

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ALL SAINTS CHURCH of ENGLAND  
(CONTROLLED) PRIMARY SCHOOL and  
NURSERY**

Wellingborough

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 121998

Headteacher: Mrs S Sail

Reporting inspector: Mrs P Silcock  
21261

Dates of inspection: 6<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> November 2000

Inspection number: 224932

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Castle Street Wellingborough Northants
Postcode:	NN8 1LS
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Reverend Paul Welch
Date of previous inspection:	29 <sup>th</sup> April – 2 <sup>nd</sup> May 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs P Silcock 21261	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design Music Equality of opportunity English as an additional language	Standards in learning Teaching
Mrs P Willman 14178	Lay Inspector		Pupils' attitudes and behaviour Care and welfare of pupils Partnership with parents
Ms M Wallace 15011	Team Member	English Religious education Design and technology Physical education Special educational needs	Curriculum
Mrs M Kelsey 10913	Team Member	Science History Geography Foundation Stage	Leadership and management

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## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>4 - 7</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>8 - 11</b>
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>11 - 12</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>12 - 14</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>14 - 15</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>15 - 17</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>18 - 21</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>22 - 38</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

All Saints Church of England Primary and Nursery school is a popular, oversubscribed school. It is situated near the centre of Wellingborough in a mainly residential area. The school is housed mainly in a Victorian building with later additions. There are 265 pupils on roll from the Nursery to Year 6, including 52 children who attend the Nursery on a part-time basis. Children enter Nursery in the September following their third birthday. In accordance with the school's admissions policy, a significant number transfer to the Reception class during the following September. Baseline assessments prior to the inspection show four-year-olds as broadly in line with expected levels of attainment for their age. The school is about the same size as other primary schools. Most pupils come from owner-occupied and privately rented homes in the immediate vicinity, although some travel from further afield. Approximately 14 per cent of pupils attending on a full-time basis are of minority ethnic origin. This figure has risen steadily over recent years. Approximately 11.5 per cent of pupils are learning English as an additional language (a high percentage). The main languages other than English are Gujarati, Urdu and Punjabi. Across the school, approximately 34 per cent of pupils are on the Code of Practice register of special educational needs; this is a higher proportion than the national average. Those with Statements of special educational need represent 0.83 per cent of the school population; this proportion is below the national average. Approximately 10.5 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, a figure representing a higher proportion of children than previously noted in the school, but one that is still below the national average.

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

All Saints is a highly effective school. It is a happy, thriving, community. Its warm, welcoming ethos and the caring attitudes it fosters are immediately apparent. Whilst the school's work is underpinned by its Christian ethos, it celebrates a diversity of cultures, languages and faiths. All members of staff are committed to raising standards, following the headteacher's excellent lead. Her outstanding qualities are complemented by the excellent teaching and leadership qualities of her deputy head. Governors fully back the aims and values of the school and work hard on its behalf. The quality of teaching - most frequently very good or better - has a decisive effect on children's learning, ensuring that they frequently reach high standards in many subject areas across the age-range. The school provides very good value for money.

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

- Pupils of all ages frequently attain much better standards than might be expected in many subjects. High standards in art and music enrich school life and give pleasure to children.
- Pupils' good learning is a direct reflection of the frequently very good or better teaching in many subjects.
- Pupils apply their very good literacy and numeracy skills well to subjects across the curriculum.
- The school fosters very good behaviour and attitudes in children who enjoy their learning.
- The school promotes excellent personal development and relationships.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- The school has very effective links with parents and these have an excellent effect on its work.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher and of senior staff is excellent.

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

- There are no areas highlighted for improvement as key issues. Two minor matters are drawn to the school's and governors' attention, which should be considered for future action:
- Improve quality of teaching in physical education to bring it in line with the school's best practice.
  - Seek to extend measures for emergency evacuation of the building.

*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 strides forward since the last inspection in April 1996. Noteworthy improvements have been made in the Foundation Stage. There is better provision for children's outdoor play in Nursery and Reception classes. Curriculum planning across the school is better and quality of teaching throughout the school has significantly improved. Consequently, standards have risen in areas of learning for children under five and in many National Curriculum subjects. There is better provision for information and communication technology, especially regarding teachers' subject confidence, leading to raised standards. Similar progress is noted in the

teaching of science. Standards in statutory tests have risen year on year overall, particularly at the higher Level 3 for seven-year-olds and the higher Level 5 for pupils of eleven. Improved leadership and management have beneficially affected all aspects of the school's work. Excellent use made of assessment data has led to more precise target setting for the school and for individual pupils. Accommodation for Year 6 and the school's general appearance are notably better than previously. The school has worked hard with a good measure of success to eliminate identified fire risks. Good improvements have been made to statutory reporting requirements. Attendance registers are now returned to the office promptly.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	B	A	A	A
Mathematics	A	B	A	A
Science	A	B	A	A*

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The table illustrates how eleven-year-olds reached standards well above the average of pupils in all schools in all three subjects in the latest statutory tests. Compared to their peers in similar schools, pupils' attainment in English and mathematics was well above the average. It was very high in science. Results are better than in the previous year in all three subjects, since pupils raised their performance at the higher Level 5, including in English, where a much higher proportion than previously succeeded at this level. All pupils reached expected levels in science and again a high proportion succeeded at the higher level. These good results include pupils with special educational needs who have mostly reached expected levels at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils with English as an additional language also do well, attaining at least in line with their peers and frequently doing better than this. Results in English have risen steadily. In mathematics and science, they have fluctuated over recent years, dipping towards the national average, although always keeping above this. The school has addressed these fluctuations by pinpointing weaknesses and its latest results confirm its success in tackling those identified. Targets set for English and mathematics are exceeded by the latest results. Inspection findings support this good picture. Pupils in Year 6 reach consistently high standards in these subjects. Pupils across the school achieve high standards in many subjects, with good levels of attainment evident by eleven. For example, in religious education, music, art, design and technology, geography and history these oldest pupils reach above average standards. In information and communication technology, standards attained are broadly average, although, when applying well-practised skills, their attainment is usually better than this. Standards in physical education are satisfactory, overall; although pupils manage good standards in swimming in Years 5 and 6 because of specialist expertise and the good quality teaching from members of the school staff.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils take pleasure in classroom tasks.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are usually polite to one another and to adults.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent. Pupils are secure in their relationships. They work co-operatively and like to be helpful to one another.
Attendance	Good.

Pupils' very good behaviour and attitudes are almost always evident. At times, the youngest in Key Stage 1 find it hard to concentrate on tasks, but manage well under firm guidance. Nursery and Reception children eagerly come in to class to see what there is to do. Even at this young age, their play is characterised by high levels of co-operation. Pupils' enjoyment of learning persists through the key stages, strongly impacting on standards. All pupils relate well to adults, and so are responsive to advice and help. Attendance is now good and lessons start promptly.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is a strength, being never less than satisfactory and good or better in almost all lessons (87 per cent). 48 per cent of lessons are of very good quality and a further 10 per cent are judged excellent. Particular strengths are seen in the Foundation Stage where teaching is consistently very good or better (57 per cent) and in Key Stage 2 where a high proportion of teaching is very good (57 per cent) with a further 11 per cent of excellent quality. In the Nursery and Reception classes, teaching (including that of a nursery nurse and a classroom assistant) is well grounded in a professional sensitivity to the needs of very young children. In Key Stages 1 and 2, the teaching of English, mathematics and science is most frequently very good. This markedly affects standards achieved. All teachers make very good provision for pupils with identified needs, such as those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. The high quality of support provided by learning and classroom support assistants helps make sure these pupils succeed. Throughout the school, teachers have an in-depth understanding of how to teach basic numeracy and literacy skills and devise imaginative ways for pupils to apply these skills usefully to subjects across the curriculum. Similarly, the teaching of information and communication technology skills is well geared both to making sure these skills are well established in pupils and applied to learning in other areas. So, pupils acquire competence in handling computers and other technology (such as overhead projectors and CD players) by the time they reach Year 6. A teacher's expertise in music leads to high quality learning across the school and to very high standards in singing by the end of Key Stage 2. More generally, teachers' secure subject knowledge in art ensures good quality learning experiences for pupils who reach standards well above what might be expected for their age. In a very small number of lessons, whilst teaching was judged satisfactory, pupils are not consistently challenged by tasks, so standards are not as high as deemed possible. This was seen, for example, in physical education, where some inexperience led to teachers planning work not suitably matched to pupils' ages.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The curriculum for pupils in the Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1 and 2 is broad and balanced. It caters effectively for pupils of all levels of attainment and with a wide range of interests.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Excellent. It is of consistently high quality in all aspects, allowing pupils to participate fully in all aspects of classroom and school life and to make excellent progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Excellent. The school has in-depth knowledge of these pupils' learning needs. The high profile given to meeting these by senior management underpins pupils' success. A visiting teacher is deployed to good effect to support early stage learners. These pupils make very good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and	Excellent. Provision for this aspect of school life is embedded in the work of the school. Pupils are able, regularly, to reflect on spiritual matters. Music and art curricula are designed to inform pupils' cultural understanding. Pupils come to

cultural development	value diversity in their various ways of looking at the world.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. Excellent procedures are used to monitor pupils' academic performance and personal development.

