

INSPECTION REPORT

JOHN BUNYAN JUNIOR SCHOOL

Braintree

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 115007

Headteacher: Mr D Hume

Reporting inspector: Mr M Newell
10638

Dates of inspection: 2nd – 5th October 2000

Inspection number: 224567

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr A B Comfort
Date of previous inspection:	23 rd March 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr M Newell (10638)	Registered inspector	Information Technology Physical Education Equal Opportunities English as an Additional Language	The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught How well is the school led and managed What could the school do to improve further
Mr R Miller (9619)	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes and values How well does the school care for its pupils or students How well does the school work in partnership with parents
Mr N Sherman (16493)	Team inspector	Special educational needs Science Art	
Mrs C Deloughry (10911)	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
Mrs J Hill (31453)	Team inspector	English Music	
Mr D Carpenter (31807)	Team inspector	Geography History Religious Education	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is a community junior school situated close to the town centre of Braintree in Essex. At present there are 280 pupils on roll. The school is bigger than most other junior schools. Assessment data clearly shows that pupils' attainment on entry to the school is below average. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is 29 per cent, which is just above the national average. The percentage of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs is 29 per cent. This figure is above the educational and Essex county averages. The vast majority of pupils in school are of white ethnic origin with a small percentage of pupils who have English as an additional language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good and rapidly improving school where standards are rising. This improving picture owes much to the clear sense of direction set by the headteacher and governors, the good quality of teaching and the good behaviour of pupils. There is a good sense of teamwork amongst staff who are keen to continue this upward trend of improvement. Taking all factors into account, the school is providing satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The good quality of teaching enables pupils to make good progress during their time at school.
- The school expects and achieves good standards of behaviour from its pupils.
- The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- The school provides a wide range of learning opportunities which enables pupils to achieve good standards in art, design and technology, history and religious education.
- Learning support staff make a valuable contribution to the quality of pupils' learning.
- There are good procedures in place to ensure pupils' welfare and to assess and track their progress.
- The school has put very good procedures in place to monitor and improve pupils' attendance.
- The school is effective in the information it provides for parents and in how it actively encourages parents to support their children's learning.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and has set a clear and accurate direction for school improvement. He is well supported by governors and senior staff.

What could be improved

- The use of information technology to support other areas of the curriculum.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning.
- The opportunities for pupils to undertake personal study and research and to use their initiative in their learning.
- The quality of teachers' marking of pupils' work

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 since the time of the last inspection in 1998 and all who work at the school are committed to ensuring that the rapid rate of improvement continues. There has been a significant improvement in the standards that pupils achieve, and in the quality of teaching. The quality of leadership is now a real strength of the school and has been instrumental in setting an accurate agenda for improvement. Policies and schemes of work are now in place. They are of a good standard and help to ensure that pupils receive a broad, balanced and vibrant range of learning opportunities. Assessment procedures have improved greatly and parents' views are justifiably far more positive about the quality of education the school provides. The school is well placed to continue to improve.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	C	E	D	C
mathematics	E	E	D	D
science	C	C	D	C

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

The table shows that the school's results at the end of Key Stage 2, on the basis of the 1999 National Curriculum tests were below the national average in English, mathematics and science. When compared to similar schools the schools performance was at an average level in English and science but below average in mathematics. The improving nature of the school is reflected in the school's results in the National Curriculum tests carried out in 2000. Although there is no confirmed national data yet available, a higher percentage of pupils achieved at least the level expected nationally for 11-year-olds in English, mathematics and science than was the case in 1999. Inspection findings indicate that standards in English, mathematics and science are at an average level with a significant percentage of pupils on track to achieve beyond the expected level.

Evidence clearly indicates that over time standards are improving. The effective implementation of the National Numeracy and Literacy strategies together with the good quality of teaching in these and other areas of the curriculum are having a most positive impact on standards and the progress pupils make. The school is already reviewing the targets it has set itself in literacy and numeracy in 2001 as a result of the improving nature of the school. A strength of the school is the manner in which other areas of the curriculum are taught in depth. A wide range of learning opportunities is provided which enables pupils to achieve above average standards in art, design and technology, history and religious education by the time they leave school. Attainment in all other areas of the curriculum is at an expected level by the age of 11. The level of attainment when pupils enter the school is below average and so pupils of all abilities are making good progress during their time at school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Most pupils are well motivated, want to do well and enjoy coming to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Although a small minority of pupils behave in an inappropriate manner, the overall quality of behaviour is of a good standard.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships throughout the school are of a good standard and contribute positively to the quality of life within the school. More opportunities could be provided for pupils to undertake personal study and research and to use their initiative in learning.
Attendance	Satisfactory. The school promotes the importance of attendance and punctuality at every opportunity.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
53 lessons seen overall	N/A	N/A	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.

During the inspection, the teaching was very good in 13 per cent of lessons, good in 51 per cent and satisfactory in 34 per cent of lessons. Teaching was unsatisfactory in 2 per cent of lessons. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is usually good across the school. In the majority of lessons, the needs of all pupils are met and the learning opportunities provided enthuse the pupils who in turn are keen to do well. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers and the very good learning assistants who make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. In most lessons the tasks set are challenging. The overall good quality of teaching makes a significant contribution to the good progress that pupils make during their time at the school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is well planned and pupils enjoy a broad, balanced and often in-depth range of learning activities. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The good provision, together with its most effective management and very capable staff ensure pupils make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good provision is made for the small number of pupils for who English is an additional language enabling them to make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision is made for pupils' moral development. Satisfactory provision is made for their spiritual, social and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	This is a caring and supportive school. Staff know individual pupils well. Good procedures are in place to assess and track pupils' progress and to ensure pupils' welfare at all times.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good and effective leadership. He has set a clear direction for school improvement and is well supported by the deputy headteacher and senior management team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their responsibilities well. They are active in monitoring the work of the school. The Chair and Vice Chair of Governors have an excellent grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Others use their individual and professional skills well to support the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school makes good use of assessment data to identify areas for improvement. The head and deputy headteacher monitor teaching but there is a need for a more regular, rigorous and focused approach that includes curriculum co-ordinators being more actively involved in evaluating the quality of teaching and learning across the school.
The strategic use of resources	All the resources available to the school, including teachers, support staff and accommodation are used to best effect so that they have a positive impact on helping to raise standards.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fact that their children enjoy coming to school. • The progress that children make. • The quality of teaching. • The approachability of the school. • The school's expectations and how the school is helping children to become mature. • The approachability of staff. • The leadership of the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework the school provides. • More information about how their children are getting on. • Closer working relationships with parents. • A greater range of activities outside lessons. •

The inspection findings endorse parents' positive comments. The school has made significant improvements since the last inspection and parents are right to feel very positive about the quality of education the school is now providing. The amount of homework that the school sets is similar to that found in the majority of schools and is judged to be appropriate. There is an annual report on each pupil's progress and formal occasions when parents can discuss their children's work with staff. Information is sent home regularly about what the children are being taught. Curriculum evenings on areas such as literacy, numeracy, information technology, science and assessment as well as family numeracy and literacy sessions are good ways in which parents are kept informed. The school has spent a lot of time and effort in developing strong links with parents and getting them more actively involved in supporting their children's learning. Although the school is constantly seeking to develop such links further, they are currently appropriate. The school provides a range of sporting and musical activities outside of lessons. In addition there is a drama club, a mathematics club, a homework club and plans are in hand to set up a computer club. The range of activities is therefore judged to be good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. This is an improving school. Standards have been rising over the last three years in English, mathematics and science. When pupils enter the school at the age of seven, attainment is below average although a small number of pupils exceed the level expected nationally of seven year olds. The standards the school is now achieving are at a higher level than at the time of the last inspection. A number of factors are responsible for this including the greater commitment of all who work at the school to achieve high standards, the higher incidence of good quality teaching, the quality of leadership, sharper assessment and target setting procedures and very good support staff. Inspection findings show that standards in English, mathematics and science are at an average level, with an appropriate percentage of pupils set to exceed the level expected of 11- year- olds. When these standards are compared to the level of attainment when pupils start school, it is clear that the pupils of all abilities make good progress during their time in school. The improving nature of the school is reflected in the fact that the targets the school has set for literacy and numeracy in 2001 are to be set at a more challenging level because based on the current rate of progress, the present targets will be exceeded with ease.
2. The National Curriculum tests for 11- year- olds in 1999 show that pupils' overall attainment in English, mathematics and science was below the national average. When compared to similar schools pupils' results were broadly in line in English and science, and below the average for similar schools in mathematics. The percentage of pupils exceeding the level expected for 11-year- olds was below the national average in all three subjects. When the results over the period 1996-1999 are examined they show that the performance of pupils in science to be close to the national average, below average in English and well below in mathematics. Test results show no significant difference was found between differing levels of attainment between boys and girls. Although there is no confirmed national data with which to compare the school's results in 2000, it is clear that standards have improved with the school achieving its best results so far in the number of pupils achieving the level expected (Level 4) and more importantly the number of pupils achieving the next higher level (Level 5), in all three subjects. Inspection findings show that there is no significant evidence of under-achievement and that in most lessons the high expectations that teachers set together with challenging tasks ensure that pupils of all abilities achieve standards that are commensurate with their ability.
3. The overall picture that emerges is that while there is still room for improvement, standards are getting better. Pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and science. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented well. Basic skills are taught well and the regular mental arithmetic practice sessions, together with the increasing opportunities for pupils to solve problems using different strategies have helped to raise standards. Literacy skills are taught well and good examples were seen, particularly for the older pupils in school, where pupils' literacy skills are consolidated and then extended in subjects such as history, geography and religious education. In these instances the pupils were asked to take notes or explain their feelings about events such as the Holocaust. However, such good practice is not consistent across the school. Not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to undertake personal study and research which prevents pupils' skills from being developed further, thereby increasing their level of achievement.

