

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BOLLIN PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Bowdon, Altrincham

LEA area: Trafford

Unique reference number: 106296

Headteacher: Mrs M A Downs

Reporting inspector: Mr Jean-Pierre Kirkland  
4483

Dates of inspection: 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> February 2002

Inspection number: 223159

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 category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Apsley Grove Bowdon Altrincham Cheshire
Postcode:	WA14 3AH
Telephone number:	(0161) 928 8900
Fax number:	(0161) 912 5936
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Janice Kellock
Date of previous inspection:	February 2000

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
4483	Jean-Pierre Kirkland	Registered inspector	Geography Music Special educational needs English as an additional language	Characteristics of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well pupils are taught What the school should do to improve further
9146	Mark Brennand	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Pupils' welfare, health and safety How well the school works in partnership with parents
14816	Sandra Gordon	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science History Religious education	
25203	Robert Cooke	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology	Leadership and management
11528	Michael Wainwright	Team inspector	Equality of opportunity Mathematics Information and communication technology (ICT) Physical education	Quality and range of learning opportunities

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Bollin Primary School is an averaged sized school with a nursery. Currently, there are 205 pupils from reception to Year 6 and 26 full time equivalent children in the nursery. Of these, 16 attend part-time and 18 are full time. There has been a slight reduction in numbers attending since the previous inspection. The school is located in an area of favourable socio-economic circumstances, but draws its pupils from a more mixed area. Attainment on entry is broadly average. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is slightly below the national average at 17 per cent. The school has 13 pupils for whom English is an additional language, seven of whom are at an early stage of language acquisition and three of whom receive extra support. The school has identified 20 per cent of its pupils as having special educational needs. This is broadly similar to most primary schools. The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational need is below the national average. The school has identified a small number of gifted and talented pupils. At the time of the previous inspection, the school was judged to be underachieving.

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

This is a very good school. Pupils enter the school with average levels of attainment. Through very good and effective teaching and learning, achievement is good overall. As a result, standards are generally above average by age eleven and well above average in some subjects such as mathematics and geography. Pupils benefit greatly from the very good teaching provided. Key staff are successful in sustaining and improving standards. Leadership and management are very good with clear vision for future improvements. The overall costs of educating pupils are average and the school provides very good value for money.

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

- Enables pupils aged eleven to attain well above average standards in English, mathematics and geography and above average standards in art and design, design and technology, history, music and physical education.
- Ensures, through very good teaching, that learning is also very good, leading to good achievement in most subjects and very good achievement in mathematics and geography.
- Enables children to make a very good start to their learning in the nursery and reception classes.
- Successfully encourages excellent relationships, positive attitudes and good behaviour from pupils who learn very well in the majority of lessons.
- Provides clear direction for the work of the school in constantly seeking improvement through very good leadership and management.

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

- Overall standards in information and communication technology (ICT).
- The achievement of higher attaining pupils in mathematics, ICT, history and religious education through encouraging consistently more creativity and independence in learning.

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

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

The school has made very good progress overall since the last inspection and also since an interim visit by Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI). The school is no longer in the underachieving category. Standards have risen for pupils aged six and seven. Pupils' attainment is above average in reading and mathematics with broadly average levels in writing and science. Standards for pupils aged eleven are above average overall. Teaching and learning have improved significantly mainly due to the effective recruitment of new teachers and rigorous monitoring and support initiated by senior management. All groups of pupils make at least good progress and achievement is good overall, with some very good

achievement in mathematics and geography. Teachers' planning has improved significantly. Behaviour is now good throughout the school with a consistently applied policy. Leadership and management of the school are very good, with a clear commitment to raising standards. As a result, the school has very good capacity to improve further.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests. Similar schools are those with between 8 per cent and 20 per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	A	A	B	A
mathematics	A*	A*	A*	A*
science	B	B	C	C

**Key**

well above average    A

above average        B

average                C

below average        D

well below average    E

Standards are above average overall when pupils reach age eleven. The most recent national tests show that standards in mathematics placed the school in the top five per cent of schools nationally. The 2001 test results show standards are above average in English and broadly average in science. Inspection findings confirm these results in science; in English, inspectors found standards to have risen to well above average. Standards are well above average for eleven-year-olds when compared to pupils from similar schools. Achievement by age eleven is also good overall. There are variations between subjects, with the best progress being made in mathematics. A comparison of the 2001 test results for the same pupils who took the tests in 1997 when aged seven, shows progress to have been very good in mathematics, good in English, but unsatisfactory in science. In science currently, inspectors found a better picture with progress now being at least satisfactory. Inspectors found that the very good progress in mathematics and good progress in English have been sustained. In ICT, history and religious education, the progress of higher attaining pupils is not as consistently good as it should be. By age eleven, standards are well above average in geography; they are above average in art and design, design and technology, history, music and physical education. Standards are average in religious education.

Children enter the school with standards that are broadly average. In the nursery and reception classes, they make very good progress and many are likely to achieve the required levels early. Standards for seven-year-olds in the national tests in 2001 were above national averages in reading and mathematics. They were close to the national average in science and below average in writing. Comparison with results in similar schools shows the same picture. Inspectors found that while the higher standards had been sustained in reading and mathematics, there had been improvements in writing and science, both of which are now broadly average. Achievement for seven-year-olds is good. The school achieved its targets last year and has set more challenging yet realistic ones for 2002 for pupils aged eleven. Pupils are on course to achieve these.



## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good and making a very significant contribution to learning; pupils are very keen, enthusiastic and eager to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good throughout the school and enabling positive learning to take place.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils make very good progress in their personal development by being given good levels of responsibility; relationships are excellent.
Attendance	Well above the national average and a significant factor in raising standards.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very good	Very good	Very good

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

Teaching and learning are very good throughout the school, including the nursery and reception classes. Children in these two classes make a very good start to their education where the learning of basic skills in literacy, numeracy and personal development is of a very good quality. This very good learning continues throughout the school with special strengths in number work and in reading, speaking and listening.

Teachers plan very effectively and work as a very good team. Assessment information is used very well to guide teaching. Work is generally well matched to pupils' capabilities. There is room for some improvement in challenging higher attaining pupils in some lessons, notably in mathematics, ICT, history and religious education.

Other groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language learn very well. Their progress over time is good and similar to that of all other pupils. Teachers have very good organisational and management skills which they employ very effectively when setting pupils distinct learning tasks. No time is wasted and pupils learn effectively because they know clearly what their tasks are and what is expected of them. Staffing is now stable; teaching and learning are very good and as a result, progress has improved significantly since previous inspection visits. The progress made by gifted and talented pupils is good.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is good with many very good features. These include the way planning focuses attention on links between subject disciplines and the very good provision made for extra-curricular activities. The contribution made by ICT is not yet up to scratch, as the school is still awaiting further resources and training.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Problems are identified early and quick remedial action is taken to ensure pupils make the requisite progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. Any early language learning difficulties are sorted out very quickly and appropriate support is provided. Many pupils in this category are fluent in English, need no support and make very good progress in lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Moral and social provision is a strength. Personal development is very good with frequent opportunities provided by the school for pupils to become involved in showing initiative and for taking responsibility.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. Assessment is used very effectively to help improve pupil performance and to set challenging targets for improvement.
How well the school works in partnership with parents and carers	A very good partnership exists between the school and its parents. This is very effective in enhancing the way in which pupils learn.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good overall. There is very effective leadership and management in place, guided by a very good school improvement plan. Clear and realistic targets have been set and progress to achieving these is very good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good overall. Governors have very good knowledge of the strengths of the school and where it needs to improve. Statutory requirements are fulfilled.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school has undertaken a series of well focused steps towards full evaluation of its provision and is very perceptive in targeting areas for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Overall, resources are used very well. The ICT suite is very new and is used creatively and effectively. Other resources are deployed to ensure maximum benefit for pupils. The school is very good at looking for ways of obtaining best value for money. It regularly assesses the impact of its spending decisions. Pupils benefit from good quality spacious accommodation. The outside area has been made very productive for learning through recent ecological initiatives.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Standards and achievement.</li><li>• The positive attitudes encouraged in pupils, with no poor behaviour.</li><li>• Good quality pupil reports.</li><li>• Good working partnership with parents.</li><li>• School takes any issues raised by parents very seriously.</li><li>• More stable staff now.</li><li>• Good leadership and management.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Parents raised no serious concerns at all.</li><li>• A very small percentage of parents expressed some concerns over homework and the reporting of progress.</li></ul>

The inspection team agrees with the positive views of parents and fully endorses their views of the school. No serious concerns were raised by parents. When inspectors examined the minor concerns raised by a few parents, they found no grounds for them. Reports home were very good and levels of homework were good.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The school's results are good overall, with good levels of achievement by Year 6. Standards are higher than at the time of previous inspection visits.

Strengths in standards are:

- Well above average standards in English, mathematics and geography for eleven-year-olds;
- Above average standards in art and design, design and technology, history, music and physical education for eleven-year-olds;
- Good achievement in most subjects and very good achievement in mathematics and geography by age eleven;
- A very good start to learning in the nursery and reception classes.

The areas for improvement are:

- Standards in ICT which are below average by age eleven;
- Providing higher attaining pupils with more effective work that moves them on to new levels of learning.

