

INSPECTION REPORT

KINTBURY ST MARY'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

KINTBURY

LEA area: West Berkshire

Unique reference number: 109967

Headteacher: Mrs Barbara O'Dwyer

Reporting inspector: Mr Fred Riches
23235

Dates of inspection: 15-18 January 2001

Inspection number: 207451

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
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Gainsborough Avenue Kintbury Nr Hungerford West Berkshire
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R Hutchings
Date of previous inspection:	2-5 November 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23235	Fred Riches	Registered inspector	English; art; design and technology; music; English as an additional language.	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
09528	Derek Bowers	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23812	Carol Slade	Team inspector	Science; geography; history; foundation stage; special educational needs.	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
30618	Paul Story	Team inspector	Mathematics; information and communication technology; physical education; religious education; equal opportunities.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This Church of England Voluntary Controlled school has 123 boys and girls on roll aged four to eleven. All come from Kintbury and the surrounding area. Two pupils are bilingual. None are learning English as an additional language. Pupils are almost entirely of white European origin. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school covers a wide range, but is broadly average overall. Six per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is below average. The school has just under 18 per cent of pupils on its register of special educational need. This is broadly average. Three pupils have statements of special educational need.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Pupils of all abilities in all classes are achieving well in most subjects, especially literacy and numeracy. This is a result of good teaching and firm leadership and management. Kintbury St Mary's is an effective school. It gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils of all abilities achieve well in literacy and numeracy, reaching appropriately high standards.
- Behaviour in lessons is very good; pupils show positive attitudes towards their work.
- Teaching is of good, and often very good quality: careful planning, well-chosen activities and very good relationships promote effective learning.
- Staff make good use of improved assessment systems to ensure that higher attainers and pupils with special educational needs do as well as they can.
- The school has a clear educational direction as a result of the sustained effort of the deputy head, staff and governors and the vision of the new headteacher.
- The school makes very good provision for children starting school.

What could be improved

- Pupils are not achieving as well as they could in art and design and technology and information and communication technology (ICT) in junior classes, because pupils are given insufficient opportunity to learn, practise and consolidate their skills in these subjects; the junior mathematics curriculum also lacks breadth.
- The school does not put sufficient emphasis on preparing pupils for life in a multi-ethnic society.
- The school needs to simplify its strategic plans for development and to establish a long-term view alongside immediate priorities and aspects to be maintained.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good improvement since the last inspection in November 1998, which found serious weaknesses. Through dedicated teamwork, the teaching staff have overcome these. Pupils' work and teachers' records demonstrate clearly that pupils of all abilities now achieve well as a result of the high quality of teaching and assessment. The school has put appropriate planning in place for the youngest pupils and is about to improve facilities for them still further. With effective support from the local education authority and diocese, the school has enabled the governing body to play a full and active part in leadership and management during a time of change. Standards, the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of leadership and management have all improved considerably.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	D	A	B	A
Mathematics	D	C	B	B
Science	E	C	D	E

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

Similar schools are those with between 8 and 20 per cent of pupils eligible for free school meals

The table shows particularly strong improvement in English and mathematics, from below to above average. Standards in English were well above the national average in 1999 and well above similar schools in 2000. Results in science show an upward trend not fully reflected in the table because of a sharp rise in the national trend. There has in fact been a 31 per cent increase in the number of pupils at Kintbury reaching the standard level. In the current year pupils of all abilities are achieving well. This is a direct result of high quality teaching and effective assessment throughout the school. For small schools, variations in comparative tables also reflect the nature of particular year groups. While standards in all other year groups are average or above, those in the current Year 6 are below average overall because of the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. These pupils receive good support and are doing well. Higher attainers are also recognised and challenged to do their best. The school is on track to meet the targets it has set for pupils' attainment in literacy and numeracy in 2001 and 2002. Music is a subject where pupils do well, largely due to additional activities organised. Standards in art, design and technology, and ICT are not as good as they could be in junior classes.

The pattern of improvement is also reflected in results of tests at age seven. In 2000, these were above average in reading and writing, and average in mathematics and science. Standards in the current Year 2 are above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils have very positive attitudes towards school. They enjoy their learning, participate readily and concentrate well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. In many lessons it is very good. The large majority of pupils show good self-control and behave appropriately around the school and at break times.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils show care for each other and a sense of responsibility in the way they carry out tasks. They work and play co-operatively with their peers.
Attendance	Very good. Well above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Good	Good

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

Teaching is excellent in six per cent of lessons, very good in a further 36 per cent and good in a further 46 per cent. This means that 88 per cent of lessons are of good quality or even better. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. The high quality teaching is spread throughout the school and is its major strength. All staff teach the skills of literacy and numeracy very well. Teachers assess pupils very carefully to check their progress in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Careful planning takes these assessments into account. Teachers therefore support pupils with special educational needs well, deploying assistants to offer effective help. They also recognise and challenge higher attainers successfully. Expectations are high for all pupils. They learn successfully because of the positive adult-pupil relationships and the balance of encouragement and challenge. Pupils like and respect their teachers and concentrate well as a result of these relationships and the well-matched tasks set. In the few subjects where junior pupils are not achieving as well as they should, this is due to curriculum organisation and timetabling, not to any weakness in teaching.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. Good for reception children; broad and balanced for infants. Insufficient breadth in art, design and technology and ICT for juniors. Good provision for literacy and numeracy throughout the school, but too few opportunities to carry out mathematical investigations and use data.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Teachers assess and understand pupils' needs well and set well-matched tasks to ensure they meet individual targets. Caring assistants provide good additional support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall. Social and moral development is good, largely because of the positive role models provided by adults and the systems for providing pupils with responsibilities. Spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Examples of good practice are not yet embedded in the school's systems. The school does not do enough to prepare pupils for life in a multicultural society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. Teachers know the pupils and their families well. Arrangements for child protection and health and safety are secure. Staff have worked extremely hard to develop very good assessment procedures and use them well.

The school's partnership with parents is satisfactory overall. The school provides clear written information and benefits from a supportive Parent Teacher Association.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. Over recent months, the acting headteacher and temporary senior management team have created a positive team spirit and set a clear educational direction, focusing on raising achievement in English, mathematics and science.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well. Governors have developed a clear set of procedures. They have successfully addressed weaknesses and now give positive, reflective monitoring support.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good overall. Very good action taken to address weaknesses and meet targets. Development planning is too complicated, however, and lacks a long-term, strategic view.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Resources were targeted fully towards the priorities set after the last inspection, with very successful outcomes. Financial control is very good. The school applies the principles of best value well.

The school is well staffed. Accommodation and grounds are of good quality, though in need of some refurbishment and development. Learning resources are satisfactory overall, with strengths in ICT and English, but there are weaknesses in large apparatus for physical education, which is awkward to manoeuvre for younger pupils, and design and technology.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The inspection team received 23 replies from 121 questionnaires sent out. 28 parents attended the meeting.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school. • They make good progress. • Teaching is good. • Staff are approachable. • An appropriate amount of homework is set. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside school. • The school's partnership with parents. • The behaviour of some pupils. • Information about their children's progress.

The inspection team agrees fully with the positive statements made by parents in questionnaires and at the meeting. The large majority of parents express positive views about the school and are pleased with the improvements they perceive. The inspection finds that the range of activities offered at lunch and after school is better than at many schools of this size. It finds the school's partnership with parents satisfactory. During the past two years, the school's focus has rightly been on raising pupils' attainment. Parents who find access to school easy feel well supported. Others who find access more difficult feel the school does not reach out to them sufficiently. The school is aware of these varying standpoints and is set to develop parental partnership further. The inspection finds that the school addresses pupils' behavioural and emotional difficulties well. Changes in policy and practice over the past year have clearly improved standards of behaviour. Staff provide good information about pupils' progress and school life and events. Most parents are pleased with the way the school contacts them and works together with them. A few at the meeting and in written replies feel that the school can do more. The new headteacher is aware of the minority view and has already taken steps to improve the flow of information and openness to parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

Headline

1 Pupils of all abilities achieve well during their primary years. The consistently good achievement stems directly from the high quality of teaching and assessment throughout the school. The school's results in national tests at age seven and eleven were low in 1997 and 1998, but much higher in 1999 and 2000. Improvements are due partly to more focused teaching and assessment and to the school's consistently effective implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies. Variations also reflect the nature of particular year groups, however. Standards in the current Year 6, for example, are not so high as the past two years. The present Year 6 has a very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, almost half of the total number of pupils identified throughout the school.

Foundation Stage (Reception Year)

2 The balance of children's attainment on entry varies from year to year because of the small numbers. In all years it is wide ranging. In the current year it is above average, but trends over recent years show broadly average attainment on entry overall. The school has only three reception pupils currently on roll. These youngest pupils have all attained the early learning goals in the six areas of learning and are working appropriately at the early stages of the National Curriculum.

English, mathematics and science at Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2 - age 5-7)

3 Results for seven-year-olds in 2000 national tests and assessments were above average in reading and writing, and average in mathematics and science. Standards in the current Year 2 are similar in reading and writing, but are better in mathematics and science and are now above average. Standards at age seven have risen since the last inspection, as a result of high quality teaching, planning and assessment.

English, mathematics and science at Key Stage 2 (years 3 to 6 - age 7-11)

4 Standards in the current Year 6 are below average in English, mathematics and science. The drop between last year's and this year's standards is entirely to do with the very high percentage of pupils on the school's register of special educational need in the year group.

5 Results in English at age eleven in summer 2000 national tests were above the national average and well above those of schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. In mathematics they were above both the national average and standards in similar schools. In science they were below average and well below those of similar schools. Comparisons with previous attainment at age seven show that pupils made good progress in English and satisfactory progress in mathematics through Years 3 to 6, but their progress in science was not as good as it could have been.

6 The school recognised the comparatively low attainment in science three years ago and the pattern of results since then shows an upward trend. In 1998, 50 per cent of pupils reached level 4 or higher. In summer 2000, 81 per cent of pupils did so. The school's improvement in the subject does not appear as good as in literacy and numeracy, however, because the national rate of improvement has been faster in science. The inspection identifies gaps in the school's provision for investigations and data handling in mathematics and the application of numeracy and data handling skills in science.

Statutory Targets

7 The school has set appropriately challenging statutory targets for attainment in literacy and numeracy by the end of Key Stage 2 for 2001 and 2002. Teachers have given much attention to target-setting systems. They set targets with very careful reference to pupils' known achievements at age seven, and in end-of-year tests at age eight, nine and ten. The school is on track to meet its targets for 2001. Targets for 2002 are still more challenging, as the staff build confidence in their ability to assess, predict and challenge.

Pupils with special educational needs; talented and gifted pupils; equality of opportunity

8 Just under a fifth of the pupils in the school are on the register of special educational need. These pupils make good progress in their learning as a result of good teaching and small group support. Teachers set precise individual targets, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Pupils with statements of special educational need also make good progress towards their targets, again as a result of caring, well-focused support.

9 Gifted and talented pupils throughout the school make good progress in subjects where their skills are recognised through close assessment. Staff throughout the school are making better use of the school's assessment information in the current year to ensure that pupils who show gifts and talents in English, mathematics and music are recognised and challenged appropriately. Pupils with skills and talents in other areas, such as art, design and technology, ICT and physical education, are not so well challenged because their skills are not so well assessed and celebrated. There are quite significant gender imbalances in some year groups, but results do not show any significant pattern of differences between boys' and girls' attainment.

