share their experience and expertise in subject planning in the parallel classes. The school employs three support teachers who provide additional support for pupils with special needs in all parts of the school. An additional support teacher for these children is funded by the Local Education Authority and works in the Nursery. All members of staff have job descriptions, including the support and administrative staff.

65. Staff development relates appropriately to the school development plan and teachers' personal professional developmental needs. Issues from the performance management process are also included in the training programme. This year the focus for staff development has been upon literacy and numeracy to be followed next year by science.

66. An induction programme for newly qualified and newly appointed teachers provides time for them to assimilate the routines and responsibilities of their work. A mentor is appointed from within the staff to provide help and professional support to newly qualified teachers.

67. The lunch-time supervisors are committed to the aims and policies of the school and they assist the pupils whom they know well during the lunch hour. The school environment is kept well by the full-time caretaker who lives on site. The school has a good degree of cleanliness, although there have been difficulties in the past in obtaining efficient cleaning staff. The administrative staff work very well together and enhance the efficiency and smooth running of the school.

68. Overall the range and quality of resources are satisfactory. Resources are good in mathematics, religious education and the library, which provides pupils with opportunities for personal research, as well as providing a good selection of books for pupils to borrow. The computer suite is used well and provides pupils with good opportunities to develop information and communication technology skills, although the lack of computers in classrooms during the inspection period prevented better use of information and communication technology across the curriculum. It is noted that 40 computers had been ordered for classroom use. Resources are satisfactory in other subjects, and for pupils with special educational needs.

69. Accommodation is good overall. Some classrooms are rather cramped but there is some compensation through the use which can be made of the shared areas outside classrooms. Outside provision is good with very good playing field facilities and adequate hard surface areas.

70. The senior management team carefully analyses all assessment data in English, mathematics and science and the analysis is shared with staff and governors. The headteacher and the subject managers for English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology observe teaching and learning, in addition to monitoring teachers' plans. Managers in all other subjects monitor teachers' plans in order to ensure coverage of the subject, and that pupils' progress is planned systematically.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

71. The school has several significant strengths and pupils attain above expectations in some subjects. In order to improve standards even further, particularly in Key Stage 1, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- **improve the attainment of pupils in mathematics, writing and science in Key Stage 1 by:**
 - a) raise teachers' expectations in Key Stage 1 of what pupils might achieve;
 - b) introducing greater rigour into the monitoring of standards and teaching;
 - c) ensuring that work is matched more appropriately to pupils' needs in lessons.
(Paras 3, 4, 5, 26, 83, 86, 90, 91, 95, 100)

- **develop a written policy for the Foundation Stage and complete a scheme of work so that:**
 - a) it is clear how the school intends to match learning experiences to children of different ages and stages of development
 - b) children's progress through the nationally recognised Stepping Stones can be readily monitored.
(Para 28)

- **develop manageable record keeping systems for the foundation subjects and use assessment to better effect in planning work across the school.**
(Paras 24, 48)

- **improve the arrangements for monitoring teaching and learning by:**
 - a) planning a schedule of focused observations;
 - b) sharing outcomes to improve the overall consistency of practice within the school and to improve some teachers' approach to the numeracy and literacy strategies.
(Paras 59, 80, 113, 122, 127)

- **improve the provision for pupils with special educational needs pupils so that**
 - a) when withdrawn from lessons they do not miss their National Curriculum entitlement;
 - b) work is planned better to fit their needs in some lessons.
(Paras 9, 20, 30, 32, 88)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	91
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	23	36	26	4	0	0
Percentage	2	25	40	29	4	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR–YR6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	31.5	365
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR–YR6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	9	70

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	13

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.9
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	01 [00]	28	30	58

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	26	26
	Girls	26	28	27
	Total	53	54	53
Percentage of pupils at National Curriculum level 2 or above	School	91 [89]	93 [90]	91 [92]
	National	84 [83]	86 [84]	91 [90]

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	26	27
	Girls	26	28	29
	Total	53	54	56
Percentage of pupils at National Curriculum level 2 or above	School	91 [84]	93 [84]	97 [92]
	National	85 [84]	89 [88]	89 [88]

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	01 [00]	14	24	38

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	11	12
	Girls	22	20	22
	Total	33	31	34
Percentage of pupils at National Curriculum level 4 or above	School	87 [90]	82 [80]	89 [94]
	National	75 [75]	71 [72]	87 [85]

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	11	11
	Girls	22	20	21
	Total	33	31	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	87 [90]	82 [78]	84 [86]
	National	72 [70]	74 [72]	82 [79]

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	7
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	3
White	325
Any other minority ethnic group	5

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – YR6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	16.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.3
Average class size	28.1

Education support staff: YR – YR6

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	150

Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.3
Total number of education support staff	4

Financial information

Financial year	00/01
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	£
Total income	669,597
Total expenditure	667,867
Expenditure per pupil	1,654
Balance brought forward from previous year	-1,537
Balance carried forward to next year	193

Total aggregate hours worked per week	33
Number of pupils per FTE adult	5.8

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5.6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	7.5

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	396
Number of questionnaires returned	127

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55	41	3	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	39	54	5	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	28	68	2	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	50	13	4	2
The teaching is good.	49	47	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	21	54	20	4	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	51	43	4	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	45	49	3	1	2
The school works closely with parents.	27	52	15	4	2
The school is well led and managed.	34	56	5	1	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	40	53	6	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	54	14	1	7

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

72. Following their third birthday children are admitted into the Nursery on a termly basis. All children attend the Nursery on a part-time basis with the older children attending the morning session and the younger three-year-olds attending the afternoon session. They transfer into a Reception class at the beginning of the term in which they are five and attend part-time for the first half term after which they attend full-time. At the time of the inspection there were 37 children in the Nursery's morning session and 26 children in the afternoon session and 30 children in the Reception class, 14 of whom were part-time. The school has good induction procedures to support children and their parents on entry both to the Nursery and to the Reception classes. Children are assessed when they are admitted to the Nursery using the local authority's 'Initial Entry Profile' to which parents make a positive contribution. In addition, initial assessments, called baseline assessments, are carried out during the first half of the term following admission into the Reception class. Baseline assessment shows that attainment on entry to the school is above that expected nationally. By the end of the Foundation Stage the majority of the children will attain or exceed all of the nationally recommended standards or Early Learning Goals. The children's attainment is similar to that at the time of the last inspection.

73. Activities in the Foundation Stage are planned around termly themes that are part of a two-year cycle. Both Nursery and Reception follow the same theme simultaneously. The Nursery and Reception class teachers plan their weekly time-tables together and in addition the Nursery teacher plans the daily Nursery programme with all the Nursery staff. This makes a good contribution to the provision in the Nursery where all the adults work well together. The Reception class teacher works closely with the classroom assistant who provides support during the morning sessions. The relationships between teaching and non-teaching staff are good throughout the Foundation Stage and these make a significant contribution to the overall good progress that children make.

Personal, social and emotional development

74. Children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and by the end of the Foundation stage will attain or exceed the standards expected for children of this age. The quality of teaching for this area of learning is good. Children settle quickly into both the Nursery and Reception class and show a good understanding of daily routines as a result of the good induction systems and relationships that are established. This sense of security helps them to grow in confidence and children were observed to talk readily to adults and each other about what they were doing. The majority of children are confident in their relationships. They persevere at activities, sometimes for extended periods of time, and play happily with their friends. They are learning to be sensitive to, and caring about the needs of others. For example, in the Nursery when one child spoke about her dolls crying, another said, "Shall I cuddle them?" When the Nursery teacher acted in role during a drama session the children readily empathised with the character she assumed. They were sympathetic when 'Joe-Joe' didn't know what to do in the circus and were eager to offer helpful and appropriate advice. There are well-established rules for behaviour and children show a good understanding of these. For example when the nursery nurse intervened in some boisterous play saying, "Please don't do it" the child immediately responded, "I won't, I'm sorry. I won't do it again". Children in the Reception class respond promptly to instructions, are well behaved and respond appropriately to all instructions. These rules, together with the good role models provided by the adults, make a positive contribution to the children's good behaviour throughout the Foundation Stage.