2. Standards are above average overall when pupils reach age eleven. The 2001 national tests show that standards in mathematics were in the top five per cent of schools nationally. The 2001 test results show standards above average in English and broadly average in science. Inspection findings confirm these results in science. Inspectors found that standards in English were now well above average, an overall improvement since last year's national tests. Standards in all three subjects are well above average for eleven-year-olds when compared to pupils from similar schools. In English, pupils' standards are well above average when compared with results in similar schools; results are in the top five per cent of results in similar schools in mathematics and broadly average in science. These results are a significant improvement since previous inspection visits.
3. Standards are broadly average when children enter the school. In the nursery and reception classes, there is very good learning and progress over time is good. Provision and progress are now improved since the previous inspection. Many children are likely to be ready to start the National Curriculum early. Progress is equally good in all areas of learning, with children, parents and staff working together effectively as a partnership geared to raising standards.
4. Early gains in knowledge, understanding and skills are built on well when pupils begin the National Curriculum. Standards in the national tests at age seven in 2001 showed pupils to be above average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing. Inspectors confirm the above average standards in reading and mathematics. In writing, inspectors found standards to be broadly average and an improvement since previous inspection visits. Teacher assessments in science placed pupils in the top five per cent of schools nationally at the expected Level 2. However, no pupils were awarded the higher Level 3 and this placed the school in the very low category. Some of this was due to the disruption of learning through teacher illness just prior to the assessments. Inspectors found standards to have improved in science. They are currently average with an appropriate number of pupils in the higher attaining bracket and an improvement since previous inspection visits.
5. In English, for pupils aged up to seven, reading is above average. Pupils read well and with fluency. They are beginning to predict what happens next in stories and they can identify and explain the characters in a plot. Writing for infant aged pupils and in particular the quality of handwriting has caused some concern in the past. National test results have placed pupils below average. Inspectors found standards of handwriting and punctuation to be improving and broadly average for the current Year 2 pupils. The school has placed a lot of emphasis on raising standards in this

area, especially in respect of boys who were significantly poorer than girls. There has been considerable success in this and inspectors found no appreciable difference between the standards of handwriting and spelling of boys and girls. Pupils are above average in speaking and listening by age seven. They explain answers to questions fluently, using a wide range of appropriate vocabulary. Pupils have developed good listening skills. In literacy sessions, pupils pay good attention to the 'big book' sessions and show they have understood well when answering questions. In mathematics, the overall standards of seven-year-olds are above average, especially in number work and problem solving. Pupils build well on their strengths from their early years. Pupils listen attentively in the mental sessions, very eager to answer questions and to solve problems. These achievements are an improvement since previous inspection visits.

6. Standards are generally above average in most other subjects. By age seven, standards are above average in art and design, design and technology, geography, music and physical education. Standards are average in history, ICT and religious education.
7. Standards are well above average in English and mathematics in Year 6. Notable strengths lie in reading, speaking, listening and numeracy. Mental calculations in mathematics lessons are rapid and accurate. Pupils explain their strategies with ease. Reading is well above average with all pupils at the top of the school being free readers. They enjoy reading and choose a wide range of fiction and non-fiction to supplement their learning. Pupils express themselves clearly and with fluency. They explain how they reach conclusions when undertaking experiments, or the strategies employed for solving problems. They do this very effectively. Listening skills are also very good. For example, when learning a calypso in music, pupils rapidly acquired the rhythm and learnt their various singing parts quickly. In science, standards are broadly average by age eleven. Overall, the very good standards at the age of eleven are significantly better than when the school was previously inspected.
8. By age eleven, standards are well above average in geography; they are above average in art and design, design and technology, history, music and physical education. Standards are average in religious education. In ICT, insufficient progress has been made and standards are below average. The school, aware of this, has now provided additional sessions in the new computer suite, so that pupils may concentrate on improving their ICT skills in the first session and focus on subject specific learning in the second.
9. The achievement of seven year olds is good. Good progress is made in most subjects. Progress is satisfactory in history and religious education. The overall good achievement results from a carefully planned curriculum, which allows for progression in learning skills and increasing knowledge and understanding. Technical language is developed effectively in English, mathematics, science and music, for example. Pupils are given frequent opportunities to undertake their own investigations in subjects such as geography and design and technology.
10. Achievement by age eleven is good overall. There are variations between subjects, with the best progress being made in mathematics, but with English not far behind. A comparison of the 2001 test results for the same pupils who took the tests in 1997 when aged seven, shows progress to have been very good in mathematics, good in English, but unsatisfactory in science. In science currently, inspectors found a better picture with progress now being at least satisfactory. Inspectors found that the very good progress in mathematics and good progress in English have been sustained. In mathematics, ICT, history and religious education, the progress of higher attaining pupils is not as consistently good as it should be. There is occasionally some inconsistency in the quality of the extension work provided. Progress, however, is satisfactory. Overall achievement is good and has improved significantly since previous inspection visits.
11. The school has identified a few gifted and talented pupils and successfully provided them with opportunities to make even better progress. Currently there are a few pupils learning with other pupils who are a year older and they make good progress at this higher level. Pupils with special educational needs are effectively identified from an early age. They are given good quality specialist support and help in all classes. Sometimes simplified worksheets or tasks enable these pupils to make good progress. Where learning difficulties are more severe, pupils are given

specialist help outside the classroom in basic grammar or numeracy. This results in very good sustained progress. The pupils at an early stage of language acquisition are equally well provided for. Through additional outside help from the local education authority (LEA), or from class teachers, these pupils benefit well from the support they receive and are making as good a rate of progress as the rest of the class.

12. The school achieved its targets last year in English and mathematics. It has set more challenging yet realistic ones for 2002. Inspectors judged that pupils are currently on course to achieve these.

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

13. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are very good overall and similar to those found in the previous inspection visits.

Strengths are:

- Excellent relationships throughout the school;
  - Positive attitudes from the youngest children in the school;
  - Good behaviour in classrooms and elsewhere in the school;
  - Generally very good opportunities for pupils to show initiative and to take responsibility for their learning;
  - Very good attendance which provides continuity in learning.
14. Relationships throughout the school have improved significantly and are now excellent. Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in the parents' very positive views. Without exception all the pupils who were interviewed commented on how much they enjoyed the school. The school places a high value on developing positive attitudes to learning. As a result in the majority of lessons pupils learn very well.
  15. Children in the nursery and reception classes settle down to work quickly. They enjoy working together and share information and resources readily. Staff have formed very effective relationships with them which aid learning.
  16. Behaviour is very good, being well managed through the consistent application of the behaviour policy and code of conduct. This is an area of significant improvement since previous inspection visits. The code of conduct is regularly linked to work in personal, social and health education (PSHE) and this helps to reinforce knowledge of the rewards and sanctions which the school applies. The school is helped in its behaviour management by the support it receives from parents. In addition, the active approach to managing behaviour means that incidents of bullying and racism are rare. When they occur, they are dealt with quickly, using a positive 'no blame' approach. The lack of any current exclusions reflects the high standard of behaviour.
  17. The school council, 'eco' project, support of older pupils for younger ones in the playground at break times and the routines followed at assembly provide very good opportunities for pupils to show initiative and personal responsibility. Their self-esteem is such that they have the confidence to raise issues. A prime example of this was a suggestion that the toilets and drinking facilities needed to be improved and as a result these are now included in the school's development plan. The introduction of the fruit tuck shop was another innovation suggested by pupils. Now an established part of school life, it has the double benefit of providing healthy food whilst at the same time reducing the amount of litter in the school grounds.
  18. Relationships are excellent, being the result of staff providing very good role models. In addition, by making themselves available teachers enjoy the confidence of those in their charge. The headteacher believes that children respond to the way they are treated and this is why so many are given opportunities to be responsible. During the inspection, learning was enhanced throughout the school by the very good provision made for collaborative learning. This starts at an early age in the nursery and is successfully built on as pupils mature. For example, in the lunch hour, older pupils were seen on a number of occasions collaborating well in the ICT suite as they set about producing a pupils' newspaper.

19. Attendance is very good and this has a significant effect on learning as little school time is lost. There is virtually no unauthorised absence, a factor for which the parents can take great credit. They are quick to inform the school either by telephone or in writing of any absence. Punctuality is also good with lateness occurring very infrequently.

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

20. Teaching and learning are very good throughout the school, including the nursery and reception classes. Overall, 50 per cent of lessons observed showed teaching and learning to be at least very good, with a small percentage of outstanding lessons. Forty per cent of lessons were judged as good and ten per cent satisfactory. There was no unsatisfactory teaching seen during the inspection. This is a very significant improvement since previous inspection visits and teaching and learning are significant strengths within the school.

The characteristics of the best teaching are:

- A strong focus on pupils learning their basic skills in literacy and numeracy;
- Planning is thorough so that all groups of pupils learn effectively in lessons;
- Teaching methods that encourage pupils to collaborate and co-operate so they are continually learning from one another;
- Ensuring pupils are kept on task so that no learning opportunities are missed;
- Using the assessment of pupils' capabilities very well to set high and appropriate challenges.

There are two areas for improvement:

- Consistently planning more effectively challenging work for higher attaining pupils, especially in mathematics, ICT, history and religious education;
- Increased use of ICT.

21. In the Foundation Stage, composed of a nursery and a reception class, teaching is very good. Children in these two classes make a very good start to their education where the learning of basic skills in literacy, numeracy and personal development is of a very good quality. Teachers and their assistant staff plan thoroughly to ensure that all areas of the curriculum for early learning are fully covered. They challenge children well and continuously. For example, children are taught to listen carefully when being given instructions for changing in physical education sessions. Teachers increase children's thinking skills by posing challenging questions that make them think about characters in poems. Staff use very good strategies when encouraging children to measure ingredients in science-based activities. As a result of these very effective strategies, progress over time is good and learning in individual lessons is very good.
22. This very good learning continues throughout the school with special strengths in learning number work and in reading, speaking and listening. Throughout Years 1 and 2, pupils are challenged effectively. Teachers ensure that the basic skills of numeracy and literacy feature strongly in all lessons. For example, in Year 1 geography, pupils learnt basic safety skills when walking along the pavement or crossing the road. In literacy, they learn to identify the characters in a story. In Year 2 ICT, due to the teacher's very effective use of technical language, pupils learn rapidly how the keyboard functions and how to change the colour on the screen. By Year 6, pupils have learnt to read fluently and with ease. They speak very well in an articulate manner. They have developed logical thinking skills and can explain complex experiments or tasks with relative ease. They have become very competent when doing mental mathematics. Teachers ensure that prior learning of calculations is secure by ensuring all pupils are able to explain the strategies they have used to arrive at specific answers. Teaching and learning in literacy and numeracy are significant strengths of the school.
23. Teachers plan very effectively and work as a very good team. Pupils know from the start of every lesson what they are about to learn. Teachers review this learning successfully at the end of lessons. Once pupils are sure of their tasks, they settle down to work quickly and enthusiastically. In Year 6 history, pupils were amazed at the kind of holidays taken by families in the 1950's. They were quick to point out the differences between then and now, such as quiet

beaches and restrictions on sun-bathing. As a result, they learnt effectively how times have changed and what developments have occurred. Equally effective learning takes place in many mathematics lessons due to pupils knowing what they are expected to do. In Year 5, for example, the pupils learnt effectively from a teacher demonstration on how to use the board protractor correctly. They also learnt new technical vocabulary such as 'obtuse' and 'acute'. When given the task of finding the missing angle in a triangle, they were confident and assured and soon came to the right answers using the correct language.