The wellbeing of each pupil is basic to the warm, caring family atmosphere in which they thrive. The school works very well in partnership with parents, valuing their views and contributions highly, realising the critical role parents have in the school's work. In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils have very good opportunities to extend their physical education skills via residential visits where they experience a wide range of outdoor activities. Many enjoy a good range of extra-curricular activities throughout the year. All pupils benefit from taking part in whole-school musical events.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent. The headteacher has a clear vision for the future successful development of the school. The deputy head is a key practitioner, bringing distinctive, highly prized skills to her work. Their partnership has a positive impact on all staff members' commitment to high standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors have good levels of commitment. They know the school well and work hard on its behalf.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Excellent. The school strives persistently to improve. It makes extremely good use of all assessment information to set realistic targets for success.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Funds are well targeted at known priorities. They are judiciously matched to pupils' needs in order to raise standards.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are good, overall. However, cramped accommodation in some classrooms makes for storage problems. Limited accommodation can also affect the delivery of physical education, most especially for older pupils in Years 5 and 6. Although the excellent standards of leadership are set by the headteacher, all staff are fully committed to the high expectations she has. All those with management responsibilities fulfil these admirably. The school is fully conversant with principles of 'best value' and applies these stringently when making decisions about school improvement.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children like school.</li> <li>• Children's behaviour is good and they have positive attitudes.</li> <li>• Children often achieve more than expected.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• Teachers are easy to approach with questions and concerns.</li> <li>• Children are helped to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• The school is well managed and led.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pressures on children taking statutory tests.</li> </ul>

Positive parental views are fully endorsed by inspection findings. Views expressed about the occasional pressure felt by pupils in statutory tests were made with parents' full awareness of the school's position in relation to government policies. Additionally, parents expressing such concerns were at pains to stress the school's very high levels of care and the way it supported its pupils at all times.



## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. There has been a good improvement in pupils' attainment in all areas of learning for children under five since the previous inspection. Standards have been at least maintained in all subjects in Key Stages 1 and 2 and, in many instances, have risen, even where they were previously found good, as in English and mathematics. Standards in information and communication technology have risen markedly as a result of improved provision, especially where this relates to teachers' confidence in planning for and delivering the subject. Pupils at the end of each key stage now reach at least satisfactory standards in their use of computers and other technology. At times, standards are better than satisfactory, especially where pupils are applying well established skills.
2. Children in the Reception class reach good standards in all areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage. By the time they transfer to Year 1, most are judged likely to achieve all early learning goals. Moreover, in personal and social development, communication, language and literacy and mathematics, most are deemed likely to exceed these goals. Baseline assessment is undertaken rigorously early in the autumn term, when children transfer to the Reception class from the Nursery. Assessments vary a little from the local education authority average, though assessments prior to the inspection reveal four-year-olds to be broadly in line with expected levels of attainment for their age in communication, language and literacy, mathematics and personal and social development. Most of the current intake in the Nursery, too, is assessed as broadly average for three-year-olds in these areas of development. Children's good progress and standards of achievement are linked to sustained good and very good teaching by all staff working with the under fives. Children with special educational needs make very good progress and gain standards better than might be expected from their prior attainment. Those with English as an additional language also make very good progress, acquiring very good competences in speaking and listening, reading and writing in their new language, allowing them to take a full part in classroom life.
3. In the statutory tests for 2000, seven-year-olds attained well above average standards both at expected levels and at the higher Level 3, compared to their peers in all and similar schools, in reading and writing. This represents an improvement on the previous year's very good results since a high proportion of pupils (approximately 50 per cent) succeeded at the higher Level 3 and almost all (80 per cent) attained in the higher range of Level 2 and above in these latest tests. Teachers assessed pupils' speaking and listening skills as broadly in line with the national average. In mathematics, pupils gained above average results at expected levels when compared to their peers in all and similar schools. Although attainment at the higher Level 3 was broadly in line with that of peers when these same comparisons are made, a well above average proportion succeeded in the upper range of Level 2 and above, compared to these peers. Teachers assessed pupils as broadly in line with national averages at expected levels in science. They reached above this average at the higher Level 3 - an improvement, overall, on the previous year, especially at the higher level, which no pupil achieved. When comparisons are made with the results of pupils in similar schools, pupils attained broadly in line with these pupils' results at both expected levels and the higher Level 3.
4. Eleven-year-olds attained well above average standards compared to pupils in all and similar schools in statutory tests in English in 2000, both at expected levels and at the higher Level 5. In mathematics and science, their attainment at expected levels was very high compared with that of pupils in all and similar schools. Results were also well above the average of those gained in mathematics at the higher Level 5 by pupils in similar schools and above the average of results of pupils in all schools, at this level. In science, pupils' success at this higher level rose well above the average compared to peers in all schools and was very high when compared to the results of peers in similar schools. These results represent a marked improvement over 1999 in all three subjects, particularly at the higher Level 5 and most especially in mathematics and science. Over a four year period, results in English have risen steadily at expected levels. They have fluctuated in mathematics and science, sometimes dipping towards the national average - especially in science - while always remaining above this.
5. The school has taken part in a local initiative to raise standards in literacy and this has contributed to steady improvements in reading and writing, augmenting those otherwise attributable to the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. The school's analysis of pupils' answers in tests led to a review of

provision in mathematics and science, with a consequent implementing of strategies for improvement that have evidently been successful. For example, the school pinpointed weaknesses in pupils' application of mathematical skills and knowledge to practical problems and in the teaching of science. Implementing the National Numeracy Strategy has also had a beneficial effect on mathematics teaching. Mirroring national trends, girls do better than boys in English and less well than boys in mathematics over time. Results in science are broadly comparable for both genders. The school has exceeded targets set in English and mathematics in these latest results.

6. Inspection findings uphold this overall good picture in both key stages. Pupils of seven and eleven years of age achieve well above average standards in English and mathematics. In science, pupils reach above average standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and standards are judged to be well above average at the end of the later key stage. Across the school, pupils on the Code of Practice register for special educational needs make excellent progress. This is seen in the good results for key stage statutory tests and in teacher assessments, especially at the end of Key Stage 2. Here, pupils frequently attain in line with their peers at expected levels in all three core subjects. In science, a pupil with identified learning needs gained the higher Level 5 in the latest tests. Pupils learning English as an additional language also make very good progress. They attain at least in line with their peers by the end of Key Stage 2 and frequently do better than this. No marked differences were identified in the performance of boys and girls during the inspection. The good progress of all pupils is owed to teachers' good planning and the way they frequently challenge pupils in lessons. Where pupils have identified needs, their very good and even excellent progress is owed to teachers' careful planning for these and to the high quality of the sustained support given to pupils. Pupils apply their literacy and numeracy skills well to other subjects and good opportunities are provided for this purpose.
7. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils can express their ideas articulately in subjects across the curriculum. They have developed a well-formed, joined, handwriting script. Spelling is mostly correct and is at least phonetic in following the sounds made by letters. Pupils across the levels of attainment read quite demanding texts for their age, quite fluently and with comprehension. They can invent stories and give them interest through the words chosen and punctuation. They develop related skills throughout Key Stage 2, reaching high standards in all aspects of English by age eleven. These older pupils express their ideas clearly. For example, they reveal a quite sophisticated grasp of moral issues when debating the pros and cons of the Internet. Pupils enjoy demanding books and can talk about characters and themes knowledgeably. They write at length for a variety of purposes, matching their work to different audiences (for example, for story-writing or for setting out an experiment in science). They have mostly developed a fluent, straightforward handwriting style. Pupils use dictionaries and thesauri appropriately. In response to teachers' high expectations, pupils' presentation of work is generally of a high standard throughout the school.
8. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are secure in their mathematical knowledge and understanding and can apply their numeracy skills to practical problems. For example, they can read 'word problems' and say which words tell them it is an addition or subtraction problem. They write out these sentences correctly as number sequences and work out an answer. They use their knowledge of multiplication tables well in their work. By eleven, pupils reveal a well-grounded knowledge of multiplication tables when answering 'mental maths' quick questions. They halve and double two and three digit numbers and reach answers to such problems as  $284 \times 7$  quickly on paper, deploying a range of useful strategies. In science, pupils of seven can separate species' similarities and differences according to characteristics and are able to group living and non-living things. They discuss their observations with assurance and can connect ideas usefully - for example, asking for their seedlings to be placed on a windowsill since the plant they re-potted recently is thriving there. By eleven, pupils recognise the need for a fair test and can identify variables in experiments and agree consistent procedures.
9. Pupils develop satisfactory skills, overall, in information and communication technology through the tasks set in lessons to build on prior learning. Importantly, they refine their knowledge when teachers plan for them to apply new learning to subjects across the curriculum. This good practice frequently results in above average standards. So, pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 produce pictures after the style of Mondrian with a paint program, showing good control of the computer mouse and program features. By eleven, pupils collect and organise data, using a data base, independently (as when high attaining pupils illustrated the statistical incidence of membership of the major religious faiths in Britain). Standards in religious education are good at the end of both key stages. At Key Stage 1, pupils link the actions of Guy Fawkes and his fellow plotters to his contemporary religious situation. They are aware of the relevance of special days to religious

practices. By eleven, they compare the major faiths (such as Christianity, Islam and Hinduism). They realise that people can feel strongly about their religious beliefs.