Communication, language and literacy

75. Children make good progress in their communication, language and literacy skills and by the end of their time in the Foundation Stage, the majority will attain or exceed the standards expected of them in this aspect of their learning. Teaching is good. In the Nursery the children have regular access to a tape recorder and headphones so that they can listen to stories and rhymes and they listen to tapes with good concentration. The 14 children who are to transfer to the Reception class after Easter also have focused activities related to initial letter sounds and some can relate this understanding to letters in their names. Some activities are well planned around traditional stories. For example, when a group of children was asked how some model goats could cross a river they were able to use their knowledge of 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff' and constructed a bridge with blocks. Such activities foster children's enjoyment of books, as well as helping them to interact with and understand stories. In adult-led activities well-focused questions support children's speaking and listening skills, as well as helping them to learn new vocabulary. When playing, some children talk readily with one another and are able to sustain complex conversations. There are daily opportunities for children to say and sing a variety of rhymes and songs from memory. Some children show an awareness of using different registers when talking. For example, when one child said "I have to go out" and was asked to ask properly, he immediately said, "Can I go out Mrs (Name), please?" There are opportunities for children to experiment with writing and many are beginning to use traditional letter shapes within their play writing. They understand the purpose of writing. For example in the drama session when 'Joe-Joe' said he forgot things, the children immediately suggested that he should "write it down". Some children can write their own names unaided and copy write with good letter formation. In the Reception class most children can write their names without assistance and copy-write legibly and correctly. The most able children can use both their sight vocabulary and their phonic skills to write simple sentences. The adults demonstrate writing regularly by writing words or stories dictated by individual children. When sharing traditional tales such as 'The Gingerbread Man' the children know and enjoy joining in with, familiar refrains. They take books home regularly to share with their parents and some children can read simple readers fluently. This practice makes a good contribution to the children's reading development as well as encouraging parents to share in the reading process. During the period of the inspection children were not observed to select books for themselves to read for pleasure.

Mathematical development

76. The quality of teaching is good. Children make good progress in mathematics and by the end of their time in the Foundation Stage the majority will attain or exceed the standards expected for children of this age. In both the Nursery and the Reception class the children regularly sing action number rhymes that use counting forwards and backwards to ten and beyond and adults encourage them to work out the difference between the numbers. They can recognise and know the properties of triangles, circles and squares and are learning about solid shapes as they put away blocks or construct models with reclaimed materials. Shop play lets them handle money as they buy different items. Sand play helps them to develop an understanding of capacity and volume. In the Reception class many children count confidently to twenty and beyond. They continue to develop their understanding of plane and solid shapes and are learning to use mathematical language to describe these. They can write numbers to ten and the most able can understand and perform addition sums to ten by combining unequal sets. They can identify and write which coins are needed to make sums up to ten. They can estimate which containers will hold the most and check to see if they are right and are learning about the need for standard measure in activities such as cooking. They can make sequential patterns.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

77. Children make good progress in this area of learning and by the end of their time in the Foundation Stage, the majority will attain or exceed the standards expected for children of this age. The quality of teaching is good. In planning the teachers make good links between different areas of learning through the use of the termly theme and this enhances the children's learning. In the Nursery outdoor play provides children with daily opportunities to notice and reflect upon seasonal change and weather patterns and in the Reception class children complete a daily weather chart. In both the Nursery and the Reception class most children are able to talk confidently about themselves, their families and events in their lives. Through activities such as making 'Mother's Day' cards they are developing an understanding of special cultural events and in the Reception class, bathing dolls provides them with opportunities to reflect upon how they have changed since they were babies. They are helped to develop a sense of present and past through the use of photograph albums that help them to recall school and class events. They have regular opportunities to cook when they can see how materials change. They explore the properties of different materials in sand and water play and begin to understand how different things behave. They have opportunities to use computers and are learning the skills that will enable them to use these confidently and with enjoyment. They use tools and equipment purposefully and safely.

Physical development

78. The quality of teaching is good. Children make good progress in this area of their development and by the end of Foundation Stage the majority will attain or exceed the standards expected for children of this age. In the Nursery the children enjoy daily opportunities for vigorous physical movement in the secure outside area and are learning to control equipment, such as balls, using their hands and feet. They are beginning to learn about their bodies and use space well showing an awareness of others around them; they play well together. They use a variety of wheeled toys confidently and safely and respond to any instructions quickly. They have regular opportunities to join in with action rhymes and songs. They use a range of construction toys and reclaimed materials to build models. They are developing their hand coordination skills through activities, such as drawing, painting and making things with dough. They use tools safely and appropriately as, for example, scissors when cutting out and glue spreaders when joining different materials. They continue to develop these skills in the Reception class. They can dress and undress themselves. They can balance when walking along a 'walkway', knowing how to use their arms to sustain a balance, and jump off carefully. They use tools, such as pencils or brushes, with greater precision for example as when they used paint to fill in triangles. They can assemble construction toys skilfully to build a variety of models.

Creative development

79. By the end of the Foundation Stage children make good progress and the majority will attain or exceed the standards expected for children of this age. The quality of teaching is good. Children enjoy joining in with simple rhymes and singing and sing tunefully. In the Reception class the majority can clap in time to a given rhythm correctly and sing tunefully. In both the Nursery and the Reception class, they have opportunities to paint pictures from their own experiences, as well as using different tools, such as sponge shapes, to make patterns as part of their topic on 'shape'. They have opportunities to talk about the work of artists such as Paul Klee and respond to what they have seen in their own work. In the Reception class they are learning how to mix colours. They use the computer to draw patterns and pictures. They make a variety of models using both reclaimed and commercial materials. They have regular opportunities for imaginative role-play where they can act out different characters and events within a given theme or from their own experience, although the lack of adult involvement lessens the learning potential of these activities. They use tools such as pencils, brushes and scissors with good control.

80. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. She has regular meetings with the Reception class teacher, primarily for joint curriculum planning but also to discuss matters relating to the Foundation Stage. She has non-contact time once each term. However, the administration of the termly Nursery admissions has prevented her from using some of this time to monitor teaching and learning in the Reception class so that she can develop an informed view. Resources throughout the Foundation Stage are satisfactory overall.

ENGLISH

81. In the national tests in 2001, the standards in reading of pupils aged seven were well above the national average and above those of similar schools. Writing standards were well above the national average and also well above those reached by similar schools. These results were an improvement on the previous year. From the evidence seen in Key Stage 1, reading standards continue to be well above the national expectation for their age group. Standards in writing are not as high as they were last year in Year 2 and are generally around what would be expected. While many achieve above this level, there are still a few who do not reach it because of their learning difficulties. Pupils' ability to express themselves verbally is well above the expectation for seven-year-olds and many are very articulate. These skills continue to develop well throughout the school.

82. In the 2001 tests for 11-year-olds, the standards in English were well above the national average, above those of schools which had performed similarly at Key Stage 1 and about the same as schools with a similar background. This follows the pattern over the past four years. Scrutiny of work shows that standards in Year 6 remain as strong, with many achieving very highly in comparison with their national counterparts in each aspect of literacy.

83. Standards are generally similar to those at the time of the last inspection, although not as impressive in the main in writing in Key Stage 1. Progress is generally steady in Years 1 and 2. As pupils move through Key Stage 2 the rate of progress increases, with a marked acceleration in Years 5 and 6. This is evident in the quality of pupils' written work, their level of comprehension of often difficult texts and their ability to express themselves with considerable maturity.