Other subjects

10 Standards in ICT are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Standards in junior classes are broadly satisfactory in word-processing, but not in other aspects of the subject, where the school has not yet given pupils sufficient experience. This is because the school has only recently upgraded computer equipment. Some pupils in Year 6 with access to computers at home have developed good word-processing and desktop publishing skills, but overall, pupils are not yet achieving as well as they should by age eleven. There are currently considerable gaps in older pupils' ICT skills.

11 Standards in music are above average throughout the school, because pupils respond well to the interesting presentation of the subject and to the additional activities, such as concerts, weekly choir and recorder lessons, and peripatetic woodwind teaching. Pupils also show good attainment in art and design in Years 1 and 2, where consistently good teaching includes regular opportunity for exploration of a variety of media. Standards in design and technology are satisfactory in infant classes. In junior classes, standards are not as high as they should be in these two subjects. Teaching in individual lessons is good, but the experiences in art and design and technology are of limited scope and do not build progressively on skills acquired. The time allocated to these subjects is quite low in comparison with most schools and this appears to be affecting the quality of learning. In geography, history and physical education, standards are broadly average throughout the school. In religious education pupils' attainment is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at age seven and eleven.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12 Pupils have very positive attitudes towards their school. They enter the building eagerly at the start of the day. They are highly responsive to interesting and challenging lessons and there is usually a purposeful, sociable atmosphere in classrooms. Teachers foster the pleasures of learning and pupils are usually very committed to their work, particularly in their

active, hands-on learning. Fine examples of this are seen in both infant and junior classes, where investigative science activities are carried out with high involvement and enjoyment.

13 Behaviour in lessons is usually good. The same is true for the playgrounds, where there is a predictably energetic but friendly atmosphere. Pupils are usually keen to meet teachers' high expectations of them and to follow the school's golden rules for behaviour. They are trustworthy. For example, junior pupils line up on the playground sensibly, without prompting, in year groups ready to lead into school. They listen respectfully to their teachers and peers and try hard to raise hands and take turns before speaking in whole class activities. They adapt and behave appropriately for the varying situations which pertain during the school day. There have been no exclusions in the past school year.

14 Pupils' personal skills develop well as they progress through the school. From their early years they are encouraged to concentrate on tasks and to work with increasing independence. Pupils quickly learn to manage many routine activities independently. They soon leave their parents at the gate and enter school confidently, organising themselves, books and lunch boxes efficiently. A further example of how well pupils' personal skills develop is shown in the assured way in which pupils decide their own choice of food in advance for lunch. All pupils are eager to take extra responsibilities and older pupils take particular pride in their special monitor roles, such as librarians and stairs guardians. Supported sensitively by understanding, tolerant, adult role models pupils grow in self-esteem and most form good relationships. Friendly, social aspects of learning are fostered and pupils usually work well together in collaborative groups.

15 There is confirmation of pupils' interest in their school and enjoyment of lessons through its attendance figures, which are well above the national average.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

The quality of teaching overall

16 The quality of teaching overall is good, with 88 per cent of lessons good or better, including 42 per cent very good or excellent. The high quality teaching is spread throughout the school. Examples of either very good or excellent teaching were observed in all classes. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. At the last inspection, teaching was satisfactory overall. It has now improved considerably and is good overall. The teaching staff have put unstinting effort into the further development of lesson planning and assessment systems and into sharing approaches to the teaching of literacy and numeracy. Their resolve to tackle key issues from the previous inspection, relating to weak monitoring and pupils' low attainment, has led to committed teamwork. Through rigorous reviews of assessment and planning, the introduction of a teaching and learning policy, and a high level of monitoring, the staff have ensured the current consistent standard of good teaching throughout the school.

Teaching quality for children in the foundation stage (up to end of reception year)

17 Teaching is very good for children in the reception year. The school has addressed fully the key issue from the previous inspection, which found unsatisfactory planning for the youngest children. The teacher deploys support staff particularly well to ensure that children in their reception year undertake a range of well-planned activities for all six areas of learning. Relationships between adults and children are excellent, encouraging confidence, enthusiasm and a readiness to participate among the youngest children in the mixed reception and Year 1 class. The teacher plans activities well matched to children's abilities and interests, which promote thoughtful, focused work. Her organisation of groups, preparation of resources and briefing of support staff is of the highest order. As a result, teaching in all areas of the foundation stage curriculum is very good overall.

Teaching quality in infant classes

18 Teaching is good overall for pupils in Years 1 and 2. Of 14 lessons observed, one was excellent, one satisfactory, seven good and five very good. Teaching is of consistently high quality. As a result, pupils of all abilities are achieving well in all subjects. Teachers plan lively activities, which catch pupils' interest and secure their involvement. They display pupils' work attractively and show that they value it. Teachers involve all pupils. They show a high level of care and professionalism in the way they respond to pupils' comments, listening carefully and congratulating those who show they have been thinking carefully. This encourages positive responses and draws in those who need their self-esteem building. Teachers brief their assistants clearly so that support is well focused. They organise the format of lessons and groups appropriately, according to the purpose of the lesson. They make good use of homework, focusing on literacy and numeracy activities, so that the work done at home effectively supports learning at school. Teachers show the pupils that they have high expectations. They have established very good relationships with pupils and manage classes well. As a result, pupils are eager to participate. All feel recognised as individuals and learn successfully in this encouraging atmosphere.

Teaching quality in junior classes

19 Teaching in junior classes is also good. Of 19 lessons observed, one was excellent, seven very good, eight good and three satisfactory. Teachers plan lessons well, preparing resources thoroughly and making very good use of them. A particular strength of the teaching in junior classes is the precise use of language. Teachers' clear introductions, explanations and instructions stem from their thorough planning and preparation. They use terminology associated with the subject and encourage pupils to follow their example. Good examples of this were apparent in a music lesson in Year 6, science in the Year 3/4 class and literacy in the Year 4/5 class. This results in pupils developing understanding through the use of appropriate vocabulary. Occasionally, teachers talk too much, not allowing pupils the opportunity to express themselves. This was particularly noticeable in a few plenary sessions, when pupils did not have enough opportunity to show their understanding. Another strength is teachers' use of assessment. All three class teachers know their pupils very well and keep good track of their progress. As a result of concerted effort, each teacher has a clear picture of each pupil's progress and sets appropriately challenging work. The lack of variation in tasks was highlighted for attention in the previous report. Staff have fully addressed this weakness and the match of tasks to pupils' attainment is now a strength. Displays in the junior area do not celebrate pupils' work as well as in the infant area. Also the organisation of resources gives an impression of untidiness in some areas. This does have a negative effect on achievement in some subjects, particularly those requiring visual celebration, such as art and design and technology. Homework set is appropriate, regularly set, and supports pupils' learning.

Equality of opportunity; the teaching of pupils with special educational needs and of gifted and talented pupils

20 Teachers are sensitive and aware of their pupils' personalities. Through effective assessment they have a very good understanding of pupils' strengths and weaknesses. They are alert to pupils who need additional support and plan effective help for them. Pupils' individual education plans organise learning effectively into narrow, achievable targets and provide a focus for extra help. Throughout the school, teachers' use of day-to-day assessment and termly tracking systems is proving particularly beneficial for gifted and talented pupils. Teachers are challenging these pupils appropriately, except in art and design and technology in junior classes. Care is taken to ensure that similar skills are taught to both boys and girls and all enjoy equal access to activities. For example, all younger pupils take part in food technology and all older pupils learn to play netball and rugby.

Teaching of literacy and numeracy

21 The teaching of literacy and numeracy is very good throughout the school. Teachers use grouping arrangements particularly effectively and vary tasks to match work to the needs of all pupils. They deploy assistants particularly successfully in these group sessions, including provision for additional literacy support, to support pupils who need an extra boost. The role of assistants during introductory and plenary sessions is to observe the model teachers present. This is not yet extended to involve assessment of selected pupils' listening, attention and contributions, where appropriate. Teachers keep a detailed record of pupils' reading development and their choice of books. Phonics are taught well and teachers give regular handwriting and spelling sessions. Pupils' assessment books show good application of writing skills on a regular, termly basis and teachers use these assessment opportunities well to grade pupils' standards and earmark aspects for attention. The school has agreed a common approach to the use and development of literacy skills in other subjects and this is in the process of development. The successful teaching of literacy and numeracy to pupils of all abilities is shown in the school's national assessment results in 1999 and 2000. The school has planned an agreed approach to the application and development of numeracy skills in the context of other subjects, such as science and design and technology, but evidence shows that this is still at an early stage. With the teaching of mathematics focusing on numeracy, there is not enough opportunity for pupils to tackle mathematical investigations within the subject or to develop and apply data-handling skills in the context of other subjects.

Teaching in other subjects

22 Teaching is of similarly high quality in all subjects throughout the school. Teachers make lessons interesting through their choice of subject matter and the way they involve pupils through questioning and well-planned activities. Resources are always well prepared and lessons proceed at an appropriately brisk, but never rushed, pace. Pupils learn particularly successfully when the teachers engage them in discussion and take on board their ideas. This was particularly noticeable in an art lesson with pupils in the reception and Year 1 class. Their teachers' encouraging responses to their efforts and her swift recognition of opportunities to share examples of their creative discoveries during printing heightened pupils' enthusiasm and led to very imaginative use of materials. Teachers are beginning to make use of recently installed ICT equipment, but this needs further development. Current use is mainly limited to art and word-processing. All staff are about to receive training and are committed to ensuring effective use of the equipment. In the one ICT lesson observed, teaching was good. A few parents at the meeting expressed some doubt about the school's commitment to physical education. Both in lessons and the after-school clubs, teachers show positive commitment to the subject. The school makes positive use of teachers' specialist knowledge to promote higher standards in physical education and music for older pupils. The quality of teaching in physical education at both key stages is always good or very good.

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

23 Although there are currently gaps in the development of older pupils' skills in art and design and technology and ICT, overall the school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that is relevant to the needs of its pupils. The early years curriculum has been well developed and in both Key Stages 1 and 2 appropriate emphasis is placed on the development of literacy and numeracy. However, particularly in junior classes, there are weaknesses in art and design, design and technology and information technology. The appropriate statutory curriculum, including religious education, is in place and statutory requirements for special educational needs are well met. Equality of access and opportunity for all pupils is well provided by the curriculum. Good use is made of community links to support learning and pupils are well prepared for entry to the school and their transfer to the secondary phase of education.

24 Since the last inspection the school has made good improvement in addressing the key issues related to the curriculum. A well planned early years curriculum reflects the requirements of the recently introduced national foundation stage for young children and the creation of a secure outside play area extends their learning into the outside environment. The literacy and numeracy strategies now provide the basis for the curriculum in English and mathematics, whilst the recently introduced nationally approved schemes and the newly revised locally agreed syllabus for religious education are used to cover all other subjects. They detail progression and skills development and indicate the level of work expected from each year group.

25 The effectively-planned and detailed curriculum for the under fives is well matched to their needs. It is firmly based on the six areas of learning identified in the national early learning goals and progressively planned to develop into the subjects of the National Curriculum. It is well based on children's own experiences with good emphasis on developing early literacy and numeracy skills. The secure outside area suitably extends their experience and the large play equipment and wheeled toys support this. The detailed plans to develop this area will increase its usefulness by extending the range of activities that can be planned.

