

INSPECTION REPORT

**HERTFORD HEATH JUNIOR MIXED AND
INFANT SCHOOL**

Hertford Heath

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117125

Headteacher: Mrs C Wackett

Reporting inspector: Jennifer Nicholson
23036

Dates of inspection: 14 – 17 January 2002

Inspection number: 220644

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11 years
Gender of pupils:	mixed
School address:	Woodland Road Hertford Heath Hertfordshire
Postcode:	SG13 7QW
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr S Smith
Date of previous inspection:	January 2000

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
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9577	Elaine Parrish	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development Care Partnership with parents
4099	Rod Brathwaite	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Geography Physical education	Curriculum Special educational needs Equal opportunities
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Hertford Heath School is smaller than most schools. It is situated in a village to the south of Hertford itself. Most pupils come from the village, from a wide variety of social and economic backgrounds. A private pre-school playgroup, which most children attend before starting at the school, meets four afternoons a week in the nursery classroom. One hundred and forty pupils attend the school, including 31 children under six years old in the Foundation Stage, in the nursery and in the mixed reception and Year 1 class. Three-year-old children approaching their fourth birthday are admitted to the nursery in September or January; they attend for mornings only until they transfer to the reception / Year 1 class one year later. Currently 24 children are part-time. There are similar numbers of boys and girls in the school. Year groups are often small, resulting in mixed-age classes. The percentage of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals is currently five per cent, lower than the national average. No pupils come from minority ethnic groups or speak English as an additional language. Eighteen per cent of all pupils, below the national average, are identified as having special educational needs, mostly with learning difficulties and at the initial stages of assessment. No pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need, which is below average. The attainment of most children on entry to the school is broadly as expected for their ages, although it is below expectations in speaking and listening skills and mathematical development. Year groups vary year on year.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This effective and improving school achieves satisfactory standards overall. By the age of 11, standards are good in information and communication technology. Standards in swimming are good. They are lower overall than is to be expected in art and design, design and technology, geography, and religious education, due to gaps in pupils' learning, although recent work in these subjects is closer to the expected standard. Good teaching enables pupils to learn effectively across the range of their work. Pupils behave well in class and are sensible around the school. They have good attitudes towards their work. The headteacher has a very clear view of what needs to be done and tackles priorities very competently in a purposeful and systematic way. Governors are actively supportive and fully involved with the work of the school. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in information and communication technology for 11 year olds exceed national expectations. Standards in swimming are good.
- The headteacher provides very strong leadership.
- Behaviour is good; pupils are polite and get on with each other, and with adults, very well; they willingly take on responsibilities and are keen to look after the school environment.
- The school exercises its duty of care and welfare for pupils very well.
- The school shows very clear commitment to working with parents.
- Attendance is very good.

What could be improved

- Standards for 11 year olds in art and design, design and technology, geography and religious education are below national expectations.
- Procedures to assess pupils' work in science and the foundation subjects are not fully established.
- Co-ordinators for the foundation subjects do not yet monitor teaching and learning across the school.
- Opportunities for pupils to develop cultural, including multicultural, awareness are limited.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

When the school was inspected two years ago, it was found to have serious weaknesses in major areas of its work. This is no longer the case. The school has made good improvement overall in addressing areas of concern. Curriculum planning is much improved with appropriate programmes of work in place for all

subjects apart from art and design where guidelines are not yet settled. Very good procedures are now in place to assess pupils' work in English and mathematics. Good systems are established for the headteacher and governors to monitor the work of the school in class. Standards in national testing have improved overall.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

Standards for 11 year olds in 2001, in comparison with schools nationally, were good in English and mathematics. In these subjects, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 exceeded national averages. Standards in mathematics were satisfactory when compared to schools with similar circumstances, but were slightly below in English. Indications are, however, that the similar school's comparisons do not fully reflect the socio-economic status of the school. In science, an average proportion of pupils achieved the expected standard, but because few achieved highly, the overall standard fell below national and similar schools' averages. These results need to be interpreted carefully as the year group was very small with each pupil representing a considerable percentage measure. Over time, results for English and mathematics show marked improvement, and at a faster rate than nationally. Results for science are more variable although the number of pupils gaining the expected Level 4 has improved steadily.

Standards for seven year olds in 2001 were in line with national averages in reading, writing, and mathematics. They were below average in comparison with similar schools in reading and writing, and well below in mathematics. Results fell below those of similar schools because fewer pupils than is to be expected achieved at high levels. As with the 11 year olds, these results need to be treated with caution because the year group was small. Although results over time have been variable, as is to be expected with small cohorts, the general trend is upwards, in the last year in particular.

During the inspection, standards for 11 year olds in information and communication technology were found to be good. Standards in swimming are good across the school. Standards in art and design, design and technology, geography and religious education are not yet reaching national expectations. For seven year olds, standards in English and mathematics are below expectations, reflecting a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the year group. Standards in all other subjects are satisfactory. Children in the Foundation Stage are likely to achieve the nationally set goals for the end of the reception year in all areas of their work apart from writing. They do well in aspects of personal, social and emotional development, in information and communication technology, and in music. They have good hand and finger control. From some low starting points, pupils make sound gains in their learning overall as they progress through the school. The school's targets for testing in 2002 are challenging and reflect the year groups.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good; pupils like coming to school and enjoy lessons. They are keen to participate fully in school life.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good; behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. There are a few identified pockets of challenging behaviour, but this is managed effectively and does not impede the learning of other pupils.
Personal development and relationships	Very good; pupils are keen to take responsibility. They become involved with the daily routines as soon as they come into the nursery and grow in

	confidence as they progress through the school. Relationships are very good and are a strength of the school.
Attendance	Very good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and 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 across the school, enabling pupils, including those with special educational needs, to learn effectively. Sometimes teaching is very good, and occasionally it is excellent. Teaching during the inspection was never less than satisfactory. Teaching and learning in English and mathematics are good. Teaching has improved well since the previous inspection leading to improved standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and also in information and communication technology. Despite improvements to the curriculum, however, the good teaching has not yet had time to impact consistently on standards in other subjects.

In general, teachers' planning is good, and lessons are well structured. Teachers' questioning skills are good, for example when encouraging pupils to make links between previous and current learning. Teachers evaluate effectively pupils' responses to lessons to guide planning for subsequent lessons. Teachers manage pupils well in a consistently positive and respectful way. As a result, pupils almost always settle to their tasks and work purposefully. Good quality teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, and information and communication technology effectively moves pupils' learning on. The best lessons, mainly for older pupils, challenge and inspire, move at a brisk pace, and stimulate very well curiosity and keenness to learn. In these lessons, teachers are very enthusiastic and have high expectations for what pupils of all abilities can achieve. Teaching assistants are used to very good effect. Pupils respond very well in these lessons, with evident enjoyment. In those lessons judged satisfactory, the pace is less crisp. Time is not always used to best effect, for example with overlong introductions or too much talking from the teacher. Tasks sometimes do not match pupils' abilities closely enough, being too easy, or too difficult for them to manage without adult support. Teaching assistants are sometimes under-used. In these lessons, pupils are less well motivated and their learning is not moved on quickly.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory; the curriculum has developed well since the last inspection. New subject work programmes are beginning to impact well on standards although some are not yet fully embedded into the work of the school. Good quality extra-curricular activities for all age groups enhance the provision.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good; pupils with special educational needs are supported well in class and in small withdrawal groups. New national guidelines are beginning to be integrated into this aspect of the school's work.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory; suitable opportunities for reflection enable pupils to consider values such as kindness and helpfulness. Provision for moral and social development is good. The school's caring ethos helps pupils to be supportive of each other. Opportunities for the appreciation of other cultures, including minority ethnic groups, are limited.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good in the way that the school looks after pupils. Child protection procedures are very good. The school provides good support and guidance to raise pupils' achievements and to promote good behaviour. Arrangements to

	assess pupils' work in English and mathematics are very good but are not established well enough in other subjects.
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Partnership with parents is good; the school works very hard to promote effective liaison with parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good; the headteacher provides very strong leadership. She has a very clear view of priorities for the work of the school and works with evident commitment and competence towards their achievement. Senior management contributes effectively to school development. Co-ordinators manage their subjects well overall, although their monitoring role is still to be fully developed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good; governors are actively involved and very supportive. They are well informed and effectively organised to enable them to influence the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good overall; very good in the way that the results of national testing and other data are analysed to guide future teaching. Teaching and learning are monitored systematically in English and mathematics.
The strategic use of resources	Good; the school makes good use of its resources for the benefit of pupils. It carefully applies the principles of best value.

The school provides a suitable number of teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum, although staffing for the oldest pupils is not settled. Accommodation is satisfactory, and is used well. However, lack of storage space in the hall constrains physical education lessons and the outside play area for the youngest children is under developed. Poor drainage on the school field impedes games sessions and renders some pathways impassable in wet weather.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The children like school; they settle well in a welcoming and caring environment. • The school is approachable about concerns and worries. • Teaching is good; the school expects the children to do their best. • There is high praise for the headteacher and her positive impact since her appointment. • Parents recognise and praise teachers' 'incredibly' hard work, especially since the last inspection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Views about homework are mixed; some parents consider that it is not consistent with the policy or responded to well enough. • Some parents consider that the school does not work closely enough with parents. • Some parents are concerned that the misbehaviour of a few older children interrupts settled learning for the majority, and that sanctions are not effective enough. • Parents are anxious that the benefits following the last inspection, such as increased classroom assistance, will not be withdrawn.

