

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **ST WEONARD'S PRIMARY SCHOOL**

St Weonard's

LEA area: Herefordshire

Unique reference number: 116740

Headteacher: Mr D A Thomas

Reporting inspector: Barbara Crane  
21227

Dates of inspection: 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> October 2001

Inspection number: 219441

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Mount Way St Weonard's Herefordshire
Postcode:	HR2 8NU
Telephone number:	01981 580352
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr B Watkins
Date of previous inspection:	November 1999

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Barbara Crane 21227	Registered inspector	English, science, art and design, history and geography, religious education, Foundation Stage.	The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
Ernest Marshall 14141	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Chris Scola 30398	Team inspector	Mathematics, design and technology, information and communication technology, music, physical education, special educational needs, equal opportunities.	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. 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 small rural school serves several villages as well as St Weonard's. There are 78 pupils organised in four classes and the headteacher teaches a class for two days each week. There are no pupils from ethnic backgrounds other than white and all of the pupils have English as their first language. Twenty-two per cent of the pupils have special educational needs, which is broadly average, but none of the pupils has a Statement of Special Educational Need. A significant proportion of the school's population changes each year and, over the past three years, an average of a fifth of the pupils has started at the school or left at times other than the usual starting and leaving points. Three per cent of the pupils are currently entitled to free school meals (which is below average) but this figure varies as children move in and out of the school over the year. Over the past four years it has been, more typically, just over ten per cent. The pupils' attainment on entry is average, but there is a wide range of attainment evident.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is a good school. The pupils enjoy their work and are keen to improve. The teaching is good and so the majority of pupils make good progress. Standards are good and the curriculum is interesting and well planned. The school is well led and managed and provides good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Standards in mathematics, writing, speaking and listening are good by the end of the infants and reading is very good.
- Standards in writing, science, speaking and listening are good by the end of the juniors and reading and mathematics are very good.
- The teaching is good for all ages of pupils.
- The school plans a rich curriculum that is interesting and relevant and there is a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
- The pupils' personal development is well promoted; they have positive attitudes to work and behave well.
- The headteacher provides a good lead for the school and is well supported by the other teachers.

#### **What could be improved**

- Spelling in the junior classes.
- Some of the pupils with special educational needs could make better progress.
- Homework is not given consistently and school's partnership with parents could be strengthened.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in November 1999, when it was found to have serious weaknesses. There has been very good improvement since then. Standards are now higher and the teaching is better. The school has worked diligently to improve its provision and resolve the issues from the last inspection. As a result, standards in writing, information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education are better. The teachers' expectations of what the more able pupils can achieve have been raised and they ensure that these pupils work at an appropriate level. The management of the curriculum has improved and the subject managers effectively check the quality of provision and standards achieved.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				<b>Key</b>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	C	E	C	B	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	D	E*	C	B	
Science	C	E	D	C	

The school's results vary from year to year as a small number of pupils (typically about twelve) take the tests. This limits the reliability with which the school's results can be compared to others, as each pupil's performance has a significant impact on the overall results. In addition, the school has had a high level of pupils moving in and out of the school over the last three years. Over recent years the results for seven year olds have been above average, although the 2001 results were not as high due to a lower attaining group of pupils. The performance of the eleven year olds has also been variable over recent years. The 2000 results were a low point. This is, in part, explained by the high proportion of pupils in that year group with special educational needs and a number of the pupils who took the tests did not start at the school. In mathematics, the school's results were in the lowest five per cent of schools in 2000. The 2001 results were better and the school met its targets. Again, a number of pupils in the year group had special educational needs. The pupils' performance in English and mathematics was similar to that seen in most schools and better than that in similar schools. In science, their performance was slightly below that in all schools but average when compared to similar schools. When their prior attainment is taken into account, pupils of all abilities did well in the 2001 tests. The school has set suitably challenging targets for this year and is on track to meet them. By the time the pupils start Year 1, their attainment is better than expected for their age in all of the areas of learning. On the basis of the work seen now, standards are well above average in reading at the end of both the infants and the juniors. In mathematics, standards are above average for seven year olds and well above average for eleven year olds. There are good standards in speaking and listening and writing at both seven and eleven. Standards in science are as expected for seven year olds but above average for the oldest pupils. Standards in ICT and religious education are average for the pupils' ages. In all other subjects the pupils' work reaches the standard expected. Pupils of average and above average attainment do well in all classes and make good progress. Most pupils with special educational needs make reasonable progress but a few make slower progress than expected because the teachers' planning has not been sufficiently well tailored to meet their needs. Standards in spelling should be higher in the junior classes. The pupils often spell common words incorrectly and do not check through their work to find mistakes.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The pupils enjoy their work and are keen to take advantage of what the school offers them.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are polite and friendly. They have a clear understanding of the school's rules and respond well to them. The pupils' play is often boisterous on the playground but it is not aggressive.
Personal development and relationships	Good. The pupils show maturity and respect for others' feelings. They get on well together. Older pupils take care of the younger ones.
Attendance	Very good. The pupils are punctual and ready to start work.

The pupils take an interest in their work. They respond very well to praise and enjoy a challenge. A small number of pupils display challenging behaviour and they are well managed by the staff. The pupils are quick to offer help to others and pupils of all ages, abilities and backgrounds mix well together.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. The teaching in English and mathematics is good. The basic skills in literacy and numeracy are well taught. The teaching of reading is very good in all classes and supports high standards. The lessons are interesting and relationships are good; teachers use resources to enliven lessons and stimulate the pupils' interest. Time is used well in lessons well and classroom assistants are deployed very effectively to support pupils' learning. Teachers have a good knowledge of what they teach and plan well to meet the needs of the average and the more able pupils. They have suitably high expectations of what the pupils will achieve. There is some very good teaching in every class. There are, however, some weaknesses in teaching and learning. The marking of pupils' work does not always give good guidance to the pupils on what they need to do to improve. Teachers do not insist that the junior pupils, of all abilities, check their writing to find mistakes in spelling. Teachers do not consistently plan work for pupils with special educational needs that focuses on what they need to make good progress.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. There are plenty of relevant visits to support the curriculum and a very good range of extra-curricular activities. The use of computers is well planned.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. The headteacher acted as the co-ordinator for a year, before the appointment of the new co-ordinator who is a specialist teacher. There is now a high level of expertise, and better planning to meet the pupils' needs is rapidly being put in place. The previous inconsistencies in planning have meant that a few pupils have made slower progress than expected.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good. The pupils have plenty of opportunities to reflect on how their actions affect others. The school effectively teaches the difference between right and wrong.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a good level of care for the pupils on a day-to-day basis. Their well-being is given a high priority.

The school tracks most pupils' progress well, although the assessment of pupils with special educational needs has been a weakness. This has recently improved. The school's partnership with parents is not as good as it was and the school needs to help the parents to better understand its work and achievements.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher gives a good lead for the school in bringing about improvements and is supported by an able deputy head. Both set a good example in their teaching. All of the staff have worked hard and effectively to bring about improvements.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governors' involvement in the school's planning for improvement is at a fairly early stage of development, but they have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The staff look carefully at what can be improved in teaching and learning and the standards achieved by the pupils.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school's large underspend is earmarked to protect staffing this year. It reduces considerably at the end of the current year.

The school has brought about improvements through a careful analysis of its performance. The right priorities for improvement are reflected in its development planning. The headteacher provides the governors with good information about the school's progress and its work, but their role in supporting the school's work is not as extensive as it could be. The school's staffing, accommodation and resources are good and have a positive impact on standards achieved.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The teaching is good.</li><li>• Children like school.</li><li>• Children make good progress.</li><li>• They feel comfortable about approaching school.</li><li>• Children are expected to work hard and do best.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Behaviour and extent to which school helps children become mature and responsible.</li><li>• Homework and information about children's progress.</li><li>• How well the school is led and managed and works with them.</li></ul>