- Standards in art and music are very high across the key stages and notably enrich the school's life. The music co-ordinator's commitment is to the fore in promoting music, and strengths, here, are owed in no small part to her considerable expertise. Teachers across the school have secure subject knowledge in art and this, too, markedly affects standards. The school is justifiably proud of pupils' achievements in both subjects. Standards in design and technology, history and geography are good at both key stages. In physical education, standards are satisfactory overall; they are good in swimming at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 also reach good standards in movement. The expertise of specialist instructors as well as the good quality teaching support given by members of the school staff helps all pupils make good progress in swimming. More generally, attainment in physical education is constrained, in part, by the cramped nature of the accommodation available for gymnastics, movement and games, especially for older pupils in the upper Key Stage 2. In part, too, the inexperience of some teachers means that pupils do not consistently reach standards they should, otherwise reach.

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

- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes enjoy school. They have excellent relationships with their teachers, with each other and with other adults. After arriving at school in good time, they settle contentedly into the day, engaging enthusiastically with the many varied and interesting activities, responding well to instructions and listening carefully to each other and to their teacher. For example, one child playing a mathematics game on the computer in the Nursery became really excited at having solved problems correctly. In a physical education lesson, children in the Reception class waited patiently and in an orderly fashion for their turn on apparatus. These very young children remember classroom routines, tidying up carefully and sensibly. They know how to help each other and are clear about what is expected from them in terms of behaviour.
- In Key Stages 1 and 2, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, have very good attitudes, behaving very maturely in lessons and around the school. In assemblies, their behaviour is exemplary. Their sensitivity to the school's values shows in their personal development and the excellent relationships they have with adults and with each other. Pupils carry out their responsibilities conscientiously and with increasing maturity. They act in kind and caring ways towards their friends and the younger pupils. These very positive features create a very happy and friendly community where each individual feels valued. Pupils' attitudes to school generally have improved since the last inspection and parents are happy with these and the values promoted by the school. The good level of pupil attendance is above the national average. While in school, pupils develop an awareness of the purpose and value of education, growing in maturity and in a sense of responsibility towards the rest of the school community. This very significantly affects the standards they achieve.
- Pupils with special educational needs work happily and securely within their class groups and smaller support groups. They relate very well to their classmates and adults. This excellent relationship, together with good levels of support, enables them to join in with all school activities and confidently explore new areas of their learning. They respond very well to opportunities for independent learning. Many attend extra-curricular clubs which both extend their learning and contribute positively to personal development.
- Pupils participate in all aspects of school life with great enthusiasm. Most parents who expressed an opinion prior to the inspection agree that their children like school, a fact confirmed by the pupils themselves. Pupils work hard, with real involvement. In a history lesson, studying Guy Fawkes, Year 2 pupils were thrilled by a '400 year old' letter, which brought the story to life. Throughout the school, pupils' response to the structure and challenge of the literacy and numeracy sessions significantly affects the progress they make. They enjoy, similarly, the challenge of mental arithmetic, taking part thoughtfully in group discussions and offering a range of worthwhile ideas and suggestions. Termly targets plainly signal to pupils their own strengths and weaknesses, stimulating them towards attempting to reach the targets set. They have an innate curiosity and thirst for knowledge. They want to succeed and most are ready to work hard to do so.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons, around the school and in the playground is very good. They respond positively to high expectations and are clear about what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Most parents who expressed an opinion prior to the inspection agreed that behaviour is good. In a very small number of

lessons in the lower Key Stage 1, when pupils' interest was not fully engaged, a small number became inattentive and progress was not as it should have been. Pupils are well motivated by praise, trying hard to earn house points for good work and behaviour. They move about the school purposefully and, although they become boisterous at playtimes, no unkindness was observed. Pupils talk of instances of minor bullying and agree that the school handles such occurrences very quickly and effectively. They recognise they should tell someone if they are unhappy. One pupil was excluded for a period of two days during the year to July 2000 as a result of poor behaviour. There have been no exclusions this term.

16. Pupils' personal development is excellent. Mutually supportive relationships with each other and with their teachers creates a nurturing atmosphere in which each individual feels special. In assemblies, pupils gain an increasingly mature insight into spiritual and moral dilemmas. For example, in a Key Stage 1 assembly, pupils showed that they knew what Remembrance Day is all about: "people gave their lives so that our country could be safe". They say that their lessons are fun. Pupils trust their teachers, admitting their belief that whatever they are asked to do is for their own benefit. They carry out classroom tasks responsibly, the oldest taking responsibility for a number of important whole school jobs, showing very good initiative and increasing maturity. Members of the school council accept their duty to represent the views of their classmates and take this role seriously. House captains assume a pastoral role in caring for younger pupils. They give advice when asked and sometimes mediate in minor disputes. They are sure about when to refer an issue to a member of staff. Pupils talk confidently, politely and articulately to adults, offering rational opinions about aspects of school life. They work constructively in pairs and groups, learning the value of teamwork and loyalty through competitive sport. Pupils successfully organise their own work and make independent choices. They undertake homework with self-discipline and most complete assignments on time. Even though some younger pupils would rather not do homework, they realise that it will help them to achieve better results.
17. Attendance has improved since the last inspection and is good, overall. Unauthorised absence - double the national average at the time of the last inspection - has fallen significantly to a point below average. Most parents recognise their duty to advise the school of reasons for absence. Pupils enjoy coming to school, and most arrive punctually. Quick, efficient registration allows pupils to settle to their lessons without fuss.

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

18. There have been very good improvements in the quality of teaching since the previous inspection, when most lessons were judged sound, overall (with very good or excellent features in a quarter), weaknesses being identified in the Nursery. Now, no teaching is less than satisfactory and almost all (87 per cent) is of good or better quality. A high proportion (48 per cent) is very good and a further 10 per cent of lessons seen were considered of excellent quality. Good or better teaching was seen throughout the school, in all areas of learning in the Foundation Stage and in the teaching of many Key Stage 1 and 2 subjects.
19. In the Foundation Stage, teaching in Nursery and Reception classes is very good in 57 per cent of lessons. Strong teaching expertise is well established in the Reception year, where the teacher presents an excellent exemplar of early years' practice. A nursery nurse who works well in partnership with the Nursery teacher gives consistently high quality support to the youngest children, positively aiding their learning. The partnership between a classroom assistant and the Reception class teacher similarly impacts on standards achieved. There is a fruitful liaison between staff across classes. Teachers' planning incorporates good opportunities for children to work co-operatively across the age-range when practicable and appropriate. So children interact during outdoor play, sharing experiences in ways contributing to their general development. For example, a Nursery child first watched a bridge being constructed by his Reception peers then began placing planks and boxes where he saw they might be useful.
20. In Key Stage 1, teaching ranges from excellent to satisfactory, with the majority (60 per cent) of good or better quality. A quarter of all teaching is very good and a further 5 per cent excellent. In Key Stage 2, almost all teaching is of good or better quality (98 per cent) with none less than satisfactory. A high proportion of teaching is very good (57 per cent) and a further 11 per cent excellent. Particular strengths are found in English, mathematics and science, where teaching is most often very good (and occasionally excellent) - clearly responsible for the high standards of work seen across the school and pupils' success in end of key stage statutory tests. However, there are teaching strengths in most subjects. For example, a teacher's musical expertise is pivotal to determining the high standards of singing managed by all pupils and to the very high standards older pupils and choir members achieve.