Inspectors endorse parents' positive views of the school. They consider homework provision to be satisfactory; and that challenging behaviour is handled effectively and does not impede the learning of other pupils. They consider also that school has a very clear commitment to working in partnership with parents. The school is very aware of the need to maintain benefits arising from the last inspection.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In national testing for 11 year olds, in 2001, standards in English and mathematics were above average. Standards in mathematics were in line with those found in similar schools. In English they were slightly below. In science, an average proportion of pupils achieved the expected Level 4, but because few achieved highly, the overall judgement fell below national and similar schools' averages. However, these comparisons need to be treated with caution, as the year group being tested was particularly small; each pupil represented a significant percentage measure. Over the last two years, results indicate an improving picture, in English and mathematics, at a faster rate than nationally. The school is achieving steady gains in the proportions of pupils gaining nationally expected levels reflecting targeted teaching in this area.
2. Seven year olds, in national testing in 2001, achieved satisfactory standards in mathematics. In reading and writing, although a good proportion of pupils gained the expected Level 2, few achieved highly, resulting in satisfactory values overall. Results fell below those of similar schools as few pupils achieved the higher Level 3. As with the 11 year olds, the effect of a small year group on the percentages needs to be taken into account. Results show improvement from the previous year, especially in reading, but an upward trend is not yet established. At both key stages, as the school is aware, boys do better than girls, contrary to national findings.
3. The attainment of most children on entry to the school is broadly as expected for their ages, although it is below expectations in speaking and listening skills and mathematical development. Few children are identified as having the potential to attain highly. Year groups vary year on year. Children in the nursery and reception classes are generally making good progress towards the early learning goals set nationally for the end of the reception year. They are likely to reach the goals in all areas of learning apart from writing. They are likely to exceed them in aspects of personal, social and emotional development and in information and communication technology. They do well in music and have good hand and finger control. Standards have improved since the last inspection in mathematical development, and also in communication, language and literacy, although writing remains below expectations. In other areas of learning, standards are broadly similar to those reported at the last inspection.
4. Inspection evidence indicates that by the age of 11, standards in information and communication technology are above national expectations, representing very good improvement in this subject since the last inspection when standards were very low. English, mathematics and science have also improved: they now meet expectations, whereas previously they were below. Standards in swimming are good across the school. Standards remain in line in history, music, and physical education. Despite improvements to the curriculum, standards do not yet reach expectations overall in design and technology, geography, or religious education by the age of 11, because of previous gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. Satisfactory standards are indicated in recent work undertaken. Standards in art and design have declined since the last inspection, reflecting a late start to curriculum improvements in this subject and priorities in other major curriculum areas. Previously standards in art met national expectations; they now fall below.
5. Standards for seven year olds are less than satisfactory in reading, writing and mathematics due to some low starting points in the year group. In all other subjects, standards for seven year olds are broadly in line with expectations. In swimming they do well. Since the last inspection, standards have improved in speaking and listening, science, geography and information and communication technology.

6. In relation to prior attainment, pupils are making sound progress overall, from some low starting points when they enter the school to broadly satisfactory standards when they leave. However, they are making good progress in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology, reflecting the school's priorities. This good progress is due to consistently good teaching but is not yet evident in the standards achieved because almost all work programmes are newly introduced and have not yet impacted fully on pupils' backlog of underachievement. Teachers are not yet able to compensate fully for previous gaps in knowledge and understanding. Higher attaining pupils make sound progress with effective challenge, and tasks suited to their abilities, especially at the upper end of the school. The school makes good provision for pupils with particular abilities to work at higher levels. Pupils with special educational needs are enabled to make good progress towards their individual targets through effective support in class and in small separate groups. Other small groups of pupils who are approaching nationally expected levels in English and mathematics do not always make good progress because of a lack of motivation, despite focused extra support.
7. The school has set challenging targets, including for higher attaining pupils, for testing in 2002, reflecting the year groups. Teachers set individual targets in literacy and numeracy that are known to pupils. Older pupils in particular know what they need to work on to improve.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. This is true for all groups of pupils at the school. Their attendance, personal development and relationships are very good and are a strength of the school. The good standards in pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships noted in the last inspection report have been maintained well.
9. Very good routines have been established for children in the Foundation Stage, which foster positive attitudes to school life and enable children to make good progress in their personal and social development. They settle down very quickly in their first weeks and enjoy taking part in pleasurable and rewarding activities. They share resources and equipment amicably and most take turns without fuss. Even the youngest three year olds show good levels of concentration.
10. These good attitudes stay with pupils as they progress through the school. Pupils enjoy school and in the questionnaires 96 per cent of parents agreed this was the case. In lessons they are keen to participate and to explain how they have reached an answer. Younger pupils are encouraged to express their views with a reassuring smile from the teacher. Older pupils respond eagerly to imaginative and challenging activities where learning is fun. This was well illustrated in a Year 4/5 history lesson where the teacher took the part of a servant in Tudor times. This intrigued and excited pupils' interest and stimulated their curiosity to find out more about the past.
11. Standards of behaviour in the classroom, in assemblies and around the school are good. Ninety-one per cent of parents think that behaviour is good. Pupils are polite and courteous and show respect for each other and for adults. They uphold the school rules well. Identified pockets of challenging behaviour from a few older boys are effectively managed and are not allowed to disrupt other pupils' learning. In the playground pupils are lively, energetic and good-natured. There were no signs of bullying or oppressive behaviour during the inspection. The two periods of fixed exclusion during the previous year were handled sensitively and effectively.
12. Very good relationships extend throughout the school. All adults are friendly without feeling their authority is undermined and pupils do not hesitate to ask for help. Pupils are polite and courteous to staff and visitors. Pupils get on well together in lessons. They listen well when others are speaking, and working co-operatively in groups, sometimes without the teacher's direct support. In a physical education lesson the oldest pupils worked together very well, showing friendly rivalry as they competed against each other in preparation for an athletics competition. Pupils in the top class show commendable maturity when working on their own.

13. Pupils are encouraged to become independent and to use their initiative from an early age. Children in the Foundation Stage are helped to involve themselves in school routines by tidying up after lessons and taking the register to the office. Good use is made of class discussion time to help pupils respect the different opinions and thoughts of their classmates and to share their findings with the class. The setting up of the School Council, with elected representatives from each class, has helped pupils see how they can take greater responsibilities for the wider school community. By the time they reach Years 5 and 6, pupils, including those with special educational needs, increasingly take the initiative, by setting up the hall for assembly, by helping younger pupils during wet play. Pupils across the school act as 'busy bees' in the school's drive for energy conservation. Some pupils, particularly in the upper school, regularly volunteer for additional tasks and they do this in a sensible and mature way. Ninety-one per cent of parents who replied to the questionnaire believe the school is helping their children become mature and responsible.
14. Attendance levels are very good. There is virtually no unauthorised absence and this compares very favourably with rates achieved in similar schools. Parents have a clear understanding of acceptable reasons for absence and co-operate with the school in its drive to maintain good levels of attendance and punctuality. Pupils are keen to come to school and lessons start promptly. This very good attendance and punctuality make an important contribution to the standards pupils achieve.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The quality of teaching is good, enabling pupils to learn effectively across the breadth of the curriculum. During the inspection, in seven lessons out of ten, teaching was good or better. The remaining lessons were satisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. This represents good improvement since the last inspection when teaching was satisfactory overall. It also reflects the school's clear emphasis on establishing a comprehensive monitoring programme. The good teaching has led to improvements in standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and also in information and communication technology. In other subjects, programmes of work have not been in place long, and consequently, teachers are not yet able to fully compensate for gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. Good strides are being made, however, as recent work indicates, for example in geography and design and technology. Previous strengths in class control and management have been maintained well. Teachers now routinely make it clear to pupils what they are expected to learn from lessons. Learning is no longer restricted by the lack of coherent subject guidelines. The teaching team is relatively new, and it is of concern that it is not fully settled, with two temporary, part-time teachers for the oldest pupils.
16. In almost two lessons out of ten, teaching was very good or better, with two outstanding lessons, in information and communication technology and history, which were particularly dynamic and inspirational. Teaching is good in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, and physical education. The best lessons overall, mainly for older pupils, move at a lively, brisk pace, challenge pupils effectively and stimulate very well their curiosity and keenness to learn. Teachers are enthusiastic and have high expectations for what pupils can achieve. As a result, pupils are highly motivated to learn. Stories are read or told in a dramatic, expressive way, with very good use of voice, to hold pupils in suspense, for example, as in the story of Esther in religious education. Role-play is used splendidly to enliven pupils' imaginations as in a history lesson about life in Tudor times.
17. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage has improved since the previous inspection when it was satisfactory; now it is good overall. The good teaching is characterised by the high quality of relationships developed between the staff and children. The teaching staff and support assistants really know the children well. The nursery has a peaceful and unrushed atmosphere, where children move happily from one activity to another. They follow routines well and every opportunity is taken to develop their speaking and listening skills. The supportive atmosphere

created enables the three year olds to settle quickly and happily into the routine of school. Children make the transition to the reception class well, as it is close by, and they have an increasing number of opportunities to visit and get to know the adults. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and for completion of work. No time is wasted during the day and resources are used satisfactorily. Shortcomings occur when older children do not have enough opportunities to develop independent writing skills.

18. Planning of the Foundation Stage curriculum is rigorously and efficiently carried out by the co-ordinator with assistance from all the other staff. This careful planning now ensures that progress is made through regular mathematics and language lessons following the nationally recommended outlines. In this area good progress has been made in addressing the issues of the last inspection due to the hard work and dedication of the co-ordinator and staff. There is a good balance between teacher-directed activities and those that the children select for themselves in the nursery. However, at present the organisation within the reception class does not always allow for all children to participate in structured play activities every day. Learning support assistants make good contributions to children's learning, for example by recording observations and progress about the children with whom they work.
19. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. It is organised effectively, in small groups so that it complements and supports class work. The work is planned carefully focusing on specific needs. The special needs teacher and teaching assistants support these pupils well, leading their learning forward in small manageable steps.
20. One of the main strengths in teaching is the systematic planning for lessons and also the evaluation of pupils' responses to activities to guide planning for future lessons. Well-structured lesson plans clearly arise out of longer-term programmes, build on previous work, and include different tasks to suit groups with differing abilities. Tasks generally meet pupils' differing learning needs, although they are not consistently challenging throughout the school, sometimes being too easy, as when all pupils in the class have the same spelling list, or sometimes too difficult for pupils to manage without adult support, as in an infant mathematics lesson. A further strength in teaching is the variety of ways that teachers ask questions. They pose questions to check previous learning, to lead pupils' thinking on about new ideas, or to encourage links between different areas of learning. Questions are often in small steps to ensure clarity and understanding, evident in literacy, including with pupils with special educational needs, and also in numeracy. Quick-fire questions are used to very good effect on occasion to encourage quick thinking and maintain keen attention. Other strengths lie in the consistently positive way that teachers manage pupils. In this they are almost always effective, despite some challenging behaviour and occasional underlying chatter. Teachers clearly value pupils' contributions and enjoy working with them. Relationships are very good.
21. Teachers' subject knowledge is good overall, especially in English and mathematics. There is some subject insecurity, however, in music. Plenary sessions are often used to good effect, to lead pupils' learning on with new but related material, and not simply to go over the outcomes of activities. Teaching assistants are generally used to good effect to support learning, being well briefed and fully aware of what pupils are expected to learn from tasks. On occasion, however, their skills are underused, as during lesson inputs, for example, when given only a minor supervisory role.
22. Lessons often move at a brisk and lively pace. However, shortcomings occur when the pace is more sedentary, mainly in the middle part of the school, and as a result pupils do not work quickly enough, with little sense of urgency to complete their tasks. They become less well motivated, and their learning is not moved on as fast. Sometimes not enough is expected of them as occasionally in mathematics. Other shortcomings occur when lesson introductions are over-long, reducing the time for practical work, or for pupils to complete their tasks. Sometimes teachers talk too much, limiting pupils' developing speaking skills. Homework is satisfactory, with an emphasis on English and mathematics. It increases suitably as pupils move through the school. Sometimes

pupils are so well motivated by an area of learning in school that they spontaneously carry out research at home to find out more, as with older juniors, about Henry VIII.