24. Teachers plan extremely well to encourage independence in learning. Much of each lesson is devoted to group work. Teachers prepare their resources very well so that pupils get straight into the tasks. Good examples of rapid learning due to good preparation were seen in Year 2 literacy and Year 5 history. In the literacy, the teacher had prepared work sheets that extended pupils' vocabulary very well, leading to very good learning of a range of new words such as 'nouns', 'verbs' and 'adjectives'. In history, pupils developed excellent research skills, for example, when researching how to write a 'Curriculum Vitae' based on a great Greek thinker and philosopher. Year 4 pupils busied themselves enthusiastically, bouncing ideas off one another effectively, as they discussed recycling of waste material in a geography lesson. Pupils collaborated very well in Year 3 science as they discovered the criteria for a fair test when comparing the strength of various materials. By allowing pupils time to debate, reflect and draw conclusions, learning is accelerated and progress is good.
25. Assessment information is used very well to guide teaching. Work is generally well matched to pupils' capabilities. Lower attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, are supported well in most lessons, either by the teacher, or by an assistant. Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are of very good quality and give teachers and support staff specific guidance on what the problems are, how best to overcome them and how to measure success. Pupils are put into separate learning groups in Years 5 and 6 in English and mathematics and this is very effective in helping those experiencing some difficulties to catch up. Lower attainers made very good progress in learning currency conversion and were able to explain how to work out the conversion using different strategies. Specialist help is made available for the majority of pupils for whom English is an additional language. Most of these pupils have a very good command of the language and make similar progress to the rest of the class. For those whose language skills are less fully developed, progress is usually good in more practical subjects such as music, physical education and design and technology. In literacy lessons particularly, staff support these pupils very well and language acquisition is good. The school has only recently identified gifted and talented pupils. Staff are beginning to challenge them appropriately, but there is still some way to go.
26. Very occasionally, and often for short periods of time during a few lessons, higher attaining pupils are not given sufficiently challenging activities to extend their learning consistently. Sometimes the tasks set are repetitious. Although the teaching and the learning were at least satisfactory overall, new, challenging extension work is not always consistently present. This occurred in mathematics, ICT, history and religious education.
27. Homework is used effectively to extend and enhance pupils' learning. Specific tasks are set and these increase in complexity as pupils mature. Work is generally marked effectively, so that pupils are given clear pointers on how to improve.

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

28. The school provides a good curriculum. This starts in the Foundation Stage where all six areas of learning are planned for effectively. All the subjects of the National Curriculum are taught in the rest of the school, meeting statutory requirements. Improvement has been made since the previous inspections.

Strengths are:

- Good planning of the overall curriculum which is relevant to pupils;



- Very good provision for pupils with special educational needs;
- Very effective strategies in place for the teaching of literacy and numeracy;
- Effective links to the community;
- Very good provision for extra-curricular activities, and for pupils' moral and social development.

The area for improvement:

- More widespread use of ICT to support the curriculum across all subjects.

29. Good planning is seen in all subjects, with some very good links made on occasions. For example pupils in Year 3 use work in art and design to enhance their understanding of 'creation' in religious education. The use of ICT to support other subjects is not yet satisfactory. Whilst the new computer suite is used very effectively to teach basic computer skills, software for using ICT across the whole curriculum is not yet in place. The strategies for teaching both literacy and numeracy skills are very good. In most lessons pupils are encouraged to explain their understanding orally. Writing skills are used for extended accounts of their learning in history and geography. In mathematics pupils in Year 4 are set problems which are related to real life and Year 6 confidently exchange a range of currencies. Calculation of number is a particularly strong aspect of mathematics. Grouping of pupils in Years 5 and 6 is helping to raise standards. This is reflected in the quality of learning in mathematics in those years. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those with English as an additional language is very good. All staff are fully aware of the difficulties facing each pupil and make good provision. For example, in geography, enlarged or simplified worksheets are provided so that all pupils have the opportunity to complete their tasks. The LEA is providing additional linguistic support for those pupils at an early stage of language acquisition, so that they, too, might access the curriculum more readily. Opportunities are open to all and there is very good equality of access.
30. The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good and better than at the previous inspection. There are many after school clubs so that, at times, the school is a hive of activity in various sports, pottery and ICT. There is also a school choir. Many staff volunteer additional time for these activities. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 also have the opportunities for residential visits, which enhance work in geography, history and physical education. A recent innovation has been 'fitbods', to raise pupils' awareness of the need to maintain good health and fitness. This is linked to working towards the Healthy School award. Pupils are also encouraged to cherish and protect the environment and the school has been awarded 'Eco School' status. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good, reflected in the maturity of the oldest pupils. PSHE is on the time-table. During the inspection, the value of teamwork was the theme for assembly and was encouraged constantly in lessons, making a good contribution to improving progress.
31. The school's links with the local community are good. Involvement in environmental awareness has led not only to improving the school grounds but also to improving the local park. Pupils participate in the local music festival. The choir has raised money for a local charity by singing in a variety of places as well as on one occasion visiting a residential home at Christmas. Recent meetings have taken place with local councillors and neighbouring schools to improve paths and access for greater safety. Links with other schools are very good. All secondary schools have an induction day and one school invites pupils on a residential visit. A link with a beacon school involves sharing good practice in literacy and numeracy. Regular meetings take place to discuss local and curriculum issues and there are established sporting links with other schools.
32. Provision for pupils' personal, social and moral development is good and there is sound practice that emphasises self-esteem and confidence effectively.
33. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Prayers are said at the daily assemblies and before lunch but other than that there are few opportunities for reflection. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to further their spiritual awareness and development through visits to places of worship. However, in some lessons, such as ICT when the teacher showed how to flood a page with colour, pupils were amazed and cries of 'wow' were prominent. At other times, pupils are given some reflection time, with staff stressing that they 'should think carefully' before answering.
34. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. Pupils learn to tell right from wrong and are given clear moral direction from teachers who encourage good behaviour and respect for others. Reading stories with a moral tone in assembly and 'circle time' provides older

pupils with further opportunities to discuss personal and moral concerns. The walking bus project, which used a video to highlight the hazards on the journey to school, was an excellent way to demonstrate the moral dilemmas faced by local council in making the journey safer.

35. Provision for social development is very good with frequent opportunities for pupils to become involved in showing their initiative and for taking responsibility. The school council, 'eco' project, fruit tuck shop and fitbods' programme are just a few of many such examples. Pupils are encouraged to socialise very well in the nursery and reception classes. These skills are effectively built up, with all lessons containing many opportunities for sharing, co-operating and debating issues. The school has addressed citizenship very well and pupils are provided with frequent occasions for thinking about social responsibility in subjects such as geography and occasionally in religious education.
36. Provision for cultural development is good. Pupils are helped to become aware of their cultural heritage through a programme of school visits and visitors. The school organises a range of events including regular trips to different museums and theatres to increase cultural awareness and heighten aesthetic awareness. Similarly, there are field trips in geography and an annual residential visit to the Isle of Man, with a geography and history focus. Provision for studying different faiths in religious education is adequate.

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

37. The arrangements for child protection and the care of pupils are good and similar to the provision reported on during the previous inspection.

Strengths include:

- Good procedures in place for child protection and health and safety;
- Good systems for monitoring progress, attendance, personal development and behaviour.

38. The headteacher is the nominated child protection officer. She has received the appropriate training and is well supported by the LEA. Care for those with special educational need is also very good. There are very good quality IEPs in place and these are used to support pupils appropriately and help them overcome difficulties. Regular assessments of progress are made. The school meets all statutory requirements in regard to special educational need.
39. Procedures for ensuring health and safety are good. The building provides a safe working environment and it is well maintained by a conscientious site manager and cleaning staff. Every term a representative from the governing body accompanies the headteacher on an audit of the premises. Where risks are identified they are dealt with immediately. Provision for first aid is good with two fully qualified first aiders supported by the headteacher who has the appointed person's certificate. All staff have had basic first aid training. The school is part of the healthy schools initiative and as part of this pupils run a highly successful fruit tuck shop. Lunches are of good quality providing a well balanced diet and the orderly way in which lunch is conducted makes for a particularly pleasant time.
40. Systems for monitoring attendance are good. The computerised system helps build up a good picture of attendance and is of great benefit when identifying any trends in absence. The school is helped considerably by pro-active parents, who telephone in to confirm absences at the earliest opportunity. In the event that a long term absence does occur the school can contact its education welfare officer. Such occasions are, however, very rare.
41. Procedures for monitoring behaviour and preventing bullying are good. The code of conduct encourages 'courtesy, care and consideration' and this message is displayed throughout the school. There are seven simple rules which concentrate on promoting the positive. The consistent application of these rules has resulted in very good behaviour. Team points are totalled every week and the winning house receives a termly prize. There is a fortnightly achievements assembly when individual stickers are awarded to pupils who have been nominated by their class teacher for the 'Golden Book'. Where behaviour is unsatisfactory this is recorded, initially by the class

teacher and subsequently by the headteacher, if the poor behaviour persists. Where necessary the school will request parental support and this is usually forthcoming. Minor incidents of bullying do occur but are rare and when they do occur they are dealt with quickly and effectively. The majority of concerns are pre-empted at the Friday business meetings where issues relating to behaviour amongst pupils are raised. The responsibility for dealing with any concerns is shared amongst staff.