26 Planning for the infant and junior curriculum is sound overall. Termly curriculum plans are shared with parents so that they can see the intended programme of work and support their children accordingly. The national literacy and numeracy strategies have both been successfully introduced as the basis for work in English and mathematics. Through careful planning teachers are ensuring that pupils receive consistently good teaching in these subjects. Literacy and numeracy skills are beginning to be employed and developed through other subject areas. The recent focus on research skills has signalled a more systematic approach to this. In junior classes, because of the focus on numeracy skills, there are too few opportunities for pupils to develop their mathematical knowledge and understanding through practical tasks and investigations.

27 In focusing its efforts on raising standards in literacy and numeracy, the school has made good use of recent approved national guidance as the basis of planning for other subjects. These have provided teachers with helpful guidance on skills development and detailed the expected levels for pupils of each age. Teachers are working from these for history and geography and using them alongside their own scheme for physical education. The music curriculum is well organised and balanced and the new locally agreed syllabus for religious education provides a good basis for work in the subject. However, at present the school is only teaching a restricted part of the information technology curriculum. The recent transfer to new computers has meant that only word processing and visual communication skills are currently being taught. In science, at Key Stage 2, there are insufficient opportunities for

pupils to make use of measuring skills in their recording while carrying out planned investigations. In design and technology and art the breadth of study is too narrow in the junior years. The school is not building sufficiently on skills learned in the infant years in these subjects. The school now needs to review its policies and develop its own schemes of work in the light of this national guidance and new curriculum requirements.

28 The curriculum is mainly well balanced, with literacy and numeracy appropriately allocated the largest amount of time. Currently, however, the school does not give enough guidance to teachers on the allocation of time to subject areas and as a result there are variations in emphasis between classes in a few subjects. In particular, art and design and design and technology are under-represented in junior classes. Also, opportunities for pupils to share and reflect on each other's views in circle time lessons vary from class to class.

29 The school's commitment to equal opportunities is good. The intensive additional literacy programme is well used to raise standards of reading and writing. It improves curriculum access for pupils whose language skills are below average. Higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are well catered for and receive good support. All pupils with special educational needs have full access to the curriculum. In English and mathematics, work is specifically matched to the abilities of identified groups. Teachers adapt the curriculum and deploy assistants carefully, so that pupils work towards the targets on their individual education plans or statements. All staff are good role models showing respect, understanding, sensitivity and care to all pupils. It is also evident in the open access pupils have to sport and other out of class activities and in the range of visitors invited into the school.

30 A good range of additional activities is provided for pupils at lunchtimes and after school by conscientious staff to enrich the curriculum. They include boys' and girls' football clubs, netball, maypole dancing, choir and instrumental tuition. These are about to be broadened by a computer club for younger pupils. In common with many schools the factors limiting the range on offer are the number of teachers and the time they have available. The school already makes good use of a volunteer parent to help with the football and is looking to make use of expertise from the local sport centre beginning with judo. A range of visits and visitors are used to support pupils' studies and older pupils can participate in a biannual residential visit to the Isle of Wight.

31 Overall the school's provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects, is satisfactory. The school sees this as an important part of its work and an area for development. However, energies have been directed at addressing the key issues of the last report and raising standards. As a result this area is in a similar position to that at the time of the last inspection.

32 Assemblies, religious education and other aspects of the curriculum all contribute to this area of the school's work. The school is currently considering, in the light of national guidance and its own aims, how it might develop programmes of personal, social and health education and citizenship. For older pupils local police provide appropriate drugs education and there is a programme of sex education that is delivered as part of their work in science.

33 Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Since the last inspection the school has received much focused support from the diocese to improve the provision for spiritual development. This has involved all staff and concentrated on the use of assemblies. In some lessons, such as music and religious education, opportunities occur for quiet reflection as, for example, when Year 6 pupils listen to the 'Antarctic Symphony' or Year 2 pupils think about the parable of 'The Lost Sheep'. Randomly pupils will show spontaneous delight and excitement at the outcomes of their work as, for example, in Year 2, as the face they have

formed on the computer screen emerges from the colour printer. In religious education pupils learn about the Christian faith and the beliefs and values of the other major religions. However, the school does not have a policy to ensure regular, planned opportunities for pupils' spiritual development in subjects across the curriculum. Assemblies give pupils opportunities to think about their own experiences and allow time for them to reflect in prayer.

34 The provision for pupils' moral development is good. Throughout the school, pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong. The good relationships between pupils and adults are used to raise expectations and show respect. This is seen in the good behaviour through the school. Through the positive behaviour policy and stories in assemblies teachers encourage pupils to take responsibility for their actions and to respect the feelings and beliefs of others. This is positively reinforced by teachers drawing pupils' attention to the prominently displayed 'golden rules', which focus on how to behave. In some classes circle times or 'bubble' times are well used to provide a forum in which problems are discussed and issues resolved, developing pupils' moral and social values.

35 Provision for social development is good. Teachers encourage pupils to be constructive members of the school community. Through tasks such as the management of homework and the selection and ordering of their school lunches pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for themselves. Younger pupils take responsibility for putting out and clearing away materials and resources in lessons. Older pupils provide good role models for younger ones as they prepare the hall for assembly or oversee movement on the stairs. They want to help and are proud of their status. Pupils learn to work together to accomplish tasks as they practice tactics in mini-netball games, complete work at the computer or take turns in answering questions. They learn to listen to the point of view of others and respect them as they take part in class discussions. Music is a strong feature of the school and pupils have evident pride in the contribution they make to the school community through it. Teachers and other adults provide good role models and promote a clear understanding of social issues. Links with the wider community are well used to further pupils' sense of belonging as they take part in Harvest Festival at the church or sing carols to senior citizens.

36 There is satisfactory provision for pupils' cultural development. Pupils are introduced to other cultures through history, literature, works of art and music. In religious education they encounter festivals and celebrations from other religions. Through visits to the village and further afield and visitors, such as a local historian, they learn more about their own culture. However, the rich diversity of the multicultural society in which they live is not sufficiently reflected in this provision and, as at the last inspection, opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of other cultures are limited. The school does not do enough to prepare them for life in a multicultural society.

37 The school has good links with its partner institutions. Close relationships exist with local feeder playgroups and broader links are made through a local early years partnership. There are good links with local secondary schools. Prior to secondary transfer pupils will have visited for a taster project day and been visited by secondary staff who work with them. A judo coach has begun a course, which is very well attended. The successful take-up may result in coaching in other sports in the long term. There are very close links with the church and school news and events appear on its notice board and in the parish magazine. Members of the community such as the vicar, police and local historian are regular visitors. The school is looking to widen its pupils' horizons and understanding. It hopes to form links with schools in other parts of the world and exchange information through the Internet.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38 The provision for the care of pupils in the school is good and shows improvement since the last inspection. There are very good relationships between the staff and pupils. The staff are very caring and they know the pupils and their families well. Some parents expressed concern about supervision in the playground, but there are effective routines for supervising lunchtimes and breaktimes. Parents are able to stay with their children in the playground before starting school in the morning. There are also good first-aid procedures and guidelines for handling medicines. The member of staff responsible for child protection attends regular courses and ensures that all other staff are fully aware of the procedures.

39 The staff and governors have put considerable effort during the past year into improving the behaviour and attitudes of the pupils. These strategies have been successful in improving behaviour in lessons and at breaktimes. The staff are vigilant in monitoring breaktimes to help to ensure that there is no bullying. Attendance registers are monitored regularly by teachers, headteacher and education welfare officer and this has addressed the issue raised during the last inspection.

40 Much attention has been given to pupils' personal development and the encouragement of increasing independence. In lessons, pupils of all ages work well on their own and take responsibility for their books, materials and equipment. They take on a range of responsibilities as monitors. One interesting feature is the active participation of 'friends' at breaktimes, who ensure that all children have access to others to talk to or play games.

41 Since the last inspection, the staff and governors have given considerable attention to the formalisation of health and safety policies and procedures. The designated governor and member of staff carry out thorough health and safety checks and risk assessments. Their findings and details of the actions taken are recorded and reported to full governing body meetings. The details of any accidents are recorded properly.

42 Teachers have a well-rounded picture of their pupils with a very good understanding of them as individuals. They provide positive role models as people to whom pupils can turn if they have a problem. The same is true of the classroom assistants, who are very kind, caring and committed to their work. Teachers have a clear picture of the attainment of all their pupils including those with special educational needs.

43 There are very effective procedures in place for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. These provide teachers with a full understanding of pupils' learning in English, mathematics and science. The school has a comprehensive annual programme of testing and recording in each of the core subjects for most age groups. The process begins with baseline assessment when pupils are newly arrived in school. The local education authority processes the results to give a region-wide comparison for the children's attainment on entry. Results of all other tests show pupils' National Curriculum levels and are used by teachers to help them with curriculum planning. Currently, the tracking sheets do not present a clear picture for sharing with parents or for external monitoring. The system works for the current staff, but is not easily understood by others. Every pupil has an assessment book for each of the core subjects. Tests given at the end of a topic are placed in the book, again with a National Curriculum level so that teachers have a more precise understanding of where individual pupils are in their learning. Teachers have begun to set individual targets for pupils in literacy and numeracy and are beginning to share these with parents, but there is still room for development in this practice.

44 Results in English, mathematics and science are also recorded on year group tracking sheets so that the pace of progress can be reviewed and future targets set for predicted levels in national standardised tests at ages seven and eleven. The base line test is used very effectively to identify children who have particular strengths or weaknesses. In this way

children with special educational needs are usually identified at the start of their schooling and early action is taken to support them. Portfolios of work, which exemplify National Curriculum levels, are being prepared as points of reference for common standards within the school. At present there are no whole school procedures for the assessment of non-core subjects.

45 The school closely monitors the results and progress of different groups of pupils including boys, girls, higher attainers and those with special educational needs to ensure that all enjoy equal opportunities.

46 Good use is also made of day to day assessment in guiding curriculum planning. Teachers have a clear understanding of how pupils are attaining in lessons and use this information effectively to place them in appropriate ability groups for English, mathematics and science. In this way junior pupils are targeted with very good additional literacy support. Pupils provided with additional help are usually assessed on a regular basis. Assistants keep good daily records about the progress of the pupils they help.

47 Teachers use well-phrased questions to aid the assessment process in lessons. They usually circulate diligently in independent learning sessions to inform themselves how pupils are progressing. The white boards used in mental mathematics by some pupils can be a potent instant assessment tool. Sometimes a lesson may be slightly adapted, if the teacher feels that additional teaching is required. A good example of this occurred during a science lesson about the eye, when the teacher observed that some pupils were not following written instructions accurately for the making of a pin-hole camera.

48 Some marking of pupils' work is done verbally during lessons and is usually a sensitive balance of encouragement and ideas for improvement. Sometimes in this way teachers assess work as exemplary and display and discuss it as a model against which pupils may compare their own work for self assessment. Although there are some inconsistencies in book marking, generally comments are positive and encouraging but do not always guide pupils in what they need to do next.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

49 Overall, parents have a positive view of the school and are confident about the future. They recognise that standards have improved since the previous inspection. In particular they feel that literacy and numeracy are well established. In almost all areas of school life a majority of parents are satisfied, particularly about their children's progress and the standard of teaching. A majority of parents feel that the school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons. The inspection finds that the school does provide a satisfactory range of clubs, but in common with most primary schools these are mainly for the older children. A significant minority of parents still have negative perceptions of relationships with the school. They are dissatisfied with the information on their children's progress, the amount and consistency of homework and the extent to which the school works with parents.