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

23. The school provides a satisfactory broad and balanced curriculum for all of its pupils. The curriculum has developed well since the last inspection when it was judged poor. Schemes of work are in place for all subjects, which are helping to improve standards especially in science and information and communication technology. The Agreed Syllabus in religious education is now fully covered, and statutory requirements are met. However, the improvements in curriculum provision are not yet fully established. For example the improved programmes of work have not yet had sufficient time to bring the standards into line fully by Year 6 in geography, design and technology, art and design, and religious education. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. It is planned effectively and helps children well towards achieving the early learning goals set nationally for the end of the reception year.
24. Strategies for teaching both literacy and numeracy are good, an improvement since the last inspection in numeracy in particular. The school has remedied this with the resultant improvement in standards, especially in Key Stage 2. Provision for personal, health and social education of pupils is satisfactory. The school has been introducing circle time, golden time and junior citizenship by a staged approach, which has also included the creation of a pupils' School Council, which is beginning to develop effectively. There are regular presentations to pupils by visitors from the police and health service.
25. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to all areas of the curriculum. Many are withdrawn from mainstream lessons for short periods of time for effective, intensive specialist tuition, but the school makes satisfactory arrangements to ensure these pupils are able to absorb any learning they may have missed. Pupils are given appropriate work in classes and are well supported by teachers and learning support assistants. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and helps them to achieve good progress. Their individual educational plans and targets are produced satisfactorily, and the co-ordinator (the headteacher) and teachers are careful to make appropriate identification. They are also making plans to implement the changes indicated by the new national Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs.
26. Planning for subjects takes good account of the needs of all pupils, including those identified by the school as gifted and talented. The breadth of the curriculum offers good equal opportunities, and planning ensures that the school is fully inclusive of all pupils in every aspect of its day-to-day life.
27. The school provides a wide range of good quality extra-curricular activities, including sporting opportunities such as cricket, netball and soccer. Since the last inspection there has been considerable improvement in the provision of non-sporting activities, which include information and communication technology, art and design, drama, music and small games. These are organised almost entirely by dedicated teaching staff, with some help from a few parents. Parents, unlike at the time of the last inspection, are now very happy with extra-curricular provision. Some visits, are made to places of educational interest, but too few are to places of a multi-cultural nature.
28. The school has good links with the local community. It is regarded as an important and integral part of the village. These links make a good contribution to the life of the school, many of which help to enhance the curriculum. The school is always invited to take part in local village events, such as the summer fete and the recycling project, and there are regular articles about the school in the parish magazine. The library displays examples of pupils' work and local shops display posters advertising school events. There is good liaison with the local church and a lay preacher comes to school regularly to lead assemblies. A local artist has come into school to work with

pupils on a sign for the village. There are close links with the local emergency services who visit regularly to give talks to pupils. The school has a close working relationship with the playgroup, which uses the nursery accommodation in the afternoons. This works well to the benefit of the children.

29. There are sound links with partner institutions. A well-established consortium of five local primary schools enables teachers to establish good curricular links, to share staff training and resources and for the school to benefit from shared information and communication technology support. The school is developing sound links with the secondary schools that most pupils will attend. All pupils in Year 6 have the opportunity to visit the school of their choice.
30. Provision for Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education is satisfactory overall. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory, demonstrating satisfactory improvement from the last inspection. Suitable links are planned between collective worship and religious education and personal, social and health education. After hearing a story in assembly, pupils are given sufficient opportunity to reflect upon its meaning and how it relates to their own lives. For example, during the week of the inspection the theme for the act of collective worship was 'thoughtfulness and kindness'. This gave pupils an opportunity to understand human feelings and emotions by listening to stories, both religious and secular. These ideas were extended satisfactorily during classroom discussions. Other special events like the Christingle service, make a very significant impression on pupils because of the lights and atmosphere, and help to support pupils' spiritual awareness. Occasionally in lessons moments of real pleasure and amazement are captured. For example, pupils in the computer suite were 'transfixed' by the power of a program to create rotational symmetrical patterns. Similarly pupils were enthralled during a history lesson when a teacher acted 'in role' as a Tudor servant.
31. Provision for social and moral development is good. The school has a clear behaviour policy and teachers have high expectations of behaviour, which encourage a good response throughout the school. From the earliest days in the nursery, children understand the need to walk about school quietly in case they disturb others who are working. They understand routines and expected behaviour, as in 'only five in the café'. They learn how to share. Discussion times in most classes enable pupils to articulate and listen to the opinions of others. For example, pupils in Years 4 and 5 are able to discuss how they would involve a newcomer to school and help him/her to make friends. They are able to perform a short role-play to demonstrate their ideas. Younger pupils also learn how to take turns when discussing how to help each other. The management of lessons gives frequent opportunities for pupils to work successfully with each other in groups and pairs to discuss and carry out tasks. Pupils have opportunities to play in the school football team. They are beginning to make significant decisions about the quality of school life as a result of the School Council. Pupils of all ages are given roles of responsibility and even the youngest children enjoy being 'busy bees' to check lights and conserve energy. The school's good involvement with the local community enables pupils to be aware of their role in a wider sphere than just the school.
32. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils are given satisfactory opportunities, through various areas of the curriculum, to develop their cultural awareness. In religious education, they learn about the practices and traditions of major world cultures, and in geography about the lives of people in other countries such as Kenya and Peru. The music curriculum also provides satisfactory insights into the music of other cultures, both in listening and percussion. However, there are limited opportunities to extend an understanding of their own and other cultures from personal experiences, for example by visits to places of religious interest, by entertaining visitors to school or by focussed teaching in this area. The curriculum is not at present enriched by the study of non-Western art in the art and design curriculum. Pupils are not yet given sufficient opportunity to appreciate or celebrate the cultural diversity of the society in which they will become adults.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The overall standard of care provided by the school for its pupils, including for pupils with special educational needs, is good and this compares favourably with the previous inspection. The school's procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are very good. They are a strength of the school. Procedures to assess and monitor pupils' academic progress and personal development are satisfactory overall, and the outcomes are used effectively to guide teachers' planning. The quality of care for children in the Foundation Stage is equally good and enables them to make a secure start in school.
34. All adults make a positive contribution to the school's caring ethos. They pay close attention to protecting pupils from harm and to promoting their health, safety and general well-being. Pupils' confidence in the security and support that the school provides helps them to concentrate on their learning. Child protection procedures are fully in place and all staff have now undergone training. The health and safety policy is comprehensive and is overseen effectively by the site manager and the governing body. Minor health and safety concerns were drawn to the Headteacher's attention during the inspection. There are good arrangements for first aid and fire drills are held regularly. All pupils are well supervised in school and in the playground. The quality of care provided by lunchtime supervisors is good.
35. The school makes good provision for pupils with special needs and there is good liaison with outside support agencies. Learning support assistants are patient and encouraging and make an effective contribution to pupils' learning, although on occasion they are underused. There are clear procedures to identify pupils early who need extra help and the school follows all the recommendations of the national Code of Practice.
36. There are good procedures to promote good behaviour and the school functions as a calm and ordered community. A good behaviour policy is applied consistently throughout the school. Pupils are clear that they must report any incidents of harassment to an adult and they believe their concerns will be taken seriously. Very effective measures promote good attendance and parents know they must inform the school if their child is absent. The vast majority of parents are very co-operative and there are very good systems in place to follow up any absences which have not been correctly notified.
37. The school has well-considered procedures to promote pupils' personal development. The newly launched School Council enables pupils to share responsibility for the whole school community. In Years 4, 5 and 6 teachers regularly discuss personal targets for their pupils, which can focus on aspects of their efforts and behaviour, as well as their attainments in literacy and numeracy. Targets are discussed with parents and are monitored for success. In this way, teachers build up a suitable picture of each pupil's strengths and areas for development. Some teachers keep records to assess pupils' personal development, but this good practice is not followed in every class. The school takes good care to acknowledge pupils' achievements, particularly when they have made efforts and tried hard. There is a good system of headteacher certificates, which are greatly prized, and which encourage pupils to work well and do their best.
38. At present there are very good procedures for analysing and collating data gained from national testing and other non-statutory assessments in English and Mathematics. Effective information and communication technology software has been introduced to track individual pupils' progress through the school, from the baseline assessments made soon after entry to the nursery. This efficient system allows predictions to be made and establishes the possibility of setting accurate personal targets for each pupil, by identifying the next steps in learning. Teachers are beginning to use this effectively. Significant progress in this area of assessment has been made in a short-time, due to the expertise and commitment of the deputy headteacher. Assessment procedures in science are less well developed, although teachers use a system of recording related to the units taught in the scheme of work. In the other subjects of the National Curriculum informal

assessment procedures are not consistently or efficiently applied by all teachers. This does not always provide useful information about progress. This forms part of the continuing development of assessment identified by the school, which includes planned assessment weeks during the year.