21. Teachers throughout the school have a thorough grasp of the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies and teach basic skills very well. They plan effective lessons, making extremely good use of learning and classroom support assistants to aid pupils with identified needs in ways that take into account all ability levels. Limited support from an outside agency for pupils learning English as an additional language is also used to best effect, although the very good skills of teaching and non-teaching staff mean that these latter pupils have quality support at all times, from the Nursery upwards. The strategic deployment of additional staff enables pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language to be included in all classroom work. Planning is shared with assistants and visiting teachers, who add usefully to teachers' knowledge of pupils, observing lessons and recording the outcomes of planned teaching and learning activities. For example, assistants commonly sit with selected children during whole class discussions to check that these pupils grasp what is being taught, to help them focus and answer questions or make points. Teachers use resources imaginatively, especially information and communication technology, when practicable.
22. Teachers set realistic targets for pupils, exploiting high quality assessments made during lessons. Targets are adjusted regularly and take appropriate account of individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs, ensuring that these pupils to make excellent progress. Pupils with such needs are especially helped with literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology and with tasks set in other areas where needs are identified. This policy beneficially affects standards reached. Support for pupils on the Code of Practice register of special needs, from teaching and non-teaching support staff, is of a very high quality. For example, the teaching of support assistants, working with individuals in Years 3 and Year 5 on literacy tasks, was judged excellent.
23. All teachers explain learning objectives clearly to pupils at the start of lessons. Where teaching is of good or better quality, they monitor pupils' progress, measuring it very well against these objectives. They, thus, make informed judgements about when to stop a lesson to highlight key teaching points. This procedure was seen, for example, during a Year 5 art lesson when the teacher held up examples of pupils' work at intervals, connecting it to the learning objectives written on a board. The strategy gave impetus to everyone's work and interest levels remained high. In such lessons, teachers keep a brisk pace, making it plain that they expect pupils to finish tasks within time-limits. In Year 6, pupils were given precisely two minutes to complete pencil and paper calculations and a further two minutes to check their work. Knowing that these limits would be enforced, they accepted the challenge. Teachers persist in trying to improve their work. Such persistence was noticed when teachers working in partnership in Year 2 judged that their ways of organising a lesson on programmable toys was not working as they had hoped and discussed why this was. They considered arrangements for a follow-up session in light of assessments made. In a minority of lessons where teaching is less effective, teachers seem uncertain about pitching content appropriate for pupils' ages (as in physical education lessons for younger pupils in each key stage). At times, too, there is a loss of pace, because teachers do not check inappropriate behaviour with sufficient firmness.
24. Teachers' very high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour often lies behind the stimulating, hard-working ethos found in classrooms. Most commonly, teachers and support-staff skilfully manage pupils so that all are included in lessons. This was noted during a story session in the Reception class when a pupil learning English as an additional language insisted on sharing his thinking at each point in the story. Whilst his contributions showed a remarkable grasp of his new language (especially considering the early stage of its acquisition), it did impede proceedings. However, the teacher managed both to include him and to move the lesson on without quenching his enthusiasm, revealing an excellent capacity for juggling competing needs successfully. Staff members' skills in motivating pupils and in forging worthwhile working relationships are major factors in pupils' good quality learning. Pupils of all ages volunteer to adults that they enjoy what they do. In the Nursery, for example, they invite visitors to join in their play, showing real joy and satisfaction. By Year 6, pupils can answer questions about what they like doing in a reasoned, detailed way. This capability showed strongly when pupils talked about their history work and recalled projects they had undertaken when they were much younger. It was also evident in the very good historical knowledge pupils revealed as they talked. Teachers capitalise on pupils' enthusiasm in setting homework. Tasks are well matched to pupils' ages and aimed at moving them increasingly towards independent study as they progress through the school.

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

25. The school curriculum for pupils in the Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1 and 2 is broad and balanced. It caters effectively for pupils across all levels of attainment as well as for a wide range of interests. It is

enriched by a very good programme of cross curricular themes. Statutory requirements are met. This situation reveals a very good level of improvement since the last inspection.

26. A key issue in the last report highlighted deficiencies in curricular provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes. Addressing these has been a strong priority and many changes have been successfully implemented. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is now very good. It supports children's intellectual, physical and social development very well, preparing them for the National Curriculum at the start of Key Stage 1. Detailed planning includes specific learning objectives. Separate planning for indoor and outdoor curricula links the two together well. The previous report noted how the outdoor curriculum did not extend children's learning opportunities, many activities lacking interest and stimulus: this is no longer the case. The school continues to work on improving provision for outdoor play in order to make it available for children in the Reception class as well as in the Nursery, whatever the weather. In addition, future planning includes possibilities for the two classes (which are in close proximity) to extend opportunities to work more closely together in promoting children's physical development and organising outdoor play. Very good use is made of visits and of visitors. The school has worked hard to embed in its activities the very good philosophy set out in its Early Years Policy. A good balance is struck between teacher directed and child initiated activities and a suitably high emphasis is given to structured play and exploration.
27. Curricular provision in almost all subjects in the key stages is very good. The exception is physical education where provision, overall, is satisfactory (though it is very good for swimming), being partly constrained by the cramped spaces available for gymnastics, movement and games, especially for older pupils in Years 5 and 6 (see paragraph 138). The school has successfully implemented National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, which are impacting on standards in English and mathematics. Teachers thoughtfully arrange contexts where pupils can apply their literacy and numeracy skills to other subjects. Similarly, they plan ways in which pupils' information and communication technology skills can further their learning across the curriculum. The school regularly evaluates its curricular provision. Planning has been reviewed suitably in the light of recent changes relating to the Curriculum 2000 and national guidelines for non-core subjects (for example, art and design, design and technology, geography). The excellent provision for pupils' personal development noted in the previous inspection has been maintained. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent and is a strength of the school.
28. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is also excellent. The early identification of pupils whose learning needs show concerns is a strength. Very good use is made of pupils' individual education plans by all teachers, who are well-informed of individual needs for this purpose. A number of well-planned initiatives also extend pupils with special talents (as when a mathematically gifted pupil in Year 5 joins Year 6 lessons). Equal opportunities is a notable aspect of curricular planning as a set of agreed guiding principles.
29. Good provision for extra-curricular activities allows pupils to extend their capabilities in netball, football, table tennis, choir, recorders and French. Other clubs, such as the 'environmental' club, are organised on a seasonal basis, thriving between the Spring and early Autumn. Activities are well attended and teachers diligently organise well-balanced, challenging and enjoyable activities, enabling pupils from different year groups to mix together. Personal, social and health education (including sex education and attention to drug misuse) is very well covered within cross-curricular subjects and science. Very good links are maintained with the local community and other schools.
30. Spiritual development throughout the school is excellent. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on moral and spiritual issues and this type of concern permeates the school, creating its very distinctive ethos. During the inspection the joy of learning was palpable in many lessons. Year 2 pupils responded to a very old letter, in their history lesson, with a sense of 'awe and wonder'. In Year 6, pupils talked openly about the power and importance of love. Well-planned assemblies fulfil statutory requirements for Christian worship. Spiritual development is strongly focused during religious education (benefiting Year 6 pupils especially). Provision for pupils' moral development, too, is excellent. Very clear codes of behaviour and values underwrite the life of the school. All classrooms have their own rules, devised and debated by the pupils. The school council also provides a very lively forum for debates about issues of school life. Pupils are regularly reminded of what counts as correct behaviour. Very good behaviour leads to very good levels of moral awareness. Potentially disruptive incidents (such as spilt ink) are dealt with calmly by teachers who provide exemplary role models.
31. Provision for pupils' social development is excellent. Social and cultural education inform a growing

awareness of the wider world and an appreciation of the school as a 'family' community. Excellent relationships between parents, children and adults in the school quickly become established from the moment children start school. Again, teachers are exemplary role models, in the way they treat each other and their pupils. Pupils are given responsibility throughout the school. The house system promotes social development in that Year 6 pupils look after younger pupils. Most notably, pupils work independently in all areas of school life, knowing that they can share concerns with others. Provision for pupils' cultural development is excellent. Awareness and appreciation of the wider world is evident in the entrance hall where pupils have painted enlarged versions of stamps from places around the world such as Mongolia and Cuba. Craft work and artefacts from around the world build cultural awareness. For example masks from Java, India, Thailand, Ghana, El Salvador, Bali, Bolivia and Kenya are on display. Indian musical instruments decorate the hall. During a teacher-led discussion on skin colour, pupils in Year 6 show an unusual grasp of what is wrong with racist remarks heard outside the school. One pupil commented 'It is what you are like on the inside that matters.' Excellent links with the local community and other schools show in the 'green travel plan', raising awareness of safety for all local pupils.

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

32. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as a second language, are very well cared for. The wellbeing of each pupil is a first priority basis for the warm, caring family atmosphere in which they thrive. First rate procedures for monitoring academic performance and personal development provide high level guidance for each individual. Excellent relationships within the school are a strong factor in the continuity of care provided. Within current physical limitations, the school has put right health and safety hazards identified during the last inspection. Its quality of care generally has improved.
33. Children in the Foundation Stage are very well looked after within a happy, orderly atmosphere. Very good induction procedures for both children and parents mean that children quickly settle into classroom routines. Parents are able, each morning, to speak informally to staff about any small matters of concern. Children speedily learn what is expected of them and staff reward good work and behaviour consistently with praise.
34. Very good assessment procedures are in place for the Foundation Stage. Staff members use results skilfully to plan the next steps in learning. All staff in the Nursery and Reception classes gather information on individual children through well planned, effectively accomplished observations. A baseline assessment, undertaken promptly in the autumn term, informs entry profiles for all children starting Nursery and also provides useful information for the diagnosis of individual learning needs. In the Reception class, baseline assessment (using a local authority tool) is also undertaken rigorously in line with requirements. Steps towards early learning goals are registered throughout the Foundation Stage. A record of children's early work is collected as a portfolio, encapsulating their achievements. This strategy is continued throughout the school to form a comprehensive record of achievement.
35. In Key Stages 1 and 2, teachers continue monitoring pupils' performance in all aspects of the curriculum as well as in matters of behaviour and attitudes to school. Information gathered is used to inform all planning and to ensure that targets set for individuals are realistic and serve to meet identified needs. Targets comprise small, achievable, steps and are reviewed regularly with pupils as well as with their parents, so that adjustments are made where necessary. Excellent use is made of information from statutory tests and teachers' assessments at the end of each key stage, as well as from national tests in Years 3, 4 and 5 in English and mathematics. Test information is analysed extensively to show how particular groups have performed (for example, those from minority ethnic backgrounds) as well as individuals and to reveal weaknesses. Practical action is taken to address these. The school still works at improving its analysis of such data, seeing such analysis as an important tool for giving focused support to individuals and for lifting standards.
36. The school keeps detailed records and documentation on all pupils with special educational needs, ensuring that teachers become familiar with personal difficulties pupils might encounter in order to guarantee appropriate support. There is an uncompromising staff-commitment to pupils in their care, showing in the school's pastoral strategies, helping pupils in classrooms and support groups to cope with growing independence, self-esteem and confidence. Pupils are moved up and down the register of special educational needs as their needs change. In sessions where pupils are withdrawn from lessons, high quality care and support ensure that they retain their enjoyment of learning.