42. During the previous inspections the school was deemed to be making good progress on the development of assessment procedures and the tracking of pupils' progress. These procedures have been maintained and improved upon making this aspect very good. The assessment, recording and reporting policy sets out a specific timetable for assessment based on classroom and standardised tests. The results are filed by year group, allowing the school to track the progress of each pupil effectively every half term. Through this process the school can see whether there has been an improvement in the performance by class. Central to this process is the use of the computerised assessment manager program. This not only allows for progress to be tracked, but also acts as a guide in curricular planning and target setting. Targets are challenging but are set according to the ability of each group of pupils. The introduction of the teaching groups for mathematics and English in Years 5 and 6 are a direct result of the very good work in monitoring and assessing pupils' academic performance.
43. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. Each class teacher keeps an informal record of social development. Infant teachers also keep an 'evaluation note for today', in which they record incidents relating to personal development. Both these records are used to recall information for the comment on general performance in the annual report to parents. A further record of personal development is kept in the 'Golden Book', listing those pupils who receive awards at the fortnightly achievement assemblies.

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

44. The school has a very positive working partnership with its parents. This is similar to the judgement of the previous inspection report.  
  
Strengths include:
  - Parental support of learning in all areas of the school;
  - Good effective levels of communication.
45. Interviews with parents during the week of the inspection indicated that good parental links are still very much in place. This view was reinforced at the parents' meeting and by the parents' questionnaire. These highlighted particular satisfaction from parents about the standards and achievement, the positive attitudes towards pupils, the quality of the reports, the good leadership and management and the reduction in staff turnover. Parents are made very welcome in the nursery and reception classes. Many attend induction sessions and the initial transfer from home to school is smooth as a result.
46. The effectiveness of school links with parents is very good. The headteacher is very accessible operating an open door policy and making herself available to meet with parents when difficulties arise. This provides parents with an opportunity to discuss issues informally. Interviews with parents confirmed the ease with which they feel they can approach the school with issues and where concerns are raised they feel confident that they are listened to and action is taken. Other staff are also available on a daily basis.
47. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is also very good. A small army of parents and other adults help out in school during the week on a regular basis, providing support for hearing reading, art and design, cookery, putting displays up in classrooms, collecting the fruit for the fruit tuck shop and managing the 'eco' project. Staff ensure that all parents have been trained in the required procedures for whatever activity they are supporting. This has been done in some cases through workshop sessions and the school has plans to present more of these. There is a vibrant Parent and Teachers' Association (PTA) which over the last three years has raised a

significant amount of money to help the school with additional resources. As a result of the sums raised by the PTA and with monies from other sources, the school has built the ICT suite on the site that was previously an internal courtyard. Further sums raised by the PTA have been used to supplement learning by providing an additional six workstations. Parent governors were involved in drawing up the home school agreement. It is presented to all parents at the 'welcome evening' held at the beginning of each academic year and this means it helps to set the ground rules for the remainder of the year.

48. The quality of information provided for parents is very good. Newsletters are informative and are sent out approximately every fortnight. The school prospectus is of good quality and meets statutory requirements. Reports to parents on pupils' progress are good in that they provide information on what each child understands and can do. They also give the level at which they are working. Targets are set, which address weaknesses and there is also a comment on personal and social development. Parents' evenings are held three times a year. Attendance by pupils at school is normally very good and well above the national average for primary schools.
49. The contribution of parents to their child's learning at home is very good. At the welcome evening parents are provided with information on the setting of homework. Often, parents are provided with a written sheet containing notification of the topics that will be covered during the year. The school holds an open morning when parents are invited in to see how it operates. Curriculum evenings have also been held on the literacy and numeracy strategies and parents attended a mathematics day to observe how the numeracy hour is taught. Pupils take books home on a regular basis and support from parents in completing the reading diaries is good.

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

50. Overall there is very effective leadership by the headteacher and other key staff. This has a significant impact on learning since there is very clear educational direction for the work of the school. The quality and effectiveness of leadership are significant improvements since previous inspection visits.

Strengths include:

- Very clear vision guided by a very good quality school development plan;
- Strong leadership which focuses on raising standards;
- Good levels of monitoring throughout the school, with effective action being taken;
- Effective support from the governing body;
- Effective use of resources , with good financial management;
- The school provides very good value for money.

The area for improvement is:

- Extending the use of ICT across the subjects of the curriculum.

51. The school improvement plan is a very effective document. Its main aims are the improvement of teaching and learning and the sustaining of high standards. Priorities are clearly defined and support its main aims. Consultation involves the governing body, staff, analysis of needs by the senior management team, teacher training and regard for the school budget. There are effective means for the monitoring of teaching and learning throughout the school. There are very effective means for the targeting of areas for improvement. Resources are used very well and the school is very good at looking at ways of obtaining best value for money.
52. Monitoring and evaluation systems have improved since the last inspection and are now more systematic and rigorous. The senior management team analyses the work of the school, identifies areas for development and ensures that these are addressed through the school improvement plan. New staff appointments, a reduction in staff absence and the establishment of the senior management team have all had a marked impact on improving standards.
53. The governors fulfil their responsibilities well. The chair of governors who is also the designated governor for literacy, pays frequent visits to the school. She is well informed about curriculum

developments and the progress of the school improvement plan. The chair meets frequently with the literacy co-ordinator and looks at literacy targets. The governor for numeracy is effectively informed about developments in mathematics and makes an annual visit to observe lessons and to discuss numeracy with the co-ordinator and look at resources. Ideas for the school improvement plan are generated within the school and are presented to the governing body for further discussion. The governors look at financial implications and help with priorities. This process is at present at the developmental stage as the newly elected governors are not yet fully involved in generating the ideas for taking the school forward. The content of the school improvement plan is discussed by committees and recommendations are made to the full governing body for their approval. This is effective practice and governors are well informed about how well the plan is progressing and the progress the school is making.

54. Evaluating the performance of staff is effective and is now firmly established. There is an annual cycle of teacher appraisal and the setting of performance objectives for all teaching staff. The process was delayed until the spring of 2001 until the new deputy head took up her appointment and a short cycle of staff appraisal was established in 2001. The annual cycle now begins in the autumn term in line with popular practice. There are very effective procedures for the induction of new staff. They receive appropriate training and release time and are supported by another member of staff during the induction year. There are very good arrangements for observing teaching and following this with advice and support. In addition to classroom observations by team leaders, the headteacher observes all teaching staff each term and newly qualified teachers half-termly. This has resulted in identifying areas for improvement. A monitoring sheet covering daily, weekly and half termly planning is used to give written feedback to teachers. Team leaders and literacy and numeracy co-ordinators are released to observe other staff. There is at the present time no systematic approach to the monitoring of teaching and learning in subjects other than English, mathematics and science. This is an area for development. A number of post holders are newly established in their curriculum areas and have not yet established a systematic approach to evaluating work in their subjects and supporting other staff. There are very effective practices for target setting and the monitoring of pupil progress.
55. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are used effectively. Very good use is made of support staff to support pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. A support teacher, who is employed for three days a week, is used very effectively to reduce the class sizes for teaching English and mathematics in Years 5 and 6. She also helps to cover classes when the co-ordinators are given some release time for working on their own subjects. New technology is used very effectively for school administration and the school uses 'assessment manager' to support its tracking of pupil progress. The ICT suite is newly established and is being increasingly used to support the school curriculum, such as in the development of basic skills. The school is waiting for the funding to start the next stage of the development. The accommodation is spacious and well used. Corridor areas are used effectively for withdrawal and other small group activities and the distribution of library shelving and reading scheme trays creates a very good working environment. Space is also used very effectively for the storage of tools and equipment. Resources are very clearly labelled and accessible.
56. Finances are effectively managed by the school. All budgetary decisions are closely tied to the school improvement plan. Decisions about spending are arrived at through full consultation with teaching staff and governors. The school evaluates its spending decisions carefully. This is achieved by examining the improvements made against the money spent. The budget overspend recorded last year was the result of an accounting adjustment following the building of the ICT suite. The school has, over time, achieved a balanced budget.
57. Pupils' achievements are good and improving throughout the school. Teaching and learning in lessons are very good. The school is very well led and managed. With average costs for educating pupils, the school provides very good value for money.

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

In order to continue to improve standards and to provide enhanced education, the school, with governing body support, should now:

(1) Raise standards in ICT through:

- providing resources to give pupils more opportunities to use their skills to enhance other areas of the curriculum;
- increasing resources to provide pupils aged seven to eleven with wider opportunities in all aspects of ICT, especially in monitoring and control.

*(paragraphs 8, 10, 20, 28, 50, 79, 85, 91, 98, 108, 114, 118)*

(2) Encourage higher attaining pupils to make even better progress by providing them with work that extends their knowledge and understanding, especially in mathematics, ICT, history and religious education;

*(paragraphs 10, 20, 26, 84, 113, 117, 132)*

Both these issues are priorities within the school's current improvement plan.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	52
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	3	23	21	5	0	0	0
Percentage	6	44	40	10	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	205
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	14

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	43

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	19

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.3

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1



National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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*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	16	19	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	13	14
	Girls	17	18	18
	Total	31	31	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (80)	89 (80)	91 (90)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	14	16
	Girls	17	18	19
	Total	30	32	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (83)	91 (90)	100 (90)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	16	16	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	15	16
	Girls	14	12	14
	Total	28	27	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (85)	84 (93)	94 (81)
	National	75 (70)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	14	14
	Girls	14	13	13
	Total	27	27	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (85)	84 (85)	84 (85)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	1
Pakistani	3
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	169
Any other minority ethnic group	4

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

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.4
Average class size	29.3

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

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	72.5

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	36.25
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

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

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

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

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	471,009
Total expenditure	481,970
Expenditure per pupil	2,025
Balance brought forward from previous year	37
Balance carried forward to next year	10,924

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	231
Number of questionnaires returned	54

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	28	6	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	48	46	6	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	59	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	30	50	15	4	2
The teaching is good.	54	41	2	2	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	52	13	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	33	2	4	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	43	4	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	41	43	11	2	4
The school is well led and managed.	54	33	9	2	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	43	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	46	37	11	2	4

## **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**

58. On entering nursery, assessment results show children's standards of achievement are average. A small minority of pupils are above average and some children are identified as having learning needs. On leaving the reception class, the majority of pupils are likely to achieve standards above those expected for their age. Pupils with special educational needs achieve standards appropriate for their age and ability. This is an improvement since the previous inspection visits and is due to the very good quality of teaching and provision children receive.