The inspection evidence confirms the parents' positive views. There was no evidence to support their concerns over behaviour or the school's leadership and management. The school provides well for the pupils' personal development and they are encouraged to show maturity and take responsibility. Most parents receive good information about how their children are doing but communication with some parents of children with special educational needs has been lacking. Homework is not as well organised in some classes as it is in others. Prolonged staff absences due to illness in the last school year and foot and mouth disease in the area disrupted the school's usual programme of events and some parents feel that their children missed out on some experiences as a result.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. There is a small number of pupils in each year group and so the numbers taking the end of key stage tests each year is low. This limits the usefulness with which the school's results can be compared to those in larger schools, because one pupil's results make a significant difference to the overall results. The standards achieved by each year group very much reflect the nature of the cohort. The school has, however, improved its planning to meet the needs of the higher attaining pupils and this has been a significant factor in raising standards. In addition, the school's analysis of pupils' performance has been used effectively to improve teaching and learning and this has had a positive impact on the results achieved.
2. The children start at the school with broadly average attainment, although a very wide range of attainment is evident. By the end of the Reception year, the pupils do better than expected in all of the areas of learning because of the good teaching. They make good progress in the basic skills and develop in confidence and independence.
3. The results in the end of key stage tests for seven year olds over the three years up to 2001 have been above average. The 2000 results stood up well with the results in all schools and similar schools. The results in 2001 were lower, but the year group was a lower attaining group of pupils.
4. The performance of eleven year olds in the tests over recent years has been very variable, both between years and subjects. From 1996 to 2000 the school's trend was below the national trend with all subjects taken together. Certainly, the results in 2000 marked a low point for the school, with results in English, mathematics and science well below average and in the lowest five per cent nationally and in similar schools. In part, these low results were due to the number of pupils joining the school with special needs and pupils missing the expected level in the tests by a very narrow margin. Also, a number of pupils who took the tests joined the school in the later years of the juniors.
5. In 2001 the school exceeded its target for eleven year olds in English and met its target for mathematics. Over half of the pupils achieved the higher level in reading and a fifth reached the higher level in writing and mathematics. The results show an improvement on the previous year. The pupils' performance in English and mathematics was similar to that seen in most schools and better than that in similar schools. In science, their performance was slightly below that in all schools but average when compared to similar schools. Given that almost a third of the pupils were on the special needs register, the pupils did well. Boys and girls did equally well across all three subjects.
6. Most of the pupils are achieving very well in reading. On the basis of the work seen now, the pupils' attainment in reading is well above average for their ages at seven and eleven. The Year 2 pupils approach text confidently and read with good expression. They have good strategies to work out unknown words and have a good understanding of what they read. The Year 6 pupils are very competent readers and read a wide range of books. They express preferences for different types of books and have favourite authors. They find information quickly from reference books and use their very good skills effectively to support their work in other subjects. The pupils' reach good standards in speaking and listening and writing by Year 2 and Year 6. The pupils write imaginatively in their stories and more formally in letters and accounts. They can adapt the style to fit the purpose by the time they leave the school and use a good vocabulary. The pupils' spelling in the junior classes should be better. The pupils often spell common words wrongly, even though they

- quickly correct these when they are encouraged to read through their work. They do not, however, do this habitually. The pupils speak confidently and they use a good vocabulary.
7. The pupils' work in mathematics reaches a good standard in Year 2 and is well above average in Year 6. Most pupils achieve well. The Year 2 pupils are quick to calculate mentally and have a good understanding of shape and measures. The pupils in Year 6 are very competent and calculate accurately with very large numbers. They can find several ways of solving problems by using different methods. The pupils work confidently with the relationship between fractions, decimal fractions and percentages, and solve problems using long multiplication and division.
  8. Standards in science are better than expected for the pupils' age at the end of Year 6. Standards are average for the pupils' age at the end of Year 2. Most pupils make good progress because they have good opportunities to learn from investigating and observing and to express ideas about why things happen.
  9. Standards in ICT are average by the ages of seven and eleven, but the Year 6 pupils are very competent in word processing. They combine text and graphics to good effect and are skilled at redrafting their work.
  10. In religious education, the attainment of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 meets the expectations of the locally agreed guidelines. The pupils have an appropriate understanding of stories from the Bible and the significance of Christian symbols. They extend their understanding of other faiths and by the age of eleven use what they know about the practices and beliefs in one religion to help them understand others. In all other subjects, the pupils' attainment reaches the standard expected for their ages.
  11. Pupils of higher and average ability make good progress in most areas of their work because the teachers plan challenging tasks and give them good support. The pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, but the weaknesses in the teachers' planning to meet their needs over the past year have led to a few making slower progress than expected. This is being acted upon as a matter of priority and the new individual education plans should provide better support for the teachers in planning to support these pupils.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

12. The pupils have good attitudes to school, right from the start. This is an area of very good improvement since the previous inspection. The pupils enjoy their work and are proud of their achievements. In an English lesson, for example, a Year 3 pupil was pleased with the poem that the class had written together and suggested that they could 'show it in assembly.' The pupils get on very well with the teachers and want to please them. In one lesson, for example, a group of Year 6 pupils was delighted when the teacher announced that she was going to work with them. Pupils enjoy the wide range of activities that the school provides for them and many take part in the after- school clubs.
13. The pupils' behaviour is good. They understand the school's rules and most of the pupils keep to them. They behave well and listen carefully in assemblies. On the playground, pupils of all ages play well together. Their play is often boisterous, but it is not aggressive. They help to tidy away at the end of lunchtime and help set out and collect the play equipment for the playground. Pupils behave sensibly in the computer suite and show a very good level of independence in organising the resources they need. The inspection team found no evidence to support the parents' concerns about the standards of behaviour at the school.
14. Pupils show a good level of maturity by the time they leave the school. In a drama lesson, for example, groups of Years 5 and 6 pupils worked together and asked sensible questions,

listened to others and thought carefully about the issues involved in leaving their homes to live on a space station. The pupils show respect for others' well-being and feelings. In a Years 1 and 2 science lesson, for instance, the pupils were very quiet in their questioning because they did not wish to wake or startle the baby who was brought to visit the classroom.

15. Attendance at the school was very good for the year 1999/2000 and was well above the national average for similar schools. There was no unauthorised absence. Unusually high levels of illness amongst pupils during January 2001 followed by the absence of a number of pupils due to foot and mouth restrictions, have resulted in a drop in attendance for the 2000/2001 year. Current figures indicate the school is back on track to regain its former high attendance level. The pupils are punctual and ready to work at the start of the school day.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

16. The teaching has improved since the previous inspection, when just under a fifth of the lessons were unsatisfactory. The teaching is now good for all age groups and in the lessons seen just under four fifths were good or better. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen and a fifth of the lessons were very good. The teachers have a better understanding of levels expected at each stage in subjects and there is more challenging work for the most able. Teachers have clear procedures for assessing work and tracking pupils' progress, and make better use of assessment to inform their planning. All of the teachers use the time in lessons well and deploy classroom assistants very effectively. They use resources well to enliven lessons and stimulate the pupils' interest. The teachers have a good knowledge of what they teach, and plan well to meet the needs of the average and the more able pupils. They have suitably high expectations of what the pupils will achieve. All of these strengths in teaching have a positive impact on the pupils' rate of learning. However, the teachers' planning in the last school year, for pupils with special educational needs, was sometimes not sufficiently focused on their needs and so these pupils made slower progress. The planning to address the pupils' needs is now improving at a rapid rate, but it is too early to see the impact of this improvement in the pupils' progress.
17. Homework is better organised in the infant and Reception classes. In the junior classes, while homework is given, it is not planned as consistently or explained as clearly to the pupils. The teachers' marking of pupils' work could sometimes give better guidance to the pupils on what they need to do to improve.
18. Teaching in the Reception class is good; the teacher promotes the children's personal and social development well. They respond very well to the teacher's calm manner and high expectations of behaviour. The basic skills in literacy and numeracy are taught thoroughly, with plenty of time given for the children to practise these through interesting activities. The children are encouraged to observe carefully and think about why things happen.
19. Teaching in English is good. The teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and the basic skills are well taught in the Years 1 and 2 class. The pupils in all classes know what will be learned during the lessons and the whole-class sessions are well paced. The teachers use good questions to draw out the pupils' ideas and a good vocabulary to extend the pupils' understanding. Teaching in reading is very good; the teachers' assessment of reading is thorough and they promote the pupils' understanding of what they read very successfully when the pupils read in groups. In the Years 1 and 2 class the teaching is consistently good and the basic skills are well taught, including spelling. In the junior classes, although the teachers plan good opportunities for the pupils to write in different styles and teach grammar and punctuation well, they do not always encourage the pupils to check through their work for mistakes in spelling. The pupils with special educational needs in Years 3 and 4 need more help to learn the spelling patterns of word families.

20. The quality of the teaching in mathematics is good. The teachers make sure that the pupils know what they are going to learn. The start of the lesson is consistently used to develop the pupils' mental mathematical skills and good attention is paid to extending pupils of all abilities and reinforcing their mathematical vocabulary. In the lessons seen, the teachers evaluated what had occurred during the lesson very effectively, highlighting things that had gone well and providing opportunities for pupils to share their learning.
21. Teaching in science is very good. The teacher's good planning in the Years 1 and 2 class ensures that they have good opportunities to observe, record and ask questions to find out information. The teacher who takes both junior classes for science has very good subject knowledge and this leads to confident, lively teaching that stimulates the pupils' interest. The work is challenging and exciting. A very good rate of learning is ensured because of the very good planning and structure to lessons.
22. The teaching in ICT is good in both key stages and has improved greatly since the last inspection. Teachers plan work that builds on pupils' existing knowledge and to develop new skills. Teachers have become proficient users of ICT and this has made them more confident. Work is well matched to pupils' abilities and ICT is well used to support other subjects. The teaching in religious education is good because the teachers encourage the pupils to ask questions and express ideas. As a result, the pupils use what they know about one religion to inform their ideas about others.