37. The safety and welfare of all the pupils have a high priority. Pupils comment that they would feel comfortable talking to their teacher about any concerns they may have, knowing they will be helped. Very good school procedures governing health and safety are comprehensive. Formal risk assessment is carried out regularly and fire drill takes place once a term. The school's response to the issue of fire safety raised by the last inspection has reduced its fire-risk significantly and statutory requirements are now fulfilled. However, inspection findings show that, in some circumstances, a fire-risk still exists. Successful evacuation from the upstairs classrooms, particularly Years 3 and 4, would probably be very difficult since, for example, the corridor outside these is narrow. First-aid provision is very good, with suitable records kept. Elements of personal safety are covered through a structured programme of personal, social and health education. Pupils learn strategies to keep themselves safe. The designated member of staff for child protection undertakes regular, on-going training, keeping other staff up-to-date with procedures. The school follows recognised safety-guidelines and staff are vigilant in their approach to them. The quality of mid-day break supervision is very good. Well-organised, mid-day supervisors are respected and liked by pupils. The school has recently experimented successfully with a 'Green Bus' (whereby pupils walk to school accompanied by designated adults) in connection with its work on safe routes to school and is looking at how this practice might be extended.
38. Since the last inspection, attendance has improved. The headteacher monitors attendance regularly, absence is followed up rigorously and the school is well supported by outside agencies. This vigilance has resulted in a rise in attendance and a significant reduction in unauthorised absence. Registration procedures are quick and efficient and fully comply with legal requirements. The school has excellent procedures for recording and monitoring persistent poor behaviour and, in such cases, parents are involved at an early stage. All staff-members handle instances of unacceptable behaviour in a consistent manner and, because pupils help put together class and school rules, they understand and respect these rules. There are very good, effective procedures in place for countering bullying and harassment and both parents and pupils speak highly of the school's promptness in dealing with any such incidents. The use of the "worry boxes" in classes is a very effective method of communication between pupils and their teachers.

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

39. The school has a very effective partnership with parents and this positively influences pupils' attainment and school life generally. The quality of this partnership has improved since the last inspection. The school gives parents many opportunities to participate in school life and get involved in their children's learning. A majority are very supportive of the school and value the good educational opportunities provided. This attitude is reflected in the very positive views expressed by parents prior to and during the inspection.
40. The quality of information provided for parents is practical, comprehensive and informative. Both the prospectus and the governors' annual report contain a wealth of useful information about the school and its achievements. The quality of the children's annual reports has improved since the last inspection and they are very good, clearly indicating attainment and balancing very well pupils' strengths and weaknesses. Specific targets for improvement are identified. At the beginning of each term, parents receive details of their children's targets for the term, together with an indication of progress made towards the previous term's targets. Parents have two formal consultation opportunities during the year and children show their own work to parents during an open evening at the end of the summer term. Throughout the year, parents can discuss concerns about their children's progress with the headteacher or class teachers. Regular newsletters and other letters keep parents up-to-date about activities taking place. Each term, parents get an outline of what their children will be learning and can attend briefings on different aspects of the curriculum, for example, the introduction of literacy and numeracy strategies.
41. Parents whose children are beyond the first stage on the Code of Practice register of special educational needs are invited to attend meetings to discuss their children's achievement and progress. They are fully involved in the decision-making process and are kept well-informed about the needs of their children.
42. The school is committed to involving parents. A straightforward policy on homework provision is regarded by most parents as setting an appropriate amount of work to do. Homework diaries in Key Stage 2 and reading diaries in both key stages imaginatively channel information between school and home. They reveal how most parents actively help their children learn at home. Many parents assist regularly in classrooms with reading and practical activities and volunteer to accompany children on study visits. A group has spent many hours producing outstanding story boxes designed to extend the youngest children's reading skills. The school invites parents into school regularly to watch their children at work, concentrating on specified

curricular areas (the most recent 'Maths Fun Day' was very well supported). The school conducted an extensive consultation process over the content of its home school agreement and all parents signed the relevant document. Most parents take their responsibilities under this agreement very seriously, a fact strengthening the effectiveness of the home-school partnership. Parents were also closely involved in helping to draw up a contract between home and school for use of the Internet in lessons. Parents' views are canvassed on many aspects of school life and, when appropriate, changes are made to reflect their views. The active Friends' organisation operates very successfully as a social forum and a fund raising organisation. It also channels information between home and school in a remarkably efficient manner. The children benefit from all aspects of its activities.

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

43. Leadership and management in the school, from the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the senior teacher are excellent. The headteacher's clear vision for the future progress of the school complements her excellent leadership skills and abilities. She has high expectations of herself, her staff and pupils and leads through personal example. She values her staff highly, watching over their interests and professional development most effectively. She includes all her team in the decision-making process. The deputy head is also a key practitioner, working through very effective classroom practice as well as through her own highly successful leadership and management style. She brings personal qualities to her work that are appreciated by pupils and colleagues alike and that complement the headteacher's strengths well. A feature of the school is its outstanding commitment to equal opportunities and to giving full access to all pupils in everything it offers. Its caring, Christian ethos generates for children an atmosphere of trust.
44. The Governing Body is very supportive. Its chairperson is frequently in touch with the school, leading assemblies and teaching some religious education lessons in Year 6. These activities give him a very good understanding of daily life in school. Committees are well organised, meeting regularly and reporting back to the full Governing Body. Governors, linked to particular classes and subjects, take related responsibilities seriously. At the present time, there are two vacancies on the Governing Body and about half its members are fairly new, but they fulfil their statutory duties well. They are involved in monitoring school policies and standards through careful analysis of data and discussions with staff, as well as making their own visits. Whilst the governors entrust the monitoring of teaching and learning to the school, they nonetheless acknowledge the importance of their own watching brief and understand the role of 'critical friend'. Experienced governors fulfil their various responsibilities well.
45. Pupils' attainment and progress is carefully monitored by the headteacher, deputy headteacher, team leaders and relevant co-ordinators, including the special educational needs co-ordinator. They analyse the outcomes of standardised tests closely to review progress and set targets in English and mathematics in light of this. Individual pupils' targets are also very closely monitored and teaching is planned accordingly. The headteacher and curriculum co-ordinators monitor the curriculum thoroughly through regular scrutiny of teachers' planning and through a planned programme of classroom observations.
46. The management of the provision for special educational needs is excellent. The governor responsible for special educational needs is enthusiastic, fully appreciative and supportive. Funds for special educational needs are well targeted and pupils' interests are kept foremost during budget and funding allocations. The co-ordinator supports pupils and teachers very well throughout the school. She is committed to arranging the best possible help for pupils and is very well supported by an excellent team of support staff, by the headteacher and by the governing body. Together these people are the bedrock of the excellent provision.
47. The importance accorded to provision for pupils with English as an additional language is signalled by the Deputy Head's responsibility in this area and her close monitoring of these pupils' progress. Importantly, she liaises regularly with a visiting teacher to ensure that best use is made of this limited resource as well as talking to class teachers and monitoring pupils' work. The headteacher also takes an active interest in provision through her daily work with her deputy and termly meetings with visiting staff from the local support service. The high profile of senior management's commitment means that pupils' learning needs are well served.
48. The headteacher has given high priority to improving teaching and learning since the last inspection. She both inspires and facilitates all staff's commitment to improving the school and raising standards. Together with the deputy headteacher, she set up a rigorous and successful staff-monitoring programme. She is very skilled at helping teachers (including those at the start of their teaching careers) refine their strengths while

dealing with areas needing improvement. As a result, staff feel valued and, in turn, support each other.