Strengths include:

- Very effective teaching leading to rapid learning of basic skills;
- Very good induction procedures which enable children to settle down effectively;
- Good procedures for identifying problems early and for taking effective remedial action;
- A very good range of learning opportunities in nursery and reception classrooms.

59. Accommodation and resources in the Foundation Stage are very good and enhance the quality of children's learning. The quality of teaching is very good. Staff create a warm, welcoming, secure and stimulating environment, making children's first experiences in school interesting, happy and constructive. Good relationships and trust between children and staff allow children to explore ideas whilst confident to request help. Teachers are sensitive to children's needs and organise challenging tasks appropriate to their ability. Teachers have high expectations of children and the praise and encouragement given is rewarded in children's success and achievement. Children receive considerable individual support and respond positively to the challenges presented. Staff knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum is secure. Comprehensive short, medium and long term planning provides a curriculum covering all early learning goals. Learning experiences are presented in interesting and imaginative ways at levels appropriate to needs and staff keep very good records of what is covered during lessons. The results of very good assessment procedures throughout nursery and reception classes are used to plan learning and enable children to begin the National Curriculum when they are ready. Many reception children work within the first level of the National Curriculum in literacy and mathematics. Provision of good quality, thorough, individual support plans for children with special educational needs ensures they make progress. Appropriate support for children for whom English is a second language enables them to enjoy the activities and tasks available and feel secure in the environment. All children have equal access to activities, are taught to respect each other and value what each can offer to the class. Parents and school work very closely together in the Foundation Stage.

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

60. Teaching, learning, progress and care of pupils are very good. Children interact well with each other, showing consideration and kindness. They know the difference between right and wrong. Children concentrate well; many are productively involved for quite long periods on particular tasks, being keen to share success when finished. Through gaining independence in managing themselves, knowing where to place their belongings and preparing for physical education with growing expertise, children are learning to organise their day. Because teachers make clear what is expected, children settle well into school routines, listening attentively, gently prompted by teachers who have a good overview of their class. Children are polite and responsive to teachers, helpers and visitors. Sharing equipment, taking turns and being aware of those around them, children confidently express their feelings to friends and teachers. Self-confidence and independence grow as children are given responsibilities in the unit for handing out snacks, holding open doors, sharing out and clearing up equipment.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

61. Teaching, learning and progress are very good. Standards are well above average. Because areas are well organised with good language on display, children talk and role-play well, developing their vocabulary. In the home corner, they explain, 'I am a vet and my job is to look after sick animals.' In group sessions, teachers encourage children to speak aloud with increasing clarity and confidence about their likes and dislikes. They use very good sentences and listen carefully to their teachers and to each other. Children are making a sound start with early reading skills. In the nursery, they recognise single sounds. The most able know some key words and read simple texts. Others read pictures with enthusiasm and understand print has a meaning. Teachers place good emphasis on reading, encouraging and stimulating children's interest and enjoyment. Reception children accurately follow a large text with the teacher and many read independently. The most able reception children are beginning to write neatly and carefully, producing sentences using simple punctuation. Good examples include: 'I can have a bath', 'I can play with my friends'. When writing invitations to a ball, reception children are extended at levels appropriate to their ability; their work showing how each child is individually challenged.

## **Mathematical development**

62. Teaching, learning and progress are very good. Standards are well above average. Children have good opportunities to engage in practical and investigative skills. They use a variety of apparatus in activities and play situations, individually and in groups. Making repeating patterns using beads, some recognise and understand how to use numbers to ten and can order into large and small groups. They enjoy practical games in which they count to ten and match equipment according to shapes, size and colour. Reception children gain speed in performing simple mental calculations with numbers during a number game. Using construction equipment, children recognise different shapes and talk about them, counting edges and corners. The language of mathematics surrounds children and, as they play, teachers continually encourage them to use and develop appropriate mathematical terms. Playing in the sand, children use vocabulary, such as 'full' and 'empty' correctly. The understanding gained in practical work is applied to recording number facts and children in the reception class are making good progress in recording simple number bonds to ten.

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

63. The quality of teaching, learning and progress is very good. Pupils experience many activities, which provide them with opportunities to learn about their world. Computers are accessible in the classroom. Children are using the mouse and experimenting with simple programs linked to literacy and numeracy. They respond enthusiastically and are very keen and curious to extend their information about everything they experience. Children talk about their journeys to school as they arrive and teachers use every opportunity to involve them in considering directions and observing what they see. When cooking, children know that mixing ingredients 'makes them different - soggy' and they know cooking makes the mixture 'hard and flat' and 'changes the colour.' Helping to look after the class guinea pig encourages children to develop a sense of responsibility and develop a caring dimension in their world. As part of the school healthy eating programme, children have fruit each day at snack time and they discuss the merits of eating fruit, even if some would prefer biscuits! Attainment is above average.

## **Creative development**

64. Achievement, teaching and learning are very good. Children use paint, mixing and applying it in a variety of ways, creating colourful paintings and patterns in a variety of sizes. They make choices and talk about their preferred colours, one child explaining that: 'I want yellow because it is bright and happy, because the painting is a happy painting'. They make collage pictures and models, using glue and scissors safely. Choosing the materials they use when making bedrooms for their dolls, nursery children explain why they make their choices - 'because I like green, so my doll will like green'. Children make good progress with observational skills. Looking at themselves, their

representations of what they see reflect their increasing capacity to 'look' accurately. Children enjoy singing; they are tuneful and learn many songs and rhymes by heart, remembering words well. Putting actions to words and music, children's attainment is well above average. Because the teacher's subject knowledge is very good, children learn effectively and make very good progress.

### **Physical development**

65. Teaching and learning are at least good and, on occasions, very good. Teachers ensure children warm up before they engage in activities. Nursery children use space very well, controlling the way they move and react to instructions. They perform at levels higher than expected for their age. The intervention of teacher and support staff is very good. Asking children questions about how to improve their work, the answers they receive show how carefully children are thinking about what they do. For example, when asked how to catch a balloon successfully, the answer is 'I can watch the balloon when it goes in the air so I know where to put my hands when it comes down.' Children understand and react appropriately to directions they are given and make very good progress throughout their lesson. When asked to move, children show they fully understand and can react to a range of vocabulary, such as 'slow, fast, walk, run, towards, together.' Undertaking a variety of classroom tasks, children manipulate construction equipment with ease, cut and glue competently, explaining 'you mustn't use too much glue because it squeezes out under the paper' and they manage small equipment in mathematics carefully. A very good variety of outdoor equipment and very good supervision and guidance from staff encourage children to develop balancing, climbing, rolling and jumping skills safely. This is good for their age.

### **ENGLISH**

66. Standards in English for the current Year 6 pupils are well above average. This is an improvement on the most recent national test results in 2001, which recorded standards as above average. Achievement over time is good and this is a further improvement since the school had its previous inspection visits.

Strengths in the subject are:

- Very good levels of speaking and listening;
- Very good levels of reading;
- Very good teaching, especially in teachers' subject knowledge, in setting targets and marking work, all leading to very good learning;
- Effective links across the curriculum.

The main area for development is:

- Developing writing more effectively and extensively with less use of worksheets.

67. At the age of eleven, national tests for 2001 showed that standards in English were above the national average and well above those of similar schools. Inspection findings show standards to have risen so that the current Year 6 pupils are reaching well above average standards in their work. This is especially the case in reading, speaking and listening.
68. At the age of seven, national test results in 2001 showed that standards in reading were close to national averages yet below those of similar schools. Standards in writing of seven-year-olds were below national averages and well below those of similar schools. Inspectors found improvements taking place with Year 2 pupils having average standards of writing and handwriting overall.
69. Attainment in speaking and listening is very good throughout the school. From an early age most pupils speak articulately and with confidence. They continue to develop their speaking and listening skills as they progress through the school. At the age of eleven, pupils achieve well above what would normally be expected of pupils of a similar age.
70. The school has made good progress since the previous inspection visits. At the age of seven, pupils' standards in reading and writing have improved. Much of the written work seen indicates



that many pupils are achieving well and often better than would normally be expected of pupils of this age. Reading is above average at the age of seven. At the age of eleven levels of achievement in reading and writing are well above those normally expected from pupils of this age.

71. Standards of writing for seven-year-olds are improving and are now average. Much of the writing is structured, imaginative and clear, but letters are often not joined. Many pupils use capital letters and full stops well and monosyllabic words are spelt correctly. Pupils are able to write a sequence of sentences and convey their meaning well. Much use is made of worksheets to support pupils' spelling and vocabulary. This limits the encouragement and development of independent writing skills at the end of the infant stage. This is an area for development. By the age of eleven pupils write for a range of different purposes. A significant majority are able to express their thoughts clearly and to use a well-ordered sequence of sentences and paragraphs to communicate their meaning. They use a very good range of vocabulary and often write imaginatively to good effect. Punctuation is used well, including commas, speech marks and apostrophes. Handwriting is normally clear and fluent and spelling is accurate.
72. Pupils throughout the school take books home regularly and many read widely from an early age. By the age of seven the majority of pupils are able to read with confidence and expression. They are able to talk about the characters in a story and about the plot. Higher attaining pupils are able to make predictions about what will happen next in a story. By the age of eleven, most pupils read widely and with increasing confidence and expression. Most pupils are able to talk confidently about stories they have read and have favourite authors.
73. Teachers' knowledge and understanding are very good. In a Year 5 lesson, the teacher used a challenging poem to good effect and elicited very thoughtful responses from the pupils. Lessons show very good planning and there are some outstanding examples of very good preparation and excellent classroom management. In a Year 1 class, for example, challenging activities are prepared for different ability groups and excellent use is made of support staff. As a result pupils generally remain on task, produce work of a high standard and show interest in and enthusiasm for what they are doing. Learning is greatly enhanced. Teachers use their voices well and in a Year 2 lesson, the expressive use of the voice is communicated to the children who learn rapidly to develop their speaking skills by varying their voices to suit the character in a story. Teachers have high expectations and clear objectives. Work is normally differentiated effectively to challenge pupils of all abilities and move them forward. Marking of pupils' work is thorough and constructive comments are used throughout the school to which pupils respond well. This, too, improves the rate of learning effectively.
74. Very good use is made of target setting. Good use is made of printed group target sheets for reading and writing which are set out on tables in some classes. Targets for the week and for the lesson are normally on display and lesson objectives are shared with the pupils so that they know what is expected of them. Pupils respond well to these challenges and to individual targets that are pasted in their writing books. Having specific goals for which to aim sets pupils precise challenges and helps them learn more effectively.
75. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are well supported and make good progress. Work is set at appropriate levels for groups and individuals. Of specific value is the basic grammar work undertaken by staff. By moving pupils on in small steps, they ensure that learning is effective and consolidated to a good degree before moving on.
76. Literacy skills are developed very effectively across the curriculum. Extended writing is developed in such subjects as geography, history and religious education. In a Year 3 class pupils developed their literacy skills in learning to follow sets of instructions while using ICT. In geography, literacy skills are developed by writing directions in Year 3. In a Year 4 design and technology lesson, pupils use information from book covers in their designs. This reinforces their library skills. Speaking and listening skills are used and developed in numeracy, as pupils are required to offer explanations and solve problems orally. ICT is being increasingly used to support literacy, but this is insufficient at the present time. There is some good word-processed work on display in which various fonts are used e.g. in the assembly hall.