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

23. There have been very good improvements to the curriculum since the previous inspection and this better planning supports the higher standards achieved. The work in religious education now fully meets the requirements of the local syllabus. All subjects now have schemes of work in place. They are based on national guidelines and clearly show what the pupils are expected to learn at each stage of their development. This enables teachers to plan effectively and teach a rich, well-balanced curriculum for pupils of all ages. The school has worked hard since the last inspection to refine and improve the curriculum and the key issue in respect of improving the way in which the curriculum is managed has been fully addressed. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy. There are good opportunities across the curriculum for the pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. Opportunities for them to develop skills across all subjects have greatly improved, especially ICT skills.
24. A very good range of extra-curricular events and activities supports this curriculum. These include local and extended visits, such as a visit to an observatory to extend pupils' scientific learning, and visits to and from the local high schools to support ICT, art and music, as well as a very comprehensive range of sporting activities. There is good involvement with the local community. This has a beneficial effect on the pupils' progress and attainment. Sex education and personal and social education are appropriately taught with health education, and the use and misuse of medicines are taught as part of science and personal and social education.
25. The provision for pupils with special educational needs has not been as effective as it should have been over the past year because of staffing problems. The tracking of pupils' progress and review of targets has suffered and while most pupils have made satisfactory progress, a few have not. This has had a particularly negative impact on pupils' progress in writing. There is some evidence of slower progress in reading for a small minority of pupils, but generally progress in reading has been better because of more specific targets being set and better support. The provision the school makes for the support of pupils with special needs is now satisfactory and the school complies with recommendations of the Code of Practice. Effective procedures for the identification and assessment of pupils with special

educational needs have been put in place. Individual education plans are in place for those pupils and a programme of regular review has now been set. .

26. The curriculum for Reception children is well organised and ensures that all children receive a good grounding in the early skills of literacy and numeracy. The children are encouraged to learn through very well planned and prepared practical experiences and structured play activities. The children have many opportunities to develop independent learning skills and to make choices and decisions about their learning. Careful planning and a very well balanced and rich curriculum ensure that all activities are purposeful, stimulating, challenging and enjoyable. The very good curriculum for the Reception children has a very positive impact on their learning and progress and prepares them very well for the National Curriculum. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
27. The school makes good use of the resources in the community. It has strong links with the local church and the vicar is a regular visitor to school. The expertise of parents and other local resources are well used. Visits take place throughout the school year to enrich the curriculum. For example, the pupils visit Hereford to study Tudor houses, a local supermarket as part of design and technology work and Techni-Quest to develop their science skills. The school welcomes a variety of visitors from the local and wider community such as drama, art, dance and music teachers from the Larraperz Centre and local music service and theatre groups. Sports' coaches visit to develop pupils' skills in rugby, tennis and football. The school has good links with its high schools. Throughout the year there are many visits by specialist teachers from the high school, who teach in school and provide particular expertise in, for example, art, pottery and physical education. There are very good opportunities for regular extra-curricular activities such as drama, line dancing and gardening as well as many sporting activities including netball, football, rounders and athletics. Each year the older pupils benefit from a residential visit that provides a range of adventure activities such as canoeing and climbing.
28. The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school makes good provision for the spiritual development of pupils. The programme of assembly themes provides a good stimulus for the pupils' spiritual awareness and self-knowledge. Well-planned lessons in all areas of the curriculum stimulate the pupils' interest and create moments of excitement. Science and art lessons are particularly well planned to extend pupils' sense of wonder. The teachers value the pupils' ideas and through skilful questioning lead them to think seriously about other peoples' ideas and beliefs. The school makes good use of cross-curricular links to extend the pupils' sense of awe and wonder at the world in which they live, and to develop their spirituality. Attractive areas within the school grounds have been developed so that pupils can sit and talk with their friends.
29. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. All pupils are taught how to distinguish right from wrong and their behaviour reflects this. Pupils are encouraged to set their own targets for personal development, and for some pupils, these may be related to learning to manage their own behaviour. There is a clear system of rules, rewards and sanctions prominently displayed in every classroom. There are various incentives such as class stars and recognition of special achievements in whole- school assemblies. The teachers take time to discuss moral issues that arise in lessons. In a geography lesson, for example, the teacher prompted the Years 3 and 4 pupils to explore their response to the evidence of vandalism that they had seen, to a few facilities, on a visit to Hereford.
30. The school provides good opportunities for the pupils' social development. They are encouraged to contribute actively to the life of the school. Pupils are taught to take responsibility from an early age and their help and collaboration ensures classroom and school routines are very smooth. Older pupils look after younger pupils and are involved in a range of roles to support the school, such as organising their own stalls during fund-raising events. They are sensitive to others' needs. In a science lesson, for example, a

group of Year 6 pupils noticed that one boy was working alone and invited him to join them in their research. Pupils are made aware of the needs of others, both in local and worldwide communities, and the school supports various charities.

31. There is good provision for the pupils' cultural development. Their appreciation of their own and other cultures is furthered by lessons in art, music, religious education, history and geography. In art, they have made shadow puppets based on examples from Asia and have looked at the use of pattern in the work of aboriginal art. In music they learn about their own cultural history, for example Elizabethan songs and sea shanties, and also about the music of other cultures such as the Inuit and African peoples. In religious education the pupils are introduced to the richness and diversity of other cultures and have a good knowledge of how Christians and people of other faiths worship.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

32. Pupils like coming to this school. They are provided with a high level of care throughout the school day and at the various after-school clubs that often follow. Both teaching and support staff know the pupils as individuals and the pupils respond positively as a result. Child protection procedures are effectively in place.
33. The staff and governors take a responsible attitude towards ensuring pupils' well-being. Premises inspections are conducted twice each year and detailed checksheets are completed. First aid provision is good. Pupils' awareness of healthy living and personal safety is supplemented by a visit to meet the 'Crucial Crew' in Hereford. This is an enjoyable day when pupils meet and talk to fire service and local police personnel. The school participates in the cycling proficiency scheme and arranges visits by the road safety officer. The school staff take particular care over the arrangements for the pupils leaving at the end of the school day, where arrangements are often complicated as pupils who normally travel by bus stay to attend the school's after-care club or extra-curricular activities.
34. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good. The teachers inform the school secretary of any unexplained absence and telephone contact is made or a letter is sent. Parents are reminded of their obligations to ensure regular attendance and the need to contact the school when absence occurs. The school discourages the taking of holidays in term time.
35. The school has well-documented behaviour and anti-bullying policies that are implemented effectively. Good behaviour is promoted through the recognition and reward of effort, attitude or achievement and is used as an example for others to follow. Staff use the system of house points and badges or certificates are presented by the headteacher at the end-of-week assemblies when parents are invited to be present. The staff are good role models and show respect for all pupils. The school has a range of sanctions to be applied in cases of inappropriate behaviour but these are rarely needed.
36. The pupils in class are well known by the teachers, who recognise their individual social and emotional needs and arrange for the support required. The pupils approach the staff readily, if they have problems or concerns.
37. The school has worked hard to improve its systems for assessing the pupils' progress. There has been very good improvement in this area since the last inspection. The information that is gained through assessment is well used to plan future work. A group of pupils from every class complete all of their work for a week, on a rolling programme, in a 'monitoring book' that provides the class teachers and subject co-ordinators with very good overview of the pupils' progress. The pupils have targets that are set as a result of the teachers' analysis of their work and performance in tests. The assessment of some junior pupils' problems in spelling is less effective.

38. The assessment of pupils with special educational needs has been a weakness for the past year, but the new co-ordinator has a high level of expertise and has made a quick start on reviewing the pupils' needs. This is leading to good quality individual education plans to support the teachers' work with these pupils.



## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

39. Most parents support the school and most of the replies to the questionnaire indicate strong support for the teaching. Parents also feel comfortable to approach the school with any concerns. There is, however, a significant level of concern shown by a number of parents regarding pupils' behaviour, provision for homework, the information about their child's progress and the extent to which the school works with them. The evidence from the inspection does not support any of the parents' concerns except that homework could be better organised and given more consistently. The parents acknowledge that prolonged staff absence and the further disruption caused by foot and mouth disease restrictions meant that the last school year was a particularly difficult one and some school events were cancelled. Whilst the school's partnership with parents is satisfactory, the school is now in a position to look at additional ways to achieve effective communication with all parents to restore the previously overall good levels of partnership with them and with the community.
40. A small group of parents and staff organise the annual programme of fund-raising and social events that have been very well supported and successful in recent times. Parents have helped raise funds for school equipment and have given practical help in the improvements to the school's grounds and building. A parent hosts visits to his farm so that pupils can learn at first hand about young animals and they also use the river on his land for environmental study.
41. The range and quality of information provided for parents are good. Newsletters are regular and informative. The prospectus and the annual report of the governing body meet all statutory requirements. Pupils' annual reports are useful; they cover all subjects and are specific to each pupil. A separate reply slip for parents' comments is issued. The school arranges two meetings for parents each year, to discuss their children's progress. Both meetings are well attended. The school also operates an open-door policy whereby parents are welcome at any time to come into school and discuss with the staff any matters of concern over their children's education.
42. A small number of parents regularly help in school, giving support to pupils' reading and helping with the preparation of resources. Most parents give time daily in support for the younger pupils' reading and some spelling work. The involvement of the parents in their children's work at home is much better promoted in the Reception and Years 1 and 2 classes. In the other classes, the homework is given spasmodically and parents are not sure of what to expect. The parents do support their children's learning very well by providing resources from home to support topic work in history.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

43. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. The headteacher has given a good lead for the school in bringing about improvements in teaching and learning. He has had good support from the deputy head and subject managers. All of the staff are clear about the benefits of improved planning in the curriculum and tracking pupils' progress and these have a good impact on the standards achieved. They are more confident in what they are teaching and meet the needs of higher attaining pupils more closely because their expectations have been raised.
44. The school has worked steadily and resolutely towards its targets. The burden of development has been considerable in this small school, but teachers have risen to the challenge. The school's planning for improvement is detailed and effective; it has improved greatly since the last inspection and the school has identified the right priorities. The ambitious programme of additional training for teachers, curriculum development and monitoring of standards, teaching and learning has been well managed. Performance targets have been agreed for all teachers.

45. The school sets targets for each year group of pupils and revises these as pupils join or leave. In some year groups the movement of pupils is considerable. For example, a quarter of the current Year 6 did not start at the school and in the school year 1999/2000 almost a third of the school's population changed. The school's results for mathematics in 2000 were disappointing and the school analysed these carefully to establish why its target had not been met. The resulting information has been used very effectively to improve teaching for this year's Year 6 pupils. The school has placed a good emphasis on meeting the needs of the more able pupils and has met with success. The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs has been less effective and as a result, a few pupils have made unsatisfactory progress. A specialist part-time teacher has recently been appointed and has moved swiftly to identify areas for improvement in assessing pupils' needs and reviewing progress.
46. The headteacher has observed teaching and given valuable feedback on points for improvement, as well as identifying strengths. Subject managers have a firm grasp of what is working well in their subjects and what needs to improve. They monitor pupils' work effectively, analyse the results of tests and use the information to improve teaching and learning. An example of this is in science, where the co-ordinator identified that the recording of work was often left until the end of the lesson and time ran out. The recording in science is now interspersed through the lesson; this improves the pace at which pupils work and most now complete the task. The English co-ordinator has effectively reviewed the school's approach to group reading in the literacy lessons and the well-planned daily opportunities for reading individually and in groups have had a positive effect on standards. The slower progress made by pupils with special educational needs, difficulties with basic spelling and handwriting in Years 3 and 4, and the lack of support for lower attainers in recording science investigations, have all been identified through monitoring and are included in the school's priorities for development.
47. The governors give satisfactory support through their work in committees and through their visits to the school. The individual governors who take a particular interest in literacy and numeracy have attended training and visited lessons. The governors receive very good information about the school's work and performance from the headteacher. They do not always yet ask relevant questions and they do not always seek clarification, but they have the pupils' well-being at heart.
48. The school's finances are well used to support its priorities for development. Specific grants are used appropriately. Uncertainty over pupil numbers creates some difficulties but the school takes a longer-term view and builds in contingencies for the future. The school has had a large underspend but this has been retained to enable four classes to operate this year; the carry forward figure then reduces greatly. The school makes good use of ICT in its administration. The accommodation is good; it is spacious, well maintained and used efficiently to promote the pupils' learning. There is a good number of teachers and support staff. The school's resources are good and have a positive impact on the standards achieved by the pupils in reading, mathematics, science and ICT.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

- **Improve standards in spelling in the junior classes by:**
  - ensuring that the teachers encourage the pupils to check through their work;
  - identifying what groups of pupils and individuals need to do to improve and ensure that teachers use this information to plan suitable work.(Paragraphs 6, 19, 37, 61, 62)
- **Improve the progress made by pupils with special educational needs by:**
  - ensuring that all of these pupils have individual education plans that set out what they need to do to improve;
  - ensuring that teachers take these plans into account when planning lessons.(Paragraphs 11, 16, 25, 38, 45, 62, 63, 66)

*In addition to the issues above, the governing body should consider the following when drawing up its action plan:*

- Improve the quality of teachers' marking so that it more consistently gives good guidance on how pupils can improve their work. (Paragraphs 17, 69)
- Review the school's provision of homework and ensure that there is more consistency between the classes. (Paragraphs 17, 64)
- Seek ways of improving the way in which the school helps the parents to understand the way in which it works and how they can be more involved in their children's learning. (Paragraphs 39, 42, 64, 69)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	28
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	14

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	6	17	5	0	0	0
Percentage	0	21	61	18	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	78
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	2
<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	17
<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0
<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	2.9
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	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 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	6	7	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	10	11	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (88)	85 (100)	92 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	9	9	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	69 (88)	69 (100)	69 (82)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

\* figures are excluded because of the small numbers of boys and girls taking the tests.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	5	10	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	12	12	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (58)	80 (25)	87 (75)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	12	12	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (58)	80 (58)	80 (75)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

\* figures are excluded because of the small numbers of boys and girls taking the tests.

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	78
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	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)	4.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.5
Average class size	22.3

#### **Education support staff: YR– Y6**

Total number of education support staff	1.2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	27

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	237505
Total expenditure	212826
Expenditure per pupil	2365
Balance brought forward from previous year	17002
Balance carried forward to next year	41681

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.2

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	89
Number of questionnaires returned	29

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	48	38	3	7	3
My child is making good progress in school.	38	38	17	3	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	24	38	28	3	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	21	34	28	14	3
The teaching is good.	31	66	3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	24	31	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	48	38	14	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	41	41	14	3	0
The school works closely with parents.	31	41	28	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	34	38	21	0	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	38	41	21	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	48	14	0	3

## **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**

49. Children enter the Reception class in the September of the year in which they are five years old. At the time of the inspection there were eight children in the class. This is a particularly small year group. The children have a broad range of attainment when they start school but for most it is average. By the end of the Reception year the children's attainment exceeds the expectations for their age in all of the areas of learning. Children of all abilities make good progress because their individual needs are well catered for. Children with special educational needs receive good support from the teacher.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

50. By the time they leave the Reception class, the pupils' attainment in this area of learning is better than expected for their age. The teaching is good and so the children make good progress and quickly settle down to the routines of the classroom. The children respond very well to the teacher's calm manner and high expectations of behaviour. They display a good level of confidence and independence. The teacher takes time to talk to the children about why it is necessary to behave sensibly. They are keen to please her and relationships in the class are warm and supportive. They have a good understanding of how their actions affect other children and are sensitive to the feelings of others. The teacher stresses the need to co-operate with others and plans good opportunities for the children to work together. In an outdoor play session, for example, the children worked well together when they rode on a 'train' and followed the instructions of those children who were operating traffic lights. One child noticed that another boy had no partner and quickly asked him to join him. The children take turns, get on well together and are patient with each other. When a girl's tower of blocks was accidentally knocked down by a passing child, a boy saw that she was upset and offered to help her rebuild it.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

51. The children make good progress in speaking and listening, reading and writing. By the end of the year, most are likely to exceed the expectations for their age in this area of learning. The teaching is good and basic skills are taught thoroughly, with plenty of time given for the children to practise these in different ways. The classroom is full of books, labels and captions to read and opportunities to write. The children are encouraged to talk about what they are doing when they work in pairs or groups. For example, a child announced, "Look what we found, we've made an aeroplane jet," when he was working with a friend with wooden blocks. The children reflect the good vocabulary that the teacher uses, and her lively manner in reading to them. One group was constructing a model that kept collapsing and two children hit upon the idea of casting a spell to make it more stable. They composed the spell and cast it with dramatic gestures and intonation.
52. In a good lesson based on the book 'A Walk Through a Jungle', the teacher's good questions and careful guidance enabled all of the children to think of a sentence to say where they would hide from the animals. She firstly focused on what the children saw in the illustrations and how they interpreted these and then asked them to express their own ideas about what would happen next. The teacher wrote one child's sentence but missed the initial letters of some words. The children promptly supplied these and higher attaining children wrote in the letters. When the children drew pictures of where they would hide, they wrote 'sentences' beneath the pictures to explain what was happening. The teacher's good planning enabled children of all abilities to extend their skills: the more able were encouraged to put in punctuation; others used word cards to create their sentences and



then copied them; some copied over the teacher's writing and others made marks that mostly resembled letters. All of the children were able to read their sentences to the rest of the class. The children enjoy looking at books and retelling familiar stories. They were delighted when the week's 'big book' appeared, and could pick out familiar words. All of the children know how to turn the pages and in which direction to 'read' the words. They often choose to look at both story and information books.