84. As they move through Key Stage 1, most pupils listen and respond with enthusiasm in class. They understand and follow instructions from adults well. Occasionally, they do not listen with sufficient attention to their classmates and so miss an opportunity to learn from others. Most begin to learn the sound letters and combinations of letters make and some are able to apply this knowledge when attempting to spell new words. However, the quality of spelling is very variable and many rely over much on support from adults. Many do not have the habit of regularly checking their own work but can in fact correct mistakes when they are pointed out. The presentation of work varies. Some take pride in forming letters correctly and a few attempt to join their writing. Most remember to put full stops and capital letters in the appropriate places. Some use exclamation or question marks and include direct speech marks. Most can retell familiar stories accurately both verbally and on paper. By Year 2, many can describe characters in the texts they have studied with some insight, for example 'I think he is disgusting when he fills his face with slimy cake'. There is a clear narrative thread in many of the stories the pupils write. Some write at considerable length with quite complex sentence constructions. All are able to recognise rhyming words in texts they read in class and some compose their own poems which rhyme and have rhythm. A few inject a pleasing sense of humour into these. All join enthusiastically in unison reading in class and many read with considerable expression, demonstrating a clear understanding of the text. Some work out unfamiliar words logically but many do not yet use their learning of phonics effectively.

85. As they move through the first two years of Key Stage 2, there is a noticeable improvement in the content and presentation of pupils' work. Most join their letters correctly and punctuation is usually accurate but spelling remains variable. Pupils begin to write in a wider variety of styles both fiction and non-fiction. There are some interesting interpretations of such Greek stories as 'Jason and the Golden Lyre'. Most pupils write in a progressively more structured way and many use paragraphing to break their writing into appropriate sections. Some use effective strategies to enhance the meaning, such as using capital letters for emphasis, for example, 'I SCREAMED in terror'. The volume of written work increases from year to year. Many are able to evaluate their own work objectively by commenting on why they have chosen certain phrases and how this could be improved the next time. In Years 5 and 6, the standard of presentation and accuracy of punctuation and spelling improves. Many pupils write with flair and considerable insight in a wide variety of styles. Year 5 pupils have produced some very interesting poems written in a shape appropriate for the subject matter, for example a spiral to emphasise the idea of water running down the plughole in the sink. Some of their writing inspired by the works and language of J. R. R. Tolkien shows quite a mature appreciation of the style and atmosphere of the 'Lord of the Rings'. For example, one elegiac poem begins, 'Mithrandir, bravely he fell on the fire bridge of Moria' and many can maintain this standard of writing consistently. Most pupils are aware by Year 5 of the importance of a strong ending to a story. Many Year 6 pupils have shown a good grasp of the characterisation and plot of 'Macbeth' by retelling parts in the form of a strip cartoon. Some of the language used to describe people or situations is well above what might be expected of the age group and many begin to be able to put themselves into the minds of others. This was seen in a Year 6 class where the majority could understand the hidden sadness that often lies behind the mask of the clown. Many can attribute human feelings to inanimate objects such as a puppet or a statue and are able to describe movingly some of the anguish they might feel. Much of their writing shows a considerable depth of understanding. This is borne out by the ability of many to read with expression and by their verbal responses in class. Most pupils use dictionaries and thesauri confidently and by Year 6 all are able to plan and draft their work, polishing and honing it before the final effort. Many use a word processor to produce their work in a wide variety of font styles to increase the impact of their writing.

86. Since the last inspection there have been some changes. Standards of pupils aged 11 have remained well above the national average, now including speaking and listening skills. In pupils aged seven, reading, speaking and listening skills continue to be very good, but writing skills are not as high as was judged to be the case last time. This is partly due to the cohort of pupils in Year 2 but teachers' expectations in spelling and handwriting could be higher in Key Stage 1. Progress in Key Stage 2 is now good and sometimes very good. Pupils continue to have a very good attitude to their work, especially in Key Stage 2 and most try hard. The quality of teaching was judged good generally last time and remains so at Key Stage 2, with sound teaching at Key Stage 1. Relationships in class between adults and pupils are now generally very good.

87. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is sound overall and occasionally good. At Key Stage 2, it is good overall and sometimes very good, particularly in upper Key Stage 2. Where teaching works most successfully, the lesson starts briskly so that pupils' attention is engaged from the beginning. Pupils apply themselves from the start with good quality work resulting from this, both verbally and on paper. Mutual respect between teachers and pupils and quiet, confident class management skills ensure that there is a usually good atmosphere in which pupils can learn. There is a quick recap on what has been learnt previously to ensure that pupils consolidate their knowledge. Questions are asked at a suitably challenging depth to make pupils think more carefully about their answers. In the upper years of Key Stage 2 particularly, teachers' own use of language at a mature level constantly challenges pupils to extend their vocabulary and to express themselves more accurately. An example of this was seen when a Year 6 class was asked to produce 'Kennings' (poems consisting of successive lines of compound words to describe something). The outcome was a series of very descriptive poems about animals or natural disasters including such phrases as 'bone-chomping, shoe-chewing' to describe a dog. Teachers often give very clear explanations of what is required so that the pupils pick up the idea very quickly. The pace of the lesson is well maintained. Most teachers read the text very expressively and this helps to emphasise the meaning and encourages

pupils to be more expressive in their own reading. There is often a good choice of activities set for the class and this produces some impressive writing from the pupils. In a Year 5 class, for example, pupils read an amusing book putting a story from two different view points. This led them to write amusingly from the point of view of the fox and the farmer, or the policeman and the robber and increased their ability to see two sides of an argument. Pupils' work is often carefully marked, particularly in the upper years of Key Stage 2, giving pupils constructive suggestions as to how they can improve.

88. In many otherwise good lessons, some strategies work less well. For example the same task is often set for the whole class. This may be too easy for the higher attainers or too difficult for the pupils who find the work more taxing and they produce very little as a result. An opportunity for pupils to gain a sense of achievement is thus lost. Also, the needs of pupils with special educational needs are not always recognised, although many receive a good level of support when there is a learning support assistant present. Planning often does not contain precise learning objectives. In many classes, the teacher does not share with the pupils what they will learn in the course of the lesson, so pupils are not fully aware what is required of them. The lesson then lacks a clear focus, which makes it more difficult for both pupils and the teacher to assess how well they have achieved the desired outcome. A closer adherence to the format suggested by the National Literacy Strategy would help these teachers to structure their lessons more appropriately. On a few occasions class control is less confident and some pupils stop listening. The teacher has to reprimand poor behaviour at regular intervals and the pace of the lesson falters. This happens where the activity chosen is not entirely appropriate. Many pupils lose interest and they begin to chat among themselves. This also occurs when the pupils spend too long sitting uncomfortably on the floor. They become restless and this distracts others. The teachers do not always take sufficient care to model handwriting and presentation correctly. As a result, pupils from an early age onwards do not all acquire the habit of making their work legible and forming letters correctly. It is noticeable that, in the classes where good handwriting by the class teacher is the norm, pupils' presentation is correspondingly better.

89. The subject is well managed. The co-ordinator is experienced, has a clear vision for the subject and brings much enthusiasm to her management. She has a good understanding of the priorities and the need to improve standards in writing at Key Stage 1. Systems for tracking pupils' progress, assessing their work and analysing their results are well in place. Pupils' work is regularly monitored and compared to the expected levels as laid down in the National Curriculum. The National Literacy Strategy has been adopted to a large extent, but the co-ordinator is aware that this needs to be monitored more closely. Planning is monitored in the long- and medium-term and year teachers share together their individually prepared short-term planning. Although the English policy document clearly states that work in class will be carefully matched to the needs of each child, this is not always followed. The literacy governor gives a good level of support and works with some classes. The subject has an appropriate range of resources to ensure full coverage. There are very strong links to other subjects, particularly religious education, history and science, where pupils extend their literacy skills in a wide variety of writing styles. There are some appropriate programmes for the computer to support pupils' spelling development and many pupils word process their writing. Drama is introduced across the curriculum, especially in history, personal, social and health education and religious education. There is also a thriving and very successful out of school club. However, there is little evidence of short role-play activities being planned in literacy lessons on a regular basis. The library is a pleasant resource. It has a good range of fiction and non-fiction and pupils are able to access books confidently. Each class is timetabled to use it weekly but there could be more opportunities for pupils to browse in their spare time and to develop their independence of learning.