4. The percentage of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs is above the national average. The pupils receive well-targeted support that enables them to make good progress towards the challenging but realistic targets that are set in their individual education plans. These plans are well written and are used effectively by class teachers. The level and quality of teaching and the very good support pupils receive from learning assistants make a valuable contribution to the good progress pupils make. The tasks that are set for the higher attaining pupils are usually of a challenging nature and this helps to ensure that they make progress at a good rate. The provision for the small number of pupils who have English as an additional language is good enabling them to make good progress.
5. Standards in speaking and listening are satisfactory by the time pupils leave school. Pupils listen well to one another and to the class teacher. Although pupils are confident when asking and answering questions, their language is not particularly expressive. The school has already targeted separate sessions within the school day to improve speaking and listening skills. Reading standards are at an expected level for most pupils by the time they leave school. Many read with an appropriate level of fluency and expression and use a good range of strategies to tackle new words. Teachers use the opportunities within literacy sessions to develop pupils' reading skills with a range of differing texts. Pupils' reading skills would be further enhanced through regular use of the school library to undertake independent study and research. Standards of writing are at an expected level for 11- year- olds. Handwriting is a strength of the school with the majority of pupils clearly taking a sense of pride in how they present their work. Pupils have a secure knowledge of the function of punctuation and use it increasingly effectively as they get older. Higher attaining pupils write expressively and for a range of audiences and purposes. Opportunities are missed for pupils to extend their writing, drafting and editing skills by using computers.
6. Attainment in mathematics is at an average level overall with a small but significant percentage of pupils exceeding the level expected of 11-year-olds. The good progress that pupils of all abilities make is due to the effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and the good quality of teaching. Pupils have a secure knowledge and understanding of all elements of the subject and are becoming increasingly adept at using their mental agility skills to solve problems. Progress is at its best when pupils are asked to use their mathematical skills in other areas of the curriculum. Such examples were seen for instance when pupils were asked to make exact replicas of the contents of ration books or to measure rainfall. Insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to use information technology as an alternative way of presenting their work.
7. Attainment in science is at an average level at the end of Key Stage 2. Particular emphasis is put on the development of pupils' investigative skills. This linked to the good teaching of scientific knowledge means that pupils of all abilities make good progress. Pupils, for example, know the differences and similarities of liquids, solids and gases. They have a secure understanding of life and physical processes. The weaker element of attainment is the Earth and beyond.
8. A strength of the school is the manner in which other areas of the curriculum are taught in depth. A wide range of learning opportunities is provided which enables pupils to achieve above average standards in art, design and technology, history and religious education. In art, by the time pupils leave school, they have a good knowledge of the work and techniques of famous artists such as Lowry, Tilson, and Van Gogh. Pupils show a keen eye for detail and their three-dimensional work is often impressive. In design and technology pupils are provided with many opportunities to design and make a wide range of products using different materials. They work with a

variety of media including fabric, card, clay and salt dough. Much emphasis is also given to designing and evaluating. The innovative and challenging tasks that are set, together with the direct teaching of specific skills, mean that the finished products are often of a good standard. In history pupils acquire good levels of knowledge of the different periods of history and of the civilisations they study. Pupils have a good sense of chronology and by the time they leave school they know that time and social change are inextricably linked. In religious education pupils' attainment is above the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils have a good understanding of Christianity and other faiths such as Judaism and Hinduism. Through, for example, their study of persecution and anti-Semitism, pupils have developed a real sensitivity and respect for the beliefs and symbols of others.

9. In geography, music and physical education pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 is at an expected level for their ages. Attainment across these and other foundation subjects would be enhanced if information technology were used in a more systematic manner to support pupils' learning and as a tool for independent study and research. Although pupils' attainment in information technology is broadly in line with national expectations, pupils are not adept at using the Internet nor are they fully aware of the potential of electronic mail. The action plan that the school has drawn up, together with the significant improvement in resources and facilities, means that the school is well placed to further develop standards in this area of the curriculum.
10. The school has made significant strides since the time of the last inspection. During their time in school pupils are now acquiring new knowledge and skills at a good rate. This is a school with no sense of complacency. It recognises its achievements but also knows there is still room for improvement. The commitment of all who work at the school to raising standards further indicates the school is well placed to continue its process of development and improvement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. The pupils' attitudes are good both to their learning and to the school itself. Parents agree that their children enjoy coming to school. The pupils arrive at school with enthusiasm and look forward to the day's activities. Lessons start promptly and where they are stimulating, this leads to a positive response from the pupils. Occasionally a small number of boys do not behave in an appropriate manner and this impedes learning both for themselves and their classmates. However in the vast majority of lessons there is an air of purpose and the pupils show a willingness to learn and do well. This often shows itself in the pride that pupils take in how they present their work. Most of the younger pupils listen to their teachers carefully, try their hardest and persevere with quite difficult tasks.
12. The pupils' behaviour is good overall both in and around the school and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. The parents feel that the school encourages their children to be polite, to have good manners, to work hard and to give one another mutual support and tolerance. Most pupils are clear about how to behave through the clear teaching of values as part of their personal and social education. The pupils understand and value others and have good relationships with each other. They have good relationships with the adults in the school, whom they obviously respect and see as good role models. Lunchtimes and playtimes are orderly, pleasant, social occasions where the pupils confidently eat, play and enjoy themselves. The small amount of inappropriate behaviour is linked to the ineffective use of class management strategies where boys are allowed to dominate discussions and activities to the detriment of others. Such instances are the exception rather than the norm. There was

very little inappropriate behaviour observed outside classrooms and no evidence of bullying, racism, or sexism. Discussions with pupils show that they are confident that should any such instances occur they would be dealt with swiftly and effectively. During the last academic year there were eleven exclusions. At present there are none, which is further evidence of the improving standards of behaviour that are clearly prevalent in the school.

13. Whilst a number of pupils are engaged in helping staff during the lunchtime period, there are few other opportunities afforded to them, to show initiative and take personal responsibility or for pupils to undertake independent study and research.
14. The school's attendance rate at around 95 per cent remains satisfactory. The rate of unauthorised absence at 0.7 per cent, whilst still above the national average, is an improvement on the previous inspection. Punctuality has greatly improved, and very little lateness was observed during the inspection.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The quality of teaching is good overall and is a significant factor in the good progress that pupils make. This together with the positive attitudes that most pupils show towards their work and school in general helps to create an atmosphere that is conducive to effective learning. Learning support assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning and how well pupils achieve. During the week of inspection teaching was very good in 13 per cent of lessons, and good in a further 51 per cent. 34 per cent of lessons were of a satisfactory standard, with 2 per cent unsatisfactory. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is usually good across the school with most lessons having a sense of challenge. On the odd occasion when teaching is not satisfactory it is linked to unsatisfactory management of pupils. The quality of teaching has improved since the time of the last inspection when there was a higher incidence of unsatisfactory teaching and a lower incidence of good and very good teaching. This improvement in teaching has made an important contribution to the rise in standards over the last three years. The improvement in teaching has come about through some staff changes, an increase in teacher's ability to reflect critically on how they teach and more rigorous procedures for monitoring teaching.
16. The school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well and they have already had an impact on helping to raise standards. Teaching in literacy is generally good across the school. Teachers plan well and take account of the different ability levels of pupils. The careful choice of texts from a wide range of authors and poets helps to motivate pupils and sustain their interest. Teachers use opportunities well to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills, whether it is in history when talking about Britain since the 1930s or to discuss links between climate and plants in geography. The very effective learning support staff make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning in literacy lessons. In a small number of lessons not enough time is left for the plenary session which reduces its effectiveness for teachers to assess what has or has not been learned.
17. The teaching of numeracy is usually good across the school. Most lessons move at a good pace and are well sequenced so that pupils are taught and learn in carefully guided steps which maintain their interest. Lessons invariably start with a mental-oral session that is successful in developing pupils' mental agility skills as well as increasing pupils' enthusiasm for what is to come next in the rest of the lesson. Teachers are becoming better and better at getting pupils to examine different strategies they can use to solve problems. This is effective because not only does it

increase pupils' ability to think in a mathematical way but also when shared with the rest of the class, all pupils' learning is advanced. Another strength is that most teachers evaluate their lessons on a daily basis and, if necessary, modify their planning for the following day. This again is effective because it ensures that gaps in pupils' knowledge are dealt with or work is provided to extend pupils' knowledge and skills.