50 Partnership with parents has been a key focus for improvement during the current year. The inspectors concluded that staff and governors have very positive attitudes towards building and maintaining strong links. There are regular informative newsletters and plans to increase the number of curriculum information evenings. The quality of the annual pupil reports is good. They cover all subjects and personal development and include comments on strengths and weaknesses. While a few parents expressed unhappiness with homework arrangements, the large majority find arrangements for both infant and junior pupils helpful and well organised. Inspectors agree with the majority view.

51 Parents give sound support to their children at home and a few assist in the school regularly in lessons and after-school clubs. The active Parent Teacher Association arranges many events and raises considerable funds for the school. Committee members occasionally feel that their efforts are not always appreciated, but are aware that the school has had a demanding agenda over the past two years.

52 There is satisfactory liaison between the parents of pupils with special educational needs and their teachers. Parents are consulted before their child is placed on the special needs register and meet termly with teachers to review their child's progress, as do all parents.

53 The general information provided by the school through the brochure, annual report and newsletters is of good quality. The school is open and welcoming to parents and there has been considerable improvement in the partnership with parents over the past year. There is still scope for further improvement in the relationships with the minority of parents who remain to be convinced of the effects of the changes that have been put in place.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

54 There has been a change of headteacher, including a lengthy time with the deputy acting as head, and the governing body has had four different chairs in the two years since the last inspection. In the midst of this considerable upheaval, the deputy headteacher has been a constant driving force in addressing the key issues raised by the last inspection. She has exercised considerable leadership qualities, maintaining staff morale during a period when the school had been deemed to have serious weaknesses. She has supported the previous popular headteacher in addressing the key issues and rallied staff after his illness and early retirement. She has nurtured the governing body through the series of changes of chair and the development of appropriate roles and responsibilities. She has led the staff by responding professionally to the requirements to raise standards and introduce appropriate provision for the youngest pupils. She has shown outstanding energy and commitment. As a result of the joint efforts by staff and governors, under her acting leadership, the school no longer has serious weaknesses. The newly appointed headteacher, who took up her post a week before the inspection, inherits a good school.

55 The school now has a clear educational direction. Improved results in national tests over the past two years at age seven and eleven are solid proof of the school's drive to raise standards. There has been rigorous monitoring of teaching and further training in the teaching of literacy and numeracy, supported by the local education authority. Inspection evidence also reveals the teachers' commitment to thorough assessment of all pupils, to give them equality of opportunity by tracking their progress and picking up quickly if they falter. This commitment to raise achievement for all pupils, extending higher attainers and supporting those with difficulties, is particularly apparent in the current Years 5 and 6. Here, the deputy and Key Stage 2 co-ordinator have set clear targets for attainment in literacy and numeracy for 2001 and 2002, based on rigorous assessment of pupils' prior attainment.

56 There is now a positive school ethos reflecting a commitment to equal opportunities for all pupils. It offers all pupils equal access and opportunity in all subjects, with particular emphasis on English and mathematics. However, the emphasis on raising attainment in core subjects has led to the school not giving its pupils a sufficient range of experience in ICT, art and design technology to make the expected gains in knowledge and understanding in their junior years.

57 The school's aims and values are largely reflected in its work. Relationships are very good, as a result of the models presented by all adults in the school and the many ways the school encourages pupils to take responsibilities. The school lives up to its renewed mission

statement, building an ethos of mutual respect and empowering children to achieve the highest standards of which they are capable. Within a largely mono-cultural community, however, the school is not doing enough to prepare pupils fully for life in the wider multicultural society.

58 The school's development plans have become difficult to manage. Through conscientious identification of areas to be tackled in all aspects of the school's work, the post-inspection action plan and school development plan have become an over-detailed, unwieldy document. Too many headings create a picture of too much being tackled at once. The plan lacks a long-term, strategic element, with the opportunity to set immediate priorities and put others on the back-burner. There is no acknowledgement of a routine maintenance for many items, while a few take their appropriate turn for necessary development. Nevertheless, despite the nature of the document, staff with management responsibilities have managed their allocated subject well, taking appropriate steps to improve provision. Funding allocated specifically for the action plan has been well targeted. The staff have shown a shared commitment and have succeeded through their joint efforts in overcoming the major weaknesses.

59 The governing body has developed a far more active and effective role. It has assumed appropriate responsibilities and assigned appropriate roles to individual governors. Its committee procedures are good and minutes detail a full picture of the workings of the full body and committees over the past two years. With supportive guidance from the local education authority, a steering group has checked that the governing body is fulfilling its statutory obligations. The school does meet all statutory requirements. Several governors visit the school when in session and a number have observed lessons as part of the process of discovering the way the school works. There is not yet a clear pattern of monitoring through discussions or reports by subject co-ordinators. The distinctive monitoring roles of the governing body and headteacher have yet to be established, as have systems for reviewing policies and schemes of work.

60 Overall staffing arrangements are good. This is an improvement since the last inspection when it was found to be satisfactory. There are sufficient suitably qualified staff to cover all classes and teach the required curriculum. As there are fewer teachers than subjects each has responsibility for the co-ordination of several and often for aspects as well. Currently design and technology is not allocated and ICT is covered by an interim arrangement. Although all staff have recently updated job descriptions these are currently very broad and the school intends to refine them further by including individual targets identified through performance management. Arrangements for the introduction of performance management are well in hand and about to commence.

61 Teachers are well supported by a high number of learning support assistants who work both in and out of the classroom. They support pupils well, including those with learning difficulties, both individually and in groups. By working closely with the class teachers, who are responsible for planning the activities, they are well prepared and briefed.

62 The leadership and management of special educational needs is good. The Code of Practice is fully implemented and the special needs co-ordinator monitors provision carefully, giving informed support to teachers and assistants alike. She liaises regularly with outside agencies, such as educational psychologists and speech therapists, to ensure effective support and advice for pupils, teachers and parents.

63 Consultation is well used to identify training opportunities for all staff. These are well matched to both their needs and those of the school. Efficient administrative support and the effective contribution of cleaning, catering and ancillary staff contribute well to the smooth

running of the school.

64 Accommodation is good and recent additions and planned developments will extend its use further. At present the school does not make the best use of all available space and, although there is a rolling programme of redecoration, areas of the school suffer from tired décor. An extensive site has both field and playground areas, with games markings, that are used for both recreation and physical education. Mature trees provide some shade for pupils. The recent addition of picnic benches gives pupils not only a place to eat but also an area where, weather permitting, they can sit and talk. The creation of a secure fenced area for early years children has addressed an issue in the last inspection and the school now has detailed plans to improve this further. The grounds remain underdeveloped as an educational resource, however. Recent external decoration and repair of the building has improved its appearance and corrected the leaks.

65 All classrooms are equipped with storage, suitably sized furniture that is in good condition. They have their own wet areas. Rooms and most other areas are carpeted to reduce noise but some patches of degraded tiling still exist in the communal areas. The infant area has been developed into a light, spacious facility with its own library and work area. In classrooms and some communal areas, such as the infant library, colourful displays of pupils' work are well used to provide a stimulating environment and celebrate achievement. Other areas of the school are less attractive or developed, for example the junior shared work area and library, the hall and the staircases. The multi-purpose hall is of a good size and is used by the whole school for assemblies, dining and physical education, but much of the older dining furniture is tired, difficult to move and would benefit from replacement. The different levels, steps, stairs and narrow corridor doors make disabled access difficult and impossible for a wheelchair user.

66 Learning resources continue to be satisfactory overall. The library and book stock have benefited from some additions since the last inspection but there continue to be a number of worn or out-of-date books in both the junior library and some classrooms. Resources for both English and mathematics have been developed as part of the implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies. The ICT network is being well developed and is set to provide a very supportive resource for teaching. The development of the outside play area for the under fives and the purchase of large wheeled toys and play equipment has improved the provision for them and addressed the concerns of the last inspection. The large physical education apparatus is very difficult for infant and younger junior children to manage, however. This limits the range of gymnastic activities offered. Resources for design and technology also place restrictions on the breadth of pupils' experiences in this subject.

67 The financial planning of the annual budget is good and closely reflects the school's planning priorities. There has been substantial improvement since the last inspection. The good planning has ensured effective management of the falling numbers in recent years. With a stable permanent staff structure and indications of steady pupil numbers the school is ready to extend its planning over a longer time scale. The committees meet much more frequently and decisions are recorded fully and distributed to all governors.

68 The school makes very good use of its resources and accounts fully and separately for its expenditure of earmarked funds for staff development and special educational needs. Financial controls are very good and the records of the accounts are in very good order. The administration of the school is effective and makes very good use of computing facilities.

69 The school makes good use of the principles of best value. There is wide consultation and participation of staff and governors in planning and decision making. Competitive tendering is well established in contracts and the school seeks good value for money in its

purchases. Parents make very valuable contributions to the school income through their substantial fund-raising activities. However, there is little benchmarking information on similar local schools and the school currently makes limited use of comparative national data.

70 The attainment of the pupils on entry to the school is broadly average. The unit costs per pupil are above average. Taking these together with the good teaching and learning and resultant good levels of achievement for pupils of wide-ranging abilities, the school is giving good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

71 In order to build on the school's current strengths, to improve the quality of education provided and raise standards further, the headteacher, staff and governing body should:

1. Improve the breadth and quality of the curriculum for junior pupils by
 - setting a well-planned timetable for art and design, design and technology and ICT;
 - ensuring that pupils build on previously learned skills in these three subjects;
 - developing a scheme of work for design and technology;
 - introducing regular, planned opportunities for mathematical investigations;
 - planning opportunities for pupils to develop and apply data handling skills in the context of other subjects, such as science;

(Reference paragraphs: 6, 9, 10, 11, 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, 28, 56, 93, 98, 100, 103, 106-116, 125-129)
2. Draw pupils attention to the variety of cultures in the world and in our society, focusing on the contributions of leading figures from non-white cultures in the realms of literature, mathematics, science, the arts and religion and offering opportunities for pupils to interact with pupils from other cultures;

(Reference paragraphs: 36, 57)
3. Simplify the development plan by setting a few immediate priorities, establishing a rolling review programme and introducing a long-term view.

(Reference paragraph: 58)

In addition to these key issues the governing body may wish to include the following minor issues in its action plan:

- Share learning targets more clearly with junior pupils and their parents; (43)
- Improve display and resource organisation on the junior floor; (19, 66)
- Develop the roles of assistants during class teaching; (21)
- Plan more opportunities for spiritual development in lessons and assemblies; (33)
- Clarify policy and scheme of work review systems; (59)
- Make the systems for tracking pupils' progress more transparent for monitoring purposes ; (43)
- Develop the school grounds as a resource; (64, 105)
- Improve large equipment for physical education; (66, 138)
- Improve design and technology resources; (66, 114, 116)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	33
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
6	36	46	12	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (full-time equivalent for part-time pupils)	123
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	7
Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	22
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	15

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.7
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	11	13	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	22	23	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (77)	96 (77)	92 (91)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	21	21	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (77)	88 (86)	92 (82)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year. The separate details of boys' and girls' performance are not reported when there are less than twelve in one of the groups.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	12	14	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	10	10
	Girls	12	11	11
	Total	23	21	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (91)	81 (64)	81 (77)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	10	8
	Girls	12	11	10
	Total	20	21	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (73)	81 (64)	69 (68)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	122
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	2	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.5
Average class size	24.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	110

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000
	£
Total income	302860
Total expenditure	284797
Expenditure per pupil	1951
Balance brought forward from previous year	20260
Balance carried forward to next year	38323

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	121
Number of questionnaires returned	23

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	39	61	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	35	52	9	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	17	48	22	0	13
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26	57	17	0	0
The teaching is good.	30	52	9	0	9
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	22	52	17	4	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	43	44	13	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	30	48	17	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	9	52	22	13	4
The school is well led and managed.	17	43	22	0	17
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	22	57	17	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	9	30	48	13	0

Percentages are rounded up or down to the nearest whole number and may therefore not total exactly 100.