MATHEMATICS

90. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards are in line with national expectations. The most recent published national test results for seven-year-old pupils at the school in 2001, indicate average results compared with all schools. Standards by the end of Key Stage 2 are above national expectations and continue the pattern of results in recent national tests. Evidence from lessons and completed work shows that pupils make insufficient progress in Key Stage 1 because the pace of lessons is sometimes slow and the higher attaining pupils are not challenged enough. Pupils in Key Stage 1 go on to make very good progress in Key Stage 2. Overall progress from entry at five to the time they leave at the age of 11 is good.

91. Since the last inspection, attainment in Key Stage 1 has fallen from above the national average to be in line with the national average while at Key Stage 2 attainment is similar to the last inspection. The results vary from year to year and the increase in the number of pupils with special educational needs attending the school has some influence on the results obtained.

92. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have an appropriate mathematical vocabulary. Simple calculations are carried out satisfactorily and pupils have the expected knowledge and understanding of number bonds and facts. Year 2 pupils can identify multiples of 2, 3 and 5, subtract to 100, including money, and know halves and quarters. In shape work, pupils know the names of common two- and three- dimensional shapes. They measure in metres and centimetres and know time in quarter, half and full hours. Pupils are becoming confident when using simple block graphs. There is a great deal of reliance on the use of worksheets in the lower half of this key stage which do not make for imaginative work.

93. By age 11 pupils handle large numbers competently, using their knowledge of factors and multiples to divide and multiply six digit numbers. They solve problems using fractions and percentages and calculate averages. They handle decimals confidently showing a good awareness of the value of each digit on either side of the decimal point and the importance of zero. In their work on shape and space they measure and draw angles accurately, classify triangles and quadrilaterals and calculate perimeters and areas. They use formulae confidently when finding surface area of a cube and reach their own decisions about which is the quickest method. They interpret graphs and charts and investigate probability. Pupils' achievements are good.

94. Pupils have very good attitudes, are interested in mathematics and enthusiastic in tackling problems. Investigation work enhances their initiative and confidence in taking responsibility. They work well together in groups or pairs, but can concentrate well as individuals, too, with the concentration span increasing with age. Pupils are always courteous and smiling, well behaved and caring towards each other. Relationships are very good.

95. Overall the standard of teaching observed in Key Stage 1 is sound. However two lessons were unsatisfactory because the pace of the lessons was too slow and pupils were not challenged by the tasks provided. Throughout Key Stage 1 the tasks provided are not always sufficiently matched to challenge all the pupils and in particular the significant number of more able children. Teachers do not often challenge the pupils appropriately during mental and oral work and in a number of lessons the pace of questioning was governed by the work rate of the slower pupils. As a result, in a number of lessons more able pupils either waited patiently or even became uninterested in the activity and a significant number of pupils made insufficient progress as a result.

96. Teaching in Key Stage 2 varies from satisfactory to very good and is good overall. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and set challenging work. They encourage pupils to explain the strategies used to reach their answers. They teach skills well, and check carefully through well-directed questions whether pupils have understood new learning. As a result, pupils' understanding develops well and they grow in confidence. The teachers' lively approach and the interesting activities they provide to consolidate and extend pupils' skills result in an

enthusiasm for mathematics. Additional support is provided in some lessons in the older classes from a mathematically skilled parent to help more able pupils. This arrangement benefits all the pupils as the class teacher can give more time to the other pupils. Nevertheless, in mathematics lessons generally the work is not sufficiently well matched to different pupils' needs.

97. The school has introduced annual tests for all pupils from seven to 11 and the results are analysed and shared and discussed throughout the school. A tracking sheet has been introduced with the intention of monitoring pupils' progress over the whole key stage. Results from these tests are used to set pupil targets and are closely monitored. The quality of marking is satisfactory and work is marked regularly. However, the level of comments which guide pupils to improve further in accuracy and presentation are variable and reflect the quality of the teaching. The contribution of homework, which is set regularly in most classes, has a good impact on standards. Pupils are regularly asked to complete work and learn tables.

98. Currently the co-ordinator checks the quality of resources, teachers' planning and some teaching and learning. There is a formal procedure for the co-ordinator to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in the classrooms and he is supported in this work by the headteacher. The use of a structured form to record observations will help to provide a clear record and help with disseminating the information gained. The co-ordinator has introduced the National Numeracy Strategy with reasonable success and is arranging training for staff new to the school. As part of his monitoring role, evaluation of the effectiveness of the use of the strategy needs to be carried out, for in one or two classes the oral and mental sessions could be brisker and greater challenge offered.

SCIENCE

99. The percentage of pupils reaching the expected level in the national tests for pupils aged seven in 2001 was average when compared with pupils nationally and above average at the higher level. The performance of Year 6 pupils was close to the national average but well below the average for similar schools. Pupils are now making better progress because of the improvements made in investigational work and in the acquisition of scientific vocabulary, a result of the school's recent re-organisation of science teaching with a new scheme of work and the focus on experimentation in almost every science lesson. These changes had not been in place long enough to make a significant impression on the pupils' results in 2001. Attainment is broadly similar to that at the time of the last inspection.

100. The pupils move from the Reception class with a sound knowledge and understanding of the world around them. They build effectively on this knowledge in Years 1 and 2 through carefully planned opportunities for them to use their investigative skills to extend scientific understanding. For example they investigate what happens when materials are heated and carry out an experiment to discover which of a selection of elastic bands stretches the most. Pupils begin to realise the importance of thinking carefully before jumping to conclusions.

101. Year 6 pupils cover a wide range of scientific topics. They understand the difference between solids liquids and gases, carry out experiments to test the rate of evaporation of water under different conditions and know the effect of bacteria and germs when fighting disease. They carry out many experiments with electricity making different circuits and can group materials into those that conduct electricity and those that do not. In their study of light, pupils pay particular attention to the human eye. As they watch a video recording about sound they practise making notes. This helps prepare pupils for similar work they will experience in secondary school. Overall, improvements in science attainment this year are largely due to the increased opportunities for pupils to find things out for themselves through experimentation and research, and to recognise the impact of scientific discoveries on their everyday lives as in the pupils' research into a healthy diet.

102. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and lessons are carefully prepared to match the requirements of the National Curriculum. They link mathematics and literacy well to science work. A very good example of this was observed in a Year 6 class when pupils had completed their investigation into the forces in action when a variety of objects are immersed in water. Their recording of the results planned to the school's format of aim, resources, prediction, a fair test, results and conclusion was followed carefully and the excellent reports included graphs and accurate diagrams.

103. Improvements have been made in science teaching since the last inspection and there is now a strong and effective emphasis on teaching scientific skills throughout the school. This is the result of the introduction of more investigative work and a stronger focus on the development of scientific language. Standards have not been as impressive in recent national tests as those previously reported but there are signs that they have picked up again.

104. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 build on the good work done in earlier years. The National Curriculum Programmes of Study are now covered well since the new scheme of work was introduced. Appropriate attention continues to be given to developing investigative work and extending the understanding of scientific language. Pupils study different types of thermometers and carry out experiments to discover which type of cover keeps water warm the longest. Year 5 pupils investigate healthy eating and the effect different food groups have on their bodies. They extend their studies to the heart, planning an investigation into the effect of exercise on their pulse rate. Year 6 pupils take notes from a video recording about sound. They respond very enthusiastically to the class teacher's challenge to seek answers to his questions by listening and watching carefully. They learn the connection between vibration and pitch and how the human ear works.