### **Mathematical development**

53. The teaching is good and the children make good progress in this area. By the time they leave the Reception year, they are likely to exceed the expectations for their age. All the children can count up to and back from ten and recognise the symbols for the numbers. Some higher attaining children can count beyond 20 and mentally calculate what is one or two more or less than numbers up to 20. They have a good knowledge of two- and three-dimensional shapes. When they sort blocks, they can do so for colour, shape and size and some higher attainers can sort for a combination of properties.
54. The teacher uses a good mathematical vocabulary. In one lesson, for example, she asked the children to guess what she might be describing: "It's pink, it's light and it has six rectangular faces." Through her good explanations of different solid shapes, the children used the terms cone, cylinder and cube when they built models from shape blocks. The teacher's good understanding of pupils' individual needs enabled her to plan activities that challenged all abilities. At the end of the lesson, higher attaining children explained that they had made a robot from cylinders, a cuboid and a cube. Lower attainers extended their understanding of the mathematical terms for relative size by building different sized robots.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

55. A good range of activities is planned and the children make good progress. They exceed the expectations for their age by the end of the Reception year. The teaching is good. The children are encouraged to observe carefully and think about why things happen. In a good lesson on the senses, the children learned rapidly about the sense of feeling because of the teacher's good use of resources and careful planning that built upon what they had previously learned. The children felt ice, straight from the freezer and then after it had started to melt. At first, they were uncertain about where the water had come from, but the teacher's good questions led them to suggest that the ice changed into water when it was not kept very cold. When the children played a game, in which one was blindfolded and had to identify a classmate by feeling the child's face and hair, they built upon the techniques and language used by the previous child and their descriptions became more precise. When they chose materials for a collage, they used terms to describe the properties of different materials, such as smooth, rough, shiny and soft. When they looked at photographs of babies and children they described the physical changes over time and put the photographs in the right order. The children use the computers confidently. They have good control over the mouse and can click on icons and drag them across the screen.

### **Physical development**

56. The teaching and learning are good and so the children do better than expected by the end of the Reception year. They show careful control in building towers of bricks, placing each carefully so that the tower remains stable. The children hold pencils correctly and use paintbrushes with a good level of control. The teacher plans a good range of activities in the very well equipped outdoor play area. The children play energetically and imaginatively with the wheeled vehicles and climbing equipment. In lessons in the hall, the children skip and hop to the teacher's instructions. They change the speed and direction of travel and take turns leading the other children in actions. They can jump and land on both feet. The children have a good awareness of the space around them and how exercise affects their

bodies. When the teacher asked them, at the end of one lesson, how they felt, they replied that their hearts were beating faster and they felt hot and thirsty.

### **Creative development**

57. Children's attainment is better than expected by the end of the Reception year because the teaching is good. They have good opportunities to paint, draw and create collages. Much of the work is linked to topics, such as science, where they have made good collages of eyes as part of the topic on senses. The teaching is good and the children are encouraged to use their own ideas, for example, when they make baptism cards. The computers are well used to support role-play. In one lesson, pairs of children enacted the roles of a travel agent and customer. The customer had a clipboard and checklist of requirements, which were given to the travel agent, who 'searched' the screen for matching property and 'entered' the data. The children persevered very well with this activity and helped each other. The children have a good repertoire of songs, which they sing enthusiastically. They perform the actions in the correct places and practise changing their facial expressions to mimic emotions such as being sad or surprised.

### **ENGLISH**

58. Standards have improved since the previous inspection. This improvement has been brought about by the analysis of pupils' performance in tests and assessments and the careful use of this information to improve teaching. Lessons have also been monitored and good feedback has resulted in further improvements to teaching. Standards in English are above average for the pupils' ages at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards in reading are well above average for the pupils' ages. Pupils of all abilities are making good progress but the pupils' spelling in the junior classes could be better. Boys and girls achieve equally well. The pupils with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress but this has been slower than other pupils' because their previous individual education plans were not sufficiently specific about the skills that needed to be promoted.
59. The pupils achieve well in speaking and listening and standards are above average for their ages. They benefit from the opportunities to perform in front of others and display a good level of confidence when they speak. They use a good vocabulary and, by the time they leave the school, express their ideas clearly. When Years 3 and 4 pupils, for example, talked about their favourite authors and which types of books they like to read, they explained why they liked humorous stories and nonsense rhymes. In a lesson on poetry a Year 4 pupil announced that a poem about a spider "could only be in a nonsense poetry book because what sort of spider would want to appear on the world wide web?" In a drama lesson, Years 5 and 6 pupils quickly created dialogue for scenes in which they acted out how they felt about leaving a polluted Earth to live on a space station. The pupils' good listening skills stand them in good stead when they are learning how to read and spell words from the sounds the letters make. A Year 1 pupil who was working on the final sound 'ck', for example, misinterpreted a picture of a brick as a box but spotted his mistake as he wrote the final letter as 'x' and then said the sound out loud.
60. The pupils' reading is much better than expected for their ages at seven and eleven. They read with very good expression, using the punctuation to help them. Year 2 pupils know that they "have to read on to see if the sentence makes sense" when they guess at a word. In a lesson with Years 1 and 2 pupils, when the teacher asked what was likely to happen next in a story, the pupils quickly came up with a variety of ideas, based on what they knew of the characters so far. The Year 6 pupils quickly gather information from what they read. In a science lesson, for example, they researched information about the solar system effectively. They understand how to skim the text to find what they are looking for. The pupils understand how an author creates atmosphere or a character through the use of language. When they looked at a section from Roald Dahl's autobiography, for example, they quickly picked out those phrases that indicated how he felt about certain events. The

pupils read widely and avidly. One higher attaining pupil, who has read all the 'Harry Potter' books, said he was dubious about seeing the film because he did not feel it could match the pictures in his mind.

61. Standards in writing are above average by the ages of seven and eleven. The pupils' writing in all classes is imaginative and uses a good vocabulary, but spelling is better in the infants than the juniors. The Years 1 and 2 pupils use their knowledge of the sounds of letters well when they spell words. They have good strategies to use when they do not know how to spell a word, such as trying it out on their whiteboards, asking a friend or looking on word lists. They use punctuation accurately and their handwriting is well formed. The Year 2 pupils can write a parody of a well-known rhyme. The higher attainers describe this as "changing the words but sticking to the pattern. It has to be unusual or surprising." The pupils write good accounts; in history for example, Year 2 pupils write about how the Great Fire of London started. They competently record their findings in science. By the end of Year 6 the pupils' writing has a good structure and they use words for effect in stories and poems. The average and higher attaining pupils use paragraphs. The pupils' handwriting in Years 5 and 6 is joined and their presentation is good. In Years 3 and 4, where there are more pupils with special educational needs, the handwriting is not as well formed. In both junior classes, the pupils' spelling is not as good as other aspects of their work. The pupils often spell common words incorrectly in first drafts of writing. More complex words are often spelled correctly. When the more able and average attaining pupils read through their work they quickly find the mistakes they have made, but they do not routinely check their work. They re-draft work to improve the quality of spelling and punctuation, but many of the mistakes are very basic and easily recognised by the pupils. Several of the pupils with special educational needs in Years 3 and 4 have difficulty in reading back what they wrote the day before because of their spelling, although they can read the words when spelled correctly.
62. The teaching in English is good. Teachers plan plenty of opportunities for the pupils to express their ideas and listen to others. The teachers value what the pupils say and so the pupils speak confidently. Teachers use a good vocabulary and this is reflected when the pupils speak. There are a few occasions when teachers ask a question to the whole class and do not encourage the pupils to put their hands up to reply. As a result, everyone answers at once and so the pupils cannot listen to each other's replies. The teaching of reading is very good because the basic skills are taught thoroughly, and the work is enjoyable. Year 1 pupils were learning about vowels, for example, and were amazed that every word had a vowel or a letter 'y'. The teacher wrote the vowels on her fingers and taught the class an action rhyme and had prepared a line from the story of the day that had all the vowels missing. As a result of her enthusiastic teaching and high expectations, the pupils worked out the missing vowels by using the sense of the sentence. The teachers read aloud to the pupils very expressively and so the pupils listen carefully. They cannot wait to find out how the story will unfold. The pupils' progress in reading is tracked very well and the teachers know what the pupils need to do to improve and how to boost their skills. There are some good aspects to the teaching of writing. In Years 1 and 2 the teaching is consistently good and the basic skills are well taught, including spelling. In the junior classes, although the teachers plan good opportunities for the pupils to write in different styles and teach grammar and punctuation well, they do not always encourage the pupils to check through their work for mistakes in spelling. The teachers have not yet identified what these pupils need to work on in spelling to improve. The pupils with special educational needs in Years 3 and 4 need more help to learn the spelling patterns of word families.
63. In the past year the pupils with special educational needs have not always been given appropriate work to improve their skills. While most have made satisfactory progress, some have not made the progress expected in reading and writing. There is now better identification of their needs and the school is putting in place good quality individual education plans to meet their needs.