77. Very good assessment processes are in place and teachers use assessment very well to inform future planning. This ensures all pupils are equally well challenged in all areas of English. Teachers' weekly and medium term planning is reviewed half-termly by the curriculum co-ordinator and books from all year groups are sampled termly. Staff are informed where changes are needed and this is very effective. Overall the management and leadership for literacy are very effective.
78. Very good use is made of the school's accommodation for the display of books. The entrance hall, cloakroom areas and ICT suite are used to good effect in creating an environment in which books are prominent. Library books are easily accessible and offer a wide range of fiction and non-fiction materials. The school does not yet use technology for access to library books.

## **MATHEMATICS**

79. Standards for pupils aged eleven are well above average. This is an improvement on the previous inspections. National tests in 2001 placed the school in the top five per cent in all schools in the country and also in similar schools.

The strengths in the subject are:

- The broad and relevant curriculum;
- High quality teaching;
- Management of the subject;
- The use of assessment.

Areas for improvement are:

- To increase the use of ICT;
- To challenge the higher attaining pupils consistently.

80. Standards attained by pupils at the age of seven are above average. Pupils are laying good foundations for increasing their rate of progress higher up the school. Overall achievement through the school is very good. Pupils are particularly strong in calculation of number. Year 6 pupils are informed that they can exchange £1 for 602,665 Turkish lira. Many of them quickly work out, mentally, how many lira they will receive for £2. The curriculum presented to pupils is meaningful. Year 4 pupils know that the money problems they are solving are related to real life. Strong emphasis is placed on pupils investigating problems. They select strategies to apply to them. When they solve a problem they often extract and set down a rule. Year 4 pupils do so regarding the addition of consecutive numbers.
81. Learning is consistently good in all areas of mathematics. It is often very good, notably in Years 5 and 6. This reflects the quality of the teaching. Pupils understand what they are learning. Teachers tell them what they are going to learn in the lesson. Consequently when pupils are questioned they can explain their understanding. The oral sessions with which each lesson begins are very effective. Pupils' mental skills are challenged and honed well. In an outstanding lesson with Year 1 pupils, the teacher constantly asked them, "How do you know?" and "Who knows another way?" The pupils were encouraged to expand their explanations. This is a feature of teaching throughout the school so that pupils speak very fluently, helping to give clarity to their thinking. In the same lesson the tasks set for the pupils were well matched to provide different levels of challenge. Those pupils who needed additional support were given it by the adults and by the provision of additional resources. All were fully included. Throughout the school teachers are very aware of the requirements of pupils with special educational needs and provide for them so that they make similar progress to their peers. During the concluding discussion of lessons, further opportunities were given for pupils to explain their strategies for success. The teacher highlighted some key vocabulary and asked if the pupils had achieved the lesson's objective. The pupils had enjoyed their learning and felt successful. They applauded one girl for her efforts and she glowed. Other lessons follow a similar pattern.
82. The numeracy strategy has been implemented very well. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. The mental activities stimulate pupils. In one lesson, Year 6 pupils buzzed with excitement in

anticipation of their challenge. As they tossed the soft toy from one to another the pupils urged each other on so that all were thinking very quickly and mainly accurately. They operated as a team, continually adding 24, trying to beat their time target. The main task, conversion of a range of currencies, was presented well and was challenging. Consequently the pupils set about it with enthusiasm. Most discussed their work sensibly with partners and there was good sharing of learning. This is common in most lessons. Relations between teachers and pupils are excellent so that behaviour management is incidental. Pupils want to learn and a good learning atmosphere prevails across the school. Although assessment overall is very good, it is not always sharp enough within lessons. On occasions, because the pace of learning is surprisingly quick, notably by higher attaining pupils, further tasks do not take them to higher levels. This is an area for development.

83. Numeracy skills are used effectively in many other subjects. For example, pupils learn how to use co-ordinates in Year 2 geography; they learn to beat and count in rhythm in music in Year 5; they use weights and measures effectively in design and technology and in science. They gain a good sense of proportion and chronology in geography and history.
84. Leadership of the subject is very good. Not only does the co-ordinator have a very clear overall view of the subject, she also provides a role model of very good classroom practice. Good use is made of ICT in data handling. However within other mathematics lessons insufficient use is made of ICT. There is good provision in Year 5 and 6 where pupils are grouped in broad areas of ability and an additional teacher involved. This gives impetus to the learning of older pupils. It also helps to ensure the very good progress of all pupils including those with special educational needs. Some very good displays of pupils' work and of guidance for the subject help to enhance learning. Literacy is supported well in the opportunities pupils are given to voice their explanations and to read and interpret problems.

## SCIENCE

85. Throughout the school standards are average overall. This is an improvement since the previous HMI visit, especially for pupils aged eleven, who now achieve satisfactorily.

Results of the inspection show strengths in science to be:

- Teaching of the subject;
- Improved use of assessment;
- Improving opportunities for practical work;
- Better challenge for more able pupils.

The areas for further improvement are:

- Continue to monitor the balance between all areas of science to ensure more emphasis is placed upon scientific enquiry and investigation;
- Increase the use of ICT in the subject;
- Monitor the use of assessment to ensure all staff use it as a tool to raise standards.

86. The 2001 national test results in science show standards to be broadly average compared with results in all schools. In comparison with results in similar schools, results are broadly average. A number of the same pupils took the 1997 tests, when aged 7, and the 2001 tests, aged 11. Comparing the two sets of results it is evident that the progress these pupils made was unsatisfactory. Findings of this inspection show that standards are rising throughout the school and there is an improvement in the progress made by pupils, particularly in the infants. This is the result of more rigorous monitoring of pupil progress by all staff and effective teaching and planning of the subject in the school. There are some pupils who are achieving well above what is expected for their age. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. All areas of science are covered in lessons over a period of time. The individual lesson time allocated to science is not always sufficient to enable pupils to carry out their investigations at length or spend time thinking about their results.

87. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Pupils in Year 2 make good progress working on electrical circuits. Having prepared the lesson well, the teacher challenged the pupils to make their own discoveries in a lively and enthusiastic manner. They respond by showing real interest and energy in their work, keen to achieve a result. They make predictions, test them and reach conclusions, which they are confident to share. By continuously encouraging, praising and questioning pupils, the teacher keeps the pupils fully involved with their work, concentrating hard throughout. By the end of the lesson pupils' discussion includes comments such as 'circuits can be different in the way they are made but they must be joined to work'. Further, they said: 'power makes the circuit work; electricity is power and it comes from the battery, so the battery must be connected to the circuit.'
88. By Year 6, investigations involve pupils in searching for information, performing experiments, forming conclusions and recording results. Following on from an experiment on how light enters the eye, pupils dissected a model of an eye to investigate its construction. Using a good technical vocabulary they deduced, then explained, how the eye works and recorded their experiment accurately. They clearly enjoy science and listen carefully in the lesson. Their interest was sustained by the intervention of the teacher introducing facts and questions at appropriate times, keeping the lesson moving. Pupils were confident to ask questions and search text for answers to their queries. As well as interest, good behaviour and a desire to learn also contributed to the progress made during the lesson. The whole school is involved in a healthy eating and healthy living project, linked to science, which provides good opportunities for pupils to apply their learning to their lifestyle.
89. Pupils in the infants make good progress and those with special educational needs make progress appropriate to their ability. In the juniors progress made by pupils is at least satisfactory and more able pupils make good progress, being presented with extra challenges to develop their understanding and experience of science. Pupils with special educational needs make progress appropriate to their ability. There is little evidence of sustained and progressive use of ICT in the subject throughout the school.
90. Good management of the subject is a significant factor in the improvements seen. Continuing improvements in all aspects of teaching, monitoring and learning are part of a good, effective development plan.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

91. Standards in art and design are above average throughout the school. This is an improvement since previous inspection visits. Achievement is good.

Strengths include:

- Above average standards and good achievement;
- Very good teaching strategies leading to a very good rate of learning;
- Effective leadership and organisation of the subject.

The areas for improvement include:

- Making better use of ICT to enhance learning;
- Providing the co-ordinator with opportunities to work alongside colleagues.

92. Standards are above average in all classes. Achievement in art and design is also good throughout the school. There are many examples of very good art work in classrooms and around the school. A wide range of materials is used. For example, 'A very hungry caterpillar' by reception class children involves paint colour mixing, symmetrical designs and the use of a range of materials including seeds, coloured tissue and card. 'Winter blues' scenes by Year 2 pupils show a good sense of colour by the use of silver and blue foil. Year 4 children use charcoal well in some mushroom drawings and they use ICT to good effect for work in the style of Seurat. Year 6 pupils produce movement effects by using a range of media. Year 2 pupils show an aptitude for completing a cropped image with skills well above those normally expected of pupils of this age. These include a sense of perspective and very good awareness of space and shape.