18. In both literacy and numeracy, as indeed in all areas of the curriculum, there is a need for pupils to be provided with more opportunities to undertake personal study and research and for computers to be used in a planned and systematic manner to enhance pupils' learning. The school has a spacious library, which is situated near an impressive computer suite. If used to their full potential these facilities could provide a powerful learning resource to enhance pupils' achievements still further.
19. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils' needs are identified early and teachers ensure that, in the main, their work is suitably planned to meet those needs. Both teachers and learning assistants are careful to ensure that the work and activities are carefully explained to pupils, ensuring that they have a clear idea of what they expect to accomplish during the course of a lesson. The strong rapport and relationships that teachers and learning support assistants have with the pupils enhance the quality of teaching further. These factors together with the very good management of all special needs staff and resources by the deputy headteacher make an effective impact on the progress that pupils make. This is reflected in the National Curriculum tests that show that their levels of attainment are not dissimilar to some of their classmates. Tasks that are set for the higher attaining pupils are more often than not at an appropriately challenging level. When this is the case pupils respond to the challenge and perform well. Occasionally when the work is too easy pupils become distracted and do not make the progress of which they are capable. Teaching and support for pupils who have English as an additional language is good and makes an important contribution to the good progress these pupils make.
20. Throughout school teachers have a secure knowledge of most subjects. In science, for example, teachers plan carefully for the scientific language they wish to develop. This is reflected well in the technical language pupils themselves use when explaining their experiments. The increasing emphasis that the teachers have placed on a structured approach to investigative work has generated a higher level of scientific curiosity in pupils. There are clear examples of teachers' knowledge, expertise and enthusiasm having a significant impact on pupils' learning and attainment. In art, pupils are not only taught about the works of famous artists, they are also taught the techniques. As a result pupils produce good quality, original pieces of work that show an impressive eye for detail. In religious education the manner which teachers address sensitive issues such as persecution and anti-Semitism produces in the pupils a genuine respect for the beliefs of others. In design and technology the pupils are provided with the opportunities to design and make a wide variety of products using a wealth of different materials. This together with the direct teaching of specific skills enables them to make very good finished products, whether it is a powered buggy, folders for storing paper, workable periscopes or fruit cocktails. In physical education the very good teaching of specific skills in rugby led to an immediate improvement in the pupils' level of performance. The school has rightly recognised the need to ensure that teachers' knowledge and expertise in information technology is extended through in-service training so that pupils can benefit from the new initiatives and advancements in this constantly developing area of the curriculum.
21. Teachers' planning is of a good standard overall. However, there is some variability between teachers within similar year groups. At its best planning is detailed, outlines

an appropriate number of learning objectives and a clear distinction is made between these objectives and the learning activities. The best practice sees the learning objectives shared with the pupils, tasks set that challenge and motivate the full range of abilities and careful evaluation of the lesson is then used to guide and inform future lessons. These strengths need to be disseminated across the school so that all pupils benefit from high quality planning that ensures their needs are met.

22. Overall the quality of relationships between pupils and staff is good. This often shows itself in discussions within lessons where pupils are happy to volunteer both questions and answers knowing that their contributions will be respected and valued. The management of pupils is generally good but there are instances where the management of the behaviour of some of the oldest and younger boys in school is not at a satisfactory level. On such occasions the teacher does not use a wide enough range of pupil management strategies or does not gain the full attention of pupils before making important teaching points. In these lessons boys tend to become over-dominant and restrict or impede the learning of their classmates.
23. Throughout the school teachers provide plenty of verbal praise and gentle constructive criticism to help pupils improve their work. The pupils appreciate this and are often willing to act upon the comments that are made. Teachers also mark pupils' work on a regular basis. Some excellent examples were seen when scrutinising pupils' books of what an effective tool marking can be to enhance pupils' learning. In these instances high quality marking outlined clearly and succinctly what pupils needed to do to improve. On other occasions the opportunity was used to clearly state why a piece of work was so good. This excellent practice is not consistent across the school, as there are examples of little comments other than ticks and work that had been incorrectly marked. Nearly all the parents who responded to the questionnaire sent out before the inspection are happy with the quality of the teaching and their perceptions are generally accurate. Approximately 85 per cent were happy with the amount of homework that the school set, with a small but significant percentage less happy. Inspection findings show that the amount of homework that is set is not dissimilar to that found in most schools and is therefore judged to be satisfactory.

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

24. The quality, breadth and depth of the curriculum in the school are good and have improved since the previous inspection, although not enough time and attention is being paid to information technology as a means of enhancing learning in all curriculum areas. The most significant improvements in provision arise from the fact that good quality schemes of work are securely established which are having a positive effect on standards. The school is meeting all statutory requirements including its provision for religious education. There is no detailed or discrete scheme of work for personal, social and health education but the pupils in the lower school discuss personal and emotional issues in 'Circle Time' and suitable instruction is provided in sex education and drugs awareness. A real strength is the fact that despite the additional emphasis the school has rightly given to literacy and numeracy, this has not been to the detriment of other subjects. The wide and stimulating opportunities that are provided across the curriculum has played a major role in the above average standards pupils are achieving in art, design and technology, history and religious education. The opportunities to study the work and techniques of famous artists, the challenging products pupils are asked to design and make or the sensitive manner in which pupils are expected to study topics such as anti-Semitism all make a powerful contribution to pupils' learning.

25. Teachers plan their lessons well, on a shared basis, within the year group, and this is contributing positively to the pupils' learning and ensuring a parity of access. The Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are securely implemented and good use is made of the skills acquired in English and mathematics in other curriculum areas, for example, measuring and data handling are used very effectively in design and technology, and in history and geography.
26. The provision of extra-curricular opportunities is good and a significant improvement since the previous inspection. After school there are drama, recorder, football and netball clubs that are well attended by both girls and boys. Cycling proficiency also takes place for Year 6 pupils with parental help. A homework club meets on Friday after school where parents can also attend to learn how they can contribute to their children's learning at home. The mathematics club takes place during the lunch break and up to forty pupils attends.
27. The provision for personal, social and health education whilst not specifically planned for, does take place in the curriculum. 'Circle Time' allows pupils to discuss their feelings and matters of importance in the world around them. As a result, they are growing in confidence and developing good relationships with each other. They learn to respect the differences between people. The school nurse is a regular visitor and is able to assist in advising on a healthier and safer lifestyle.
28. The contribution made by the local community to the pupils' learning is satisfactory. Visits are made to a local museum and nature reserve as well as delivering food parcels to the local elderly residents at harvest festival time. Visitors to the school include a theatre group who come dressed as Egyptians or Tudors to enhance the history curriculum. Others include the police, fire service and local Christian groups.
29. The school enjoys constructive relationships with its partner infant and secondary schools. Regular meetings take place between staff and resources are exchanged to supplement the curriculum. Year 6 pupils are able to visit the secondary school for a number of days as part of a business initiative where they learn to use design and technology resources under expert guidance supplied by industry. Appropriate links are in place with teacher training institutions.
30. All pupils with special educational needs have access to all aspects of the school curriculum. A strong feature of the overall provision for pupils with special educational needs is the careful recording of pupils' progress. In many cases, the learning support assistants under the watchful brief of the class teacher, and special needs co-ordinator do this. Care is taken that assessments are closely aligned to the pupils' individual education plans and the targets that these contain. From such work comes careful evaluation of the precise steps that pupils need to take in order to make further progress. There are effective links with the school's various support services including educational psychologist and speech therapy service. The pupils for whom English is an additional language benefit from well organised support that enhances their learning.
31. The school continues to make sound overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development, and the provision for pupils' moral development is of a good standard. Collective acts of worship are held on a daily basis and meet statutory requirements. Pupils' behaviour in assembly is good and all pupils participate well. There are opportunities within the act of worship for pupils to reflect on experiences in ways, which develop their spiritual awareness and self-knowledge. Recorded music is used well to assist this feeling of calm and create an atmosphere of community spirit. Within lessons teachers draw pupils' attention to the beauty of the world in which they

live when the moment is appropriate. However, such instances appear to be incidental rather than specifically planned for.

32. The school provides a good framework for moral development. Pupils are very clear about right and wrong. They know that sanctions and rewards are available within the school and agree that they are fair. The pupils themselves were responsible for drawing up class rules and most understand and try to comply with them at all times. Teachers and other adults in the school set good role models and have high expectations of courtesy and manners. Pupils recognise staff to be supportive and encouraging. Teachers make the most of opportunities to reinforce moral principles.
33. Pupils have opportunities to develop socially through the curriculum in, for instance, science or geography. The school's clear aims promote a good self-image; self-confidence, tolerance and staff act as good role models. These aims ensure that pupils grow in maturity and learn to work co-operatively. When opportunities are provided for pupils to take responsibility either in their own learning or by doing jobs around the school, they respond with a good level of maturity. However, such opportunities are not as frequent as they could be. The good range of extra-curricular activities and the residential visit that pupils attend provide further opportunities to enhance their social development. Pupils raise money for charities such as Great Ormond Street Children's hospital and this provides them with a valuable insight into the lives of others who may not be as fortunate as themselves.
34. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils learn about a number of different religious beliefs, cultures and ceremonies in religious education and carry this knowledge through into other lessons. Opportunities are provided through the teaching of art to extend pupils' cultural development by studying the work of famous European artists. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to study the work of non-European artists and craftspeople or for further developing their appreciation of cultural diversity through literature.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. The school continues to care for its pupils well. There are effective health and safety measures in place to ensure that their welfare is maintained. Regular checks are carried out on all electrical and fire equipment. Risk assessments are made of the school premises at regular intervals and fire drills are carried out. The procedures for child protection are appropriate and well understood by all staff. There are close links with outside agencies, including the school nurse and learning support services.
36. Procedures for supporting and monitoring pupils' personal development are in place and are an improvement since the last inspection. In addition, the staff know the pupils well and use information effectively to monitor pupils' progress and to set targets for improvement in their personal development.
37. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good and there is effective liaison with the educational welfare officer, who visits the school on a regular basis. Registers are kept in accordance with statutory requirements although in some instances daily totals are not recorded consistently. Absences are followed up promptly and reasons sought from parents and carers. This area of school life is a significant improvement since the previous inspection.
38. There are good procedures in place to monitor and promote good behaviour. The rules and code of conduct are widely displayed around the school and are well understood

by pupils, as they were instrumental in their formation. All staff fairly and consistently apply rewards and sanctions. The school's behaviour policy is in most instances effective in eliminating oppressive conduct but a statement on bullying is required to be drawn up to ensure pupils and parents alike clearly understand the meaning of the term.

39. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in the school are good, and have significantly improved since the previous inspection. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and well informed.
40. There are good systems in place to regularly assess the pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science and their progress through the National Curriculum levels are carefully tracked. The results of the tests, including a baseline assessment in Year 3, are used to set future targets for individual pupils and to inform the teachers' curriculum planning and classroom organisation. The results of national tests are now being analysed so that areas of weaknesses can be identified and targeted for extra practice. This is proving effective in, for example, mathematics, where fractions and problem solving have been highlighted and standards have improved.
41. Some teachers apply tests in other curriculum areas and the assessment co-ordinator intends to include National Curriculum levels in future lesson plans so that pupils' progress can be monitored more accurately and used to inform the annual reports to parents.
42. The pupils maintain their own records of attainment by selecting and annotating pieces of work throughout the year. This helps them to track their progress and celebrate their success. They are also involved in setting themselves new targets, which is a positive and commendable approach. There are systems in place for teachers to make notes after each lesson on the progress individual pupils have made. The record keeping and the evaluations of outcomes of lessons are, however, not consistently maintained in a minority of classes, which is limiting their value.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. Over 90 per cent of the parents who responded to the questionnaire and attended the formal meeting, consider John Bunyan Junior to be a good school. There are opportunities for parents to meet with staff on a daily basis, in addition to an annual formal meeting where they are able to discuss their children's progress reports. They receive an annual report from the governors and a prospectus, which are both informative. There is now good, regular, communication from the school, on such things as curriculum matters, as well as a weekly, user- friendly, newsletter. This is an improvement on the previous inspection, and has enabled parents to give more help to their children at home. The number of parents helping in the school, however, is minimal and despite the school's efforts, this still remains an area for development. Parents confirm that they feel welcomed by the school and are confident to approach the staff about any concerns they may have. Parents feel far more positively about the school than they did at the time of the last inspection and the inspection findings fully support the parents' positive views.
44. The 'Friends of John Bunyan' has a committee which organises events to raise funds for equipment and resources for both the infant and the junior schools. The committee works hard and is much appreciated by both schools. Its efforts have a beneficial impact on the quality of resources which in turn enhance pupils' learning.

45. The school is extremely keen to develop close relationships with the parents of children with special educational needs. It is very successful in this. Unusually, over and above the informal contacts that teachers have with the parents of the pupils with special educational needs, a separate night is held for them to discuss their children's progress in more detail over and above the normal parent consultation evenings. All parents are given a copy of their children's individual education plans and invited to make comments. This close co-operation enables parents to gain a clear overview of the level of support given by the school and the progress their children are making.
46. The parents generally feel that their children are making good progress at school and they are happy with the quality of teaching. Parents feel that the school sets high expectations and is now well led. A small but significant percentage of parents are not happy with the amount of homework that is set. However inspection findings show that it is similar to the level found in the majority of schools and is therefore judged to be satisfactory. A small percentage of parents feel that the school does not provide a wide enough range of activities outside lesson time. The school provides sporting and musical activities as well as clubs for drama, mathematics and homework. Plans are already well advanced for a computer club. The range of extra-curricular activities is judged to be good. Although the partnership between home and school has clearly improved the school is very keen to forge stronger links so that such a partnership can have an even greater impact on pupils' learning. The school's commitment is already evident in the way it has established family numeracy and literacy groups which are beginning to have an impact on pupils' attainment

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. The overall leadership of the school is good and has made a significant contribution to the improvement of the school during the last two years. The leadership provided by the headteacher is very good and a real strength of the school. He has been a pivotal figure in the school's improvement. At the last inspection the leadership and management of the school was judged to be weak. The headteacher is to be commended for the manner in which he has systematically addressed the weaknesses identified, and has turned the school around. Standards have improved, teaching is of a better quality and the quality of leadership is now a strength of the school. Together with his able deputy headteacher, and more recently an extended senior management team, and an astute well informed Governing Body, the weaknesses identified in many aspects of school life have been addressed. The school is clearly a better, more effective school than at the time of the last inspection where standards are rising. The very good team spirit that has been developed in the school together with the readiness of all staff to reflect critically on what they do indicates that the school is well placed to continue to improve.
48. The senior management team, which consists of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and two senior members of staff, meets on a regular basis and discusses issues pertinent to the improvement of the school. These issues are then fully discussed at staff meetings. Teaching and non-teaching staff are actively involved in the decision making process. Detailed minutes are kept of meetings and the headteacher ensures that decisions relating to classroom practice are carried out. This has a positive impact on the quality of education the school provides.
49. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have carried out a number of lesson observations. All visits to the classroom are formally recorded and the outcomes discussed with the teachers involved. The teacher is given a written record of the visit and areas for improvement are clearly identified. Follow- up visits then concentrate on

these areas for development. Teachers recognise this process to be an important element of their professional development and show a readiness to act upon the constructive comments, which are made. However the size of the school means that observations are not carried out on a regular basis. Curriculum co-ordinators are not sufficiently involved in the monitoring process and do not systematically and rigorously monitor and evaluate teaching and learning through lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work or teachers' planning. The school has already identified the involvement of co-ordinators in the monitoring process in its school development plan, and the issue will be addressed in the near future. This will enable the co-ordinators to have a greater impact on raising standards by disseminating the good practice that clearly exists and tackling weaknesses.

50. Although there are no systems in place for the formal appraisal of staff, individual meetings with the headteacher identify areas for professional development. Teachers attend training courses, which enhance their knowledge and expertise as well as meeting the needs of the school. An example of this is the training courses staff have attended for information technology because both individual teachers and the school had identified this as an area of weakness. This training has led to greater confidence and expertise, which has enhanced pupils' learning. The school encourages support staff to attend appropriate training courses, which they are only too keen to do. The new skills they acquire are put to very good use in the classroom and the pupils benefit enormously. All staff in the school are aware of their role in the school's day-to-day work. All have clear and concise job descriptions, and as a team the school staff help to bring to life the aims of the school.
51. The Governing Body is effective and rigorously holds the school to account for the quality of education it provides. Following the previous inspection the Governing Body has worked very closely with the school in tackling the issues identified. There is an appropriate committee structure in place and all committees have terms of reference to help guide their work. All statutory requirements are met. Governors make a valuable and valued contribution to setting the direction of the school and in monitoring progress towards the stated targets. The governors know the school well and use their individual and professional skills for the benefit of the school. Many visit the school on a regular basis and governors with responsibility for literacy, numeracy, and special needs, for example, have observed lessons being taught and discussed their visits with staff. All governors are linked to a curriculum area and discuss development with subject co-ordinators. The Chair and Vice-Chair of Governors have made an excellent contribution to the work of the school. The headteacher greatly values the manner in which they have fulfilled their role of 'critical friend' and the way in which they have worked with him in helping to improve the school.
52. At the time of the last inspection the school was identified as having serious weaknesses. In response to this the Governing Body set up a special committee to first of all draw up the required action plan and then to monitor progress towards the stated targets. The committee met on a regular basis and ensured that issues were systematically tackled. By the time HMI visited the school in 1999 significant improvements had already been made which were reflected in the report produced by HMI. The school has made very good progress since the last inspection and is clearly a much better school. Standards have risen, the quality of teaching has improved, the curriculum is now well planned, assessment procedures are of a good standard and most significantly the leadership and management of the school is now a real strength. The headteacher, staff and governors all recognise that there are still areas that need improvement but evidence indicates that these issues will be tackled in the same systematic manner which has already brought the school its recent success.