64. The management of the subject is good and has a positive impact on raising standards. The co-ordinator has benefited from attending meetings with co-ordinators from other primary schools, as part of the local partnership based on a Beacon School, and has learned from best practice in organising the work in grammar in the Literacy Hour. The co-ordinator checks the teachers' planning and also the pupils' work. The information gained, along with the monitoring of lessons, is well used to identify areas for improvement. Through good analysis of the pupils' performance, for example, she has identified the weaknesses in spelling and presentation. There are a good number of books from which the pupils choose to read for pleasure or find information and this supports their very good standards in reading. The teachers plan good opportunities for the pupils to use ICT to present their work. Homework is better planned in Years 1 and 2 than in the juniors. The older pupils are less consistently sure of what they have to do, other than reading at home.

## **MATHEMATICS**

65. Standards are well above average by the end of Year 6. In the infants, standards are above average. There is no significant difference between boys and girls. These results are an improvement from the previous inspection where standards were judged to be close to the national average. The main reason for this improvement is a newly implemented scheme of work that is very well structured and supports the National Numeracy Strategy. A wide range of supporting materials enables teachers to plan very effectively and match work to the needs of all pupils. Regular detailed assessments also ensure that teachers have a good knowledge of pupils and plan work accordingly. Teaching has been monitored by the co-ordinator across the school. This has highlighted various areas for development such as the need for more input on problem solving which has also benefited the curriculum. These improvements to the mathematics curriculum since the most recent inspection have ensured that all pupils make good progress in their learning.
66. The only exception to this is the progress of some pupils who have special educational needs. The provision for special educational needs has not been as effective as it could be and the shortcomings in tracking, individual monitoring and support for some pupils, have resulted in progress at a slower rate than for the majority of pupils. This is now improving with the appointment of a specialist teacher.
67. By the age of seven all pupils have a clear understanding of place value to 100. They confidently add and subtract numbers mentally to 20 and count in multiples of two, five and ten. Higher ability pupils handle large numbers well and can tackle calculations in a variety of ways. The teacher encourages the pupils to use the correct mathematical terms and the pupils develop a secure mathematical vocabulary and can describe the properties of common shapes. They recognise angles of turn and everyday standard units of measurement in length, capacity, mass and time. They have a good understanding of simple fractions and know that four quarters make a whole and that there are two quarters in a half. There are good opportunities for practical problem solving, such as when Year 2 pupils had to estimate the height of Giant Couldbegood. The pupils used practical experiments and problem-solving skills to deduce that the ratio of height to the size of a person's foot is always around 1:6. Since they knew the size of the giant's foot, they could work out his height.
68. By the age of eleven virtually all pupils have a well-developed understanding of place value to tens of thousands. This provides the foundation for their ability to work confidently with the relationship between fractions, decimal fractions and percentages and to solve problems using long multiplication and division. The high level of ability of this class was clearly illustrated by two pupils explaining how they had designed a pie-graph as part of ICT work. They had deduced that, because eleven per cent of the traffic surveyed were goods vehicles, in order to determine the slice of the pie they would need eleven per cent of 360 degrees, which was 39.6. All this was computed mentally and shows the confident way in

which these pupils are able to manipulate numbers. They can identify and measure the perimeter of a variety of polygons and accurately use protractors to draw angles. They are able to plot co-ordinates on two axes and draw line and block graphs linked to science and ICT projects.

69. The quality of the teaching throughout the school is good. The National Numeracy Strategy is well managed by teachers. Lesson objectives are shared with the pupils so that they have a good understanding of what they are learning. The start of the lesson is consistently used to develop the pupils' mental mathematical skills. During this part of the lesson, good attention is paid to extending pupils of all abilities and reinforcing their mathematical vocabulary. In the lessons seen, the teachers provided valuable opportunities for pupils to share their learning. In a good lesson in Years 1 and 2, for example, the pupils discussed which would be the best unit of measurement to use and the difficulties of using non-standard measurements. In a lesson with Years 3 and 4 pupils, the teacher's careful preparation of resources and guidance for the support assistant enabled the pupils with special educational needs to make good progress in extending their understanding of shapes and angles. The good teaching in a Years 5 and 6 lesson enabled the pupils to work together to find the most efficient way of calculating to solve problems, based on the information they had. There are inconsistencies in setting homework. The pupils' work is always marked but the teachers could sometimes give clearer guidance on how pupils can improve.
70. The subject co-ordinator carries out her role very effectively. She has good subject knowledge and a clear vision of how to improve teaching and learning. The improvements to the curriculum since the last inspection have been considerable. Assessment information is well used to influence future planning and to identify what areas of the curriculum will need reinforcing. The teachers use the results of the assessments to identify those pupils who can benefit from extra support. Resources for the subject are good and allow for the ease of practical activities.

## **SCIENCE**

71. Standards are better than expected for the pupils' age at the end of Year 6. Standards are average for the pupils' age at the end of Year 2. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Most pupils make good progress because the teaching is good and the work is challenging. The pupils have good opportunities to learn from investigating and observing and to express ideas about why things happen. They have better opportunities to record their investigations and findings than at the last inspection. All of the different aspects of the subject are covered and the curriculum is now well planned. The more able pupils are suitably challenged. The teachers' assessment of the pupils' progress is effectively used to plan future work. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in discussions and practical tasks and make good progress, but a few of the Key Stage 2 pupils need more support for recording their work. Completed work shows that they often do not complete the task and so cannot review their work.
72. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good. The teacher has a good knowledge of the subject and plans interesting and very well resourced lessons. As a result, the pupils enjoy their work and are keen to improve. By the end of Year 2, the pupils know that sound travels through air and water and is caused by vibrations. Higher attainers use words such as 'trembly', 'shivery' and 'buzzy' to describe the feeling when they touched a cymbal after striking it. In their work on forces, they observed how balls made of different materials and weights reacted when they blew at them through a straw. The pupils deduced that the lighter the material, the more the ball moved or swerved from its course. The pupils learn to record their findings in diagrams and charts and use a good scientific vocabulary when talking or writing about what they find or observe. In a good lesson, during which the teacher had arranged for a parent to bring her baby to visit the classroom, the pupils learned at a rapid

rate about how humans grow and their needs change. The teacher's good planning ensured that they had good opportunities to observe, record and ask questions to find out information. By the end of the lesson, the pupils knew that babies cry for several reasons, including hunger, tiredness and boredom and that the parents needed to respond to these needs. They were extremely polite to the visitor and showed maturity in the way that they remained calm and quite throughout the visit, so that the baby slept undisturbed. When they discussed what babies eat, they demonstrated a good awareness of the need to eat a healthy, balanced diet. The teacher's very good use of resources ensured that the topic had relevance and interest for all abilities. The pupils had brought resources from home and talked about their own physical development, as seen in photographs. The Year 1 pupils added captions to their pictures and the Year 2 pupils wrote sentences to explain their drawings of stages of growth.

73. The teaching in the juniors is very good. The headteacher takes both classes and his very good subject knowledge leads to confident, lively teaching that stimulates the pupils' interest in scientific enquiry and promotes their thirst for more knowledge. The work is challenging and exciting. A very good rate of learning is ensured because of the very good planning and structure to lessons. The teacher intersperses periods of direct teaching with opportunities for the pupils to find out for themselves, test their ideas and record what they are doing. The pupils immediately put into practice the skills they have learned, or use the knowledge they have acquired and they approach the work confidently. The pupils show a good level of independence in their thinking and use what they know to explain why things happen. In a very good lesson with Years 3 and 4 pupils, the excellent resources enabled pupils to learn about the structure of teeth and identify different types of teeth. By the end of the lesson, pupils knew the terms 'incisors', 'molars', 'canine' and 'bite', and decided on the major ways to protect teeth from decay or damage.
74. The very good lesson with Years 5 and 6 pupils extended their understanding of the relative size of planets, their positions in the solar system and why there is night and day. The teacher started from the pupils' own experience and ideas and led the opening discussion skilfully so that pupils of all abilities contributed ideas. Through questions such as "What makes you think that?" or "How do you know?" he probed the pupils' thinking very effectively. When he asked the pupils to think about how far they could get from the sun and still see it, the pupils listened carefully to each other's ideas and refined their own as a result. One girl suggested that the furthest point was Pluto, but was contradicted by another who said, "No, Pluto is cold, the sun doesn't reach there." A boy then pointed out that it would depend whether another planet was in the way of the sun, because "light travels in straight lines." Another pupil offered, "Much further. You can see other stars that are further away than Pluto and our sun is a star." The pupils quickly constructed electrical circuits to investigate why there is night and day. One pupil wished he had a switch in the circuit. The pupils knew that the Earth is tilted on its axis and were able, after five minutes of working in groups, to explain why a town in the North of Norway would have hardly any daylight for most of the year. The more able pupils went on to find an explanation of why we have seasons. The teacher gave good support to pupils with special educational needs and so they made very good progress in both investigating and recording their ideas.
75. The co-ordinator provides good and effective leadership for the subject. She is very aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the teaching and learning, and through her monitoring has identified the problem with recording by some pupils with special educational needs. The use of computers is well planned and pupils create graphs and charts of the results of investigations, create databases and research information using CD-ROMs. Resources for the subject are good and so practical work and research are well supported.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