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

Provision for children at the foundation stage is very good.

72 Children are usually admitted full time to the foundation stage at the beginning of the term in which they are five. At present there are three children at this stage. They are in a class with 21 Year 1 pupils who work within the National Curriculum. At entry to the reception class the children bring with them a variety of pre-school experiences, with the large majority having previously attended a nursery or playgroup. Staffing arrangements for the reception/Year 1 class recognise the need for appropriate levels of assistance to support the teacher and pupils.

73 Assessments show a varying picture for attainment on entry between year groups, but the general level is average for children of this age. A majority of children achieve the early learning goals by the end of the foundation stage. Higher attaining pupils are challenged appropriately and some are working at early stages of the National Curriculum by the time they reach the end of the foundation stage.

74 The quality of teaching is very good overall and one lesson was excellent. The teacher has an outstanding grasp of child development and the needs of young children. She provides rich learning experiences in a well-balanced curriculum, which succeeds in combining enjoyment with high expectations of learning. Planning is good and has significantly improved since the previous inspection, when it was a weakness. The foundation stage has well defined objectives for each of the areas of learning. There is a clear picture of what the youngest children will achieve, even though for much of the day they are integrated with Year 1 pupils. The teacher makes very good use of assessment to ensure that learning is carefully matched to children's developmental needs whatever their abilities. By this efficient method children with special needs benefit from early identification of their problems leading to prompt action to support them. The two classroom assistants are patient and good-humoured. They work sensitively with groups of children and provide very good additional support for them and for the teacher. With the help of the deputy headteacher and the governing body, the early years teacher organised and implemented the refurbishment of the classroom and has created a modern, stimulating learning environment for young children.

75 The school has a successful induction programme, which familiarises children and parents with the ethos, learning and behaviour expectations and routines of the school. The success of these can be judged by the confident and enthusiastic way in which the youngest children quickly immerse themselves in the life of the school and in their own learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

76 The provision for personal, social and emotional development is very good and matches the quality of teaching. The teacher's warm, friendly and good-humoured approach results in the children feeling enjoyment, safety and security in their learning. The consistency and care with which children are treated gives them good examples and role models for their own friendships and for work in co-operative groups. High expectations of behaviour help children to develop their listening skills and concentration so that they make the most of learning opportunities. Acceptable behaviour towards others is promoted through golden rules and examples such as 'politeness poems'. Children quickly gain good levels of independence as they are encouraged to walk into the school building unaccompanied by their parents or

carers after a suitable settling in period. They manage their personal hygiene efficiently. Children who have school dinners confidently decide on their choices from a varied menu first thing in the morning and handle their own dinner money with the help of supportive adults. Most children achieve the early learning goals for personal, social and emotional development by the end of the foundation stage.

Communication, language and literacy

77 The teaching in this area is excellent. Children are absorbed in a rich language environment, both spoken and written, throughout their school day. There is a particularly strong emphasis on these skills during the daily literacy hour. Adults have sensitive questioning skills and in group listening and speaking activities children are encouraged to take turns in expressing their opinions. They are also trained to listen carefully and to respect each other's opinions. Through regular, lively class work with big books, children understand book conventions and are taught to use a varied and increasingly successful range of skills to read stories. They also begin to read regularly from published, graded good quality reading schemes. Most children take books home frequently from the outset. The support they receive with reading from parents and carers makes a significant contribution to their good progress with reading. Phonics are well taught, both by the teacher and the support assistant assigned to this activity with the foundation stage children. The teacher uses great ingenuity in devising interesting writing tasks for the children. As examples the youngest children decide what they would take to grandmother if they were Little Red Riding Hood. Older children write their own versions of well-known stories such as 'The Three Rabbits' and share them with the class. A majority of the foundation stage children achieve the early learning goals for communication, language and literacy before the end of the foundation stage.

Mathematical development

78 The teaching of mathematical development is very good. The daily focus for this area of learning centres on the numeracy hour, which is well managed for children in the foundation stage. With effective help from the learning support assistant, children work in a small group to practice using mathematical language as they play number games. They are learning to recognise numerals to 15 and such ideas as 'more' and 'less'. Thinking carefully, they are able to work out what one more than a number is. The children gather a set of objects and guess how many there are before counting them. They learn to write numerals accurately. They enjoy and appreciate the number aspects of favourite children's stories such as 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' and enjoy singing number rhymes too. During times of free choice there are many resources available which provide opportunities for mathematical learning such as capacity in the sand tray and shopping. Valuable mathematical use is made of odd moments of time throughout the school day. A good example of this is shown when pupils count to twenty as they line up to leave the hall after a physical education lesson. With support the children who have school dinners manage the payment for them independently. Most children achieve above the expected standard at the end of the foundation stage.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

79 The teaching in this area of learning is good. Skills of looking, listening and thinking are effectively promoted. The children understand the connection between the weather and the clothes they wear. They explore a variety of materials and recognise wood, paper, glass and fabric. Touring the school building they look for manufactured objects which use these materials. The day to day experiences of light and dark are discussed and the children think about sources of light. Again the wider school environment is well used as the children locate light sources around the school. In looking at the natural world the children begin to

investigate life processes by matching and comparing young and mature animals. They gain an awareness of the importance of technology in everyday life as they manipulate the audio tape recorder to listen to story and music tapes. Three computers are accessible to the children, on which they learn skills such as manipulating the mouse to move the screen cursor. Through an appropriate range of software they experience additional learning opportunities. Most children achieve above the expected standard by the end of the foundation stage.

Physical development

80 The teaching in this area is very good and despite some shortcomings in resource provision most children reach the expected standard by the end of the foundation stage. Every day the children use tools with increasing confidence. These tools include, for example, pencils for writing, pens and crayons for illustrating ideas, paintbrushes and scissors. The children also make jig-saw puzzles and build with construction kits. The teacher makes her physical education lessons in the school hall into a lively enjoyable opportunity for the children to develop their whole body movement and co-ordination skills. As they twist and turn energetically after warming up exercises the children gain some awareness of the effects the activity will have upon their bodies. The children try hard to follow the teacher's instructions and move safely with a good awareness of their own and other people's space. This is a good lesson, which incorporates several activities towards other early learning goals. For example, personal and social education is developed through learning the co-operative skills of carrying the large physical education mats in a foursome and deploying them safely. The joy of rolling and balancing on apparatus helps the growth of children's self-confidence. The school has recognised its unsatisfactory provision for a safe, secure outdoor play area for its foundation stage children. Plans are in hand for the imminent redevelopment of the area to fully meet the children's physical needs.

Creative development

81 The teacher provides creative opportunities for the children across many areas of the curriculum. For example after reading the big book story of Little Red Riding Hood during the literacy hour, each of the foundation stage children painted a picture of what they would take in the basket to the granny. The role-play area is designed to look like the three little pigs' house. As well as the usual role-play equipment, there are also puppets available for creative language development. In a very good art lesson the children explore the idea of making lines. They make lines with their bodies on the floor, with play dough and then with a paint roller on paper. They attribute emotions to different sorts of lines, seeing others as happy, angry or puzzled. There are musical instruments to experiment with too. The quality of teaching is very good and as a result most children achieve the expected standard by the end of the foundation stage.

ENGLISH

82 The school's results in national tests for seven-year-olds in 2000 were above average in reading and writing. Standards in the current Year 2 are similar, as a result of sustained very good teaching of literacy throughout pupils' reception and infant years. Results at age eleven in summer 2000 national tests were above the national average and well above those of schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. Comparisons with previous attainment at age seven show that pupils had made good progress through their junior years. Results at ages seven and eleven in 1999 and 2000 show that standards rose considerably after the last inspection, as a result of high quality teaching, planning and assessment. The school has made very good improvement in reading and writing at both key stages.

83 Standards in the current Year 6 are below average, but this is because of the very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the class. Close investigation of pupils' assessment books and teachers' records of their progress show that pupils of all abilities are doing well. Pupils who show a talent for writing and those who read avidly are recognised and challenged in the work set. Those who find difficulties with handwriting, spelling, expressing themselves through the written word, developing an understanding of phonics and reading for meaning all receive well-targeted support because their needs are recognised and addressed. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls in infant or junior classes. All receive equal access to the curriculum and teachers ensure that all pupils contribute in discussion.

84 Pupils' skills in speaking and listening are above average overall throughout the school. In all literacy lessons and many other lessons observed, teachers offered pupils good opportunity to extend their listening skills. One of the strengths throughout the school is in teachers' precise use of language. Where teaching was at its best, pupils spoke more, contributing and listening to each other, rather than listening, albeit attentively, mainly to the teacher. Sometimes teachers require pupils to work together in group sessions and discuss their views with each other. The teacher stimulated very effective discussion and recording in a lesson requiring pupils to harness proposals for traffic changes in Kintbury. Pupils in this lesson led the plenary, with the teacher interjecting supportively. By ensuring that pupils explained their findings and suggestions, both teacher and pupils together reviewed the learning from the lesson. The school offers lively opportunities for pupils to participate in drama, though fairly infrequently and on a large scale. Annual concerts illustrate this activity, for example. There are few planned class lesson opportunities.

85 The teaching and acquisition of reading skills are a strength of the school. Infant pupils develop good reading strategies as a result of very good teaching of phonics and enjoyment of shared texts in the literacy hour. They receive positive individual support from teachers and assistants at school and from their parents at home. The school ensures a productive partnership with parents of infant pupils through its home reading arrangements. Pupils read enthusiastically and enjoy books. Teachers in both infant and junior classes monitor pupils' choice of books carefully, using a colour coded system, which allows an appropriately structured choice for pupils until they are fluent readers. Teachers in junior classes continue to encourage pupils to take home books on a regular basis. Most pupils, particularly more able readers, continue to enjoy reading and talk with enthusiasm about their favourite books and authors. Teachers use the literacy hour effectively to teach these pupils more advanced reading skills. One area for development is the junior library, which needs further development to encourage greater use and pupil's development of research skills, although all older junior pupils know how to access and use information books. Another area needing attention is the book stock in junior classes. Many books are old, look worn and do not promote a love of reading. There is also a lack of displays focusing on specific authors or

genres, to widen pupils' interest. One positive feature of work in infant classes is the publication of books by pupils and the class. Samples of books written by the children themselves and kept in the infant library promotes children's identification of themselves as authors and strengthens the learning links between reading and writing.