49. The school's development planning is very good, being worked out, reviewed and monitored with the full participation of the staff and governors, led by the headteacher. The annual budget allocation process is well organised to resource the work of the school, pinpointing areas needing financial support. Reliable financial information made available during the year helps the school set achievable targets. The school's income has been spent wisely to pay sufficient teachers and extensive learning support staff. The high priority given to the latter has a positive impact on standards reached.
50. Financial administration and budgetary control are very good. The most recent auditor's report raised only minor issues, which have been addressed. The administrative staff is very good at ensuring the smooth running of the school, allowing the headteacher and staff to concentrate on professional duties. Funds allocated for special educational needs and other specified purposes are properly used, as designated. Lessons begin promptly and time is well used.
51. Sufficient teaching staff are well qualified, with a broad range of experience and subject expertise. Teachers regularly attend In-service courses to further their professional expertise and an appropriate balance is kept between personal development and school needs, regarding selection of courses. Staff members are formally appraised during a process widely regarded as constructive and developmental. Those new to the school are helped very ably not only by a designated mentor, but by all colleagues. The two administrative staff deal with all administrative matters very efficiently and pleasantly.
52. The school's accommodation is adequate and, with very good management, allows staff to teach all subjects of the National Curriculum. Constraints of space hamper the delivery of some elements of physical education in Key Stage 2, especially for older pupils. Although some classrooms are small for the relevant numbers of pupils, this fact does not affect pupils' learning detrimentally because class teachers are well organised and children well behaved. The school makes very good use of a nearby public park for games whenever practicable, because of the small size of its own spaces and to redress difficulties created by limited hall space. The site manager and cleaning staff maintain a clean and tidy environment. Displays of pupils' work celebrate their skills and brighten up classroom walls and public areas. Such care and the good decorative order of the school's interior helps create a warm, inviting, learning environment.
53. Resources for English, mathematics, art and music are very good. Resources for the Foundation Stage, science and most other subjects are good, with the exception of physical education where resources are satisfactory. There are sufficient computers with a full range of appropriate software. These resources are accessible and of good quality, overall. Resources for pupils with special educational needs are very good. Many are tailor-made by staff to suit the needs of individuals, helping along the excellent progress pupils make.
54. Income and expenditure per pupil are somewhat above the national average for schools of a similar size and type. Taking regard of pupils' attainment on entry, their very good progress and high standards attained when they leave the school, together with the excellent standards achieved by pupils with special educational needs (when judged in the context of their ability), the frequently good or better quality of teaching and the excellence of the leadership and management, the school gives very good value for money.

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

There are no key issues to be addressed, but the headteacher, staff and governors should consider the following less important weaknesses for inclusion in an action plan. These are indicated in paragraphs 10, 23, 37 and 146.

- The school should ensure that its excellent procedures for monitoring and supporting teachers are employed to improve the quality of teaching in physical education, so bringing it in line with standards in other areas.
- The good safety measures taken after the last inspection, improving emergency evacuation from upstairs classrooms, should be reviewed in order to extend these measures.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed

73

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

43

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
10	48	29	14	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	213
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/A	22

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	10	71

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	21

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.0
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	12	19	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	11	11
	Girls	19	19	19
	Total	29	30	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (92)	97 (92)	97 (100)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	9	9
	Girls	19	19	19
	Total	27	28	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (92)	90 (100)	90 (96)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	14	19	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	14	14
	Girls	18	18	19
	Total	31	32	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	94 (81)	97 (75)	100 (94)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	12	14
	Girls	16	15	19
	Total	29	27	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (75)	85 (63)	100 (84)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	14
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	1
White	157
Any other minority ethnic group	4

*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	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.2
Average class size	30.4

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

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	162

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	35

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1999-2000
	£
Total income	459667
Total expenditure	431972
Expenditure per pupil	1631
Balance brought forward from previous year	19920
Balance carried forward to next year	47615

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	264
Number of questionnaires returned	151

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	36	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	38	2	1	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	39	1	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	45	4	1	8
The teaching is good.	64	31	1	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	38	8	1	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	28	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	69	26	1	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	50	44	5	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	66	30	1	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	35	3	0	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	36	9	4	16

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

55. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is now very good. This represents a marked improvement since the previous inspection. These youngest children are happy, settled and secure. A very good familiarisation programme for helping children settle into school routines ensures their well-being in the school setting. This programme includes visits to school by children and parents or carers before children start and visits by members of staff to children and families in their homes. Staff members make themselves available before and after school to chat to parents and carers, who appreciate the chance to exchange useful information about their children. Children with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language receive a very good start to their schooling. Their individual learning needs are pinpointed early and specific programmes of work are drawn up to guide their learning. There is humour, laughter and care in abundance in classes for children under five.

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

56. Children's personal, social and emotional development has high priority. The quality of teaching is very good, overall, with consistent teaching and learning objectives a hallmark of teachers' planning and of all staff members' interactions with children. By the time they leave the Reception class, indications are that all children will achieve the early learning goals and almost all are likely to exceed them. Children make very good progress.
57. The Nursery strongly encourages children to be independent and make choices. Children can work on their own or alongside others, as well as in groups, and they generally get on well together. For example, children decide when to take their snack in an area set up for this purpose. They converse amicably as they eat and drink and talk happily to visitors about what they are doing. Any minor disagreements are dealt with promptly by staff members, who stress the importance of being kind to one another. This is seen as fundamental to the whole life and work of the school. A very good example of how children's independence is encouraged is seen in the cookery activities. Children are taught to follow picture-recipe books, which the staff have designed as suitable for the very young. Pupils begin cooking in Nursery and, by Reception year, are self sufficient in making products for themselves. Children know the hygiene rules about washing their hands, can put on their aprons without help and follow a recipe without need for adult intervention. This was accomplished very impressively during the inspection, when children made Indian sweets in connection with learning about Diwali, managing the whole process independently from start to finish, showing very high levels of concentration and purpose.
58. In Nursery and Reception classes, children take part in a very interested and responsive manner in all the activities provided. In Reception, children concentrate and persevere. All staff members are very good role models, helping pupils towards positive, caring relationships. Through their religious education lessons, children take part in celebrations such as Christmas and Diwali, and learn to respect people of different cultures and beliefs. They play happily together and, although it is fairly early in the year, Reception children manage undressing and dressing for physical education quite independently, getting out resources and tidying up at the end of sessions. They move round the school with assurance and readily take part in whole school events such as assembly. Children in both classes are friendly and always respond well to visitors, talking about what they are doing and including a visitor in role play (such as offering rides in a space rocket). At lunchtime, Reception children very much enjoy the friendship and care offered by lunch time staff and older children sitting with them. The children work well together and their attitudes to their work are very good.

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

59. Knowledge and understanding of language and literacy are very effectively promoted through daily speaking, listening, reading and writing activities. Children in the Nursery quickly learn to listen attentively to each other and to their teacher and helpers. They learn to speak confidently, when asking or answering questions, or requesting help. They enjoy listening to stories and can contribute ideas. For example, they could suggest what the bear might be afraid of in the story "Can't You Sleep Little Bear?" They will also reveal some of the things they might be afraid of. Staff provide many opportunities for early mark-making,

during 'writing' activities. For example, pupils 'label' their own work and write 'cheques' at the bank. The children enjoy playing storybook characters, with the help of their story boxes. Staff members are very good at extending the children's vocabulary, joining in with play and asking pertinent questions such as "why do we need special clothes to travel to the moon?" as children prepare to go in the space rocket. Children recognise the colander (which served as a space helmet in a story) and can elaborate on a story, using storybook language, following its pictures as they re-tell it.

60. In the Reception class, children take part, daily, in aspects of literacy study adjusted to their needs. They are learning about the conventions of books. For example, they understand title, front cover and spine. They also know that people in stories are called characters. They listen attentively to stories and also enjoy sitting in the book corner and reading stories to the class puppets. They mimic a teacher's expressive story-telling and make sure that puppets follow the pictures as they turn the pages, improvising on the text. All four-year-olds can recognise their own name. Some can pick out some familiar words and a few can read early books taken from the school's reading scheme to an adult. They have already developed the habit of taking books home in their book bags to share. In writing, almost all can hold a pencil correctly, and many can write their name. They often practise their emergent writing, for example, as they write messages inside the Diwali cards they have made. Children are thoroughly familiar with the idea that not all writing is in English, through the many captions around the room written in the home language of some of their peers. They make very good progress in all aspects of language and literacy (speaking, listening, reading and writing), because of very good teaching. By the time they move into Year 1, early indications are that they will have achieved the early learning goals and many children will have exceeded them.

### **Mathematical development**

61. Children in the Nursery have a good range of suitable practical activities for the development of their mathematical skills. They gain a good foundation for future mathematics work through play activities and games with apparatus involving sequencing, sorting and matching everyday objects. In their sand and water play, they become aware of comparisons such as "full and empty" and "wet and dry". They are familiar with numbers to 10 and, as they play inside their space rocket with the Nursery nurse, they are encouraged to select a sequence of numbers from the landing book and switch on the corresponding numbers on a control panel. The lights come on as the numbers are programmed in, and the children start the count down to blast off. Much excitement ensues.
62. In the Reception class, their teacher uses a suitably shortened version of the daily numeracy lesson to teach basic number work. Such lessons are well structured, carefully planned and very well taught. Children practise counting as they post letters in the post box and compare bags of sweets. All can count to 10 and some to 20. Some can use the language of 'more than' and 'less than' appropriately. Most use everyday words correctly to describe position. For example, they climb 'up and over' ladders and know when an object is 'behind' or 'in front of' another.
63. Teaching is good, overall. It is never less than good and, at times, is very good. This was seen in the Reception class, for example, when the teacher used a class puppet to reinforce counting skills. Staff members maximise every opportunity to develop mathematical skills, through cookery, for instance, where children measure out ingredients, using scoops and spoons of different sizes. All children make good progress. By the end of the Foundation Stage, indications are that almost all will have exceeded the early learning goals.