76. No lessons were seen during the inspection but evidence from the pupils' past work in sketchbooks, from displays and the teachers' planning, confirms that the pupils' attainment reaches the expectations for their ages at seven and eleven. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection and has resulted from the teachers' good planning, which is now well supported by a scheme of work. The co-ordinator provides good leadership for the subject and this has had a positive impact on standards. She looks at ways in which the provision can be improved and ensures that the teachers' planning builds on what the pupils already know. A particular strength of the planning is the good emphasis on giving pupils opportunities to analyse their response to particular paintings or artists' work from different times and cultures. As a result, the pupils are thoughtful about their own work and how they can improve it. On the basis of the pupils' work and teachers' planning, the teaching is good, and interesting activities are planned that enable the pupils to explore their ideas and refine techniques.
77. As part of their topic on portraits, the Years 1 and 2 pupils have looked at paintings by Rembrandt, Ringgold, Picasso and Klee. They decided that their favourite portrait was Senecio by Paul Klee because they liked the shapes and colours. They found the Rembrandt portrait too dark. After looking at the pictures, they drew self-portraits using a mirror and then drew or painted a friend. Their portraits show a good understanding of facial proportion. The pupils talk about how an artist's subject has to 'sit still for a long time' so that the pose can be captured and appreciated how difficult this was when they sat for their portraits. They have completed some lively paintings of the Great Fire of London and their observational drawings of fire-fighting equipment show good attention to detail.
78. The Years 3 and 4 pupils have looked at paintings that tell a story or depict relationships. They show a good degree of sensitivity in their response to questions about the atmosphere created in pictures by Impressionist artists and use words like 'comfortable', 'relaxing' and 'calm'. The pupils have composed a double portrait to attempt to depict a relationship and their work shows that they learned about the importance of the figures' proximity and stance from their analysis of artists' work. The Years 5 and 6 pupils are creating collaborative pictures based on a story and choose themes such as Daedalus and Icarus, St George and the Dragon, or the Willow Pattern story. They choose the media for the work and their choice shows good thought and discernment. For example, one group searched at length to find the right texture for the sea and said that they were going to overlay parts with net to improve the appearance of the waves. They also planned to paint over the net for part of the sky. Pupils of all ages have created portraits in clay, as a result of the visits from an art teacher from the local secondary school. The pupils use a painting program on the computer very effectively and can import pictures from a file. The pupils have very good attitudes to the subject and recall previous work with evident pleasure. One boy remembered his feeling of amazement when he learned that Leonardo da Vinci could draw a perfect circle. Another group recalled a visit to a quilting exhibition and cheerfully recounted difficulties they encountered in executing a collaborative piece that they planned after the visit.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

79. Only one lesson was observed during the week of the inspection. Judgements are based on the evidence gathered from the scrutiny of the pupils' work, from teachers' planning, from talking to pupils and from the work on display. There is evidence of some good work in photographs and displays around the school. Standards are average for the pupils' ages and all pupils make satisfactory progress. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection. There is now a structured scheme of work, which supports teachers in their planning
80. Teachers plan a good range of activities to develop the infant pupils' designing and making skills. For example, in Year 2 the pupils carefully design and make bowls and birds'-eye

maps in clay. Good links with geography are developed to enable pupils to understand how three-dimensional maps are created. Their knowledge of the process of designing and evaluating, using such resources as textiles and food, is good. In food technology, for example, Year 1 pupils prepared a range of vegetables to make soup, which they served to Year 2 pupils. By the end of the juniors, the pupils have suitably extended their knowledge of the design process and are better able to refine and make products from their planning. The pupils are supported by some imaginative planning and good teaching. When, for example, the Years 5 and 6 pupils studied how structures are designed for strength, they were given opportunities to erect a range of shelters such as tents and gazebos in the school grounds. As a result, they developed their understanding of the crucial link between a structure's design and its strength, in preparation for designing and making their own shelter. There are good links with ICT when pupils develop their understanding of how packaging carries information and begin to appreciate the marketing aspects of packaging when making their own wrapping for loaves of bread. Good links are also made with food technology.

81. In the lesson seen the teaching was of a good standard. Good planning and preparation, clear exposition, high expectations, carefully targeted questions to draw out and consolidate the pupils' knowledge and understanding, and the use of good links with literacy and numeracy, were features of this lesson.
82. The co-ordinator is currently ensuring that the subject makes best use of links with specific topics and other subjects. The school uses the expertise of the local high school both in teaching and in the use of a kiln. Parents are involved in various projects such as learning how to design and make clay faces.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

83. No lessons were seen in history and two lessons of geography were observed in the juniors. On the basis of these lessons, the scrutiny of the pupils' past work, teachers' planning and discussions with the pupils, standards are average for the pupils' ages at seven and eleven. This is an improvement on the previous inspection and has been achieved through better planning of the curriculum. The school makes good use of the national guidelines for both subjects to support the teachers' planning. It also uses its local area very well to support the pupils' learning and they go on a good range of visits to support their learning.
84. All pupils make good progress in geography in the infants. The pupils of average and above ability make good progress in geography in the juniors. Lower attainers and pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, but do not always have sufficient support for recording their work and so sometimes do not complete it. By the end of Year 2, the pupils can describe their route to school and draw the significant features on a map. They have used the digital camera to take photographs of the features of the village and discuss where people in the village work. The pupils understand that physical features are represented by symbols on a map and can interpret a key. They create a map of a fantasy island and use co-ordinates to locate physical features. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of rivers and how these affect the landscape. Pupils have visited a local meander to see how the silt builds up on alternate sides and understand how this eventually forms an oxbow lake. A visit to a water treatment plant was remembered in some detail and pupils explained some of the processes. The pupils have a good understanding of the water cycle and how a river changes during its course to the sea. They use atlases and CD-ROMs competently to help them find information. They use a good geographical vocabulary such as 'confluence', 'deposition', and 'flood plain'. Pupils have an appropriate understanding of how settlements and farming impact on the landscape. In a very good lesson in Years 5 and 6, the teacher planned challenging work for all groups of abilities. The pupils worked from notes made during a television programme. The more able pupils



were set challenging tasks to research the features of a river using a CD-ROM. The less able pupils used a 'big book' to research information. In a satisfactory lesson with Years 3 and 4 pupils, they used what they had learned during a visit to Hereford to identify differences in facilities between a city and smaller settlements. The average and above average ability pupils settled quickly to recording which features of their locality and in Hereford they would like improved, using the field notes from the visit. The less able made a slower start and although they could discuss what they wanted to write, struggled with the format and spelling. The pupils are writing to a school in Herne Bay and preparing to e-mail the school in an exchange of information.

85. All pupils make good progress in history. The Year 2 pupils know that the church is 'very old' and that there were more shops in the village than there are now. They have a good sense of chronology in their own lives and know that some things happened before living memory. The pupils talk with great interest about their current work on the Great Fire of London. They understand that the fire actually happened and is not a story. They know that it started in Pudding Lane and spread quickly because of the wind and wooden buildings. The more able pupils remember the term 'eye-witness' to describe Samuel Pepys. The pupils know that he wrote down in a diary what he saw and that is how we know so much about the events. The pupils explain how people used leather buckets and squirts to try to extinguish the fire. By the end of Year 6, the pupils have a good understanding of several periods in history. They write about changes in working patterns of men and women after the Second World War, both in farming and industry. They compare the lives of poor and wealthy families in Victorian times. They know that Prince Albert opened the Great Exhibition in 1851. In work about the significance of Remembrance Day and the emotions of those involved in war, there is some poignant and sensitive writing in which the pupils put themselves in the place of a young soldier or his mother. The Year 6 pupils have a good understanding of why King Henry VIII found it necessary to split from the Catholic church.
86. The teaching is good in both subjects. The planning for lessons is very clear about the specific skills and knowledge that will be learned. The teachers' subject knowledge is good and they make the subjects interesting and relevant by using the resources in the community and visiting sites further afield. The use of ICT is well planned to support the pupils' learning in both subjects. The school has resolved the issue from the last inspection, of using too many worksheets, but needs to provide more support for lower attainers in recording their work in geography.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

87. Since the previous inspection when, standards were judged well below national expectations by the end of the juniors, there has been considerable improvement. By the end of the infants and the juniors, standards of attainment are at least in line with expectations for the pupils' ages. There are significant strengths in certain areas. All pupils make good progress in developing ICT skills. The computer suite is in almost constant use throughout the day, and pupils who do not have computers at home are encouraged to use the school's computers when they wish to do so. This has a positive impact on the standards achieved. The curriculum is very well planned to ensure that pupils of all ages and abilities make good progress, and systematically build upon their previous learning. ICT is used very effectively to support pupils' learning in other subjects, such as research in history and geography and for producing graphs and charts.
88. By the end of Year 2 most pupils attain standards that are broadly in line with national expectations. During literacy activities they are confident in their use of tape recorders as they listen to stories. They know and name the external parts of the computer and are competent users of the keyboard and mouse. Nearly all the pupils confidently and independently print short pieces of text and illustrate their writing using graphics programs. For example, in a good Year 2 lesson, the pupils designed suitable titles for their display on

'Pigs in Pond' by dragging pictures and dropping them in other places and changing the size of letters and types of fonts to produce titles that had visual impact.