105. During the inspection the quality of teaching was never less than satisfactory. In half the lessons it was good and in Year 6 it was very good. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and lessons are carefully prepared to match the requirements of the National Curriculum. Almost all teachers share what is to be learned during the lesson with pupils, so that they understand the purpose and relevance of their work. Skilful questioning is used to check pupils' scientific knowledge, to develop thinking skills and to extend their understanding of scientific language. Teachers ensure that safety is often mentioned. During a Year 2 lesson when they made electric circuits using batteries, teachers referred to safety in the home when using electrical equipment. The good teaching has a significant impact on the quality of learning and is reflected in the attitude of pupils, who are eager to learn. They handle equipment and resources with care, help each other and many take pride in the presentation of their work. This is particularly noticeable in the books of more able pupils in the Years 3 to 6. Pupils show interest, enthusiasm and excitement when involved in practical activities. For many pupils in the Year 2 classes there was a moment of wonder when, having struggled to fix their batteries, wires and bulbs in the correct way, the bulb lit up. Pupils who have special educational needs are given work suited to their abilities, always linked to the whole-class curriculum and supported well by teachers and teaching assistants. As a result they make good progress in their learning.

106. The co-ordinator over the last two years has worked hard to improve provision in science. She has drawn up a policy and a new scheme of work, supported by a commercial scheme, which ensures that the curriculum is well planned according to the latest national guidelines. Good assessment systems have recently been developed. An analysis of pupils' work has been carried out across the school and areas for development have been reported back to teachers. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' plans regularly and any problems are dealt with quickly. Teachers constantly encourage pupils to link science to literacy through writing reports of scientific investigations and to

mathematics through recording results in graphs and tables. When Year 6 pupils had completed their investigation into the immersion of objects in water in connection with their work on forces, they recorded the work well and included graphs and accurate diagrams. Information and communication technology is not yet being used widely in science. Resources are satisfactory and well stored. They are being upgraded to support the new scheme of work. Overall the subject is well managed and the co-ordinator has a firm commitment to raising standards throughout the school.

ART AND DESIGN

107. Standards of the work seen are broadly in line with the national expectation for pupils aged seven and 11 representing an improvement in standards in Key Stage 1 since the last inspection. At each age group there are some whose work exceeds expectations, particularly in three-dimensional work, but also some whose work is below average. In Year 1, pupils begin to develop a 'feel' for a range of different materials. For example, some use clay, grasses, shells, cotton wool among other materials to create sculptures in a box. These portray gardens, moorland scenes or seashore still life, some of which use the texture of the material very effectively. Many show a good degree of spontaneity when working in paint and produce abstract paintings full of colour and vigour. In Year 2, they extend their skills to work in other media. Many can produce imaginative pictures by cutting out part of a magazine photograph and recreate the rest of the picture around it. Some are able to use computer art programs to produce eye-catching invitations to a party. Sometimes groups of pupils work well together on large three-dimensional projects. An example of this is the mosque on display, made of painted card for the walls and gold collage for the dome, capturing some of the essence of the type of architecture and decoration associated with these buildings. Many begin to develop their observational skills as they reach the end of Key Stage 1. For example, some make a reasonable attempt to produce realistic pictures of natural objects like flowers or feathers and a few are able to capture some of the lightness of such objects. Most pupils greatly enjoy working in clay and some produce imaginative tiles with three-dimensional patterns.

108. As they move through Key Stage 2, many develop their skills in using paint and pastels. Some use colour printing of blocks of paint to create lively patterns in Year 3. As they grow older, pupils are introduced to a wider range of works of other artists. Many in Year 4 are able to draw in the style of Van Gogh for example in their pastel drawings capturing something of his intensive use of colour. In Year 5, this develops further and many pupils used a lighted candle as the inspiration for very effective pastel drawings on a black background, with some able to reproduce the movement of the flickering flame. Year 6 continue this idea of movement in pictures by using tissue paper stuck onto card to represent a series of moving figures to good effect. Pupils' skills in observational drawing continue to develop. For example by Year 6, many can draw a shoe realistically using pencil shading to give their drawings depth. However, this skill is not always carried into their drawings of the human face. These are seldom produced in anything other than full face view and few pupils can create the sense of light and shadow which would bring their drawings to life. A few pupils have a good sense of pattern and some effective work was seen where the contrast between smooth and spiky patterns was achieved effectively. The emphasis on three-dimensional art and the continuous building of these skills results in many in Year 6 being able to create very effectively repulsive masks of Macbeth's three witches using a wide variety of materials imaginatively. A few work very hard on the small details giving their work that extra impact. Little evidence was available to show how well pupils learn to blend paint colours smoothly to create a range of different effects. At each key stage, pupils work well with each other offering suggestions or sharing materials within their groups.

109. Pupils make steady progress overall. They make good progress in some particular areas like three-dimensional work, an improvement on the last inspection. Some members of staff still lack confidence in teaching the subject and this affects the standards of pupils' work. The curriculum has been given a better focus and structure by using optional national guidelines for the scheme of work to ensure full coverage of the required areas of study. Since the last inspection there is a wider variety of materials available for pupils to work with and they are given more opportunities to experiment and

use their own creativity. Resources have been reviewed and are now adequate to meet the demands of the curriculum. The links with other subjects remain good and pupils are encouraged to illustrate their work in history, geography and religious education and to do scientific diagrams. However, because pupils only have art and design in alternate half-terms, and there are long spells without specific art lessons, there is not sufficient opportunity for them to develop skills systematically in the art curriculum and this affects the pupils' overall progress.

110. The quality of teaching in lessons ranges from satisfactory to very good, depending to a large extent on the confidence of the teacher. Where it is strongest, the pupils are encouraged to experiment with different materials and to use their imaginations without too much input from the teacher, as seen in the Year 6 witch masks. Pupils are given the opportunity to develop their sense of the texture of materials for example, when kneading moist clay in preparation for moulding a tile or a small sculpture. Pupils are asked to plan their work so that they form an idea of what they want the outcome to be from the start and they can adapt and experiment in their sketchbooks. Preparation for lessons is often good so that both pupils and teacher have the necessary materials or resources to hand, allowing the lesson to flow smoothly. At the end of some lessons there is an opportunity for pupils to assess their own work and that of others and to suggest how it could improve. However, in some lessons, the pupils simply show what they have done without any critical appreciation and an opportunity for them to build on their skills is lost. Where the teacher lacks confidence, the explanations of the set task are sometimes not sufficiently detailed to give the pupils a clear idea of what is required. In some lessons, the teacher does not give any direction by role modelling to suggest how pupils could improve their technique.

111. The subject co-ordinator is only very recently in post so it is not possible as yet to judge her effectiveness. Time is allocated for the management of the subject but this is usually in the morning. Since art and design lessons are in the afternoon, it is not possible to monitor the quality of teaching. Each class has a collection of some of the work the pupils have done but there is not a whole school portfolio, which would help the co-ordinator to gain an overview of progress and standards. Such a portfolio would also show the full range of techniques in a variety of media the pupils acquire. There are plans to set an art competition, which would provide some insight into the general standard of art and design throughout the school. There is a curriculum overview, which designates what each class will do at which part of the term. Class planning is monitored termly to ensure that the programmes of study are being covered. There has been no recent in-service training but the co-ordinator gives informal support where she can. Work is often displayed to advantage and some money has recently been spent on framing materials to add value to pupils' work. There are good links with other subjects in the curriculum. The work pupils do in literacy often acts as a source of inspiration for art and design work. For example Roald Dahl's 'Matilda' or Tolkien's 'Lord of the Rings' prompted the pupils into some very effective illustrations for the text which helps to strengthen the pupils' understanding of the characters. Computer software programmes are sometimes used as a different media in which the pupils can express themselves. Geography, history, religious education and science all provide further opportunities for the pupils to develop different techniques of draughtsmanship.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

112. Due to time-tabling restrictions during the course of the inspection only one Key Stage 1 lesson was observed. However, a sample of pupils' work from Years 1 to Year 6 was scrutinised, displays examined and discussions held with teachers and pupils. From this evidence, pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with the national expectations. Standards in Key Stage 2 are above national expectations. These judgements are similar to those at the last inspection.