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

64. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world in which they live is developed very well through relevant topics such as that on "Contrasts" in the Nursery. For this topic, children investigated light and dark, exploring dark places created by their play tunnels. They used torches to light up their play-houses and were encouraged to think of ways of adding windows to a house they were building. They made extra use of this idea with their shadow puppets. Children think about animals, which live in dark burrows as they search for worms in the garden. They have been for an autumn walk in the local park and work with their teacher to plant horse chestnut seeds so that they can grow trees, as Percy the park keeper did in the story of "The Storm". From growing other seeds, children already know that their conkers will need watering.
65. In the Reception class, children have visited the nearby bakery to see how bread is made. As part of their

current topic (Celebrations and Festivals), they learn how Hindus celebrate Diwali and make their own diya lamps from clay. They examine real Diwali cards, before designing and making their own. Children use construction kits to build a bridge for the Three Billy Goats Gruff and try very hard to make it firm. They use ideas about bridge building to construct a bridge outside from large blocks and planks over a blue strip of plastic, representing the river. The learning support assistant challenges them to make sure it doesn't wobble and they refine their problem solving skills to make it so that the goats don't have to take such long strides. When a Nursery child comes to investigate and stands on the blue strip, the children are anxious about the inappropriateness of this and tell him "You can't stand there, it's water."

66. Children in both classes can use the classroom computers each day. They use the mouse to activate the screen, taking great pleasure in these activities. A girl in the Nursery demonstrates how to 'click and drag' a colour to make fireworks explode on the screen. She can name the colours and chooses a number of different sorts before saying "I'm going to mix them all up!" gleefully splodging a mix of colours onto the screen. By the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage, children are likely to be well on target to achieve all the early learning goals for this area.
67. The quality of teaching is at least good and is frequently very good. Particular strengths are seen in the Reception year where teachers watch that learning is consistently extended through purposeful talk and questioning, well aimed at challenging children's thinking. Consequently, children make good progress in their learning.

### **Creative development**

68. The Nursery has interesting and appropriate creative activities and a good balance is kept between self-chosen and teacher-directed activities. Children experiment with dough, learn cutting and sticking skills and show a steadily increasing ability to express ideas through drawing, painting and modelling. Pupils' work adds substantially to large displays in the Nursery - such as their Bonfire Night picture. Children engage in role-play in a space rocket, wearing helmets made from silver card and show a good understanding of relevant vocabulary through their play. They extend this to the outdoor area when they climb over the ladders and crawl through the tunnel.
69. Many Reception class activities extend children's creativity well. For example, through role-play, children develop situations to suit themselves, or dress in costume to re-enact the story of the troll and the three Billy goats. In this latter situation, they can be heard adopting the correct tone of voice and language for each character. They come to appreciate music by listening to 'Peter and the Wolf'. Children listen attentively to different instruments and can pick up the rhythm of a drum beat. They can suggest how the wolf might feel – cross because he's been caught. Children in both classes enjoy singing and can join in with songs and rhymes from memory. In the Reception class, they have painted autumn pictures, and made very creative paper sculptures.
70. Teaching in this area is good. It is sometimes very good. Children make good progress and are on target to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation stage.

### **Physical development**

71. Children's physical development is in line with what is expected for children of this age. Indications are that children are well in line to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the Reception year. Teachers' planning covers all areas of the curriculum appropriately. The quality of teaching is good, overall, and is very good at times. Teachers and support staff oversee children's activities very well, both when these are adult-directed and when they are self-chosen. They make sure that children know how to use tools correctly and safely, building on earlier learning. For example, in the Nursery, children were helped to use a saw properly through a teacher's good questioning and instructions when constructing houses to their own design.
72. Within the limits of current provision, excellent use is made of outdoor play areas. In the Nursery, children develop gross motor skills (such as balancing and climbing) on equipment well suited to their needs in a covered area (limited though this is in size). Climbing equipment on an adjacent grassed area gives further good opportunities for them to extend such skills in fine weather. Rainy weather during much of the inspection week meant that outdoor play with wheeled toys was restricted and this curriculum activity was not seen. Teachers' planning shows, however, that the full curriculum is suitably covered. For example, children in the Reception class have access to the wheeled toys during those times when Nursery children

are not in school.

73. In the Nursery, children crawl confidently through tunnels and go up and down ladders in the course of their play activities. Some can turn round to face the ladder as they climb down. They construct 'walkways' with planks and boxes and tread confidently along these. They have good opportunities to develop ball skills, for example by aiming at a goal post. The Reception children have time-tabled physical education lessons in the hall. These are good, teacher-directed opportunities for developing pupils' physical skills. Children stop promptly on a signal. They balance along a beam, climb on to apparatus then jump off, landing on a mat. Children try hard to improve their performance when asked by a teacher about the shapes they make. These lessons are very well taught. Pupils are allowed to evaluate their own performance and learn from each other. They learn correct lifting techniques as they practise getting out and putting away the large apparatus. At these times, children also learn the value of team-work, as they co-operate in putting apparatus away together.
74. In both classes, children develop their fine motor control and co-ordination very well through a wide variety of tools and equipment across the curriculum. For example, they use scissors, brushes and pencils for art activities and writing, the computer mouse for information and communication technology, play dough for making letter shapes and equipment such as saws and vices on the woodwork bench for constructing their own designs out of wood.

## ENGLISH

75. Standards in English have continued to improve since the last inspection and are well above average by the end of both key stages. This picture reflects that shown by national test results for 2000. The school exceeded targets set by a considerable margin.
76. In the latest statutory tests, seven-year-olds attained well above the average both at expected levels and at the higher Level 3 compared to peers in all and similar schools in reading and writing. This represents an improvement on the previous year's very good results since a high proportion of pupils (approximately 50 per cent) achieved at the higher Level 3 and almost all pupils (80 per cent) achieved in the higher range of Level 2 and above in the latest tests. Standards achieved in spelling are significantly higher than the national average, although teachers assessed pupils' speaking and listening skills as broadly in line with the national average, overall. Eleven-year-olds also attained well above average standards compared to pupils in all and similar schools in statutory tests in English in 2000, both at expected levels and at the higher Level 5. Just over half of all pupils (51.5 per cent) achieved at this higher level. Over a four year period, there has been a rise in standard of attainment at both key stages, particularly marked at the end of Key Stage 2. These latest results significantly reinforce this rising trend. By eleven, although boys do better than their peers nationally, girls do better than boys in school, mirroring the national picture. No significant differences were found between the attainment of boys and girls during the inspection. Pupils' achievement is very good throughout the school and reflects the consistently very good teaching. A significant feature, here, is the excellent progress made by pupils with special educational needs. They achieve the expected level by age eleven. Pupils with English as an additional language also make very good progress and attain at least in line with their peers by the end of Key Stage 2.
77. Since the last inspection, very good progress has been made in raising standards in reading and writing. The school has taken part in a local initiative to raise standards in literacy and this has contributed to its success. High standards in pupils' presentation of work have been maintained over time. Significant progress has been made in allowing pupils to use computers for writing directly on screen and editing and re-redrafting work. The school has extended its range of books and resources available for Key Stage 2 pupils considerably.
78. Pupils enter the school with average skills in speaking and listening. By the end of both key stages, they speak, read and write competently and are on course to perform well in this year's national tests. Speaking and listening skills have become very good. In Year 1, pupils can explain clearly how to make a stick puppet, using straws. They talk with understanding about the sequence of events in the story of "Handa's Surprise". Pupils in Year 2 have very good vocabulary knowledge and use this knowledge effectively. For example, higher attaining pupils explain the meaning of 'osprey' and 'plunging' in a comprehension text. In Year 6, pupils can correctly name elements of style in demanding texts. They explain the meaning of 'onomatopoeia' and can find examples when they select "A swish of a silk sari on a hot summer night", saying that the word "swish" is like the sound it makes. High attaining pupils know the

meaning of 'hyperbole', pointing out that "A cowboy on a broomstick" is somewhat 'over the top' in terms of its accuracy. Pupils' very good linguistic knowledge is put to good use when writing and speaking. They discuss issues confidently and are untroubled when challenged to justify answers to adults' questions.