39. Regular evaluation of teachers' short-term planning is good. The use of a consistent method of recording achievements in lessons helps to inform future plans. This also helps to identify areas of the curriculum where review is needed and this has been especially significant in art and design, where a new scheme of work is currently being introduced. Marking, particularly for Years 3 to 6 is diagnostic and helpful to both teacher and pupil. It gives good indications of the next steps for learning.
40. The continuing development of assessment procedures in the school demonstrates good improvement from the last inspection. The senior management team have implemented this improvement very quickly and appreciate that there remain areas for further development and perceive the need for these new procedures to become embedded in teachers' practice.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41. The school shows a very clear commitment to working in close partnership with parents. In the inspection questionnaires and at the pre-inspection meeting parents registered their strong support for the school. Inspection evidence supports parents' high levels of satisfaction with the way in which the school works in partnership with them. The partnership with parents has been further strengthened since the previous inspection.
42. Very good links are established with parents starting before children enter the nursery, by a variety of meetings and an informative pamphlet. Daily informal access to nursery and reception staff ensures that children settle quickly and happily. All parents and carers of children in the Foundation Stage are invited regularly to discuss initial assessments, and targets for learning and progress with their practitioner.
43. The school has put considerable thought into the way it communicates with parents and the quality of information it provides for them is very good. There are well-written letters and newsletters that keep parents up to date with the current curriculum and with school activities. The prospectus gives clear information about school routines, and introduces ways in which parents can support their child's learning at home. There are regular meetings to discuss various aspects of the curriculum and a useful home reading diary. Consultation meetings and open afternoons are held where parents can discuss their children's progress and observe work. Annual reports on pupils' progress are very good indeed and give parents a very clear idea of the standards their child has achieved. These reports also identify areas of strength as well as targets to help children to improve. Parents of pupils with special education needs are well informed of their progress during reviews of their individual education plans.
44. The school actively encourages parents to become involved in the life of the school, from the nursery onwards, and provides a welcoming environment for them. Ninety-one per cent of parents who replied to the questionnaires feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or a problem. School policies encourage teachers to involve parents and some make a regular commitment to help in classrooms, to run after-school clubs or to accompany pupils on outside trips. The school greatly values any help that parents feel able to give. Most parents have signed the home/school partnership agreement and co-operate readily, by reporting absences promptly and supporting school activities. The vast majority of parents demonstrate their interest in the school by attending consultation evenings and supporting their children's learning at home by listening to them read and helping with homework. However, attendance at curriculum evenings is sometimes low.
45. The active Parent Teachers' Association contributes generously to school funds and cements good relationships between parents and staff. Pupils benefit from the funds raised on their behalf and by the quality of relationships forged between home and the school. Parents appreciate the support given by the school to the Association's events and see this as practical evidence of the school's commitment to building a strong partnership.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. The leadership and management of the school are good and have improved well since the previous inspection. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. She has a very clear view of what needs to be done and tackles priorities with energy, and in a purposeful and competent way. She has worked very hard, and with success and evident commitment, to effect change and improvement. Standards are showing an upward trend since her appointment, just before the last inspection. She gives a very strong lead to staff who are working together well as a team. Senior management are very supportive. The newly appointed deputy headteacher is making a very good contribution towards improvement through her work on assessment. Subject leadership has

developed well since the last inspection, although not all aspects of the co-ordinators' role are yet operational.

47. Governors fulfil their statutory duties well. Good systems are in place for them to understand the working of the school and to enable them to provide effective support in shaping its future. They are well informed and familiar with school life through regular visits and discussions. They are making a good contribution to the monitoring programme through informed class observations. They have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and where it needs to improve. They are fully involved with planning for school development. The school's pastoral and social aims are fulfilled well and permeate the work of the school. The school is working hard to fulfil its academic aims. Performance management arrangements are established and are contributing effectively to school development, for example through focused training. Plans are in hand to include non-teaching members of staff in performance management procedures.
48. Governors effectively oversee special educational needs provision. This area has improved well since the last inspection; previously generally satisfactory, the school now makes good provision. The co-ordinator, at present the headteacher, works effectively with the team of trained support staff. She liaises effectively with agencies beyond the school. Work has already begun to adopt revised national procedures. Specific funding is used well to support the learning of pupils with identified needs.
49. Planning for school development is good, detailed and comprehensive. Staff and governors are fully involved, as is the local education authority, and progress towards improvement is monitored regularly. Issues to be addressed are relevant, stemming from the last inspection. To this end the headteacher has established a constructive and effective monitoring programme, closely linked to school improvement, and including class visits and analysing samples of pupils' work. She provides good quality written feedback with clear targets for development. Arrangements centre mainly on English, mathematics and science at present. Co-ordinators for these subjects are beginning to be suitably involved. Plans are in hand to extend the programme include other subjects.
50. Targets for improvement in national testing are challenging. Test results are analysed closely to inform the target setting process, and to establish common weaknesses to be addressed in future lessons, for example long multiplication, or sustaining quality throughout a piece of writing. The school makes suitable provision for extra teaching in English and mathematics, to enable small groups of pupils in Year 6 to work more closely towards achieving the expected Level 4 in national testing, in 'booster' groups. However, the work in English is more successful in engaging pupils' attention and moving their learning forward than in mathematics. All pupils have targets for English and mathematics. Older pupils in particular are aware of areas where they need to improve.
51. The school has sufficient suitably qualified teachers and learning assistants to meet the demands of the curriculum, including in the nursery class. Since the last inspection there has been a very high turnover of staff and almost all teachers are new to the school. The teaching team is not fully settled, however, as the mixed Year 5/6 class is taught by two temporary part-time teachers. The number of teaching assistants, low at the time of the last inspection, is much improved. They are deployed well overall, and in the Foundation Stage in particular where they contribute significantly to the quality of children's learning and care. In general, teaching assistants support pupils; learning effectively. All support staff, including administrative staff are very committed to the school and give willingly of their time and energies. Staff development is planned carefully and is linked appropriately to the school development programme. There are currently no formal procedures for the induction of new staff.
52. Accommodation is satisfactory and allows all the subjects of the National Curriculum to be taught effectively. One classroom is currently used to store resources and also to take small groups and listen to readers. The new computer suite is a good facility and makes an important contribution to raising standards in information and communication technology. It is well utilised, during the day and also for an after-school club. The newly located library is comfortably furnished to

encourage browsing. Pupils have some access to the resource, for example during class reading sessions, and sometimes at playtimes and after school, but overall it is not yet being used well enough. Although the school has made efforts to reduce the amount of equipment stored in the hall, the tables, chairs and equipment, mentioned in the last inspection report, continue to reduce the size of the hall and present a hazard in physical education lessons.

53. The spacious and pleasant grounds include good separate outdoor play areas for infant and junior pupils. The outside area for Foundation Stage children, however, as the school is aware, is in need of development to better support outdoor learning. Access to the large playing field is restricted in winter months as it becomes waterlogged through poor drainage, rendering adjacent pathways impassable. The re-decoration programme, suggested in the last inspection report, is well under way. However, the school has not yet fully addressed the need to provide a more stimulating learning environment in the hall and in some classrooms. There is currently little display of pupils' work on walls. The accommodation is regularly used by a number of local organisations, including a village playgroup.
54. Resources are satisfactory overall. They are generally used to good effect to promote pupils' understanding, especially in a practical way. Improvements in resources since the last inspection, especially for the Foundation Stage, and in science and mathematics are impacting well on raising standards, in practical aspects of these subjects in particular. The school has also worked hard to establish good resources in information and communication technology, in the computer suite as well as in classrooms and for administration purposes. Teachers integrate information and communication technology into their planning on a regular basis, and make good use of the equipment to promote learning across the curriculum. This has been the basis for the considerable improvement in this area.
55. The school makes good use of its financial and other resources. The finance committee, headteacher and local authority finance officer work closely together to ensure that special grants are used effectively in order to meet the school's priorities as identified in the comprehensive school development plan. The headteacher is mainly responsible for the key strategic decisions, but is monitored by the finance committee, who weigh the information and strategies carefully before sanctioning spending. In this way 'best value' and cost effectiveness are routinely sought. The governing body is aware that an enduring priority of the school is to eliminate the fluctuating intake, which gives rise to considerable variations in the annual budget. The introduction of the pre-school playgroup on site has been helpful in stabilising entry numbers, and the governors are examining closely further options. The day-to-day financial management of the school is good, leaving teachers free to concentrate on their classes. It is well maintained by the headteacher and the dedicated and experienced secretary. Taking into account, the overall satisfactory but improving standards achieved, pupils' broadly average attainment on entry, and the high unit cost, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

56. In order to build on the existing good features of the school and raise standards further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- (1) Improve standards in geography, religious education, art and design, and design and technology by:
 - continuing to systematically implement programmes of work;
 - finding ways for subject co-ordinators to monitor the impact of the new programmes in class. (As already identified by the school in development planning.)(Paragraphs: 23, 49, 87, 91, 98, 117)
- (2) Fully develop assessment procedures for science and the foundation subjects. (Paragraph 38)
- (2) Enhance pupils' cultural development, including their multi-cultural awareness, by enriching the curriculum, for example through visits and visitors, and also in the humanities, literature and religious education. (Paragraphs: 32, 90)

In addition to the issues above, the following points should be considered for inclusion in the school's action plan:

- (1) actively promote a love of reading across the school; (Paragraph 68)
- (2) further improve provision in the Foundation Stage by:
 - increasing opportunities for children to develop independent writing skills (Paragraph 60)
 - increasing opportunities for children to initiate activities for themselves (Paragraph 18)
 - develop the outside area as a teaching and learning environment. (Paragraph 64)
- (3) work in partnership with the local education authority to improve drainage on the school field, to increase access and reduce flooding on some pathways. (Paragraphs: 53, 116)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	50
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	7	28	13	0	0	0
Percentage	4	14	56	26	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 two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	9	118.5
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	Yr – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		24

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	95.5
National comparative data	93.9

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001			20

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	18	19	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (86)	95 (86)	95 (86)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	19	19	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (91)	95 (91)	95 (86)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

*Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.
Numbers are omitted where there are 10 or fewer pupils.*

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			13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	11		12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (70)	77 (56)	92 (85)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total			
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	54 (85)	62 (56)	54 (96)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.
Numbers are omitted where there are 10 or fewer pupils.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	119
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	2	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20:1
Average class size	24

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	74

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/A
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	31
Number of pupils per FTE adult	9:1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000 - 01
	£
Total income	375,853
Total expenditure	371,583
Expenditure per pupil	2815
Balance brought forward from previous year	18,272
Balance carried forward to next year	22,542

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	125
Number of questionnaires returned	56

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	41	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	48	45	5	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	31	60	5	4	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	41	46	11	2	0
The teaching is good.	57	38	5	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	48	14	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	27	2	4	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	55	41	2	2	0
The school works closely with parents.	41	41	14	4	0
The school is well led and managed.	64	29	4	4	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	43	48	5	2	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	53	43	4	0	0

The inspection team have taken into account of the views of parents, expressed by the questionnaire responses, by additional comments, and at the pre-inspection meeting.