93. Teaching and learning are very good throughout the school. Teachers have very high expectations of what pupils will learn. For example, in a Year 6 class, pupils used their imagination and creativity well to produce designs depicting movement. Teachers plan their lessons well and these are often linked to longer-term projects. These projects enhance children's learning by helping them to develop skills and techniques over time. In a Year 2 class the teacher chooses phrases such as "we are going to be picture detectives" to capture the children's imagination. The pupils respond well, show enthusiasm for their work and, as a result, the pace of learning improves. Teachers are clear about what they want the pupils to achieve. Planning for lessons is very good. Day-to-day assessment is used effectively to plan for the next stage of the work and to take the children forward in their learning. Teachers offer praise and encouragement to pupils and offer individual help to those who need it. They encourage high standards by referring to very good work produced during lessons. Teachers offer opportunities for pupils to use a range of materials and to be creative. Pupils respond well by showing concentrated effort and often total absorption in the task in hand. Behaviour is very good overall. Pupils contribute well to class discussions and are very articulate in explaining their preferences for choice of media and design. Pupils show interest in what they are doing; they work well together and show respect for the efforts and opinions of others.
94. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make good progress and achieve as well as other pupils of the same age. In Year 6 there are examples of pupils with special educational needs who excel at drawing and pattern work.
95. There is effective management for art and design throughout the school. The co-ordinator keeps a portfolio of photographs and some samples of good work. The school has added to published guidelines in order to ensure that essential skills are given more attention at the infant stage of learning. Planning and curriculum coverage are checked half-termly and the co-ordinator sees examples of outstanding work that are brought to her. The overview of planning and support for staff given by the co-ordinator contribute to the overall high standards throughout the school. There is as yet no systematic process in place for the regular release of the subject co-ordinator to work alongside colleagues or to demonstrate good practice.
96. Some use is made of ICT such as in some pointillist and wrapping paper designs by Year 4, but opportunities for pupils to use ICT in art are insufficient overall. Art and design is developed across the curriculum as, for example, in 'Creation' pictures by Year 3 as part of religious education.
97. There are good resources for art and design that are stored in a suitably accessible area. The school has a kiln which is used effectively in the production of pottery, which is sometimes glazed. There is a pottery club for Year 5 and 6 pupils once a week after school.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

98. Standards in design and technology are above average throughout the school. There are some examples of very good work in some classrooms and this represents an overall improvement since previous inspection visits.

Strengths in the subject are:

- Above average standards of finished work with good achievement throughout the school;
- Effective planning by teachers so that learning is consistently good;
- Effective links to other areas of the curriculum.

The area for improvement is:

- Extend learning further through the use of more ICT.

99. Standards are above average overall, with many examples of well above average finished products. There are examples of good work in design and technology in all years and some very good work in both infant and junior parts of the school. For example, there is evidence of very good work on designing and making a vessel to transport animals across water by reception class pupils. Other

examples of very good work are models of Miss Muppet and her spider using a handle and rotating movement in Year 2; designs for a new kind of biscuit in Year 5; and circuit question boards and pop-up books in Year 4. All pupils make good progress and overall achievement by age eleven is also good. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. They achieve very good results which are of a similar standard and sometimes better than those achieved by other pupils.

100. Teachers plan very effectively and have very clear objectives often for projects that take place over time. This helps pupils to develop a number of skills well and to learn and consolidate their skills effectively. Work is effectively assessed on a day-to-day and individual basis. Assessment is used effectively to inform teachers' planning and to take the children forward. Teachers show interest in and enthusiasm for design and technology. They have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. This elicits a very good response from pupils who speak enthusiastically about what they do and as a result, learn effectively. Pupils are encouraged to achieve high standards by the display of work in classrooms and around the school and by praise for examples of outstanding work in achievement assemblies.
101. There are good cross-curricular links with science in Year 4 where pupils design and make question and answer circuit boards that light up when a question is answered correctly. A pop-up book project in Year 4 has close links with work in literacy. One class uses ICT effectively to produce wrapping paper designs. Pupils are very creative; they concentrate very well and most work independently. While work produced is frequently of a good and sometimes very good technical standard, the range of size, shape and form is often limited. Older children occasionally lack the opportunities and range of resources to produce the varied individualistic and creative efforts of which they are capable. Pupils sometimes work in small groups on a carousel basis in order to make effective use of resources and to ensure that pupils receive individual supervision and support.
102. The headteacher effectively manages design and technology during the absence of the co-ordinator. Curriculum coverage and teachers' medium and short-term planning are good. These are checked half-termly and teachers are informed if any action for improvement is required. Outcomes of work planned are checked as units of work are completed. The policy and guidelines are satisfactory, but are due for review when the co-ordinator returns. At the present time little use is made of ICT in design and technology. This is an area for development.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

103. Standards throughout the school are well above average. This is a significant improvement since the school was previously inspected.

Major strengths are:

- Very good focus on bringing the subject alive and making it relevant to pupils;
- Very good teaching with a strong emphasis on learning basic map work skills;
- Very effective links to other areas of the curriculum.

104. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language, learn very well in geography. Teaching focuses on relevant and interesting issues. Immediately, pupils are drawn into debate and discussion on issues to which they relate very well. For example, Year 1 pupils were really excited as they watched a school-based video of the walking bus initiative. The video showed how parents and pupils could make part of the journey to school on foot. Pupils began to point out many of the potential risks of such a venture, as well as how to overcome them. They were keen to point out narrow pavements and the importance of keeping in a line; they understood the potential problems of slippery leaves and of not being seen. Solutions included writing to the local Council asking for footpaths to be swept more regularly, and the need for reflective clothing. In addition, pupils gained a very good insight into the local area, using language such as 'turn left' or 'use the pedestrian crossing'. In Year 2, the teaching builds successfully on prior learning through the use of grid references and how to use them. On a large map of the local area, pupils began to explore symbols and learn their meaning. They learnt to

distinguish between picture representation and symbols, recognising the latter as simpler. Pupils quickly grasped the principle of grid references through the use of rows and columns and the numbering system. Teachers always make sure that different groups of pupils are included in their questioning.

105. Pupils in Year 3 learn very well through a survey on traffic in the area and the journeys made to local shopping centres. Many pupils have a clear understanding of where places are. For example, one pupil was able to state the precise distance from his home to where his mother worked south of Birmingham; another was clear about where other UK cities were located. Geography was brought alive for older pupils in Year 4 through field work in the local area. This began by litter picking in the areas adjacent to the school and the school grounds. Indoors, this was sorted by pupils and staff into recyclable and reusable piles. At each stage, teachers and support staff were keen to draw from pupils wider ranging issues of pollution, conservation and social responsibility. As a result, pupils learnt the great value of how to use leaves as a basis for compost, or recycling plastic bottles and tin cans. One pupil was heard to remark: 'all the cans go to a place where they get squished up', showing the principle of re-use had been learnt effectively. The wider concept of social responsibility with regard to keeping an environment clean was readily appreciated. Pupils became clear about the need for providing litter bins and bins for the disposal of dog waste. Field work makes a further valuable contribution to learning, with trips to the local area, the upper Trent valley and the Isle of Man.
106. Teaching is very good and this results in the very good learning observed in lessons. Teachers plan very well and ensure through attention to detail, that each group of pupils has a task which is appropriate to their capability. These include using larger diagrams for map reading, or simplified tasks for pupils who need to work at a slower pace. This ensures that all pupils make very good progress. Challenges are high – questioning is probing and makes pupils think. For example, questions such as 'how do you get from A to B?', 'what sort of transport do you use?', 'what do you think bio-degradable means?' are all good examples of the challenges staff give including the very good technical language used. Map reading and the value of maps are at the forefront of much of the planning. From an early age, pupils acquire a good sense of spatial relationships as they learn to draw a plan of the school, their classrooms and their routes to school. They then go on to widen this understanding with reference to the whole of the local area and in the juniors this becomes a world-wide issue.
107. Very good links are made to other areas of the curriculum. Pupils learn to make connections between geography and science through the work on recycling. They appreciate terms such as pollution and conservation, making a strong link to environmental issues. They learn road safety issues through their early work on the walking bus.

## **HISTORY**

108. By the age of seven the standards of achievement reached by pupils are in line with those expected nationally. By the age of eleven, pupils reach standards above those expected nationally.

The strengths of history in the school are:

- Teaching and teachers' subject knowledge in upper junior classes;
- The enquiry skills of older pupils.

Areas which require improvement are:

- Resources to support teaching and learning;
- Use of ICT in the subject;
- Opportunities for all pupils, especially the higher attaining, to maximise literacy skills in more varied and exciting ways to present their understanding of history.

109. Throughout the school there is good evidence to show that pupils understand the passage of time and the main events in different historical periods. Some pupils have access to primary sources of information, such as toys or post war utensils, advertisements and photographs. When this

occurs, the accounts and writing produced are interesting and informative and demonstrate how pupils can successfully compare and contrast the past and the present.

110. Teaching and learning are good across the school. Using a series of drawings, Year 1 pupils show how toys have changed over the years and they talk animatedly about handling toys belonging to their grandparents, using a growing historical vocabulary. Older junior pupils demonstrated excellent enquiry and research skills when sharing information they had retrieved about Greek philosophers, from a variety of sources. Good use of the Internet, books and parental knowledge provided material for discussion. Placing these 'thinkers' into their correct historical age, pupils then explained: 'Hippocrates was the Father of modern medicine and doctors can take an oath named after him when they qualify, to say they promise to make people well'. Pupils explained further that: 'Pythagoras invented a theory to help us work out some facts about triangles'. Using this information, the teacher introduced pupils to a Curriculum Vitae (CV), asking them to write a CV for each 'thinker.' Because the teacher has excellent subject knowledge and great love of the subject she readily answers and develops pupils questions and they are enthralled by what they hear, developing a real love of history. Pupils work hard, they concentrate fully on what they do, share ideas and ask intelligent questions, all of which contribute to the good progress they make.
111. The good behaviour and keenness of pupils to learn is a feature of the lessons seen, enabling pupils to develop a good knowledge of history and improve their skills in discussing the features of different periods of history.
112. Work completed by pupils is neat and well presented and shows teachers present a good range of work, which is neatly recorded. Historical facts are accurate but there is little evidence that pupils are able to interpret history from different viewpoints or in different ways, for example, as biographies, in poetry, or as a newspaper article. This disadvantages the higher attaining pupils in particular, who are denied more access to independent research work and opportunities to extend their creativity. The progress made by pupils in the infants is satisfactory and the progress made by junior pupils is good.
113. Lack of good resources, such as historical artefacts and maps, reduces research possibilities for pupils. Older junior pupils are beginning to use ICT as a good source of facts, but this practice has not yet spread to the rest of the school.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

114. Standards by the age of seven are broadly average. By the age of eleven they are below what is expected. There has been insufficient time since the provision of the new computer suite for it to have the necessary impact. However improvement has been made since the previous inspections. Achievement overall, in the aspects covered, is good. Pupils in Year 6 show a high standard in multi-media presentations.