86 Pupils write for a range of purposes throughout the school. The improvement of writing has been a major focus for the whole teaching staff over the past two years. Young pupils' writing is lively and imaginative. In Years 1 and 2, pupils write for different audiences and this helps them to appreciate both the purpose and enjoyment of writing. They make books for their own class libraries and to share with their friends. Their adaptations of Little Miss Muffet show a delight in the humour of nursery rhymes and promote thoughtful creation of rhyme, in turn developing good spelling habits. Snippets such as '...Along came a crocodile and sat on a reptile and frightened Miss Snake away...' reveal the breadth of pupils' vocabulary and their appreciation of humour in writing. These individual rhymes are complemented by stories such as 'The Big Sneeze', where the teacher has drawn the whole class into shared authorship to show the pattern of story-writing and share different pupils' ideas among the whole class. Much of the most interesting writing by junior pupils is in their termly assessment books. A little writing is displayed, including some thoughtful poems written by the oldest pupils. Many have developed their desktop publishing skills through a homework task, to present eye-catching final versions. The assessment books show good emphasis on writing accounts and stories, involving thoughtful phrasing and well-chosen vocabulary, as well as ensuring pupils focus on spelling, handwriting and punctuation. Other samples of written work show too little emphasis, however, on pupils seeing themselves as authors and writing for genuine audiences and purposes. Writing skills are very well taught, as exercises in pupils' books show, and teachers make good use of homework to involve parents and pupils in developing or practising these skills at home. By the time pupils reach Year 6, most write in a joined and legible style, although in the current year a significant minority have not developed a fluent script. The school has begun to create additional opportunities for pupils to write at length and has plans to link these opportunities more closely with studies planned in other subjects. A West Berkshire anthology of children's poetry does provide a genuine audience for Year 6 pupils' poems, which are sent in by their teacher annually. Also, pupils in Year 5 drafted a letter to their parents in preparation for a local visit. The school needs to extend these opportunities.

87 The quality of teaching is very good throughout the school and ensures that pupils of all abilities achieve well. Two excellent lessons were observed, one at each key stage. Teachers plan very carefully and prepare their lessons thoroughly. They use language effectively and present lessons in a lively and imaginative way, using body language, facial expression and gesture to communicate encouragingly with pupils. Teachers explain tasks clearly and, in the best lessons, involve pupils in active speaking and listening, valuing their contributions. Pupils' work is marked regularly and helpfully. Annotations in assessment books are particularly well focused. Teachers have been developing the use of individual targets for pupils, but these are not yet fully shared with pupils and parents to help them understand what they need to do to improve. Computers are used to help pupils to develop their writing, drafting and editing skills and also effectively in one-to-one work between assistants and pupils with special educational needs. The use of ICT is less well established among older pupils. This is partly due to the recent introduction of new equipment.

88 The co-ordinator has carried through a clear agenda for improvement, particularly in writing. Teachers catch her enthusiasm and confidence has risen. Standards have improved throughout the school. The literacy strategy is very successfully implemented. Areas for further development in a strong subject include:

- the introduction of book events and author displays;
- the sharing, publication and display of pupils' work in the school;

- the organisation and display of books in junior rooms and the library.

MATHEMATICS

89 Results of national tests in 2000 show that Year 2 pupils attained standards that were in line with the national average and also in comparison with similar schools. Year 6 pupils' results were above the national average and those of similar schools. This is a considerable improvement on the position at the time of the last inspection, when standards for both age groups were below the national average. Over the past three years standards attained by pupils have been steadily rising. There was a particularly sharp rise in 1999 in Year 2 results to well above average, followed by a dip in 2000 to average. This was largely a result of different proportions of pupils attaining higher levels. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. Higher attaining pupils are well provided for and there are currently no significant differences in performance between boys and girls.

90 Pupils throughout the school achieve well. Pupils in Year 2 are currently attaining above the standards expected for pupils of their age in numeracy and all areas of mathematics. Although in Year 6 they are just below expectations, throughout the rest of Key Stage 2 they are at least in line. The overall level of attainment of Year 6 is affected by the fact that there is a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Within Year 6, as in all other year groups, pupils achieve well and all pupils, including higher attainers, are making good progress.

91 Year 2 pupils have a sound knowledge of place value to at least 100, whilst some go beyond this. They use this knowledge and good mental recall of basic number facts to 10 to solve problems. Pupils halve and double numbers and count in 2's, 5's and 10's. They recognise and describe a range of two and three dimensional shapes, measure using non-standard units and tell the time using o'clock and half past. Data about their involvement in Christmas productions or outcomes of science investigations is pictorially displayed and interpreted.

92 By Year 6 pupils quickly make calculations in their heads. They show good recall of their tables and understanding of fractions. Pupils use written techniques to add, subtract, divide and multiply numbers up to 1000. Some go beyond and are beginning to work with decimals. They make good use of these skills to calculate the area and perimeters of shapes and solve problems involving distance, length and weight. Pupils know the names and properties of two-dimensional shapes, draw and construct different types of triangles and represent data on block graphs.

93 Throughout the school pupils use mathematical skills to solve practical situations in other subject areas. For example, Year 2 pupils accurately measure card to make jointed bears and record the distance travelled by a wheeled toy, whilst pupils in Year 4 record the results of their litter collection on computer generated graphs. However, the use of mathematical skills in other subjects is not yet part of a fully planned strategy. Examples vary from year to year, with fewer applications in junior classes. Similarly, there are very few examples of pupils, particularly juniors, undertaking investigations into mathematical concepts or ideas that would extend their knowledge and understanding.

94 The quality of teaching and learning in the school is consistently good or better and overall it is very good. This is an improvement on the last inspection, when it was found to be satisfactory. Since then teachers have worked hard to address concerns about features of the teaching and to implement the numeracy strategy. It is this improvement in the quality of teaching that has led to gains in learning and a rise in standards. Teachers' appropriate expectations and good knowledge of pupils in their class ensures that tasks are well matched

to pupils' ability and that all make good, or very good, progress.

95 Carefully planned and prepared tasks challenge and develop pupils' learning and thinking. Throughout the school pupils are encouraged to solve problems in their own way, often through the use of practical apparatus. By sharing the methods they have used with the rest of the class they clarify their own thoughts and stimulate those of others. Very young pupils count sweets and record what one more will be. Charting the 5 and 6 times table Year 4 pupils think about other ways in which the answer may be formed. Higher attaining Year 6 pupils use a written method of decimal division and check their answer with a calculator.

96 Teachers make good use of the three-part format of the national numeracy strategy as the basis for planning their lessons. Following in-service training they are confident and secure in its use. As lessons begin they are very careful to share with pupils the purpose of the learning. They make very good effective use of the introductory quick-fire oral and mental sessions to consolidate and extend the speed of pupils' reasoning. For example, Year 2 pupils quickly place 35 and 45 correctly on a tens line and list the other numbers in the range. Reinforcement during these sessions of selected mathematical vocabulary ensures pupils comfortably develop use of the correct terminology.

97 Within the main activities, teachers use well-prepared and well-matched activities to move pupils' learning forward by providing opportunities for them to practice their skills. Good use is made of resources. Learning assistants are well deployed to support pupils. Teachers are careful to quickly correct misconceptions and make good use of their knowledge of their pupils and their abilities, to ensure there is sufficient challenge in the activities. As a result, pupils are fully occupied, feel a sense of achievement and enjoy their lessons. The plenary session is well used to revisit the learning intentions of the lesson and assess pupils' understanding. Only occasionally is it used to prepare for the next stages of learning.

98 Because of the recent changes to the computer equipment throughout the school, the use of information technology to develop pupils' mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding is underdeveloped. Teachers do make occasional incidental use of it as, for example, in Year 4 where computer-generated graphs were used to display information about a litter survey carried out in geography. Homework tasks are regularly set to provide further opportunities for pupils to consolidate and practise their mathematical skills.

99 Teachers make good use of information from regular assessments and testing to chart pupils' progress and predict what they should achieve. Marking is more variable and does not always indicate to pupils how they could improve. However, teachers use their marking and informal assessments to build a comprehensive picture of the pupils in their class.

100 Since the last inspection the knowledgeable and conscientious co-ordinator has worked hard to provide staff training and analyse assessment data, tracking trends and identifying areas for improvement. Teachers have been actively involved in the monitoring of teaching and learning through classroom observation, focusing on the implementation of the numeracy strategy. This has not yet been extended to scrutiny of pupils' work or teachers' planning. The numeracy strategy is currently used as the basis of planning. Areas for development include:

- planning to ensure all areas of the mathematics programme of study, including investigations and data handling, are covered in the required depth;
- improved use of ICT to support pupils' learning in mathematics;
- systematic planning for the use of numeracy skills in other subjects;
- the deployment of resources to best effect and the replacement of unsuitable and worn items.

SCIENCE

101 There has been an improving picture for attainment at age seven and eleven since the previous inspection. Standards at age seven have risen from average to above average, on a par with similar schools. The improvement at age eleven, although faster than the national rate, still left the school below average in 2000, and well below those of similar schools. In 1998 the performance was well below the national average. In the current year, standards at age seven are again above average, but at age eleven, they are again below average. The reasons for standards being below average in 2000 are different, however, from the reasons for below-average standards in the current year. The staff have worked hard to ensure improvement in the subject and the rising trend in the proportion of pupils reaching level 4 and level 5 testifies to the success of their efforts.

102 There are particular reasons behind the low standards in the current Year 6. The school's records show that this year group includes by far the highest proportion of pupils on the school's register of special educational need. These pupils are achieving well, but a comparatively high proportion are unlikely to attain the national standard for eleven-year-olds. What is important is that pupils are doing as well as they can. By improving assessment procedures and ensuring good coverage of the knowledge components of the curriculum, the school is challenging all pupils well. Assessments also show that the school sets challenging expectations for pupils already identified as higher attainers. Below average standards in the year 2000 were not due to special needs factors. The proportion of pupils reaching level 4 and above was just three per cent below the national figure. Had one more pupil reached the level, the school's performance would have been average. The statistical difference is insignificant. More relevant was the school's sustained performance after a big improvement in 1999.

103 Teachers have worked hard, with some success, to improve their science provision since the previous inspection. To address criticisms in the previous report a new national scheme of work has been adopted. It secures the continuity of the curriculum across the school and ensures that there is full and complete coverage of the National Curriculum. The quality of teaching has improved. Whilst concerted efforts have been made to improve the quantity and range of investigative work there is still room for improvement, particularly in the use of mathematical measurement to inform pupils' investigative work.

104 The quality of teaching in lessons is very good and the impact it has on pupils' learning is highly significant. Foremost, teachers are enthusiastic about science and their pleasure at teaching the subject is infectious. Pupils relish hands-on activities and are often fascinated by their investigations. A fine example of this was seen in Year 6, where the pupils were excited at seeing inverted images through pin-hole cameras they had made. Teachers have a secure understanding of the subject. In consequence they are able to ask searching questions which stretch pupils' thinking, often helping them to dig deep into previous learning to make new connections. The same good questioning skills are effectively used for another purpose. They also help teachers to assess where pupils are in their learning. Very good pupil management strategies help to ensure that pupils behave well and concentrate fully. In a Year 2 lesson where pupils were investigating friction the group working independently proved to be well chosen. They showed very good collaborative skills and were able to substantiate their observations having used successful investigative techniques. An energetic pace to the various sections of lessons also helps to keep pupils on their toes, as do strategic countdown reminders about time. Teachers are usually observant and sensitive in circulating the class and helping pupils individually. Most successful lessons begin with a sharing of the lesson objectives and end with groups contributing their findings to the results of the whole class. This process helps to give pupils a context for the lesson and a yardstick

for their achievements in it. Assessment measures, including those already mentioned, are very strong in science and teachers have a very good understanding of their pupils' learning. They are effectively supported in this by regular tests at the end of each science topic, the results of which are quantified and recorded for their National Curriculum level. Every pupil has a science assessment book, in which the tests themselves as well as the assessments are kept for future reference.