53. The headteacher in consultation with all staff and governors decides the educational needs and priorities of the school and articulates them in the school development plan. This document is an accurate assessment of the areas of the school that need to be improved. Timescales and costings are built in to the plan. The plan is an effective tool for school improvement because all priorities are linked directly to the impact they will have on raising standards.
54. The school carries out a good number of tests and assessments to assess and then track the progress of all pupils. The headteacher carries out a detailed analysis of assessment data and uses the information to set targets for improvement. Within class, teachers set targets for groups of pupils and targets for individual pupils. This practice is having a positive impact in helping to raise standards. The school has set literacy and numeracy targets for the year 2001. The improving nature of the school means that these targets need to be reviewed and set at a more challenging level.
55. The day-to-day finances are well managed by the school's finance manager who has good procedures in place to set up and monitor financial planning and expenditure. The finance committee draws up a detailed one year budget plan with outline planning for a further two years. The school has had a large surplus budget carried forward from the previous financial year. This money has been specifically targeted for improving the school premises and increasing the number of support staff. When this money has been spent the surplus amount will be at a more acceptable and appropriate level. The school's pattern of spending relates closely to priorities identified in the school development plan. Under the astute leadership of its chair, the finance committee ensures that the school evaluates the cost effectiveness of major spending decisions, such as an increase in the number of support staff, in terms of the impact they have on helping to raise standards. The recommendations of the latest auditor's report have been acted upon.
56. The school makes good use of its available resources and governors are effective in applying the principles of best value in their management of resources. Office duties are carried out effectively by two industrious and pleasant secretaries who enable the school to run smoothly on a day-to day basis. Good use is made of specific grants such as the standards fund which is used to provide teacher training for areas of the curriculum such as information technology, where staff knowledge is not as strong as it could be. The school does not make enough use of the large number of opportunities it has with the computer suite or in the classrooms. Opportunities are missed for the computers to be used for independent study or to support other areas of the curriculum. This restricts standards in the subject from being stronger.
57. Overall the quality of leadership and management of the school, together with the efficient running of the school have improved greatly since the last inspection. The school has a clear focus and direction and is now providing satisfactory value for money.
58. The management for pupils with special educational needs is of a high standard. Good progress has been made in respect of this since the school's last inspection when arrangements were found to be insecure. Since then, the management of provision has largely been undertaken by the deputy headteacher in close liaison with the staff. A new structure for the formulation of pupils' individual education plans has been devised and provision for learning support assistants has been increased. Their work is closely supervised and they make a valuable contribution to the work of the school. Governors' involvement is good and care is taken to ensure that the grants given to the school for the pupils with special educational needs are judiciously spent.

59. The school has a well-balanced mixture of both experienced and more recently appointed staff. These teachers are appropriately qualified to ensure full delivery of the National Curriculum. This is an improvement on the previous inspection. The deployment of staff is constantly under review to ensure maximum effectiveness. There are currently no newly qualified teachers but when there are their induction is well handled with good mentoring procedures in place. The school is used for the training of new teachers on a regular basis. The school has a number of teaching assistants who are of great benefit in raising the standards of pupils. There are regular discussions between the assistants, class teachers and the special educational needs co-ordinator concerning pupils' progress. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
60. The accommodation is more than adequate. Classrooms are generally spacious, well appointed and clean. The building is used effectively to teach the National Curriculum, although the library is insufficiently used for the development of pupils' research skills. Outside play areas are spacious and include a swimming pool, a large field as well as playgrounds, which are designed to accommodate a number of games to be played simultaneously. There is also a pleasant quiet area with tables and benches. Trees and plants enhance the environment and any rubbish is placed by the pupils in strategically placed waste-bins.
61. There are sufficient resources for all National Curriculum subjects. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The resources are generally adequate in all subjects and in history, geography, religious education and information technology they are good. The selection of fiction books in the library has improved since the previous inspection. There is a computer suite in addition to computers in each class. Some physical education equipment needs to be upgraded.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62. In order to improve the quality of education further the Governing Body, headteacher and staff should:

1) Further raise standards in information technology by:

- ensuring that computers are used to support pupils' learning in all areas of the curriculum;
- extending pupils' knowledge and understanding of the use and potential of the Internet and electronic mail;
- providing appropriate in-service training for all staff to extend their knowledge and expertise.

(paras 6, 9, 20, 24, 50, 56, 66, 71, 72, 74, 83, 96, 100-105, 121)

2) Ensure that curriculum co-ordinators, in addition to the senior management team, are provided with opportunities to have a greater impact on raising standards by:

- supporting, monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning in classes other than their own;
- regularly scrutinising pupils' work and teachers' planning.

(paras 49, 72, 78, 99, 105, 111, 116, 121)

3) Provide more consistent opportunities for pupils to enhance their learning and personal development by:

- enabling them to undertake personal study and research using books and computers;
- encouraging them to organise and take responsibility for activities that would make a valuable contribution to the life of the school as a community.

(paras 3, 13, 18, 87)

4) Ensure that all teachers use the marking of pupils' work as a means of effectively outlining what pupils need to do to improve their attainment and learning.

(paras 23, 71, 76, 83, 96)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	53
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	40

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	13	51	34	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	Y3-Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	280
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	82

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	81

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	28
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	32

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.7
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	1999	30	41	71

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	18	23
	Girls	29	25	34
	Total	42	43	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	60 (56)	60 (42)	82 (66)
	National	70(65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	17	18
	Girls	29	26	29
	Total	42	43	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	59 (43)	61 (47)	80 (45)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	5
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	288
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	11	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	30

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	173

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/A
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/A

Total number of education support staff	N/A
Total aggregate hours worked per week	N/A

Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/A
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1998/99
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	£
Total income	565029
Total expenditure	539746
Expenditure per pupil	1836
Balance brought forward from previous year	56855
Balance carried forward to next year	82138

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	284
Number of questionnaires returned	75

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	45	55	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	40	53	4	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	24	67	5	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	23	61	9	4	3
The teaching is good.	40	56	0	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	53	9	1	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	41	55	3	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	49	49	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	28	58	9	0	5
The school is well led and managed.	21	72	5	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	27	68	1	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	35	51	0	11	3

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

ENGLISH

63. The inspection findings indicate that pupils' overall attainment in English is below national expectations as pupils enter the school and is in line with national expectations by the time pupils leave the school. Although there is no confirmed national data the results the school achieved in the National Curriculum tests of 2000 were the best the school have achieved in recent years with a greater percentage of pupils exceeding the level expected of 11- year-olds. This continues the upward trend in the school's results.
64. Progress in English has been good since the last inspection. Factors contributing to this include the successful implementation and further development of the National Literacy Strategy. Teachers are more effective in their planning and evaluation, and track the progress of both individual and groups of pupils well. The role of the co-ordinator has been developed. There has been a clear focus on handwriting. These initiatives, along with an improvement in the quality of teaching and the impact of pupils' positive attitudes, have been successful in raising standards.
65. By the end of Key Stage 2 the standard of writing is in line with national expectations both within English lessons and across other subjects. Handwriting is a strength in the school, with very good presentation skills noticeable in displays such as 'All About Me'. Towards the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' understanding and use of punctuation is secure and spelling is usually accurate. Higher attaining pupils can write expressively and for a range of audiences. There is an increasing range of opportunities for pupils to develop extended writing as they move through the school and the school needs to ensure that such opportunities continue to be provided on a regular basis to enhance pupils' writing skills.
66. There are some good opportunities for pupils to use writing across the curriculum. Pupils write up accurate reports in science. Research writing and reporting skills are well used in history. However there are limited opportunities to develop writing skills in information technology.
67. At the end of Key Stage 2 standards of listening are in line with national expectations and pupils make good progress in both speaking and listening. Pupils listen well to one another and to the classteacher. They enjoy listening to stories, plays and poetry. Although pupils are confident when answering questions in class, their oral work lacks a certain degree of depth or expressive vocabulary. The school has targeted separate sessions within the school day to develop opportunities for speaking and listening. There are opportunities within 'Circle Time' and assemblies to develop both speaking and listening skills. In history older pupils ask questions and are articulate, for example, in talking about Britain since the 1930s. In religious education, younger pupils use a wide range of vocabulary to compose a prayer and read this aloud confidently. In geography pupils are given the opportunity to discuss links between climate and adaptation in plants, working in pairs to present findings. A well-attended drama club helps to support and enhance speaking and listening skills.
68. Pupils make good progress in reading. When pupils enter the school they have a limited awareness of a range of authors and are not always enthusiastic about reading. Able pupils read well but not fluently, with limited expression and intonation. By the end of Key Stage 2 able pupils read confidently, fluently and with expression. They use

a good range of strategies to approach new words and are clearly enthusiastic about books. There is a good range of opportunities for pupils to develop their reading skills across the curriculum. However, reading books chosen within school do not always match pupils' abilities and on occasions pupils find the level of text either too easy or too difficult. On these occasions pupils' learning is not as rapid as it could be.

69. In history, geography and religious education pupils adapt their style of reading in reference texts although the library is not effectively used to support independent reading and research. There are good opportunities for reading aloud in the Literacy Hour and a range of texts, authors, poems, story sacks, big books and plays are effectively used.
70. Pupils' response is good in English lessons. They listen well to each other and to the classteacher and support assistants. They concentrate well on their tasks and take pride in presentation. Pupils co-operate well in the use of shared resources, for example, dictionaries; group reading books and play scripts. A few pupils at the upper end of the school are easily distracted when listening to others and can disrupt the pace of lessons.
71. The quality of teaching is good across the key stage. Teachers plan well, differentiating tasks for different ability levels. Teachers make good use of assessment and evaluation of lessons to inform future planning. Homework is set on a regular basis to support pupils' learning. Most teachers have good management strategies and have clear expectations, maintaining a good pace during most of the lessons. Sessions at the end of lessons can sometimes be rushed and are not always effectively used. Good use is made of questioning techniques to extend pupils vocabulary and understanding. Clear targets are set with the pupils although these are not always reviewed. Literacy is used well to support learning in other subjects. Support staff are used well, particularly to support pupils with special needs. Opportunities need to be developed to use the library and to make use of information technology to support learning. Although work is always marked it is not always used effectively to support and develop pupils' learning. There are limited opportunities for independent research.
72. English is led by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator who is aware of the subject's strengths and weaknesses. She has monitored planning and teaching and has a good overview of how the subject is taught across the school. Monitoring of pupils' work would further enhance this overview. The co-ordinator has developed clear tracking systems for pupils and makes good use of assessment data to inform future developments. All this has had an impact on raising standards. The co-ordinator has developed a portfolio of examples of writing and recognises further work is needed to moderate work. This would help to inform teacher assessment. There is a strong governor link. The governor has monitored a range of English lessons. Feedback is currently only to individual classteachers. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to make more use of the school's resources, including the use of the library and the use of information technology. Marking guidelines are currently being trialled. These should further support and develop pupils learning.