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

57. This area of the school's work has improved well since the previous inspection. Social skills continue to be developed well. Previous weaknesses have been addressed effectively. Due emphasis is now given to communication, language and literacy and mathematics development. A wide range of good quality activities is provided to move children's learning forward. Adults support children's learning effectively in small and whole class groups. Comprehensive and detailed planning and assessment systems have been introduced. In addition, effective new staffing arrangements are in place, with one teacher overseeing the two classes and a nursery nurse responsible for the day-to-day running of the nursery.

Personal, social and emotional development

58. Teaching in this area of learning is good and, as a result, children are making good gains towards the early learning goals. Children make particularly good progress in the nursery. They learn quickly how to change their shoes and how to sit and listen with others. They answer the register and learn how to walk about school in a quiet and sensible manner. They ask questions politely. They learn that hand washing is an important part of personal hygiene. Insistence upon regular routines and acceptable behaviour continues in the reception class. Children have many opportunities to learn how to take turns to speak in their discussion sessions, for example when passing their dog, Wilf, around the class circle. They take full part in the day-to-day events of the main school. They attend and enjoy assemblies. They understand that learning takes place in other areas of the school, like the information and communication technology suite. They become increasingly confident to carry out jobs and deliver messages. Even the youngest children are able to deliver resources 'next door'. Children are very happy in the two classes. They play together in a friendly manner and appear to enjoy all the activities that they are offered during their stay in the Foundation Stage. They are enthusiastic and establish very good relationships with staff.

Communication, language and literacy

59. Children are making good progress with speaking and listening skills and teaching in this area is good overall. Every opportunity is taken, especially in the nursery, for adults to engage with pupils in the role-play area, joining in and extending children's vocabulary and ideas. The nursery nurse in the nursery frequently 'went for her lunch' to the class bakery and café, ordering food from the cook and collecting cakes in a bag, for which money was exchanged. Learning support assistants also play an important part in language development by asking frequently such questions as: 'How?' 'Why?' and 'What do you think?'. Children have many opportunities to listen to and share in stories and like to join in with books they know. They like to predict what comes next by looking at the pictures and because they 'know the song'. For example, while sharing 'If you're happy and you know it', two girls were able to sing along and sing the next verse. The youngest children can answer questions about favourite characters and are beginning to learn about reading books.
60. Efficient teaching of phonic skills helps the older children in the reception class to begin to sound out words, although at present they are still at early stages. They enjoy reading big books, and singing nursery rhymes, while looking at the text. Children learn to form letters well and, from an early age are able to trace and recognise their own name. There are frequent opportunities for them to match their names, for example when coming into school in the morning, and collecting their named milk at snack time. Older children can copy well, both from the board and in their books and their letters are usually formed correctly. However, there are fewer opportunities beyond the guided writing sessions of the literacy hour for children in the reception class to write

on their own. They lack confidence in this area and many are unlikely to achieve the early learning goals in this aspect.

Mathematical development

61. Children are making good progress in this area of learning and, from some low starting points, most are likely to reach the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Teaching is good. In both classes, good opportunities are offered for counting and sorting. Children at the end of the reception year can identify two-dimensional shapes and count successfully to 20 and beyond. In the nursery, children use money counters to buy cakes at the 'bakers' and in the reception class they are able to count the pennies in their purses. Many opportunities are given to children to pour, fill and empty containers, in the inviting, coloured, bubbly water in the nursery. Later they are able to identify what is full, half-full or empty. The older children in the reception class learn quickly and successfully in numeracy lessons. However, the younger children in reception often need an adult to work with them in order for them to make good progress in learning with their number games. Younger children are learning their colours, sorting objects and beginning to count them. There are many valuable, more informal opportunities given to children to consolidate their understanding of number. For example, counting the number of children present and singing number songs.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

62. Most children are likely to attain the early learning goals in this area of learning. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with good features, as in information and communication technology. In this aspect, children do well and most are likely to exceed expectations. Nursery children have access to a computer at all times and confidently click with the mouse on icons to play simple sequencing and matching games. Older children benefit from small group sessions in the information and communication technology suite and are able to practise logging on, opening a program from the desktop and using a paint program to 'write' their name. They are very proud of their achievements. In design and technology aspects, nursery children have ample opportunity to use glue carefully and use pipe cleaners, paper and fabric to make a mouse for their 'hickory dickory dock' display. Children continue to make things in the reception class and use fabric and card successfully. In this area however, there are fewer opportunities for the children to make their own products, as many activities are teacher-prepared.
63. Older children are beginning to understand what it means to travel, for example by listening and 'reading' a big book about Barnaby Bear travelling to Dublin. They are gaining an awareness of the wider world through looking at aerial photographs and a simple map of the British Isles. Younger children discuss the days of the week and the weather, and keep a record. Many opportunities are given in the nursery for children to construct train track layouts, set up model farms and use plastic construction kits of all types. They are able to use their senses in their activities in the sand and water, and when rolling, modelling and cutting dough shapes. Older children benefit from working with those in Year 1, as they share in their design and technology and science projects, for example making their own house and investigating which paper is best for making splashing pictures. Many children can identify metal, plastic, cork and fabric and good questioning enhances their learning. They are able to investigate the properties of materials and use their senses well to discover what is breakable and not breakable. This links well with the topic about nursery rhymes. Children know that eggs are breakable, like Humpty Dumpty!

Physical development

64. Most children are likely to reach the early learning goals in this area of learning. Teaching in this area is good. Staff provide many opportunities for children to play with construction toys and use pencils, crayons and brushes, which develop good manipulative skills. Children in the reception class show increasing competency in manipulating pencils and begin to carry out handwriting exercises, resulting in well-formed numbers and letters. Children in the nursery 'love' to go to the hall. They are learning quickly how to use space sensibly. They run fast and feel their heart beating. A few can skip and hop, but everyone tries hard. They move well to music and songs,

marching, hopping and skipping, and participate in the actions with great enthusiasm, humour and energy. This is a very productive time. Older children are beginning to use mats and small apparatus. They practice jumping and landing safely, running and stopping. Outside, the youngest children can pedal bikes and toys, use scooters and other wheeled apparatus. Older children have good opportunities to run, climb and balance in the playground, but opportunities to exploit the outside area as a learning environment have yet to be fully developed.

Creative development

65. Children make satisfactory progress overall in this area of learning, and most are likely to attain the early learning goals at the end of the Foundation Stage. In some aspects they do well. All children in the Foundation Stage sing tunefully and enjoy nursery rhymes and action songs. They experiment with percussion instruments, and older children practise skills with small hand bells as they help Year 1 pupils to play 'Twinkle, twinkle little star'. They make good progress with their musical skills. Teaching is good. Staff provide many opportunities for painting, and in the reception class, children learn to mix colours effectively and make varying shades of the same colour. They also suitably investigate texture using yarn, fabrics and other collage material. A strength of this area are the very good opportunities for creative role-play, especially in the nursery.

ENGLISH

66. Observed standards in English at age 11 are in line with national expectations. This varies with national test results in 2001, which were above, because an above average proportion of pupils achieved the higher Level 5. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress through effective support. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2, but standards for seven year olds in English at the time of inspection are lower than is to be expected, due to the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Variations in results are to be expected when year groups are small, and sometimes very small, as in this school. Each pupil represents a significant percentage measure.
67. Standards in speaking and listening are in line with national expectation across the school. This is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection. Pupils listen well and concentrate hard in lessons and assemblies. They are encouraged by teachers to talk giving factual answers and opinions. As a result, pupils gain confidence in speaking and a high proportion are prepared to make comments. Not all, though, can yet give extended answers, although this improves as they go through the school. There is less reticence to contribute than indicated at the time of the last inspection. Many pupils are happy to talk to adults on a 'one to one' basis about their work. The school drama club and newly established School Council are now making a significant contribution to the standards achieved by those pupils who take part, although as yet no boys have felt encouraged to join the drama club. A good contribution to speaking and listening is also made by the withdrawal groups for special needs pupils, and pupils on the threshold of gaining the expected Level 4, in 'booster' sets. In these groups, pupils have good opportunities to talk through constant encouragement by the teacher. In a poetry lesson, for example, all six pupils made significant contributions to questions about 'Bad Dog'; most of them beginning sentences with "I think that...".
68. In reading, standards are below the national expectation at the age of seven, although this is not representative of standards across the school as a whole. Shared reading in the literacy hour has improved pupils' familiarity with and pleasure in words on the page. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 greatly enjoy participating in activities, such as the reading of 'Red Riding Hood', making good attempts to read and define the meaning of words like 'scowled', 'stomped' and 'angelically'. Good support by learning assistants is helping pupils with special educational needs to make progress with their reading, through maintaining interest and encouraging consistent effort. Most

pupils use text, picture and phonic clues to help them, although a number are not confident in splitting up unfamiliar words. Many pupils across the school lack expressiveness, especially when reading aloud, although they readily talk about the stories and predict outcomes. Few pupils show much indication of the excitement and enjoyment of the books they are reading.