113. Pupils in Year 1 learn to plan and design a bowl of fruit salad. They understand the term 'ingredients' as they make a choice of fruit to use in their salad. They can recall the previous lesson when they tried and tasted a variety of fruits remembering the term 'citrus.' They draw from their home experiences to discuss the foods they know. One pupil gave a full description of the art of peeling an avocado. The pupils enjoy designing a pattern to surround the bowls. Pupils in Year 1 also learn to make a moving picture of a firework. Completed work by Year 2 pupils is attractively displayed and shows the satisfactory standards achieved. Pupils use different sized axles and wheels to make cars that move. The cars are used in a science investigation to see how far their own car will travel. One pupil in his evaluation of the project wrote, 'It was fun.'

114. Year 2 pupils learn to sew simple stitches and to attach materials. They plan and design a puppet learning to cut and stick materials together. The pupils learn to evaluate the finished product and to suggest improvements to their designs and the methods and materials used. Some pupils suggested that the choice of glue was a problem as the noses of some of the puppets fell off. Boys and girls, including those of high ability and pupils with special needs, make satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding of the key skills of the subject.

115. In Key Stage 2 pupils consolidate their design and technology skills. Year 3 pupils learn to make photograph frames constructing a prototype before they decide upon the final design. They learn to cook using a packet mix. However in one Year 3 class, some of the written accounts of the project were poorly presented and incomplete.

116. The sewing skills acquired by pupils are further developed in Year 4 during a project to make a money container using a choice of fabrics and fasteners. Year 4 pupils also have a good idea of the processes involved in making a torch. They make a choice of the appropriate tool required and develop an understanding of the materials and their uses. The pupils evaluate their completed design and product critically. Their books reflect the good standards they achieve. The designs are carefully drawn and illustrated and their evaluations are constructive and honest.

117. The very good standards of work in Years 5 and 6 are to be seen in all the projects that are undertaken. The shelters designed by Year 6 pupils have many original features that are carefully illustrated. The methods of construction together with plans and measurements and the problems that have to be overcome before the shelters are habitable are described accurately. Year 5 pupils learn to research many types of bread products before embarking upon making bread and designing their own packaging. This linked very well to other areas of the curriculum and the quality of pupils' work was good. Pupils in Year 5 make musical instruments and make toys with moveable parts of good quality.

118. The pupils' attitudes to the subject are good. They enjoy planning and making their own designs and they work co-operatively together in pairs and groups.

119. The quality of teaching overall is good and it is very good at the end of Key Stage 2. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject as evidenced in the Year 5 project on moving toys. They plan and use resources effectively and manage the pupils well. Work is sometimes marked with constructive comments as seen in one Year 4 class, but this is not the case throughout the school.

120. The co-ordinator has written a policy that addresses cross-curricular links, health and safety practices and is fully inclusive. There is a separate scheme of work which provides an effective framework for learning. The satisfactory range of resources is labelled and stored safely. The kitchen area is very well equipped. Monitoring of the subject is not fully in place but photographic evidence provides some assessment opportunities. The recording of individual pupil progress, skills and understanding of the subject is unsatisfactory.

GEOGRAPHY

121. Pupils reach the expected standards in geography by the end of both key stages and these are similar to those at the time of the last inspection. National Curriculum Programmes of Study are fulfilled. A scheme of work is in place which enables the pupils to build up their geographical skills sequentially so that by Year 6 pupils can use atlases independently for research purposes assisted by their ability to find out other information from reference material. Pupils make sound progress in the subject.

122. By age seven pupils can find their own home on a map of the local area and plot the distribution of homes of children in the class. Pupils understand that people of the world live in different circumstances and compare their own life-style with that of people in Ghana through the detailed study of life in a village. They are familiar with the day-to-day life of a child and its family through studying the village crops and how they are grown, cooking styles and sources of water. They make a study of the weather in their own vicinity and plot it daily on a chart and use this to make comparisons with other places. They become familiar with the concept of a key by using their study of a Ghanaian village to make maps and they reference their maps with key symbols for the water pump, well and mosque.

123. By the end of Year 6 pupils are familiar with some of the major mountainous zones of the world, can name them and find their location on a world map, using the index where necessary. They study water and its uses both industrially and for domestic purposes and can give some reasons why water consumption is high on farms and in the leisure industry. They further their knowledge of life around the world by studying village life in India and the means of irrigation for their crops. They appreciate the hydrological cycle and pollution through acid rain. They make particular studies of rivers around the world such as the Orinoco and compare this with the Severn through their own research. They know a little about the physical features of rivers such as deltas. Occasional good use is made of the computer for example to draw a plan of the classroom to scale as in a Year 5 class complete with colour key.

124. The quality of teaching in the lessons observed was sound overall in both key stages but with some examples of good practice evident in the scrutiny of work, as in the use the computer for scale drawing. Teachers manage their pupils well in lessons and pupils show good levels of interest in their work. Year 6 pupils were seen researching their work on mountainous zones to good effect and learning much about mountain ranges and their features across the world. Pupils research enthusiastically at home. In lessons pupils cooperate together well and are polite when listening to the views of others. They discuss well in groups to share ideas.

125. The co-ordinator manages the subject soundly but does not have opportunities to observe teaching and learning because the arrangements for co-ordinator release do not coincide with geography teaching. She checks teachers' long- and medium-term planning. Resources for the subject are satisfactory overall but video clips, globes and atlases are in short supply to support the work in the subject.

HISTORY

126. Standard in history have been maintained since the last inspection and are in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and above national expectations at Key Stage 2. No lessons were observed in Key Stage 1 and evidence was obtained from teachers' planning and pupils' work. Four lessons were observed in Key Stage 2 and these were good or very good.

127. In Year 1 pupils are developing their understanding of chronology and this is carried forward throughout Key Stage 1, resulting in pupils beginning to establish a satisfactory sense of past and present. Work, such as their comparison of hospitals at the time of Florence Nightingale and today,

helps with the development of their understanding. Pupils demonstrate good recall of facts from topics they have studied such as the Great Fire of London.

128. In Key Stage 2 pupils have good opportunities to build on their knowledge through more detailed studies and good use of visits. An illustration of this was in Year 5 where the pupils are studying the censuses of 1851 and 1881 to find out any differences or changes and to try and relate this to what was happening during Victorian Times. An illustration of the good use of visits was seen in a lesson in Year 4 where the teacher used a recent visit to Solgrave Manor to help pupils distinguish between the life-styles of the rich and the poor in Tudor times.

129. Throughout the key stage emphasis is placed on pupils searching for information and the formation of questions to help them to develop their knowledge and understanding. These skills are put to good use by pupils in Year 6 who, in their work on the twentieth century, have carried out independent research, resulting in interesting, well presented folders on the lives of people, such as Winston Churchill, Mother Teresa and Charlie Chaplin. Good use of information technology has been used to help with the presentation of work and the world wide web as well as CD ROMs to gather information to help with the work. It is the pupils' keen interest in following up their studies, their ability to reason and the use of different sources of evidence to form their views which helps the pupils' attainment to be above expectations by age 11.

130. The quality of teaching and learning is good, stimulates pupils' learning and enthuses them so that they make good progress. Teachers plan in detail to present interesting and worthwhile activities for them. The teachers are enthusiastic and bring the subject alive. Teachers use questioning effectively to check knowledge and understanding and pupils are well managed.

131. The co-ordinator has only recently taken over responsibility for the subject but has already drawn up an action plan for developing the curriculum. The policy for history has recently been updated and the school has the Qualification and Assessment scheme of work in place. Resources to support this scheme of work have been identified and their purchase is being considered. Assessment and record keeping within history are unsatisfactory and in need of development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

132. Standards in information and communication technology meet expectations by ages seven and 11 and are similar to those at the time of the last inspection. The curriculum is well planned and gives pupils the opportunity to engage in the full range of studies laid down in the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. The work is supported by a detailed scheme of work.