MATHEMATICS

73. Attainment in mathematics is in line with the national average at the end of the key stage, and the progress pupils make, including those with special educational needs is good. This represents a clear improvement in standards since the previous inspection.

The main reasons for the improvement are the secure implementation of the numeracy strategy and an improvement in the quality of teaching.

74. Good emphasis is placed on teaching the pupils to use a range of methods to add, subtract, multiply and divide whole numbers, fractions and decimals. By the end of the key stage, most pupils supply reasonable estimates of answers to questions or make accurate calculations by rounding numbers to the nearest ten or hundred. They have a sound knowledge of numbers and explain their ways of working, confidently and accurately, using appropriate mathematical language. Other aspects of the numeracy curriculum are appropriately developed. The pupils demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of the properties of shapes and symmetry and collect data which they present on bar and line graphs. Their understanding of shape, space and measures and data handling is often applied very effectively across the curriculum, especially in design and technology and often in history and geography, for example when making replicas of ration books or measuring the rainfall. Insufficient opportunities, however, are being provided for pupils to use information technology in order to deepen their understanding or as an alternative way of presenting their work.
75. The pupils' attitudes to mathematics are good. Pupils behave well in class, listen to their teachers and respond enthusiastically in the oral question and answer sessions. This is having a positive effect on their understanding and mental agility. Pupils work confidently on their own, or with a partner but are not afraid to ask for help when needed. They apply themselves well to their written work and the majority usually complete the tasks in the set time. Pupils take a pride in the finished product and their books are neat and well presented. This helps them to work accurately and is a strength in the school.
76. Most of the teaching is good. The teachers have all received training in the numeracy strategy and their knowledge and understanding are good. The teachers in each year group plan their lessons co-operatively. These plans are very good, with clear objectives and include different activities to meet the needs of pupils of differing abilities. Most lessons move at a good pace and are well sequenced so the pupils are taught and learn in carefully guided steps. This helps them to understand, and maintains their interest. The classroom assistants usually work with small groups and the high quality of their input is having a very positive impact on standards. Another strength in the subject arises from the fact that most teachers evaluate their lessons on a daily basis and, if necessary, modify their plans for the following day. This is a highly effective means of ensuring that the pupils gain a secure understanding of the topic being studied.
77. Regular assessments are made of pupils' progress in mathematics and the results of the National Curriculum end of key stage tests have been analysed in order to identify any weaknesses in the curriculum. It was noted, for example, that pupils were experiencing difficulties in understanding fractions and word problems, as a result a greater emphasis is now being placed on these aspects as a means of raising standards. Another positive feature is the setting of individual targets for each pupil which are written on the front of their books. These, however, are not always as effective as they might be, because the teachers seldom include written comments in the pupils' books when marking their work.
78. The co-ordinator has worked hard and effectively to lead the school in the implementation of the numeracy strategy. He creates opportunities to scrutinise the pupils' work but he is not gaining an adequate overview of the subject by directly monitoring teachers' plans or the teaching and learning in the classroom. This has

already been recognised as an area for development so that the co-ordinator can have a bigger impact on helping to raise standards even further.

SCIENCE

79. The inspection findings indicate that pupils' attainment at the end of the key stage is in line with national expectations. The results of the most recent National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments indicate a rising trend of attainment over that of preceding years. The pupils enter the school with below average levels of attainment; they make good progress in their learning as they move through the school. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress.
80. By the age of 11, pupils have a good understanding of how to undertake investigation work to support their learning of different scientific ideas. Teaching regularly supports the use of such an approach to develop pupils' learning. As a result, pupils have a secure knowledge and understanding of how, by changing just one of the variables within a test will alter the results and invalidate their work. While most pupils communicate the results of their work clearly, not all pupils label or draw their diagrams with sufficient care. Pupils have a secure knowledge of the similarities and differences between solids, liquids and gases and of living things. They appreciate, for example, that the temperature of water has a direct bearing on how much gas is given off when yeast and sugar is mixed together. Pupils draw and label primary sources of light and know how these differ from secondary sources and are able to show how light changes direction when it travels through two different transparent materials. Pupils' understanding of the Earth and beyond is the weaker aspect of their attainment generally. However, they know and give examples of different forces and understand what is meant by the terms 'air resistance', 'upthrust' and 'streamlining.' By the age of 11, pupils name and explain the different parts of a flower.
81. Pupils make satisfactory gains in their understanding of scientific language as they move through the key stage and by the end of the key stage have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of living things in all year groups, for example, pupils learn about living creatures. This increases in complexity as Year 4 learn about habitats being the natural home of a plant or animal. In Year 5, pupils learning about how animals adapt to their surroundings and how certain creatures are a natural part of the 'food chain' with they being either a 'producer' or 'consumer.' In Year 6, pupils learn about the terms 'pollination' and reproduction as their understanding becomes deeper.
82. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers' planning is effective and consistent both within and across year groups. Lessons suitably highlight what scientific language and understanding is to be developed during a lesson. While teachers have sufficient expectations of most pupils, evidence from pupils' work suggests that on occasions pupils of all abilities are given the same work. Sometimes this leads to pupils, particularly those with higher attainment, not being sufficiently challenged. However, clear use is made of investigation work to support pupils' learning and this effectively ensures that pupils gain a good mastery of the scientific language often associated with such work. In lessons seen during the inspection, teachers were extremely mindful to utilise the skills and experience of learning support assistants to support pupils in their endeavours. The quality of their input is often good with, open-ended questions being used to explore and extend pupils' learning. Across the school, the quality of teaching is such that many pupils demonstrate and develop positive attitudes to their learning of the subject. Many are curious about scientific ideas and, for the most part, work hard in lessons.

83. While teaching benefits by some good marking, the overall quality could be improved by giving increased emphasis on highlighting how pupils could improve their efforts. There is scope to make greater and more consistent use of information technology to support pupils' science learning.
84. There is satisfactory leadership and management of the subject. Since the last inspection, the school's scheme of work is consistently used to plan pupils' learning and increased attention has been paid to assessing the rate of pupils' learning. While records of progress are passed from class to class, there is a greater need to make fuller and more consistent use of the information about the level of the pupils' progress when they first enter the school to set targets for future development. The school has rightly identified the need to make more use of the knowledge and expertise of the co-ordinator across the school. This is to include the more regular observation of lessons and the scrutiny of pupils' work in order to spread the good practice that does exist and to tackle any weaknesses.

ART AND DESIGN

85. By the end of the key stage, standards in art are above national expectations. This is an improvement since the school's last inspection when they were found to be in line with expectations. There are well-planned links with other subjects and the school has managed to maintain a broad, balanced curriculum and, at the same time, has enabled pupils to explore art themes in some depth. As a result, all pupils, including those with special educational needs make good gains in their learning of art as they move from class to class.
86. By the age of 11, pupils have gained a good knowledge and understanding of the works and techniques employed by famous artists. The works of craftspeople such as Van Gogh, Lowry, Michelangelo and contemporary artists such as Joe Tilson are regularly explored with pupils in each class. Year 4 pupils know, for example, that Lowry often used dark, subdued colours to capture everyday life as he experienced it in Salford. Year 6 pupils appreciate how Joe Tilson draws upon the patterns often seen in the pottery of the Ancient Greeks in order to create his own work. Pupils develop quite a keen eye for detail and by the end of the key stage, use a range of different pencils, chalks and pastels to observe and recreate drawings based on still life observations. Pupils' three-dimensional work is often impressive. Recent examples include the creation of well-crafted models from a range of recyclable materials in order to create a model of how a blitzed building may have looked during the Second World War. Pupils' ability to create and appreciate different printing and marbling techniques is also well developed by the time they leave the school. Pupils have an equally good understanding of paint and understand terms such as 'hue' and 'wash'.
87. The good progress pupils make in the school is enhanced significantly by the quality of teaching, which is good. Since the last inspection, a clear scheme of work that highlights the skills and techniques pupils are expected to learn as they move through the key stage has been devised. This is consistently used as pupils move through each of the year groups. These skills increase in complexity and demands are made on pupils in what they are expected to achieve. Teachers have good subject knowledge and the undoubted enthusiasm they have for the subject is communicated well to the pupils. This ensures that the pupils themselves are enthusiastic about the work they undertake. Evidence from many photographs of their artwork indicates that pupils have a keen eye for detail and work hard to produce artwork of a high standard. Furthermore, the well-planned links that are made with other subjects allow pupils to explore topics and themes in greater depth. Much art teaching, for example, is linked

with the subjects of design and technology, history and geography and this allows them to develop their art skills and understanding through these subjects. Evidence also suggests that pupils are given good scope to evaluate their art work and say what they liked about what they have created and how, in future work, they could improve their efforts. At present, however, the school is only just starting to establish how information technology can be used to extend pupils' learning in art. However, occasionally, teaching is a little over-directed with, for example, resources often put out by teachers for pupils to use. Pupils would benefit from being given greater freedom and responsibility for choosing which media they would prefer to use as part of their art work. If allowed, this offers greater opportunities for pupils to improve their initiative and personal development. Sketch books, while used by many pupils in the school, could be more effectively employed.