69. In Years 3 to 6, reading is generally satisfactory and is well supported in literacy lessons. Whole class reading of stories like 'The Iron Man' and 'Tom's Midnight Garden' gives opportunities for pupils to join the reading modelled by enthusiastic and expressive teachers. A significant minority of pupils, however, less motivated by the texts, indicate that they would not choose to read the books on their own. There is considerable evidence that pupils read regularly to and with adults at home and at school, but many do not show any marked enthusiasm for books. Preferences that are indicated come from a very limited range of strongly promoted authors nationally. Pupils' use of the library is underdeveloped. Plans are in hand for its development and for the continued improvement in book (especially reference) resources.
70. Standards in writing for seven year olds at present are lower than is to be expected nationally, although younger pupils' writing is in line. Pupils in Year 2 have regular spellings to learn at their indicated attainment level and are generally accurate in their formal tests, most managing words like 'once', 'out' and 'push'. In their less formal story writing though, they make frequent spelling errors, and the use of punctuation like capitals and full stops is often incorrect. There is little evidence of unaided or extended writing in their work.
71. Standards in writing for 11 year olds meet expectations. Many pupils use extended sentences with internal punctuation, reflecting focused teaching on the use of correct punctuation, including colons and hyphens. Class work on how words are made up, by the use of suffixes and prefixes, is useful in extending pupils' understanding of vocabulary. Pupils write for different purposes, for example biography, summary, job descriptions, and also across a range of themes. For instance the Book of Magical Storms by Years 5 and 6 enabled imaginative and exciting vocabulary to be used. Pupils also enjoyed writing a 'modern' version of Macbeth, injecting their own brands of youthful humour - 'While I was crossing the heath, this hag shouted "Hail", I thought she was giving a weather forecast!' Pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to develop their writing by teaching in small steps, in line with individual targets. Overall, however, there is insufficient celebration of good writing. Examples of pupils' writing on display in classrooms and public areas are limited.
72. A commercial handwriting scheme has been introduced and this is helping pupils to more consistent letter formation, style and positioning. Handwriting throughout the school has improved since the last inspection and by the time pupils are age 11 their writing is generally fluent, joined and legible and their presentation of writing in their books is good. This is because the school has made a concerted effort for pupils to become more consistent in their formal work, and regular lessons in handwriting skills now take place. Some work, though, on worksheets and in draft form is careless and untidy because pupils do not see it as being 'best work'.
73. Teaching and learning are good overall and have contributed well to the improving standards in the last two years, since the appointment of the new headteacher. Sometimes teaching is very good, characterised by a fast and lively pace that motivates pupils well, and maintains keen attention effectively. Expectations for pupils' learning, as well as their behaviour, are high. In general, teachers have good subject knowledge and enthusiasm for literature. They plan lessons well and make good use of the National Literacy Strategy. They provide suitable tasks for groups of different abilities, and on most occasions have a good expectation of what their pupils can achieve. They make good use of information and communication technology to support learning, for example about prefixes and suffixes in Years, 5 and 6. Teachers manage widely ranging ability levels and mixed aged groups well. Relationships with pupils are very good. Teachers show a caring approach to pupils' needs, although this sometimes deflects them from encouraging pupils to work quickly. Some pupils, particularly the more able, although having appropriately challenging

tasks, are sometimes too leisurely in their approach and not productive enough. Their independent work often lacks urgency. Pupils generally work better in groups when adults are guiding them. Pupils' attitudes are never less than satisfactory, almost always good, and in smaller groups, especially with the special needs teacher, sometimes very good. They enjoy their lessons, especially the verbal and plenary aspects, and use computer resources well to help their learning.

74. The conscientious and effective co-ordinator leads the subject well. The literacy strategy has been successfully implemented, and the range of books continues to improve. Assessment of pupils' progress is very good. The school uses a wide variety of tests and keeps copious records of progress, which it is using well to set targets and make predictions for pupils' learning. The results of national tests are analysed closely to guide future teaching and to contribute to the target setting process. Plans are underway for the co-ordinator to become more involved with monitoring teaching and learning in classes.

MATHEMATICS

75. Observed standards in mathematics for 11 year olds are in line with national expectations. This is lower than the results of national tests in 2001 due to differences in the year groups. As a result of comprehensive training for all teachers, and improvements in teaching, the subject has improved well since the last inspection when standards were below expectations. Teachers provide suitably challenging tasks for pupils of different abilities and all aspects of the subject are now covered appropriately.
76. Most pupils in Year 6 are gaining a secure understanding of square numbers, and can give a suitable definition. With suitable use of calculators, pupils make reasonable estimates of the square of a two-digit number. Higher attaining pupils work reasonably well with decimal numbers, and begin to find the square roots, applying logical strategies. Pupils make good use of their knowledge of multiplication tables to identify factors. They use different strategies to add mentally two-digit numbers. They work appropriately with co-ordinates, calculate perimeters, measure in degrees, and devise frequency tables. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress towards their targets through focused teaching in small steps.
77. Standards for seven year olds are below national expectations overall. They are lower than the results of national testing in 2001, which were in line nationally, because of a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the current year group. Pupils are beginning to understand the value of each digit in a two-digit number, practically and with support. They recognise pairs of numbers that make ten. Higher attaining pupils confidently order numbers to one hundred and beyond, or divide numbers methodically using a pictorial method. When supported, pupils with special educational needs make suitable gains in their learning. They lose concentration when required to work independently.
78. Standards in numeracy are satisfactory overall. Pupils make appropriate use of numeracy skills to support learning in other subjects, for example devising computer generated symmetrical patterns in art and design and timelines in history. They make good use of information and communication technology to support learning in mathematics with regular allocated time in the new computer suite.
79. The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics are good overall. It is satisfactory for five to seven year olds, and good for eight to 11 year olds. Occasionally it is very good, for the oldest pupils, when fast pace lively and challenging teaching keeps pupils very alert and keen to succeed. Previous gaps in pupils' learning are being addressed systematically, and pupils are achieving well overall in line with their abilities. Strengths of the teaching include detailed planning, with different tasks for different ability groups, and routine evaluations so that pupils' gaps and misunderstandings are addressed in future lessons. On occasion, however, tasks are too hard for

pupils to manage without adult support, or too easy. Teachers question pupils effectively, with due attention to the different ages and abilities within classes. They give clear explanations through good direct teaching and introduce mathematical language suitably. They encourage pupils to use different approaches and strategies to solve problems and calculations. They invite pupils to explain their mathematical thinking but this aspect does not have a high enough profile. Lessons are clearly structured. The pace of oral lesson introductions is often good, and pupils are keen, interested and alert, contributing well. The brisk pace is not always sustained, however, throughout the lesson, particularly for infants and lower juniors, and pupils' efforts and concentration wane. Sometimes introductions are over-long, reducing the time for practical tasks. Plenary sessions are often effective in leading pupils' learning on further by introducing new but related material. Lessons for older pupils in particular are challenging.

80. Liaison between the two job-share teachers is very effective with very good communication and a high level of commitment to improving standards. Teaching to support the mathematical development of pupils with special educational needs is good in small carefully reinforced steps, engaging well pupils' interest and keenness to learn. As a result they continue to work hard with their tasks when not supported by an adult. Teaching to support pupils at the threshold of gaining the expected Level 4, in 'booster' groups, is less effective. These pupils are less well motivated to succeed and do not work as productively. The school makes good arrangements to support the learning of pupils with particular talents in the subject.
81. The co-ordinator has a clear view of the future needs of the subject. Very good assessment procedures enable realistic targets to be set and guide planning for future lessons. Detailed analysis of the results of national testing and other data also provide useful pointers for future planning. Monitoring of teaching and learning in the subject is good. It is mainly carried out by the headteacher, but with arrangements well in hand to include the co-ordinator. These procedures, together with the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, and a good level of additional training for all teachers, have enabled the school to make good headway in raising standards in this subject since the last inspection.

SCIENCE

82. Standards in science at age seven and 11 are in line with national expectations, although there are fewer pupils attaining higher levels than might be expected at both key stages. This demonstrates satisfactory improvement from the last inspection. The implementation of a scheme of work and the dynamic teaching in Years 5 and 6 are enabling previous gaps in learning are being addressed. All pupils are beginning to attain levels appropriate to their ability through the appropriate concentration on skills of investigation and the understanding of processes in science. The co-ordinators and senior management team has understood the need to improve science teaching throughout the school to provide appropriate challenges for all higher attainers.
83. By the age of seven, pupils name the main parts of a flowering plant and know that the plant needs water, light and air to live. They describe clearly how to make a simple electrical circuit to light up a bulb. With support they write instructions for changing the batteries in a torch and talk about how it works. Pupils are beginning to obtain and share information from books, for example about materials like paper, metal and wood. Pupils with special educational needs are included well so that they make similar progress to their peers, for example, sharing their information, from a well-chosen video, about how glass is made.
84. By the age of 11, pupils describe investigations they have carried out, for example in separating mixtures by evaporation. They use specific vocabulary well, as a result of teachers' effective modelling of scientific terms. They know about life cycles and food chains. They are able to make predictions about the insulative properties of different textiles. They use information and communication technology skills to very good effect, as when producing graphs and charts, when

recording experiments and using heat sensors to measure water temperature. Pupils demonstrate their understanding by making small non-fiction books, for example about magnetism and springs.

85. Teaching and learning are good overall. The good teaching observed is characterised by careful planning and good questioning, particularly in plenary sessions, where pupils' understanding is often extended. For example, older pupils are led effectively into making decisions about setting up an investigation into insulation using temperature measurement and introducing the concept of controlling variables like time. Lessons are well-structured and usually conducted at a good pace, with pupils involved in different activities. For example, while learning how to categorise natural and non-natural materials, younger pupils were actively sorting, labelling and discussing, as well as researching by using books and videos and finally reporting back to the class. Often pupils have a series of different activities to visit, as with the use of textiles as insulators. The variation in activity maintains attention and concentration. In the best lessons, different methods are used for recording. For example, making collages and pictures of light sources, reporting verbally or using record sheets (recording frames) designed for different ability levels. During demonstration lessons, pupils are kept alert and busy by very good questioning and opportunities to record predictions for the next investigation. They are able to consolidate understanding of previously learned facts.
86. The co-ordinator and her support teacher maintain perceptive and energetic leadership of the subject. They have worked very hard to ensure the successful implementation of a new scheme of work, using government curriculum guidance. The quantity and useful storage of resources has improved, making teaching more effective. A useful start has been made to monitor teaching, planning and pupils' work. Both leaders have a very clear vision of how the subject should be developed. This area marks good improvement since the last inspection.