133. By age seven pupils can write in different formats and with different fonts. They use the computer effectively in some lessons across the curriculum, for example in science to label different parts of the body, although the current lack of class computers, shortly to be addressed, restricts the general opportunities for applying general classroom work across the curriculum. Pupils can log on, save and print their own work. Pupils manipulate the mouse well, as in a Year 1 class when they placed items of food on a shelf whilst classifying healthy and non-healthy foods. They can move the cursor by using the arrow keys and they can use the space bar to separate jumbled words and the return key to make lists of items. They can select colours and use art programs to draw and colour in. They can program a moving toy by planning and calculating a route on the floor. By age 11 pupils use the computer effectively both at school and at home for research purposes, as when studying mountainous areas in geography and in researching the work and life of authors and poets. They know how to use e-mail and have their own class address. They can interpret data programs and use the term 'field' correctly. They can enter their own data and interrogate the information. They learn about aspects of the tools icon and techniques such as 'autocorrect' which they can apply to the written text. They learn to use control techniques and to operate sensing programs. They can use spreadsheets.

134. The quality of teaching observed in Key Stage 1 was sound and good in Key Stage 2. The overall quality in the subject is good with examples of very good teaching in upper Key Stage 2. Teachers' confidence has been increased by the training they have had and this shows in the way that they can demonstrate techniques to pupils in lessons. Pupils learn quickly when shown new techniques and make good progress in lessons. They work enthusiastically and show good levels of interest. Overall progress, however, is affected by the limited access to computers on a daily basis but nevertheless progress is sound overall and assisted by the large number of pupils who have personal computers at home.

135. In a very good Year 5 lesson pupils were taught sensing techniques to analyse temperature and light. The teacher's very good knowledge and explanation of the program enabled the pupils to apply the skills for themselves. The very good demonstration absorbed the pupils and they were enthralled to see the changes on the monitor gauges when the sensor was immersed in hot water. The pupils were challenged and made to think throughout the lesson with good questioning techniques, which kept the pupils on their toes. The very good initial demonstration taught the pupils how to use the program for sensing temperature and light, and included links with science through the reference to fair testing when conducting the experiment. Pupils were then set the problem of finding out which colour from different coloured plastics would make the best pair of sunglasses by working out the colour which let in the least amount of light. The pupils worked with very good application on the challenge and were thoroughly absorbed in the task. They worked cooperatively in small groups of three and concluded it successfully.

136. Hardware and software resources for the subject are satisfactory and used efficiently in the small information and communication technology suite which can accommodate half a class. Better use could be made however of the digital camera and scanner. The school recognises the limitations of the current provision as computers are not readily available in classrooms but is taking action to improve the situation. The co-ordinator has had an opportunity to observe teaching. She is managing the subject effectively in other respects also and has been involved in the ordering of new equipment and the setting up of a new record of pupils' progress.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

137. French makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development. It is taught to Years 5 and 6 pupils for one period weekly of 40 minutes each. Year 4 pupils are able to opt in to French as an extra-curricular opportunity. The subject gives the pupils a suitable grounding for their secondary school studies in the language. Standards by the end of Year 6 standards are appropriate for the pupils' age and similar to those reported in the previous inspection.

138. By the age of eleven pupils know some basic French, such as the French words for items of clothes, animals, months of the year, members of the family, numbers, colours and the use of gender in French words in nominating pronouns and nouns. They can put together short sentences to describe the wearing of clothes such as 'Elle porte la jupe verte'. Pupils' responses are usually accurate but as yet often hesitant. Pupils show satisfactory levels of interest in Year 6. Many pupils are confident to speak and have a go. The teaching of French in Year 6 is sound. Lessons are well prepared. The French teacher's pronunciation is satisfactory but better use of audio and visual tapes would add to the quality of teaching and to the pupils' interest. The teaching in Year 5 is of good quality. The teacher has a good French accent and moves the learning on briskly. In the lesson observed good use was made of number fans as pupils calculated in French. They know their numbers to 20 in French and some know them to 50. Several pupils in the class could count backwards in French from 20. With adult help they were able to count in fives to 50. Pupils enjoyed the lesson. The techniques used by the teacher helped pupils to concentrate. Good use was made of the French alphabet by the teacher in a game situation. Each pupil had a car number plate and the pupils had to recognise their own as the numbers and letters were called out.

139. The co-ordinator has good skills and a thorough knowledge of the language. The school is still debating the best scheme to use for the pupils in view of the limited amount of time which can be devoted to the subject.

MUSIC

140. Pupils' attainments are at expected levels in general class music judged against National Curriculum Programmes of Study and similar to those at the time of the previous inspection. However, some pupils achieve standards above national expectations due to the opportunities afforded to them by peripatetic instrumental music lessons, through the regular music clubs and by some specialist teaching.

141. Pupils in Key Stage 1 learn to sing, clap and march in time to the beat. They develop their knowledge and understanding of dynamics and pulse with the aid of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. Pupils in Year 1 learn to develop their listening and imaginative skills by relating the sounds of everyday life, such as the noises heard in shops to the sounds of percussive instruments.

142. Pupils in Year 2 consolidate their knowledge of percussion instruments and identify which ones are shaken or beaten. They select their choice of instrument to play and can explain the sound they create. In one satisfactory lesson observed in Year 2, pupils worked in friendship groups to compose short rhythmic pieces to represent walking and running movements. They understand the use of symbols to represent notes and rhythms. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their ability to recognise dynamics, tempo, musical patterns and mood.

143. In Key Stage 2 pupils consolidate their musical skills and make satisfactory progress in all aspects of the subject. In Years 5 and 6 pupils make good progress.

144. In one good lesson observed in Year 3, pupils learnt to use instruments to represent specific animal movements, such as cats and snakes. They listened to and enjoyed Saint Saen's 'Carnival of Animals' and could explain which animal was described in sound. They responded enthusiastically to each other's attempts to play a percussion instrument that represented their choice of creature.

145. During one very good lesson observed in Year 5, pupils built upon their listening and rhythmic skills. In their four groups they clapped four different rhythms listening to the other groups whilst still maintaining their own part. They thoroughly enjoyed the task of layering rhythms resulting in an exciting rhythmic composition. A further example of the pupil's ability to combine complex rhythmic patterns was apparent as in their groups they clapped the specific rhythms attached to the words of a song. The final performance resembled the sounds of a cotton mill.

146. In another good lesson observed in Year 6 pupils used their sense of rhythm to discuss the beat and tempo of the song 'Give peace a chance' by John Lennon. They explained in a mature manner how the beat defines the meaning of the lyrics. The lesson developed the social and moral awareness of the pupils as they thought of issues that they felt strongly about, for example, fox hunting, drug abuse, racism and bullying. Pupils worked in co-operation to compose the lyrics of a four-line chorus of protest. One pupil sang her completed composition to the admiration of the class. Pupils made good progress in their understanding and skills of composition.

147. Pupils throughout the school, including those with special needs, enjoy all aspects of music. They behave well in the class lessons and concentrate in order to complete an activity. In some lessons the quality of singing is just satisfactory but overall the majority of pupils make good progress in singing. They are able to sing in two parts in time and tune whilst many pupils in Years 5 and 6 can sing harmoniously in three parts.

148. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is sound and it is good in Key Stage 2. Where teaching is good the depth of planning and the effective use of resources are matched to the skills and knowledge of the pupils. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 make greater progress in composition due to the fact that a teacher with specialist knowledge of music is time-tabled to teach them. This helps them to make good progress. The school has also appointed a specialist music teacher to teach in both key stages for one afternoon a week. This again has improved the standards of singing and performing as is evidence by the senior choir who were about to perform at the Royal Albert Hall in London.

149. Teaching is weaker when the teacher has insufficient knowledge of the subject and resources or does not know the pupils well. This can lead to pupils misbehaving. Formal individual assessment of pupils is not in place, although the units of work are assessed.

150. The school has satisfactory information and communication technology facilities that are harnessed for the development of the music curriculum, although at the time of the inspection computers were not used for composition. This is an area of the subject that should be developed further.

151. The temporary co-ordinator has rewritten the music policy and has introduced some additions to the scheme of work. Resources are stored tidily and are clearly labelled. The school has a number of instruments from other countries adding to the multi-cultural aspect of learning and to the knowledge and skills of the pupils. There is also a range of percussion instruments available in every classroom. This is an improvement since the last inspection. An increasing number of pupils' benefit from instrumental tuition and the musical clubs that are held after school hours. At present their talents are not harnessed in a school orchestra. However, the school holds an annual musical evening in the summer term that is popular with pupils, parents and the wider community.