89. By the end of Year 6, the pupils' have good word-processing skills. These skills are most evident in the presentation of their English and project work where text and graphics are combined to good effect. Pupils are skilled at drafting and redrafting their work as, for example, when writing poetry. They competently find information on a CD-ROM and use this to support their work in other areas of the curriculum. They recognise that electronic mail is an efficient means of sending and receiving information and use the limited facilities that the school currently has, to do this, when for example communicating with pupils in other schools. Years 5 and 6 pupils are aware that devices can be controlled by a sequence of instructions and recognise the need to be precise when, for example, controlling model traffic lights or setting up an alarm system in a model house.
90. The quality of teaching in ICT is good in both key stages and has improved greatly since the last inspection. A well-planned programme of training has raised teachers' expertise. Their planning is now good; it is based on the national scheme and systematically builds on pupils' existing knowledge to develop new skills. Teachers have become much more confident in using computers. Work is well matched to pupils' abilities, and computers are well used to support their learning in literacy and numeracy, as well as in other subjects. Good use is made of programs to support pupils who have special educational needs.
91. The subject co-ordinator has worked hard and effectively to bring about the considerable improvements to the curriculum and has a very clear vision of what the next developments will be. The current focus is to develop the school's Internet facilities as soon as the equipment is installed and this is imminent. Links are being set up with other schools and also the acquisition of equipment such as web and digital cameras. The Beacon Partnership has been used very effectively to help the school develop its own website. There are also very good links with the local high school, which has provided specialist support and expertise. The good resources for the subject are having a positive impact on the pupils' rate of progress.

## **MUSIC**

92. By the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, the pupils' attainment is as expected for their ages. Pupils of all ages and abilities make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. There are many good opportunities for them to take part in musical productions and there is a wide range of extra-curricular activities and specialist teaching that develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of music. These have a very positive impact on their performance skills.
93. It was not possible to observe any music lessons during the inspection and so judgements are made on observations of assemblies, discussions with pupils and teachers and evidence from teachers' planning. In assemblies pupils sing well and have some knowledge of the music of famous composers such as Mozart and Bach. In the infants, a recorder group demonstrated a good sense of rhythm and pitch and an understanding of simple composition. The pupils used musical instruments to create sound effects for their favourite nursery rhymes. There are good links with dance and drama. During a dance lesson pupils listened attentively to the music and showed a good understanding of musical language. In the juniors, a group of pupils benefit from specialist tuition for the violin and piano. From the work they have done with a specialist percussion teacher they develop good skills. They have enjoyed and gained confidence as performers and have good opportunities to take part in public performances. Most pupils have a good understanding of how music from other cultures and times has its own distinctive style, such as South American music, sea shanties and Elizabethan music.

94. On the basis of the available evidence, it is clear that teaching across the school is satisfactory. Lessons are taught regularly and all elements of the National Curriculum are planned for. However, composition is a relatively weak area and has been identified for development. The school has a good quality commercial scheme to help teachers with their planning. The music featured during assemblies enables pupils to identify and appreciate specific composers and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. At present the pupils do not make any formal record of their musical activities and this too is an area that the school is planning to improve.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

95. During the inspection it was possible to observe only one gymnastics lessons in the juniors and one dance lesson in the infants. The evidence from these lessons, teachers' planning and conversations with the pupils and the physical education co-ordinator indicate that physical education has a secure place in the curriculum. Standards of attainment are at the level expected for pupils' ages, and all of the pupils, including those with special needs, make satisfactory progress. The curriculum includes gymnastics, dance, games, athletics, swimming and outdoor education activities.
96. By the end of Year 2, most pupils show good levels of co-ordination as they move round safely, stopping and changing direction when instructed by the teacher. Pupils interpret music well and are able to alter the speed, rhythm, level and direction of their movements. They make effective use of space. In a good dance lesson they communicated the contrasting movements of elephants and sloths well and become very involved interpreting the movements of the different animals in the ark. They understand the importance of warming up and use a good bank of warm-up routines.
97. From observations of activities on the playground, pupils in Key Stage 2 have average ball skills. The pupils develop satisfactory control travelling with a ball, stopping and aiming it. Throwing and fielding skills are also satisfactory. In gymnastics the pupils can devise sequences of moving through space on the floor and apparatus, using different parts of the body, both individually and with a partner. By the time they leave school most of the pupils are able to swim 25 metres.
98. Teaching is good. Teachers plan their lessons very thoroughly. They have clear learning objectives and high expectations. Teachers manage lessons well and a very high standard of behaviour is maintained. Good use is made of the pupils' performance to demonstrate and develop teaching and learning points. This was identified as an area for development in the previous inspection and has now improved.
99. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities, including netball, football, rounders and athletics, which are taught by several of the staff and various coaches. Parents also make a very valuable contribution to the extra-curricular activities. The school, despite its small size, successfully competes in inter-school sports and gives pupils opportunities to learn skills in a wide range of sports such as rugby, tennis and cricket, using various bought-in coaches. Older junior pupils participate in outdoor adventure activities. All these activities effectively provide support for the subject, enrich the physical education curriculum and extend pupils' personal and social development. The school is currently participating in a national scheme to increase teaching skills and improve resources.
100. The co-ordinator has introduced a very structured curriculum based on a commercial scheme. This provides good support for teachers and incorporates a wealth of ideas for effective delivery of the curriculum.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

101. There has been very good improvement in this subject since the last inspection, when teachers' planning and pupils' progress was unsatisfactory. Standards have improved and are now at the levels expected for the pupils' ages at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The school has worked hard to improve the support for teachers' planning, their expertise and the depth and range of pupils' knowledge. The curriculum closely follows the locally agreed syllabus for the subject. The co-ordinator has given good support for these developments and provides a strong sense of direction for the subject. The teaching is good because the activities are carefully planned to build upon what the pupils already know, and the teachers encourage the pupils to ask questions and express ideas. The pupils make good progress in widening their understanding of different beliefs and using what they know about one religion to inform their ideas about others.
102. By the end of Year 2, the pupils know that the cross is an important symbol for Christians because "Jesus was crucified on it." The more able pupils know that Jesus and his disciples were together at the Last Supper and that one of Jesus' friends betrayed him. The pupils have an appropriate understanding of the features of a place of worship and know that their church is used for special occasions in people's lives as well as services. In one lesson they visited the local church and recognised a Nativity scene in a stained glass window. They quickly identified the people who were depicted. They demonstrated a very good sense of respect and sensitivity during this visit. The teaching was good and provided them with good opportunities to extend their knowledge and understanding of symbols and special places. The pupils listened carefully to the vicar when he explained the different colours of vestments. They were enthralled when he explained the significance of the altar and a communion wafer. The image of Christ on the communion wafer was greeted by intense interest. The pupils asked sensible questions about objects in the church and several displayed pride when the vicar explained that the church banner had the names of most of their villages on it, because the family of the church was widespread. The curriculum also includes the study of Judaism and pupils also learn about the similarities and differences this has to Christianity.
103. The pupils in Years 3 and 4 know that even Jesus was tempted to do things that were wrong and that he felt emotions, just as they do. In a good lesson, they looked at paintings of Jesus' life and discussed what he might have been feeling on each occasion. When they looked at a painting of the Last Supper, pupils suggested that he probably felt sorrow, fear and also happiness at being with his disciples. The good teaching enabled the pupils to both learn about Jesus and also learn from his teaching. The junior pupils broaden their knowledge of world religions by learning about Islam, Sikhism and Hinduism. In a lesson with the Years 5 and 6 pupils, on the theme of looking after the natural world, the teacher made good reference to the morning's assembly when it was stressed that it is important to look after even the smallest things, as they are important. The pupils have a good knowledge of the Christian creation story and in one lesson used this to interpret the Hindu creation story and to draw parallels. In creating a design to represent the most important symbols from the Hindu story, one pupil put the fish in the centre of the design because "it was the protector, like God is the protector." The pupils know that Christians and Sikhs worship one God, but that Hindus worship many.
104. The co-ordinator's subject knowledge is good and she has been resolute in bringing about improvements in resources and training for staff. The school is establishing links with a multi-ethnic school in Bristol and also planning a visit to a temple. The subject makes a very good contribution to the pupils' spiritual and moral development as the pupils have plenty of opportunities to experience awe and to consider the choices that they have to make in daily living.