ART AND DESIGN

87. Few lessons were observed during the inspection. Judgements are made on the basis of analysis of pupils' work, teachers' planning and conversations with pupils. Standards at age seven are broadly in line with those expected nationally, but pupils at age 11 do not attain the levels expected. The school has experienced some problems with the introduction of a new scheme of work and, as a result, the oldest children have not yet had appropriate experiences to develop the necessary skills. They have had no recent experience of work in three dimensions, for example in clay, or sculpture in other mediums, or the opportunity to develop sketching skills or to use their sketchbooks effectively. Pupils do not have enough knowledge to discuss preferences for mediums or to express appreciation of different artists' work. Evidence of painting skills is limited. This marks a fall in standards since the last inspection.
88. Older pupils appreciate good links made with other areas of the curriculum. Capitalising well on a study of the Tudors, pupils are examining pattern on fabrics, in buildings and in Elizabethan gardens, to develop repeating pattern blocks for printing. There are also some good examples of work related to a study of Pointillist painters. Pupils produce some detailed and careful use of pastels through studying well-known landscapes. They use information and communication technology to good effect in the area of pattern making. A Year 3 group of pupils were transfixed by the symmetry facility of a paint program, which then allowed them to set up repeat stamps for their design. By the age of seven, pupils have been given suitable opportunities to investigate colour mixing and can change shades of colour appropriately. They experiment with texture, by using collage materials like pasta, yarn and fabric.
89. Teaching and learning in lessons observed were satisfactory overall. Because of setbacks in implementing a coherent programme of work, teachers have not yet had sufficient time to recover pupils' lost ground, especially the oldest pupils. Teachers' planning is effective. They explain clearly to pupils what they are intended to learn, and build well on learning from previous lessons.

They use specific vocabulary suitably, for example 'repetitive' and 'symmetrical' to describe pattern. They make good links with other areas of the curriculum to support learning in art and design. For example, good use of information and communication technology enables pupils to experiment with colour, shade and pattern and motivates them very well. The work on pattern links also with learning in history, through the comparison of modern patterns with those of Tudor times. Pupils are managed well. They respond well to class teachers' enthusiasms, enjoying art and design lessons.

90. Leadership and management of the subject are sound. The co-ordinator is aware of the deficiencies in the curriculum, revealed through the school's good lesson evaluation procedures. Plans are already in hand to introduce further new guidelines together with additional resources for work in a variety of mediums, to provide appropriate breadth and balance. It is of note that the school successfully subscribes to the local authority art-borrowing scheme to provide a range of pictures, some original, for the school, but they are not always used effectively enough to support art appreciation. Evidence of art from non-Western cultures to actively support multicultural understanding is limited.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

91. It was not possible to observe teaching during this inspection. Judgements are made on the basis of scrutiny of pupils' work, analysis of teachers' planning, and discussions with staff and pupils. Standards at age seven are broadly in line with those expected nationally, but at age 11 they are below those expected. Despite the introduction of a comprehensive scheme of work, the oldest pupils in school still have gaps in their knowledge and some absence of skills. The organisation of the subject co-ordinator and the support provided by the scheme of work are beginning to ensure that, as pupils pass through the school, they attain appropriate skills and carry out suitable design and technology projects.
92. At the age of seven, pupils join materials appropriately, for example by sticking, using tape and making paper hinges, to make a card with a hidden picture. Younger pupils design and make houses in groups with additional paper, fabric and paint to finish. They make designs for Joseph's coat, affix fabric by simple stitches, showing some good experimental techniques. They make good use of the coats, using them as part of the dressing up collection. Pupils make flow charts using words and pictures, and including listing the materials they require. These show that they have a suitable understanding of the design construction and evaluative process. Pupils are beginning to reflect suitably on what they have done and make suggestions, usually orally, on the quality of the product.
93. Evidence of completed work in Years 3 to 6 indicates an appropriate progression of skills in planning and evaluating. There is a record of an appropriate range of tasks, which include structures (a money container), mechanisms (a moving monster and moving toys) and projects with food (bread making and testing, and designing and making sandwich snacks, using a variety of fillings and different types of bread). Pupils often usefully share their work in assembly so that other pupils can see products at various stages of completion and are becoming much more aware of the total design and technology process.
94. Indications from the limited evidence are that teaching is satisfactory overall. All teachers plan effectively and have appropriate subject knowledge. They provide suitable tasks for pupils to undertake with due regard to all aspects of the work. They use information and communication technology to good effect, with the oldest pupils in particular. The school has begun to address the issues from the previous inspection and, with support from the government schemes of work, is now providing a suitable curriculum. The foresight of the co-ordinator has ensured that there is now a satisfactory supply of tools and consumable materials, and she also monitors teachers' planning. She keeps examples of plans, evaluations and photographs of finished products to

moderate standards and support teachers in their practice. She is compiling guidelines for the progressive development of pupils' skills in order to strengthen the curriculum further. There has been good improvement in this subject since the last inspection.

GEOGRAPHY

95. Standards in geography for seven year olds are in line with national expectations. No lessons were taking place during the inspection for Years 3 to 6. Judgements are based on looking at samples of pupils' work, looking at teachers' planning and other documents, and talking to pupils. Indications are that standards for 11 year olds fall below what is to be expected. This represents some improvement since the last inspection when standards were found to be below for seven year olds and well below for 11 year olds. The main improvement in the subject lies in the introduction of a coherent scheme of work to ensure full curriculum coverage and a steady development of geographical skills. Teachers have not yet had sufficient time, however, to fully improve older pupils' geographical knowledge and understanding, although examples of recent work indicate an acceptable standard. Additionally, although the co-ordinator has now prepared assessment guidelines for the school, they are not yet operative, and so teachers do not yet have sufficient knowledge of how pupils are progressing in the subject. Geography is a major priority for further development in the current school development plan.
96. Pupils in Year 1 are following Barnaby Bear's recent journey to Dublin. They understand that to travel anywhere, people need to buy tickets, use a passport, and sometimes change money. One boy already had knowledge of the Euro. In Year 2, pupils are developing an understanding of living on an island by enjoying the stories of Katie Morag on the imaginative Isle of Struay. Some, although not all, are able to identify human and physical features of an island, and offer views such as: "you can't fly to the island because it hasn't got a runway, you must go by boat or helicopter". They have also looked at and gained knowledge of the buildings of Hertford Heath by walking around the village and examining photographs taken with the school digital camera. They have also looked at aerial photographs and make suitable observational comments.
97. Older pupils have a good knowledge of Peru and Kenya. They describe many characteristics of both countries, and make clear and valid comparisons of the differences between life in these countries and life in Hertford Heath. They talk enthusiastically about their adventure weekend in Norfolk, when they did some basic mapping. However, there are clear gaps in their knowledge and understanding, for example of the environment and environmental issues, and maps and directions, because of the short time that the new scheme of work has been in place.
98. Indications from the limited evidence are that the quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory, although not yet leading to nationally expected standards for the oldest pupils. This is because there has not yet been sufficient time to fully address previous gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. Planning is greatly improved and teachers are working hard to link geography with other areas of the curriculum, such as literacy, information and communication technology, and history. In the two lessons observed in Years 1 and 2, teachers were particularly mindful of the need for their pupils to develop their observational skills as well as the need to learn facts. Pupils listen carefully, are keen to offer their views and knowledge, and have great interest in their learning.
99. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has worked hard to implement the new scheme, and is shortly to introduce the new assessment procedures. She is carefully adding to and improving the previously inadequate resources. The school is well placed to continue its recent improvement.

HISTORY

100. Standards in history for 11 year olds meet national expectations, as at the time of the last inspection. Pupils from Years 3 to 6 have an appropriate knowledge of aspects of Saxon village life, for example, peoples' occupations, their gods, and the stories they told. They learn about invasions of Great Britain, giving reasons for the Viking invasion, and weigh up benefits of the Roman invasion. Older pupils' work shows some appreciation of the chronology of these periods. Pupils are making good gains in their learning about the newly introduced topic about Tudor times. They extend well their previous knowledge, about Henry VIII and his wives, for example. Older pupils in particular are so well motivated and keen to learn that some are carrying out spontaneous personal research about King Henry at home.
101. No lessons were seen for five to seven year olds, as was the case during the last inspection. The very limited evidence, from talking to pupils and looking at brief planning, indicates that standards are broadly satisfactory. They have an appropriate knowledge about aspects of the lives of Guy Fawkes and Florence Nightingale. They have a clear understanding that they were real people from the past. Suitable comparisons between modern and old houses are made.
102. Teaching and learning in history are satisfactory overall throughout the school but with clear strengths. Teachers' good subject knowledge is conveyed to pupils in lively and imaginative ways. They plan effectively to give pupils a broad experience of the past, from a wide range of sources, for example, videos, music and pictures, as well as books. They arrange whole class enactments, as of a Roman feast. They use information and communication technology to good effect to further support and reinforce pupils' learning. They use questioning skills to good effect. Pupils respond well and with evident enthusiasm to the good teaching, only becoming restless when the pace is more pedestrian. One excellent lesson was seen, when pupils gained a vivid insight into life in Tudor times. The teacher's dramatic and sustained role-play as a Tudor servant, snatched for a moment from 1529, as she hurried from Haileybury to Hertford to meet her mistress, inspired and intrigued pupils. Their curiosity to learn about the past was very well stimulated through this rich cameo.
103. Co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. The subject has moved on suitably since the last inspection. Appropriate curriculum guidelines are now in place together with a four year cycle of work to take the mixed age range classes into account in Years 3 to 6. Assessment procedures, however, remain to be established, as do arrangements for the co-ordinator to monitor the implementation of the new work programmes in class. The subject benefits from the association with other small schools for the sharing of resources, which are readily accessible as they are housed at this school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

104. The inspection in 2000 indicated that standards were below national expectations at the age of seven, and well below at the age of 11. This inspection shows that very good improvement has been made throughout the school, so that the standards of seven-year-old pupils are now in line with national expectations and by the time they reach 11 they are above the expected level. Progress is good in Years 1 and 2, and very good in Years 3 to 6. Pupils with special educational needs are also making good progress. This rapid and commendable improvement has been achieved by good, and sometimes very good, teaching skills throughout the school, effectively harnessing pupils' enthusiasm for the subject, by the provision of good quality hardware and software, and by the highly effective leadership of the co-ordinators.
105. By the time they are seven, pupils have good word processing skills. Younger pupils in Year 1 have a good understanding of computer vocabulary (keyboard, icons, desktop), use the mouse, move the cursor accurately, and log on. They use the computer to paint and draw characters like Elmer from their stories, and colourful pictures of 'Under the Sea'. Older pupils in Year 1 and

Year 2 pupils can use function keys to enter text, set it out and correct it using return, backspace and arrow keys. All of them in one lesson were able to word process their names and addresses, including capitals and their postcodes. Many pupils can use tape recorders to listen independently and will talk enthusiastically about their experiences with information technology.

106. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are able to control the computer equipment by opening programs. They select, for example, pencil or paint brush to create pictures or patterns using floodfill techniques to colour areas of the picture within defined boundaries. By the time they are 11, pupils have had many opportunities to work with logo, use spreadsheets, and apply data analysis to their own research, for example about the hours spent on different activities in a week by classmates, or about monitoring environmental change. A feature of their work is the wide use of information and communication technology across the curriculum. For example, in literacy lessons, many pupils have opportunities to work on tasks related to their English studies. Pupils have made multi media presentations of soap operas, pop music, aliens, quad bikes and wrestling, in which they include animated text and pictures. Pupils are delighted to show their work and talk about their researches in geography and history, and how they have monitored temperature data and pulse rates in science on computers. In an outstanding lesson with Year 5 and 6 pupils, half of the class used a program and sensor to develop procedures to operate lights and motors for measurable lengths of time, discussing how these could be applied to traffic lights and lighthouses. Other pupils, at the same time, were using word processing skills to complete their filtration experiments and report for science. Pupils with special educational needs had the skills to design a maze problem on the computer with support.
107. Teaching and learning are good, sometimes very good and on one occasion, during the inspection, excellent. All teachers have benefited from training. Sometimes they are self-taught. They are confident in developing pupils' skills. They manage pupils well, and use their support staff, who have also received training, very effectively. Lessons are lively and buzzing with enthusiasm from all concerned. Information and communication technology is used consistently in many lessons across the curriculum. The computer suite is used almost all the time to help improve skills, although it is rather small for whole classes. Good teaching and resources complement the very positive attitudes of pupils to their learning. They work well independently, very few, even of the youngest pupils, giving up and 'waiting for the teacher' when they become stuck. They treat the equipment carefully and work enthusiastically in pairs and groups. Many of them use their own home computers to enhance their skills.
108. Information and communication technology has been a major priority for improvement since the last inspection. The co-ordination and leadership of the subject development have been very good, with a shared commitment to improvement throughout the school. The co-ordinators are now poised to introduce a comprehensive assessment strategy, encouraging pupils to evaluate their own skills and development.

MUSIC

109. Standards in music meet national expectations across the school, as at the time of the last inspection. On occasion, the youngest pupils attain well, as when playing simple tunes with hand bells. Other pupils in Years 1 and 2 can hold a steady beat, for example, to lively dance music. Pupils in the middle part of the school begin to play short rhythmic patterns in time to a steady clapped pulse. Older pupils experiment with untuned instruments to create a mood, working together in small groups to produce a short piece. Pupils in general sing tunefully and with enthusiasm, especially when given due opportunities to practise and improve.
110. Teaching and learning in music are satisfactory overall. Teachers use subject guidelines appropriately to compensate for some lack of expertise and confidence. They give pupils suitable opportunities to rehearse sections, for example when learning a new song, or when composing a

short instrumental piece in small groups. As a result, pupils' confidence increases and performance improves. Pupils with special educational needs make equally good contributions to the musical work as their peers. Opportunities are lost, however, for teachers to use their own voices to lead the singing, using taped support instead. Teachers make appropriate use of instruments. They introduce pupils to a range of different sorts of music, from different times and other countries. Often, however, the music is played as a background to another activity, such as coming into the daily act of collective worship, or whilst writing, and opportunities are lost for pupils to actively listen to the music. Teachers use music suitably to support learning in other subjects, for example history. The use of information and communication technology to support learning in the subject is limited.

111. Co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. The curriculum has improved since the last inspection through the introduction of appropriate subject guidelines. Good quality extra-curricular provision enhances the subject for infant pupils through the music club, and from time to time visiting musicians work with classes across the school. Assessment procedures are not yet fully in place. Plans are in place for the co-ordinator to monitor teaching and learning and the implementation of the new work programmes in classes across the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

112. Pupils attain standards in line with those expected nationally, both by the ages of seven and 11. Their progress, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. This reflects the picture reported at the last inspection two years ago.
113. Pupils in Year 1 use the hall well in their warm up activities and make simple judgements about their movement. They can reproduce simple skills and actions such as walking in different ways along a bench and jumping onto impact mats. However, when involved in fast activity around the hall they have little spatial awareness. Pupils in Year 2 can create interesting and imaginative 'spiky' statue shapes involving stretching, crouching, high, low and floor work, although a few tend to copy each other. The dance skills of pupils in Years 3 and 4 are satisfactory, for example when interpreting a storm, in pairs, involving up to four movements. They are able to incorporate different heights and speeds into their movements, and are good at choosing their actions. Several pupils in a lesson observed managed to incorporate unassisted handstands into their sequences. Pupils in Year 4 are developing good dance steps to taped music, involving imaginative fast and slow body movements, jumps, turns and 'show the carnival costume' sequences. Again though, like most pupils in the school, they tend to forget teachers' reminders about using space and often bunch together in their movements in the hall. Year 5 and 6 pupils work with great gusto on their athletics activities such as standing long and high jumps, triple jumps and step up stamina exercises on benches. They also take turns to record each other's performances accurately and neatly, with a strong but friendly competitive approach. All pupils in the school have very good opportunities to develop swimming skills. Standards are good and almost all 11-year-old pupils have already reached the recommended national standard of swimming 25 metres unaided. Many achieve far more than that and show good quality skills in the three main strokes. Younger pupils are developing high levels of water confidence and are also making good progress. The development of swimming is a strength of the school.
114. Teaching and learning are good overall. Teachers are thorough and meticulous about safety, use time well, instruct clearly and manage their classes effectively. They are aware of the need for pupils to evaluate their activities themselves, but this is not done effectively enough. Pupils rarely give extended evaluative comments. Due to a very tight hall timetable, some early morning lessons are too short to be completely effective. Pupils are uniformly enthusiastic about their physical activities. They listen well and follow instructions accurately. A strength of their attitudes is how well the oldest pupils work together in mixed gender situations; younger pupils tend to choose only their own gender when working in paired activities. Many pupils also enjoy

the opportunities to take part in netball, soccer, rounders and swimming galas against other schools. Last year the school won a local schools soccer tournament, and also the swimming gala.

115. The effective co-ordinator has made a thorough audit of existing and future resource needs, which are at present adequate, although some are showing signs of age. She has clear views of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and plans for future development, including the introduction of appropriate assessment procedures, which are not operating at present.
116. The school has good indoor and outdoor resources, which nevertheless have clear deficiencies. The hall is significantly reduced in size by physical education resources and school (mostly dining) furniture. The school is badly in need a storage area, so that pupils can benefit from the complete facility. The good-sized sports field has poor drainage, which makes it unusable too often, and also floods the environs of the school on occasion, creating a safety hazard. The school has been unable, as yet, to afford the considerable expense of dealing adequately with this problem, which is having a negative impact upon both safety and standards.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

117. Standards are close to expectations at the end of Year 2, but are lower than is to be expected but by age 11, due to gaps in pupils' learning. Pupils in Year 6 have little in depth knowledge of major religious faiths. Recent learning, however, is closer to expectations due to recent improvements in the work programmes for the subject. Infant pupils have a simple understanding in a limited range of Bible stories and Christian symbols, and also of some of the basic aspects of Diwali and Hannukah celebrations. Attainment for pupils in Years 1, 3, 4 and 5 meets expectations overall, reflecting greater security in curriculum planning.
118. Pupils in Year 6 draw out, through their discussions, important qualities for leaders, such as kindness, care and understanding. They begin to appreciate that such qualities are more important than how a person looks. They carry out initial research about Buddhism and Hinduism in preparation for later work. Pupils in the mixed Year 4 and Year 5 class have a sound understanding of the story of Esther and of the importance of Purim to Jews. Lower juniors remember facts about the five K's in Sikhism and what each represents. They have a simple understanding of the meaning of some of the basic symbols of Christianity. They talk about the importance of belonging, for example to a family group. The youngest pupils understand simple aspects of change, as relevant to their experiences.
119. Teaching and learning in religious education is satisfactory with good features, although this is not yet impacting on raising standards overall due to a backlog of underachievement. On occasion teaching was very good when dramatic story telling engaged pupils' attention very well, holding them in rapt suspense. Teachers use a good variety of teaching strategies as well as story telling, for example, discussion, role-play, group work and artwork. Their good questioning techniques, including about important issues, challenge pupils to think carefully, as well as to recall previous learning. Pupils are interested and keen to contribute and teachers clearly value what they have to say. Teachers use poetry and other forms of writing, but on the whole there are too few such opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills and reinforce learning in the subject. The daily acts of collective worship make suitable contributions to pupils' knowledge about religions, for example through enactments of Bible stories. Appropriate curriculum planning is now broadly in place but, despite the good teaching, does not yet compensate for previous gaps in pupils' learning, at the top of the school in particular.
120. The co-ordinator has a clear view of the subject and where it needs to develop. Through her major monitoring role within the school she has a good knowledge of the quality of teaching and learning in classes, but this subject has not yet received focused attention. Assessment

arrangements are beginning but are not fully established. The subject benefits, as in history, from the small schools' alliance in the sharing of resources.