105 The leadership and management of science is strong. The co-ordinator regularly and systematically monitors the teaching of science throughout the school. She is a very good role model for the teaching of the subject herself and has played an important part in the raising of standards since the previous inspection. The school has identified the need to develop the school grounds as a resource for environmental scientific study.

ART AND DESIGN

106 Standards seen in infant classes are good, but in junior classes there is little sign of pupils building on skills learned in earlier years. The small number and limited range of work samples available or on display testify to the continued low profile of the subject in junior classes. Standards in Years 1 and 2 are better than they were in the previous inspection, but there has been not been sufficient improvement in junior classes. Standards remain below a level that would be expected from children in this age group.

107 Infant pupils of all abilities achieve well. This is a direct result of their teachers' careful preparation of a variety of media for them to explore, clear explanations and demonstrations. The high achievement also stems from the way teachers observe what each pupil is doing, in order to highlight successes and share these with the class. Pupils experiment and explore media with enthusiasm, using their imaginations well and developing a range of skills. As a result of teachers' observational assessments and their knowledge of pupils' previous work, they show higher expectations of pupils who exhibit a talent for the subject. They challenge these pupils by offering them greater independence in their activities after the initial clarification of tasks. Similarly, the teachers know who needs more support and reassurance. They provide closer attention and, where possible, deploy assistants to develop confidence among pupils with special educational needs or those who have little confidence in using the media.

108 Standards seen in displays by pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5, based on works by Lowry and Matisse, include some satisfactory outcomes. In the only junior lesson observed, pupils also showed attainment appropriate for their age. Discussions with pupils revealed their interest in the work they had done. Pupils spoke enthusiastically, for example, about the way they had imitated Matisse by using shapes to create the image of a spiral for their snail pictures. Pupils were less forthcoming when discussing other art and design activities. This, together with the lack of sketchbooks, work samples, individual portfolios and three-dimensional work, shows that pupils are not focusing enough on the skills they are employing in the subject. Although the co-ordinator has put in place a clear outline curriculum map for all year groups, junior pupils are not receiving sufficient breadth of experience. They are not aware of any development of their skills or of any wealth of experience in design and use of media. They appear to see art lessons as isolated activities, unrelated to previous or planned future experiences. Displays and discussions with staff confirm that the subject remains underdeveloped in Years 3 to 6. Pupils with artistic talent do not have their work recognised and celebrated sufficiently. Those with special educational needs, along with pupils of average ability, tackle art lessons purely as isolated tasks. They do not have a picture of their developing knowledge, understanding and skills.

109 The quality of teaching in individual lessons is consistently good or better and one very

good lesson was observed. In this lesson, the teacher caught pupils' enthusiasm very early in the practical part of the lesson by stopping the class and showing the successful result of one pupil's printing experiment. The teacher's enthusiasm and warm encouragement inspired everyone to very well focused effort, which in turn produced successful results. The teacher had also deployed two assistants very effectively. One worked with pairs of pupils to teach the complicated skills involved in making string prints, while the other supported the youngest pupils and those needing more confidence to use the materials available. The teacher continued to recognise successful experimentation and prompt further exploration of the media and tools, highlighting a few of the best examples at the end to review what pupils had learned.

110 The co-ordinator has taken positive steps to invigorate a subject which has had too low a profile in the school. These have had a positive impact in infant classes, but outcomes are not clearly visible in the junior classes. Individual teachers are organising time slots and deciding whether to group lessons or alternate with design and technology. There is no agreed system. The new headteacher is eager to raise the profile of the subject and has already introduced an art club, so that pupils with a particular interest can nurture their talents.

111 The main areas for development are:

- the broadening of the range of activities for junior pupils, including the introduction of three-dimensional work;
- the allocation of time and organisation of the timetable for junior pupils;
- the way the junior staff identify and assess pupils' skills and make pupils aware of their developing skills;
- the introduction of individual pupil portfolios.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

112 Standards are satisfactory in infant classes, but there is too little evidence of work in junior classes to make a judgement on standards. This replicates the findings of the previous inspection. Having committed itself to addressing other, more pressing priorities, the school has not done enough to improve standards in design and technology for junior pupils.

113 Pupils of all abilities receive an appropriate range of opportunities up to age seven. Pupils of average attainment and those with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily under the careful guidance of their teachers. There is little evidence of recognition and challenge for higher attainers in this subject. In the junior classes, pupils of all abilities underachieve because of the lack of a detailed scheme of work to ensure broad coverage. Teachers offer boys and girls equality of opportunity, but for junior pupils, this means the opportunities are equally limited. The subject currently lacks leadership and needs pro-active management.

114 The staff have agreed a curriculum map, which shows the aspects of the subject to be covered each term for each year group. However, the outcomes are similar to those in art and design. The infant teachers are working quite closely together to create an agreed sequence of experiences for pupils. This ensures appropriate breadth and due attention to the design and making aspects. In junior classes, decisions on the time allocation and the length of time given to different topics chosen are too dependent on individual teachers. Samples of work seen are limited to quite simple techniques of folding, cutting and gluing card and paper. The choice of activities is too limited and restrictive, partly because of limited resources. As a result, pupils' skills remain undeveloped and standards achieved by the oldest pupils are poor. One or two older pupils told how they enjoy making pop-up cards

associated with festivals, but such activities appear to be the main element of their design and technology experience. There is also very little evidence of teachers planning effective use of pupils' literacy or numeracy skills in a subject which offers many opportunities for appropriate application of these skills. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 are set to investigate bread-making shortly in an interesting project involving a national supermarket chain. This project is an exciting development towards a fuller and broader approach in this curriculum area.

115 Teaching in the only lesson observed, an infant class, was good. Relationships among teacher, assistant and pupils were good. The teacher gave clear instructions and pupils responded well to the support and direction of the assistant by showing a good standard of care in their work. They successfully identified vehicles used for different purposes and drew a labelled diagram of their chosen vehicle, commenting on the purpose of the labelled parts. The lesson is part of a series during which pupils will design and make a moving vehicle.

116 The areas for development are:

- the provision of: clear leadership and direction for the subject;
- a scheme of work which ensures sufficient breadth of experience for junior pupils;
- improved resources and time-tabling in junior classes;
- finding a means for pupils to keep a record of their work in the subject;
- ensuring that pupils take pride in their work by giving it a polished finish;
- improved application of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in the subject.

GEOGRAPHY

117 Standards in pupils' knowledge, skills, and understanding of the subject are satisfactory and have been maintained at this level in both infant and junior classes since the previous inspection. Pupils of all abilities are achieving appropriately as a result of a well-planned curriculum, which includes a number of tasks that are relevant to the pupils and excite their interest.

118 Most teachers alternate geography and history half-termly on the timetable. Only one junior geography lesson was seen and no infant lessons. Evidence was gathered from pupils' previous work, teachers' planning, and discussion with the subject co-ordinator. The school has recently adopted the national scheme of work for geography.

119 Progressively good use is made of the local environment across the school in providing a focus for geographical enquiry and investigation. Infant pupils familiarise themselves with features of the school site. They gain an increasing understanding of how the world is represented on maps and can position Kintbury approximately on a map of the United Kingdom. They express simple comparisons between London and Kintbury. In junior classes the planned progression in geographical skills leads pupils into more complex studies of World geography, but the locality remains a strong focus. One class explores their own leisure activities, where they are sited and how they travel to them. In this study pupils experience a good range of maps for different purposes and of varying scales. They develop their own interesting reference keys. In the only lesson observed, Year 5 pupils learned more mature enquiry methods as they explored the possible effects of a hypothetical change in the traffic flow and car parking in the village. They prepared for a field trip to investigate the area on foot by discussing the first hand evidence they would need to gather for informed debate. By Year 6, pupils make a detailed exploration of the geographical features of rivers and how they are formed. A biennial residential visit to the Isle of Wight for Years 5 and 6 provides an important curriculum focus, which includes comparison between Kintbury and a seaside venue. In a meaningful environmental topic pupils look at the quantities of litter collected from both school playgrounds over a fixed period. They successfully use information technology to present data clearly in graphical form.

120 The teaching was of the highest quality in the only lesson observed. Through careful planning the teacher effectively achieved two objectives in an economically timed lesson. Firstly, the teacher enabled pupils to develop their writing skills in a relevant situation, by completing their own consent letters to their parents for permission to make a field trip. Secondly, she developed pupils' debating skills through efficient, sensitive management and good relationships with the pupils. She very successfully gave them responsibilities, for team consultation and then the confident debating of ideas.

121 An area for development is assessment, based on the revised scheme of work.

HISTORY

122 Two history lessons were observed during the inspection, both in junior classes. Evidence was also gathered from the examination of work already accomplished by pupils in their books. Teachers' planning was also analysed, as was the school's adopted scheme of work. From these sources it is evident that pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress in their knowledge, skills and understanding of history as they move through the school. Standards seen are appropriate for pupils' ages throughout the school.

123 Pupils in Year 2 have a secure sense of time passing and understand that there are variations and similarities between past and present. Through effective teaching pupils are well aware that they have their own history. They know the features of their development which chronicle and order the important stages of their life so far, such as what they were like when they were born and when they started school. One pupil vividly recalls her nursery school experience. Pupils understand the meaning of 'old and new' and 'old and young' and some have a sound awareness of the generations in their families. They know about some important events in the past and how they influence their present day life, for example the connection between Guy Fawkes and our national celebration of Bonfire Night. Through Years 3 to 6 pupils satisfactorily extend their knowledge of distinct historical periods such as the Ancient Egyptians, the Tudor Dynasty and the Victorian period. Pupils develop sound enquiry skills as they experience a broad range of historical evidence, including dramatisations on video, older visitors from the community with experiences of war and evacuation and visits to places of historical interest.

124 The good quality of teaching has a strong influence on pupils' learning. Teachers enthuse their pupils through their own interest and knowledge of history. They ask carefully crafted questions which help pupils to think and draw upon their prior knowledge too. Through good planning teachers expertly home in on the key features to be learned. For example, one helped pupils to explore the fundamental importance of the River Nile to the Ancient Egyptians. Another movingly used her personal knowledge of the short life of her grandfather to give impact to pupils' learning about the horrors of the trenches during the First World War. Focused research and access to varied resources give pupils a well structured framework for their independent investigations. They use successfully taught, efficient referencing skills to gather specific knowledge from information books. Homework is sometimes used well and in one session seen the teacher asked pupils to research personalities and events surrounding the Second World War.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

125 There is insufficient evidence available to make a firm judgement about standards in all aspects of ICT. However, it is quite clear that at the present time attainment in both key stages is below expectations since aspects such as control are not covered and computer

use is largely focused on word processing and paint-and-draw programmes. This is a similar position to that found at the time of the last inspection. Although the network installation and acquisition of computers is not yet complete, the recent developments in the subject have markedly improved the quality of provision. They mean that the school is now well placed to develop pupils' ICT skills and work towards covering all aspects of the subject.