152. Pupils respond to music with enthusiasm and enjoyment. It contributes to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

153. Attainment is above that expected nationally by the end of Years 2 and 6 and similar to that at the time of the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress throughout the school. Swimming lessons are available for Year 4 pupils and the majority of pupils reach the national expectation of swimming 25 metres by the time they leave the school, and many can swim considerably more than this. The good standards identified in the previous inspection have been maintained.

154. During the inspection pupils were observed in gymnastics, dance and games. In a Year 1 gymnastics lesson, the pupils were aware of the need to warm up gradually at the beginning of the lesson counting their movements to the beat of the music and making an important link with their mathematics development. At the end of the sequence pupils checked their heartbeat, which helped them to understand the importance of exercise. Pupils practised three different jumps improving their style and adding other movements to their jumps as they listened to the music. Gradually they developed these sequences to a high standard and could perform these, involving the use of large apparatus such as agility tables, benches and mats. Year 2 pupils reached a good standard in their dance lesson which was part of a sequence of lessons on African dance. Pupils practised balancing and moving with style before attempting to move in a similar way to the beat of the go-go drums and cowbells.

155. By the time they are 11, pupils have made good progress in their physical development. The school makes very good use of its playing field which affords excellent facilities for games. Pupils are involved in other sporting activities, such as cross country running, rounders, cricket and athletics at appropriate times of the year. Parents organise football training at weekends. Year 6 pupils were

observed improving their skills in football and hockey. Year 5 pupils were observed in a very good dance lesson. It was the second of a series and the pupils were set the task of choreographing their dance movements set to traditional music. The pupils explored the beat patterns, counting in 16s before deciding on their dance. After an appropriate time to practice, the groups were keen to perform the dance routines they had planned. This gave pupils opportunities to work collaboratively. At the end of their performances the generous applause of their friends helped boost the pupils' self-esteem.

156. Pupils have good attitudes to physical education and enjoy their work. They are enthusiastic, work hard and their behaviour is good. All staff and pupils change appropriately for physical education lessons. Teachers are keen to have pupils changed quickly at the beginning and end of lessons. In the Year 1 class the teacher arranged an egg timer which the pupils tried to beat as they placed their clothes neatly on their desks when they were changed. They persevere to refine their skills and collaborate effectively in pairs, groups and teams, listening attentively to instructions. Pupils are willing to accept responsibility, for example, being team leaders in games. They concentrate well and have an awareness of the need for safety and that other pupils need space. Some pupils show initiative, for example, when inventing new ways to move on the floor or along apparatus. Most pupils are courteous to each other and respect each other's efforts and contributions.

157. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory and in half the lessons observed it was very good. Teachers have a secure understanding of the requirements of the National Curriculum, and plan lessons in sequence which build up pupils' skills systematically. Lessons are organised effectively and move briskly from one activity to the next so that pupils' interest and concentration are engaged. Teachers have a very good rapport with their pupils and transfer their own enthusiasm for the subject to the pupils.

158. The co-ordinator took over in September 2001. She is well qualified to lead the subject and the management of the subject is good. An effective policy and a scheme of work provide guidance on the development of skills. Resources of small apparatus are satisfactory. The accommodation is good. The school is fortunate to have a very large playing field for games and a good-sized hall for gymnastics and dance. Assessment is at a very early stage of development. The school takes part in local competitions in netball, football and cross-country running. Extra-curricular activities in sport are an important feature of the school. The school's general commitment to a spirit of fair play and teamwork in games and outdoor activities means that physical education makes a very good contribution to pupils' moral and social development.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

159. The observation of lessons, displays of work throughout the school and discussions with pupils and teachers indicate that pupils are attaining standards above those expected in the Buckinghamshire Agreed Syllabus at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils' learning is good overall and pupils with special educational needs are included in all activities and are well supported. They make progress in their learning in line with their ability, as a result of additional help from their teacher or support worker. Overall level of attainment is similar to that found at the previous inspection.

160. By the age of seven, pupils reach above the expected standards in their knowledge and understanding. Pupils learn that some people go on special journeys for religious reasons which are called pilgrimages. They have a secure understanding of the Christian festivals such as Christmas, Easter and harvest. Pupils in Year 1 were able to discuss with their teacher why Jesus was special. They enjoyed the story about Jesus being lost and being found by his parents in the temple. Pupils could understand how his parents felt when they found him. This story gave the teacher the opportunity to link their thoughts to Mother's Day which was being celebrated on the Sunday after the inspection. Year 1 pupils link their study of the Christian faith to people who help us, remembering the work of Mother Teresa in India as an example. During the week before the inspection the pupils in Year 2 had visited the local church. In the lesson observed they discussed their visit before writing a

letter of thanks to the vicar. Pupils had found the visit very enjoyable and remembered many things they had seen, such as the font, the cross, the pulpit and the lectern and what they were used for. All pupils took a keen interest in the lesson and pupils learned the importance of saying 'thank you'.

161. Year 3 pupils understand the story of the creation as told in the Bible. They are keen to display their knowledge of Adam and Eve and other stories from the Old Testament. All year groups are given opportunities to think for themselves during religious education lessons. Teachers often take the opportunity to link religious education lessons with literacy, for example when Year 6 studied the Prophets in the Old Testament they worked independently to write a prophetic announcement appropriate to today on subjects of their own choosing such as racism, war between nations and animal testing. Their writing was of a very high standard, often reflecting the language of the prophets of old. Year 3 pupils study festivals in different religions for example Yom Kippur and Ramadan. They produce their own Rangoli patterns as they study Hinduism. Year 4 understand the importance of light in different religions looking especially at The Christingle Service. Year 5 pupils understand the role of the Imam as a local faith leader who has the responsibility of leading worship and educating others in aspects of Islam. By the time pupils reach the age of 11 they have gained a deeper knowledge and understanding of the different religions of the world.

162. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They have very good relationships with their teachers. The majority of pupils show interest by being attentive in lessons and by confidently offering views and opinions. Responses to questions are thoughtful and relevant. Pupils are well motivated and able to work in groups with minimum supervision. This is most noticeable in Years 5 and 6. The behaviour is good. Pupils respect each other's work and contributions and take good care of resources.

163. The quality of teaching is always satisfactory with almost half being very good. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject. They use precise, specific language in their discussions with the pupils in order to increase their vocabulary in a structured way. Pupils are later questioned and encouraged to respond, using the newly acquired words correctly, so demonstrating that they have learned and understood the specialist language. This was particularly noticeable in a Year 6 lesson. Teachers interest and motivate pupils through the provision of a wide range of activities so that they can build on earlier learning. For example, in the Year 2 lesson on pilgrimages, the teacher showed pupils souvenirs she had brought back from her own journey to the Holy Land. Year 5 pupils listened to the replies they had received from religious leaders before writing an advertisement for an Imam after discussing what qualities he would need to fulfil his responsibilities. Teachers introduce lessons with sensitivity and incorporate questioning well to stimulate thought and to capture pupils' interest. Questioning is also used as an assessment tool to ensure that all pupils understand the work. Teachers use discussion in the subject as another way of improving pupils' skills of speaking and extending their vocabulary. Lessons are well planned and include clear direction for staff supporting pupils who need additional help with particular activities. The standard of presentation, especially of the older pupils is very good. Teachers mark work carefully and this helps pupils to improve their future work.

164. The management of the subject is good. Some improvement to resources has been possible since the previous inspection but the subject co-ordinator is well aware that extra artefacts are still required to support the new locally Agreed Syllabus which has only been available for a year. Religious education makes a significant contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, in a moment of awe and wonder, pupils described how lovely it was in the church when the colours of the stained glass windows were reflected on the floor. One pupil wrote, "I saw all the colours of the rainbow and it was lovely".