88. There is effective management of the subject that has a positive impact on the quality of pupils' learning and progress. The co-ordinator is highly enthusiastic about the subject and has a good overview of how the subject is planned for and taught across the school. Art makes a valuable contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, making increased provision for pupils to explore the work of other artists from a non-European background could enhance this even further. Overall, resources are satisfactory and suitably complemented by a good range of books about famous artists in the school library.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

89. Standards in design and technology are above the national expectation at the end of the key stage, and pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection, which is very much due to the enthusiasm and expertise of the co-ordinator, and the quality of the teaching.
90. The pupils are provided with a wide range of opportunities to design and make a variety of products, utilising different materials. The pupils make hinged and decorated invitation cards, weave and sew, using fabric and wool, and create pots and models from mouldable materials, such as clay, salt dough and paper mache. They have a good insight into food preparation and make soup and fruit cocktails, which they then evaluate for flavour and quality. In Year 5 the pupils design small buggies which, by applying the knowledge gained in their science lessons they mobilise, using electric power. By the end of the key stage the pupils have become familiar with a variety of materials which they combine together in a range of practical tasks. They utilise their mathematical skills very well and use tools skilfully and safely. They design and produce attractive, functional folders for storing paper, workable periscopes and useful textile items for their bedrooms.
91. The pupils' attitudes to the subject are very good. They behave very well in lessons. They listen carefully to instructions, and work with interest and concentration. They discuss their past and present work with enthusiasm. Pupils display high levels of perseverance and are very willing to evaluate their work and modify their designs if necessary. They set themselves high standards and take pride in the finished product.
92. Teaching is good, and during the week of inspection some very good teaching was observed. The teachers' knowledge and understanding is good and they organise their lessons very well, presenting clear objectives and instructions. They intervene and provide help and support when needed but leave room for the pupils to experiment and learn from their mistakes. Much time is spent at the designing stage and teachers

provide good opportunities for pupils to disassemble and evaluate examples of similar models before making decisions and creating their own designs. This is impacting positively on the pupils' designs and the practical outcomes. Teachers develop the pupils' self evaluation skills well, and this is a strength in the subject, which is very effectively helping to raise standards.

93. The co-ordinator maintains a very useful portfolio of lesson plans and evaluations, together with examples of outcomes which is a very effective means of supporting the teachers. The year group of teachers plan their lessons together thus providing mutual support. They make good use of pupils' numeracy skills in the lessons, and incorporate design and technology successfully into other curriculum areas, such as history, where, for example, they have designed and produced shadufs as used in ancient Egypt and ration books to enhance their understanding of the conditions prevailing during World War Two.

GEOGRAPHY

94. Pupils make satisfactory progress in geography and in some classes the standard of work is high. The curriculum map provides for good coverage of geography across the four years of the key stage. Overall standards are at an expected level at the end of the key stage.
95. Pupils develop their geographical skills in a number of ways as they build from their study of the local environment through examination of the contrasts provided by the geography of St. Lucia. They extend further into an examination of aspects of European geography and begin to look at global patterns such as weather and climate. More detailed study of the British Isles is linked with a closer examination of physical and regional features, investigation of local issues such as the construction of the bypass and other nearby features. Pupils have a good level of factual knowledge and their recording is well presented. In discussion they can address the morality of human impacts on the environment such as settlement and pollution and they have positive and enthusiastic responses to the subject. There are some gaps in their knowledge and understanding that stem from a lack of experience in developing the fieldwork skills which are central to improving pupils' geographical appreciation.
96. The teaching of geography is generally good throughout the school, although some teachers rely too heavily on recording through the medium of worksheets rather than allowing pupils the opportunity for investigating for themselves. New developments are being incorporated into the scheme of work for geography and the recently appointed co-ordinator is acquiring a good overview of the subject. Planning and assessment are effective and marking is generally good although not in every class. Teachers do not have a full range of opportunities for the promotion of geography because of the lack of provision for fieldwork and the lack of suitable information technology resources. Other resources for the subject are good.

HISTORY

97. Pupils make good progress in history and by the end of the key stage standards are above national expectations. The teaching of history is timetabled for an appropriate amount of time across the four years of the key stage. New developments are being incorporated into the scheme of work to meet the requirements of Curriculum 2000.

98. In their study of history pupils pursue a good mix of subject matter that gives them insights into a variety of periods and associated events. They have a good sense of chronology and by Year 6 they know that time and social change are inextricably linked. In their study of Braintree then and now, pupils are able to develop some elements of their fieldwork skills although there is insufficient opportunity across the subject as a whole for this skill. Study also includes an investigation of the Romans, ancient Greece and ancient Egypt, the Tudors and Britain since the 1930's. In their study of each period pupils gain insights into the key features and the changes that took place at the time. Older pupils are also aware that the state of the modern world is due in part to the influence of events and civilisations of the distant past. Pupils have access to a good range of resources, including artefacts and photographic materials, and they learn to treat these with respect. By Year 6, pupils have a maturity of understanding and outlook that is a credit to the quality of the history teaching.
99. The teaching of history is good throughout the school, and some particularly good lessons were observed during the course of the inspection. Teachers use a range of quality materials although the variety of information technology resources needs to be improved as part of the up dating of the curriculum. The quality of the work produced in workbooks, folders and displays is very good and pupils take pride in the outcomes of their collective efforts. The quality of the displays is often very high and these make a significant contribution to the ambience of the learning environment. Marking is generally detailed and encouraging and teachers are secure in their knowledge of the history curriculum. The recently appointed co-ordinator is acquiring a good overview of the teaching of history although, as yet, has no time available for the monitoring of the teaching of history in the classroom.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

100. The inspection findings indicate that by the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' overall attainment is broadly in line with national expectations but there are weaknesses in certain elements of the subject. Not enough use is made of computers to support other areas of the curriculum or for pupils to develop their skills of independent study or research. Pupils are not adept at using the Internet or aware of the potential of electronic mail. However the school has made significant improvements since the time of the last inspection when this area of the curriculum was identified as having unsatisfactory standards and not meeting National Curriculum requirements.
101. Following the previous inspection immediate action was taken to replace old or incompatible equipment. The school has recently set up a computer suite with a large number of machines that are of a good standard. This suite is being increasingly used by all staff to aid the direct teaching of specific skills to larger groups of pupils. Each class has a timetabled lesson each week. The school recognises that the potential of this excellent facility has not been yet been fully realised. Plans are in hand for pupils to have access throughout the day so that computers can be used to support other areas of the curriculum as a tool for pupils' independent research. This is an accurate assessment, as both computers in the suite as well as those in the classroom are not used to their full potential to enhance pupils' learning and raise achievement. The school has identified the need for staff to attend specific training packages to deepen their knowledge and confidence. Staff have worked hard over the last two years to increase their command of the subject through in- service training and further training should equip them with the necessary skills to exploit to the full the very good facilities and resources the school has in order to further pupils' learning.

102. Pupils are provided with opportunities to draft and edit their work. They access, save and retrieve information and change the size or style of the font they are using. Towards the end of the key stage many pupils know how to import graphics into word-processed pieces of work. Limited examples were seen of pupils undertaking research tasks in history when looking at the lifestyle of the Tudors and the Ancient Greeks. In work on modelling and control technology, pupils write short programs to control a screen turtle. Here good links are made with their work in mathematics through discussion of angles and rotation. Other aspects of computer modelling and control are not as well developed. Pupils know how to save and print out work and recognise the function of many icons, which appear on the screen. The school is to develop its Internet and e-mailing facilities in the near future. This is an important development because at the moment pupils are not fully aware of the power of computers as a tool for communication and information.
103. There is no doubt that the school has made big strides forward in this area of the curriculum. The investment in new computers and the setting up of the computer suite has meant that pupils show positive attitudes to working with computers. The provision of the computer suite gives the subject a much higher profile in school and pupils respond by listening attentively and are increasingly recognising the importance of computers as a means of enhancing their learning. Pupils are always ready to help each other when working on the computers with the higher attaining pupils being only too willing to help their less confident classmates. These positive attitudes make an important contribution to the satisfactory progress that pupils of all abilities are now making. The school has recently adopted national guidelines to support teaching and learning across the school. If rigorously implemented and monitored indications are that they will provide good coverage of all aspects of the subject and help to create a more rapid rate of progress and higher levels of achievement.
104. The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory with evidence of good practice. There is now an increasing emphasis on the teaching of direct skills that is enhancing pupils' learning. The computer suite facility means that pupils are never working more than two to a computer, often pupils have a computer each. This means that immediately a specific skill is taught pupils have the opportunity to test out what they have learned on the computer. The best teaching occurs when teachers use appropriate technical language, set high expectations and make their explanations clear so that pupils know exactly what to do. In these instances pupils invariably rise to the challenge. Teaching is not as effective when teachers do not gain the full attention of the pupils when making a direct point. In these instances the pupils miss salient teaching points and their learning is not enhanced. There are some good examples of teachers using computers in other subjects such as history and the better teaching reinforces pupils' numeracy skills by asking them to work out angles of rotation when writing a short computer program. These practices need to be at a much more consistent level across the school.
105. The co-ordinator has played a major role in helping to improve standards and provision in the subject. She has attended numerous training courses and uses the knowledge and skills she has developed to support colleagues. She has drawn up a good quality action plan, which if followed will help to ensure that standards and resources continue to improve. The school has clearly earmarked monies for further improvement in provision. At present the co-ordinator is developing a system to assess and then track pupils' progress as they move through school. As these procedures become increasingly embedded into the life of the school it will provide an accurate assessment of what pupils can or cannot do. The role of the co-ordinator does not include the monitoring and evaluating of teaching and learning. This is a weakness

because it prevents the co-ordinator from having an even greater impact on helping to raise standards.