126 In both key stages little direct teaching of ICT skills was seen. However, it is evident from viewing teachers' planning, talking to pupils and looking at their work that pupils are making progress in their ability to use information technology. From the limited evidence, it is clear that teaching of infants within the current limitations of computer usage is good. Use is already being made of the new network to support work in other subjects. Infant teachers have suitable expectations of their pupils and ensure that appropriate work is provided to build on the basic skills they have been taught. As a result pupils are making rapid progress in acquiring skills, knowledge and understanding. Year 2 pupils select colours from a menu and use the mouse to draw and fill the outline and features of a face, showing good dexterity in their work. They know how to erase and refill areas they are dissatisfied with and to save and print their work. They have already produced pictures in the style of Mondrian by positioning and colour 'infilling' rectangular shapes.

127 Junior pupils are also developing ICT skills but the rate of progress is often slower. As they frequently do not have the basic skills on which to build, work is often less advanced than expected. This is particularly true of the older pupils, whose level of skills is frequently dependent on the access they have had to ICT out of school. Teachers carefully plan activities that will develop and extend pupils' ICT skills. They demonstrate its relevance and capability by applying it to tasks in other subjects. Pupils in Year 3/4 log onto the network, select a background colour from the menu, then build and overlay coloured shapes to create an abstract picture of a guitar in the style of Picasso. All are able to select line or colour mode and tone by dragging the cursor with the mouse and to activate print. They excitedly watch the finished picture emerge. Pupils in the Year 4/5 class describe how they would use ICT to research sound by either interrogating a micropedia or using a search engine to find suitable web sites on the Internet. Year 6 pupils search the internet for specific information on the rainforest as part of their work on the water cycle and print covers for their topic folders. They show confident use of the mouse and keyboard. A display of poems shows a good example of many older pupils developing their word processing and clip art skills on their family computers during homework tasks before the new equipment was available in school. The lack of direct observation of teaching in junior classes makes it inappropriate to judge the quality of teaching at this key stage.

128 During the past two terms, whilst the school has not had a designated co-ordinator for information technology, the deputy headteacher has acted very capably in an interim capacity, well supported by the local education authority advisory consultant. Arrangements for the network installation and purchase and development of ICT equipment have been well managed and plans are well in hand to complete this. The planned staff training will play an important role in developing and extending staff skills.

129 Areas for improvement, in order to move learning forward and raise standards in the subject include:

- formalising arrangements for the co-ordination of the subject;
- ensuring regular monitoring of provision;
- the introduction of a full scheme of work that builds progressively on skills already taught, covers the required curriculum and details what pupils of different ages should be achieving;
- developing an accurate assessment system to identify what pupils already know, understand and can do and to inform both teaching and subject development by

identifying areas of strength and those needing further attention

MUSIC

130 Music is one of the school's strengths. Pupils of all ages enjoy the range of activities provided in lessons, during hymn practices and choir practices after school. Three lunchtime recorder lessons and a series of individual and small group woodwind lessons offer junior pupils further opportunities to extend their musical abilities. Standards seen in lessons are satisfactory throughout the school. Pupils of average attainment and those with special educational needs achieve appropriately. The school gives very good opportunities for higher attainers in junior classes to extend their skills. Large numbers attend the choir and around a quarter of the junior pupils are learning play an instrument. Overall, therefore, because of the additional provision for older pupils, standards for eight-to-eleven-year-olds are good. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection, which found standards satisfactory throughout the school.

131 Pupils in Year 2 choose from a selection of percussion instruments and successfully interpret different types of weather, deciding which type is best represented by their instrument. As a result of the teacher's careful prompting, they listen to each other's sounds and create patterns of music, changing the sound picture from snow to sun, to fog and to hail. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 recognise and use musical terms such as 'forte', 'piano' and 'crescendo' with understanding. They show a developing ability to follow a conductor and written musical symbols by using instruments to imitate a rhythm, varying the dynamics appropriately. The teacher challenges higher attainers by setting them more complicated rhythms to follow and repeat. Pupils in Year 6 listened with close attention to the first movement of Vaughan Williams' Antarctic Symphony. The excellent choice of this piece showed the teacher's wide knowledge of music and her sensitivity to its use in association with other studies. Pupils had discussed Scott's final diary entry and were asked to picture the scene and reflect on the experiences and feelings of members of the expedition. Their responses showed pupils' empathy with the situation.

132 The quality of teaching in lessons observed was all satisfactory or good. Pupils' singing in hymn practice and assembly, together with work samples showing older pupils' recorded pictorial notation, contribute to the judgement that teaching is good overall in both infant and junior classes. The high profile of the subject in the school means that all teachers plan their lessons carefully and that pupils experience a good variety of listening, appraising, composing and performing opportunities. Teachers ensure that resources are well prepared and that all pupils have the opportunity to participate. Occasionally this slows the pace of the lesson, leaving pupils waiting while others take their turn to play. For the most part, teachers ensure good control of instruments. They have clear expectations and ensure that activities fit the purpose of the lesson. Each lesson succeeded in meeting the named objectives within the thirty-minute session. It is the regularity and consistency of these well-planned lessons which creates a good quality of learning for pupils. This breadth of experience, together with the teachers' enthusiasm, leads to many participating in the weekly after-school choir practice and a high proportion of junior pupils learning to play the recorder and other woodwind instruments. The high participation level stems from the strong musical tradition at the school, which is indebted to the enthusiasm and energy of the co-ordinator, who spends three lunchtimes with recorder groups in addition to the weekly choir practices.

133 The school offers good opportunities for pupils to perform, whether singing or playing, in assemblies and concerts at school and in the village. In lessons and additional activities, the school offers equal opportunity for boys and girls. The school recently put on a performance of 'Rats', with older pupils taking solo roles. They also sing at Notrees, a local home for the elderly, for example. The co-ordinator also ensures that enthusiastic pupils have the

opportunity to sing with larger groups. Last year, pupils sang at the Albert Hall with other pupils from West Berkshire, accompanied by a full orchestra. Resources include instruments and music from a variety of cultures worldwide. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to raise pupils' awareness of music from other cultures as well as celebrating the many forms in western traditions. The wealth of performance opportunities offered, together with those for reflection when listening to music, lead to the subject contributing considerably to the development of pupils' spiritual and cultural celebration.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

134 Standards in physical education are average in both key stages. This is much the same as was found in the last inspection. There is no difference in performance between boys and girls and an appropriate balance of games skills are taught.

135 Infant pupils work enthusiastically in gymnastics, for example, through actions involving twisting, rolling and travelling. They clearly enjoy their work and co-operate well in the tasks. They show increasing control of their bodies and awareness of the space around them when balancing and turning. Teachers make effective use of clear instructions to move pupils' learning forward through well-planned activities at a good pace. Most seven year olds are able successfully to link together a sequence of jumps or sliding movements into a sequence making good use of the space available to them. They work independently and are given opportunities to watch the performance of others and reflect on how to improve their own. They are not, however, always given sufficient time to practice, refine and incorporate this into their own work. Time is often lost as they queue to take turns on the mat or apparatus.

136 The work is of a similar quality in junior classes. The teaching is good overall and is more focused on the development of skills. In games, pupils develop their passing and catching skills with a large ball and their knowledge of tactics through mini games. They clearly enjoy their lessons, are attentive to their teacher and work well together. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 develop their understanding of attack and defence as they try to block the passage of the ball or move it quickly across the court with quick, short controlled passes. They begin to learn the rules of netball and by Year 6 are applying these to mini-games in which they develop their tactical skills. They discuss the moves and how they could be improved. Well-timed intervention by the teacher increases the level of challenge. In the lesson observed, the teacher moved learning forward well through the refinement and addition of rules, as well as the coaching of specific skills

137 Pupils and teachers in both key stages are well aware of safety issues. Equipment is moved safely and sessions begin with warm up activities and end with ones to cool down. As they progress through the school pupils show increasing awareness of the effects of exercise on their bodies. Pupils in Key Stage 2 learn to swim at a pool in a nearby town and standards are above average.

138 All aspects of the curriculum for physical education are planned, but outdoor and adventurous activities only occur as part of a biennial residential trip. The school is currently reviewing this. The co-ordinator is actively developing the provision of extra-curricular coaching and competitive sports. The netball and girls' and boys' football teams will soon be joined by judo. There are currently no formal arrangements for monitoring the subject or assessing and recording pupils' performance. Recent national guidance is being used to identify levels of expectation for pupils in each year and inform the setting of objectives for lessons since these are not currently included in the scheme of work. It is this exemplification of pupil performance and clear view of attainment that are needed to raise standards further in the subject. Resources for games are in good condition but would benefit from a review of their storage. However, the large apparatus in the hall is

cumbersome and unsuitable for younger children and restricts the range of gymnastic activities.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

139 During the inspection only a very limited amount of pupils' work was available, since much occurs through discussion. This was therefore supplemented by lesson observations, discussions with both pupils and teachers and reference to planning. As was found in the last inspection, pupils' attainment is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.

140 The quality of teaching is good overall in both key stages and includes some very good teaching. Lessons are well planned to build on pupils' knowledge and experiences to develop their understanding of Christianity and the world's leading faiths. As a consequence pupils have good knowledge of significant features and stories from these. Year 6 pupils, for example, appreciate the significance Easter has for Christians, recall different versions of the Christmas story and know significant aspects of the Hindu religion. Year 2 pupils when discussing the parable of the 'Lost Sheep' talk confidently about other stories they know about Jesus. They know that the bible is a special book and that it contains stories about special people including Jesus.

141 Teachers are careful in their introductions to ensure pupils understand the link to previous work and know the purpose of the learning. They make good use of the plenary to revisit this and check pupils' knowledge and understanding. Teachers' clear expectations, well established routines and good subject knowledge support and extend pupils' learning well. Teachers show considerable skill in creating a secure atmosphere in which pupils are confident enough to discuss and explore their feelings. Through the careful use of questioning they focus and challenge pupils' thoughts well. Quiet reflection is also well used to focus those thoughts, as in Year 2 when pupils sit with eyes closed empathising with the feelings and emotions in 'The Lost Sheep'. Year 5 pupils, who had learnt about the Hindu belief of Dharma quietly thought about how they might improve themselves by modifying their behaviour, trying harder or being more considerate of others. Pupils work well together and show obvious interest in the tasks as, for example, when the same pupils compared and discussed the suitability of their choices.

142 Teachers make good use of a range of techniques to enliven their lessons and enthuse their pupils. Story telling skills are well used as they read from a first Bible in Year 2 or go on a bear hunt in Year 1. They build well on pupils' experience to make the topic being studied meaningful to them. In Year 1 pupils discuss journeys and the emotions they feel in both real and imaginary situations. They compare their feelings when confronting a bear with those they might experience in an everyday situation. The tasks set are varied and well matched to pupils' ability and good support is given by teachers and learning support assistants so pupils successfully complete them. Good use is made of links with the local church. Year 3 pupils visited it as part of their studies, noting the names of different features together with their purpose and significance. The local vicar has regularly taken lessons with Year 6. Effective links are made with literacy through discussion, looking at pictures, reading stories and pupils independently writing well worded sentences.

143 Since the last inspection the enthusiastic co-ordinator has developed the range of artefacts and teacher resources which has helped staff confidence. There are currently no formal arrangements for monitoring standards in the subject. A portfolio of pupils' work to support this is at an early stage of development. The recent revision of the locally agreed syllabus indicates expectations of pupils and is closely linked to recent national guidance. Although the school is drawing on this for its planning it now needs to incorporate it into its

scheme of work so that a system of assessing and recording what pupils know, understand and can do is developed. Visitors are predominantly representatives of the Christian faith and linked with the local church, although a visit by a Hindu is planned.