Strengths of the subject are:

- The teaching of skills;
- Planned use of the computer suite;
- Subject leadership;
- Standards in multi-media work.

Areas for improvement are:

- Raise standards in all aspects of the subject, especially those of higher attaining pupils;
- Extend resources to provide more support across the curriculum.

115. There is provision for all pupils to spend two sessions each week in the ICT suite. One lesson is to learn basic skills, the other to apply the skills to various curriculum areas. Pupils are grasping skills well. Teaching is good. Teachers appear confident in these lessons. They take particular care to give clear instructions and demonstrations. Pupils want to learn and behave well. They are attentive and listen carefully to instructions so that when they set to their tasks they know exactly what to do. A very good Year 2 lesson saw the pupils log on quickly and select the



correct program. They showed confidence at the keyboard and had good mouse control. Most of the class quickly grasped the new task and changed the font size and colours of certain words. Pupils with special educational needs were fully included and given additional support so that they also achieved the task.

116. Teachers plan clearly and are well prepared. In most lessons management and organisation are very good. This results in pupils paying full attention, settling to tasks and working harmoniously with partners. Sharing of equipment is fair and the good relationships mean that pupils aid each other in their learning. Year 5 pupils worked in pairs mixed by ability and gender. They decided how the task was to be divided and shared so that each pupil was fully involved. When they achieved the task they set themselves a further one to reinforce learning. Assessment of pupils' attainment overall is satisfactory but is not yet sharp enough in lessons. Some pupils are acquiring skills very quickly and on occasions are not provided with further tasks that move them on sufficiently, in data handling, for example.
117. There has been much improvement in the subject recently, led by a very good co-ordinator. Very good use is made of the computer suite with the resources currently available. There is, however, insufficient software to apply pupils' skills in all areas of the curriculum. Insufficient use is made of the computers based in the classrooms. Pupils, particularly in the junior phase, have insufficient experience in areas such as control, monitoring or musical composition. As a result, pupils make satisfactory progress rather than good progress. This applies especially to higher attaining pupils who sometimes are given the same tasks as the rest of the group. The school is well aware of these deficiencies. The subject provides good support to literacy. Pupils edit, refine and present their written work very well. A group of Year 6 pupils, working in their own time and independently, produce a high quality school magazine. Numeracy is supported through the use of spreadsheets and experience of graphs.

## MUSIC

118. Standards in music are above average throughout the school. This is an improvement since previous inspection visits.

Strengths in music are:

- Good achievement with some very good teaching and learning;
- Above average performance when singing;
- Gains in self-esteem and confidence through public performances and individual tuition.

The area for improvement is:

- To use ICT to enhance learning.

119. Achievement is good in music. Pupils are taught to appreciate the differences between high and low sounds, and to distinguish between soft and loud music effectively in the infants. Pupils learn the names of the major instruments of the orchestra and begin to understand that some are made of wood and others of metal. Building effectively on this knowledge, older pupils learn to group these instruments into the families of the orchestra. The very good teaching observed in the juniors focuses on learning technical language well, such as concord, discord and crescendo. By Year 6 pupils have above average knowledge and understanding. They are able to explain in detail how instruments such as the piano or flute produce their sounds. They know some of the major composers, such as Mozart and Beethoven.
120. Singing progresses well throughout the school. In assemblies, pupils sing with clarity and sweetness. They learn to vary the dynamic effectively, emphasising the chorus sections of hymns, for example. In lessons, older pupils learn how to sing in part. Unaccompanied, they make rapid progress, with all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, taking a full and active part. In one Year 5 lesson, the pupils quickly learnt a calypso from scratch and several pupils learnt to accompany the song using shakers and wooden sticks to beat out the fairly complex rhythms.

121. Public performances within school and outside school enhance pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem. There are regular performances in the local music festival and individual performances in school. A good range of additional individual tuition is available, with many pupils learning the violin, piano, fife, recorder and clarinet. This enables those pupils who are gifted and talented in this field to make good progress and achieve high standards of performance.
122. The co-ordinator for music is new to the school. There are plans in hand to audit resources and undertake some monitoring of standards. As yet, however, little use is made of new technology to enhance learning in the subject. The co-ordinator hopes to be able to do this following specific training later in the school year.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

123. Standards in the subject overall are above those usually seen in pupils at the age of eleven. There has been improvement since the previous inspections.

Strengths of the subject are:

- The curriculum, including extra curricular opportunities;
- Teaching;
- Standards in swimming;
- Subject leadership.

The area for improvement is:

- Resources for gymnastics.

124. Standards in swimming are well above those in the majority of schools. All pupils currently in Year 6 can swim a minimum of 25 metres. Many of them swim considerably further than this, some beyond 1500 metres.
125. The subject has a high profile in the school, with active and high quality leadership setting the tone. It marries well with the Healthy School ethos. Older pupils help to guide younger ones in a healthy lifestyle through 'Fitbods'. Pupils are fortunate. They are provided with wide experiences in the subject. All areas of the National Curriculum are covered with many additional opportunities provided. Pupils in both Year 5 and Year 6 have opportunities to go on residential visits. These provide experiences in outdoor and adventurous activities and also enhance team-building skills. Excellent provision is made for improving and extending skills in games after school and a large number of pupils participate.
126. Pupils learn well, in response to good teaching. They tend to mirror their teachers' approach, in dress and application. Some very good teaching was seen in the infant phase. Year 1 pupils move well in their dance lesson. They reflect the lively approach of the teacher in the warm-up. Pupils show very good control and interesting shapes as 'growing beanstalks'. There is good quality in the way they hold their finishing positions, for example. The teacher develops this by reminding them of starting positions and giving them opportunities to discuss improvements. Most of all, the pupils clearly enjoy their work. Similar high standards are seen in a Year 2 gymnastics lesson. Pupils are well motivated and interested, so they practise hard, linking balances well. There are a number of 'wows' when the teacher demonstrates. Everybody is active.
127. Year 5 was the only junior class seen. Due to inclement weather their games lesson took place in the classroom. Pupils were set the task of preparing a team talk to motivate the netball team. They worked in mixed pairs very effectively, with sensible and mature discussion. When they shared their work with the class, all listened politely. Pupils made points about fair play and not blaming team-mates. The teacher led the discussion very well, so that the pupils' views about the purpose and value of games were reinforced. This type of activity provides a strong contribution to pupils' personal development and also supports literacy.

128. The subject co-ordinator is involved in everything. The policy provides good guidance for all teachers, including points about safety. Some assessment is made in games and gymnastics, but not consistently. Resources for gymnastics are unsatisfactory. Benches and gymnastics tables, for example, are too heavy. Steps are being taken to replace them.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

129. By the age of seven and eleven years, pupils achieve standards that are in line with those expected from the locally agreed syllabus.

The strengths are:

- Coverage of the Christian religion;
- Contribution of assemblies to religious education.

Areas requiring improvement are:

- Resources for teachers and pupils;
- Teaching of faiths other than Christianity;
- The amount of work completed by pupils in both infants and juniors, especially higher attaining pupils;
- Time given to religious education on the timetable.

130. Teaching is good overall. Pupils in Year 1 were engrossed whilst listening to the story of the Good Samaritan. Retelling the story with good expression, the teacher engaged the pupils' concentration well. When asked about the story, the pupils' accurate and detailed answers showed they absorbed the facts they heard. Leading into a general discussion on helping, pupils were confident to share ideas, which are valued by their teacher who respected each. Using their partners as 'listeners', pupils talk about how they may need help or how they can help in different situations. They talk sensibly and listen to each other, sharing views. At a very simple level they are able to discuss aspects of the story they have heard as they relate to their own lives. Knowing each pupil well, the teacher assists where needed and ensures each pupil gains from the experience. The duration of the lesson was very short. Therefore the teacher had to leave further follow up of the pupils' ideas until the next lesson. The teacher had an illustrated book to share with the pupils, but there was not a good selection of relevant books in the school to provide further material to support the pupils' learning.
131. Older junior pupils, whilst watching a film of the festival Diwali, were observant and interested and learnt the names of the various foods and materials used in the celebration. The teacher carefully led into discussion of the differences between Diwali and celebrations experienced by pupils. Pupils were respectful and sensitive in discussion and were aware that the festival was of importance to those who followed it. The lesson was rushed due to the short allocation of time allotted to it on the timetable. This prevented the teacher from continuing fruitful and valuable discussion on the content presented.
132. Pupils' work shows they have a wide knowledge of both the Old and New Testament and of major Christian beliefs and festivals. In Year 4 pupils have created colourful and imaginative pictures of how they interpret the creation stories, portraying personal ideas and feelings. Overall, however, there is little multi-faith work evident and all recorded work is very short in length. The content of work is satisfactory and the progress pupils make in the work covered is satisfactory throughout the school. Higher attaining pupils produce work that is broadly similar to the rest of the class. While satisfactory overall, opportunities for providing more challenging work are sometimes missed.
133. Assemblies provide good opportunities for pupils to apply the facts they learn in lessons to the life of the school and to reflect how their actions affect the lives of those around them.

134. There are very few resources to assist pupils' learning. For example, there are insufficient Bibles for one class to follow stories as they are read and no artefacts from a variety of religions for pupils to see and touch.
135. A new co-ordinator has made a very good beginning in identifying areas for improvement and, well supported by senior management, an action plan to resolve issues is being formulated.