MUSIC

106. Attainment in music is broadly in line with national expectations. Progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory. A scheme of work is in place and this ensures continuity and progression. More tuned percussion instruments are available. Singing is satisfactory.
107. Pupils at the beginning of the key stage are able to name some percussion instruments. Pupils can identify loud and soft sounds and explore ways of making sounds using instruments and different parts of their body, including voice. Instruments are used well across the school. More able pupils are able to follow a tune and keep rhythm. Younger pupils are able to sing a round and play untuned and tuned ostinatos. Pupils at the end of the key stage are beginning to create a pentatonic scale and use this to accompany a song. Less able pupils need an assistant to call out notes; more able pupils are able to perform well when accompanied by a guitar. Older pupils are aware of the need for notation to record music.
108. Pupils sing enthusiastically in class activities and in assemblies. Pupils listen well to music as they enter assembly. The range of available listening music is currently limited and needs to be developed to include music from a range of cultures and styles. A number of recorder groups already enhance the music in the school. There are currently too few opportunities to make improvements to pupils' own and others work.
109. Music is taught regularly and teaching is of a satisfactory standard. Teachers re-cap on previous lessons and clarify objectives for the lesson. There is a clear expectation of participation and pupils respond positively to this. Teachers' subject knowledge is not always secure and at times there is an over dependence on taped lessons. There are missed opportunities for pupils to explore the different sounds instruments can make. There is a good pace within lessons although lessons can finish abruptly leaving pupils who are waiting to perform feeling disappointed. Where subject knowledge is good teachers extend techniques in singing and in the playing of instruments and are able to modify lessons immediately. In one lesson the planned ostinato was too difficult for pupils at this stage. The teacher modified it using a suggestion from one pupil.
110. Pupils are enthusiastic about using instruments. They co-operate well with each other and use the instruments sensibly. They respond well to the practical nature of the lessons and all pupils participate. They listen well to each other performing.
111. The recently appointed co-ordinator has a good overview of the subject. She has a clear overview of standards. Opportunities need to be developed for the co-ordinator to develop the role by monitoring lessons and planning. Standards would be improved by developing staff confidence and by extending the current scheme so that it is not over-reliant on tapes and booklets. Where this is already happening there are clear benefits in terms of the opportunities for pupils to participate and perform.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

112. The school provides a satisfactory range of physical education experiences for pupils. Although not all activities could be observed during the week of inspection, those that were, demonstrated that by the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' attainment is at an expected level. A small percentage of pupils show a higher level of physical prowess which exceeds the standards expected of 11-year-olds.
113. The school has an outdoor swimming pool and during the autumn term many physical education lessons are centred on swimming. By the time pupils leave school they are good swimmers with many able to swim beyond 25 metres. The swimming facilities that the school has, together with good teaching provided by the peripatetic teacher, means that pupils develop good water skills from an early age. Improvements in techniques follow as pupils move through the school. The good quality teaching centres on instilling water confidence in the pupils and on developing different stroke techniques. The swimming teacher stresses the importance of physical exercise and makes known the fact that swimming is an excellent activity to develop stamina and fitness. In all lessons pupils are made to work hard and are physically active throughout. Good attention is paid to health and safety issues and pupils respond with maturity. Pupils change for lessons in the classroom and then make their way to the pool in an orderly and well-behaved manner. Pupils appreciate the facilities they have and clearly enjoy their lessons. Once in the pool the standard of behaviour is good and pupils show a good awareness of the needs of others. Pupils are supervised in an effective manner at all times.
114. During this term the other main activity besides swimming is games. By the end of the key stage pupils show a satisfactory level of games skills. In football, rugby, hockey and basketball pupils pass a ball with reasonable accuracy and show a sound awareness of the need to escape a marker in competitive games. Many pupils recognise the importance of warm-up and cool-down activities before and after physical activity respectively. Higher attaining pupils move with greater agility and show good levels of co-ordination. These pupils read the game well and are good at intercepting passes and turning defence into attack. Most pupils understand the need for special rules in games but not all recognise the need for co-operation as well as competitive edge in team games.
115. The quality of teaching within games lessons is of a satisfactory standard overall with some good and occasionally very good practice. All teachers plan for a warm up activity, a series of main activities and a time for cooling down. This planning gives lessons a structure which enhances pupils' learning. Teachers are always appropriately dressed and expect the same from the pupils. In the best lessons the teachers directly teach a specific skill and then provide sufficient time for pupils to practice, refine and then evaluate their performance. Such examples were seen in football and rugby for the oldest pupils in the school. In these lessons teachers were ready to stop the lesson if pupils had not fully understood what was required or they used demonstrations by pupils as a means of clarification. In both these instances there was an immediate improvement in the level of pupils' performance. Games activities take place within well-marked and contained areas. This is good practice because it encourages pupils to keep greater control of balls. Where teaching is not as effective, strategies to manage pupils are not as they could be, with the result that a small number of boys disrupt the lesson for their classmates or teaching points are missed because the level of attention is low. Such instances are the exception rather than the norm. For most pupils physical education is an enjoyable experience, and they want to do well. Many pupils listen attentively and take a full and active part in lessons. At present the school has a policy of all the Year 6 classes having games

lessons at the same time. This did not cause a problem during the week of the inspection because the lessons took place outside. Inclement weather however, would mean that only one class would be able to take part in physical activity in the hall. The co-ordinator has already identified this as an area that needs to be looked at further.

116. Teachers' planning clearly shows that over the course of the year pupils experience the full range of physical activities including gymnastics, dance, games and swimming. Dance activities and outdoor pursuits are not as well covered as other areas of the curriculum. The school's extensive grounds are not used as much as they could be for activities such as orienteering. However the older pupils in school do attend a residential course each year where they take part in activities such as canoeing, rock climbing and a range of other outdoor pursuits. The visit is very popular with the pupils and adds much to the development of their personal and social skills as well as their physical ones. Documentation to support the teaching and learning in the subject is currently under review by the co-ordinator. This is appropriate because he is seeking to ensure that the school provides a balanced programme of activities and that pupils' prior attainment is systematically built on and developed. Not enough opportunities have been provided for the co-ordinator to monitor teachers' planning or to monitor teaching and learning across the school, where he can use his knowledge and expertise to have a greater impact on helping to raise standards.
117. The school actively participates in inter-school competitions including football, netball swimming and rounders to name but a few. Over the course of the year the school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities including football, netball, athletics and cricket. Staff members who give of their time willingly run these activities. All the activities are well attended by the pupils. The school benefits from having extensive hard and soft surfaced play areas, which provide ideal facilities for outdoor games. There is a need for the school to consider the replacement of some small games equipment and gymnastics mats, which are showing signs of wear and tear. On all the evidence available standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

118. As they move through the school, pupils make good progress in religious education and by the end of Key Stage 2 their attainment is above the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.
119. Pupils have a good understanding of Christianity and are also familiar with significant aspects of Judaism and Hinduism. In discussion they are able to talk about the life of Jesus, locate key events in the Old and New Testaments and demonstrate an understanding of major Christian Festivals such as Easter and Christmas and ceremonies such as baptism. By virtue of their explorations of Judaism and Hinduism they have gained an awareness of the importance of ceremonies and festivals in other major world faiths. The ubiquitous nature of prayer, naming ceremonies and celebratory festivals is firmly embedded in their understanding of the religious faiths that they have studied.
120. Older pupils are aware that beliefs are central to particular ways of life and they know that in this respect they should expect to find differences between the faiths they have examined. In comparing the main religious faiths they know that symbols such as the cross have a particular importance and that worship takes place in buildings such as churches, temples and synagogues that have a special place in each form of belief. Through linking religion with key events in history pupils have increased their understanding of profound moral and spiritual issues. Older pupils have done

particularly well in their study of persecution and anti-Semitism for example. By the time they reach Year 6 pupils have developed sensitivity and respect for the beliefs and symbols of others. At present insufficient provision is made for visits to places of worship in order to increase appreciation of the range of religious practice present in a multi-faith community.

121. The quality of teaching is good and teachers are secure in their approach to the subject. An appropriate amount of time is devoted to the teaching of religious education. The delivery of the subject contributes to the pupils' spiritual and moral development and also enables them to come to grips with matters of great moral significance. However, in some classes teachers rely too heavily on recording work outcomes through the medium of worksheets which lack spirituality. Good use is made of the resources available and pupils have access to artefacts and recently produced text materials. More use of information technology would add a new dimension to pupils' experiences in the subject. At the present time the recently appointed co-ordinator for religious education is unable to monitor teaching in classrooms throughout the school but she is in the process of building a good overview and also looking at revisions to the subject content.