79. Pupils throughout the school are enthusiastic about books. They read stories and poems aloud with assurance. By the end of Key Stage 1, they read accurately and fluently at quite demanding levels. High attaining pupils and those of average attainment read with good expression. Teachers' way of challenging pupils to decipher unfamiliar words enables the pupils to achieve standards higher than might otherwise be expected. Pupils devise a range of strategies for such purposes. They predict the endings of stories and can identify their favourite books (such as "Winnie the Pooh") and say why they find the book interesting. They use reference books well. With adult support, pupils with special educational needs complete word tasks competently. For example, they identify objects beginning with such sounds as 'cr' quickly (like 'crab' and 'crossword') and place them in a correct basket. All pupils make very good progress in learning, because they find a balance of games and challenging work stimulating. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils at all levels of attainment read with expression, showing a good grasp of significant ideas, themes and characters in the content of what they read. Those of higher and average attainment make correct inferences when reading texts that stretch their understanding. They are given sustained, good guidance while reading. They are encouraged to think about a text's content and to reflect on the possible meanings of difficult words, looking at how these are used.
80. Pupils across the school achieve very good standards in writing. A strength of the provision is seen in the richness of vocabulary established in Key Stage 1, which then grows as pupils move through the later key stage. In Year 2, all pupils see the need for clarity when writing instructions. Those of average attainment thus write easy-to-follow instructions for cleaning their hamster's cage. Pupils comprehend how descriptive language can enhance their writing and work independently in an imaginative way (as when they compose stories about 'My magical journey'). High attaining pupils sustain ideas on 'The spooky adventure' for several pages. Pupils expand on a good idea for structuring a story because they have learned about story-frameworks, separating beginnings, middles and ends. They compose their own poems about 'Eight, great!' with a good sense of rhyme. At the end of Key Stage 2, the quality of learning is very good and pupils reach high standards in their writing because a teacher's explanations of lesson content are clear. For example, when discussing such lines as 'the darkness beckons' in a lesson about how images are created in poetry and how punctuation is used, pupils with special educational needs complete their poem 'The Magic Box' with fair imagination (they write 'The swish of the dolphin's tail hitting the sea' and 'Rumbling, tumbling earthquake.'). Pupils across all levels of attainment understand metaphors, alliteration and personification, as illustrated in the poem they study. One pupil draws vividly on imagery from other lessons and writes 'I will put in my box the screeching of the last air raid in World War 2' as a start to his work. Pupils in Year 3 have a good insight into how speech is set out on the page for writing plays. They write simple play scripts continuing the story of the 'School Bell.' Their teacher sets clear targets for the use of time and has high expectations of the quality of the work produced. Pupils accept this very readily and a buzz of activity develops during the lesson. Excellent opportunities to reflect and evaluate on their own and others' work arise, with a good impact on the progress made. In a successful lesson in Year 5, all pupils made evident progress in their understanding of auxiliary verbs. This was well illustrated when a pupil, still in the early stages of acquiring English as an additional language, was eager to answer questions at the end of the lesson and could explain that the example she had chosen was in the past tense.
81. Regular spelling tests designed for all levels of attainment mean that pupils are suitably challenged in their weekly spelling tests in all classes. Spelling and punctuation skills are realised to high standards across the age-range taught. By the end of Key Stage 1, handwriting is neat, well formed and joined up. Such skills are further refined in Key Stage 2. Presentation throughout the school is very good because pupils receive continual guidance on such matters and teachers' high expectations are made explicit.
82. Teaching is most frequently very good or better (84 per cent) throughout the school. Planning is consistently of very good quality. The National Literacy Strategy is securely in place, although teachers sensibly adapt this to suit their pupils. A strength in teaching is the planning of appropriate work, very well matched to tasks, for all levels of attainment. Additionally, the excellent quality of support for pupils with identified learning needs in English (for example, in Years 3 and 5) ensures that these pupils succeed. Good use is made of information technology. Strengths are also evident in the frequently high quality plenary sessions which end lessons, when objectives are reviewed and when work completed is discussed and appreciated by all. This was seen in a Year 4 lesson when pupils took pleasure reading out instructions written in their groups for making a cup of tea. By so doing, they revealed good progress in their use of

verbs and their grasp of correct linguistic terminology. Teachers' marking is frequently very helpful. It is personal and well aimed at individuals' efforts. It gives pupils good information about what they have done well and how they might improve. Teachers strike a good balance between teaching specific techniques and encouraging individual creative work. Drama is included to good effect in the teaching of religious education. Good opportunities for pupils to perform before an audience are provided with school productions such as 'Joseph and his Technicolour Dreamcoat'. A recent production gave pupils throughout Key Stage 2 the chance to develop a variety of performance skills and to perform at a local theatre.

83. Literacy is used very well to enhance pupils' learning in subjects across the curriculum. For example, Year 2 pupils are invited to think of imaginative words in a movement lesson. In science, pupils across the school learn how to deploy their literacy skills (as when they sequence experiments they have conducted in logical format and check spellings).
84. The co-ordinator is totally committed to raising standards and her enthusiasm is reflected in the high standards and enthusiasm for learning found throughout the school. In supporting the implementation of the Literacy Strategy, she has monitored classroom teaching and learning practices regularly and to good effect. She also monitors teachers' planning to make sure that curricular requirements are fully met. Samples of pupils' work are scrutinised to check progress systematically. All information from national tests and teachers' assessments is analysed purposefully to support future planning and set individual learning targets. A very good range of resources, many of them tailor-made for pupil's needs, contribute well to high standards achieved. Homework is set appropriately in line with the school's policy on such matters.

## **MATHEMATICS**

85. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 reach standards well above what might be expected (for their age) in numeracy and all areas of mathematics (number, algebra, space, shape and measures, and data handling). Pupils with special educational needs frequently gain much higher standards than expected because of the school's excellent quality of support. Similarly, pupils with English as an additional language achieve at least in line with their peers and, at times, better than this. There are no marked differences in the performance of girls and boys. Teachers persistently set challenging tasks for pupils across all levels of attainment, so pupils are highly motivated and make good progress - which is frequently discerned in lessons. This picture shows an improvement on the good standards noted by the previous inspection.
86. Seven-year-olds attained above average results at expected levels in the 2000 national tests compared to pupils in all and similar schools. Although attainment at the higher Level 3 was broadly in line with that of peers in all and similar schools, a well above average proportion of pupils achieved in the upper range of Level 2 and above, compared to these peers. Even so, results were not as high as in 1999, especially at these higher levels. A greater proportion of pupils was on the register of special educational needs last year and, whilst these pupils did well when compared to their prior attainment, their presence affected the overall picture in the latest tests.
87. The attainment of eleven-year-olds at expected levels was very high in comparison with that of pupils in all and similar schools in the 2000 statutory tests. It was also well above the average of results achieved at the higher Level 5 by pupils in similar schools and above the average of results of pupils in all schools at this level. Over a four-year period, results have varied but generally show a rising trend, the exception being a marked dip downwards in 1999. The school's analysis of the 1999 results picked on weaknesses in pupils' application of mathematical skills and knowledge and action was taken to address these weaknesses with evident success. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language consequently did much better than might be expected in the latest results. The school exceeded the targets set for mathematics.
88. In Year 2, pupils estimate the number of spots in a pattern with good levels of accuracy through applying their knowledge of the 2 and 10 times tables. A pupil of average attainment makes a good leap forward during an end of lesson discussion, when the class is shown a picture containing 1000 objects and asked how this number might be checked. He explains that he calculated there were 100 cubes in the picture (10 x 10) and saw there must be 10 objects in each cube so the total must be 1000. Lower attaining pupils can put counters in the correct place on a Venn diagram to show tens and units when adding or subtracting. For example, they can manipulate such numbers as 25 and 14 on a magnetic board. In Year 6, pupils show their secure knowledge and understanding of multiplication tables during 'mental maths' quick questions, when halving and doubling two and three digit numbers and working out answers to such problems as 284 x

7 quickly on paper. Across levels of attainment, they can explain 'mean', 'mode' and 'median' when recapping work on handling data. High attaining pupils discuss articulately what they do as they work through tasks set, consistently using mathematical terms correctly. Lower attaining pupils show a good grasp of the nature of problems to be solved, benefitting from support geared not to providing answers, but to encouraging them to persist, via skilled questioning well aimed at reinforcing earlier learning.

89. Throughout the school, pupils apply their mathematical know-how well. For example, in Year 1, pupils connect number sentences, such as  $7 - 2 = 5$  and  $5 + 2 = 7$ , to answer a teacher's good questioning during a whole class session. They then go on to devise their own number sentences in practical, follow-up, work. Lower attaining pupils succeed well with numbers below 5 through adult support. In Year 2, pupils of average and higher attainment read sentences revolving around 'real life' problems of relevance to them (such as how many chocolate biscuits are left if some are given away) and make number statements for addition and subtraction 'sums', which they then complete correctly. Pupils in Year 5 have a fair grasp of the language of shape when exploring the properties of rectangles, using this with increasing accuracy as work proceeds.
90. Pupils across all levels of attainment are challenged by work set and by teachers' frequently very high expectations. Work is carefully planned to meet widely different needs, with extension work ready to hand for pupils who finish quickly, including high attaining pupils. Teachers deploy learning assistants to very good effect to support lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, or who have English as an additional language. Consequently, these pupils participate fully in whole-class sessions at the start and end of lessons and make good progress in their recording of work. This was seen in a Year 6 lesson on handling data when lower attaining pupils gained in confidence in their use of the mathematical terms and how to calculate the mean.
91. Teaching is most frequently very good and some is excellent. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and a good understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy. They plan effectively within this framework, with learning objectives spelt out for pupils at the start of lessons and a close watch kept on these throughout. Often, objectives are put on the white board as a useful 'aide memoire'. In a very good lesson in Year 5, a teacher gave effective feedback to pupils about what had been achieved when recapping about rectangles. Learning was further extended by the use of symbols to show, for example, how 'parallel' can be expressed mathematically. Teachers often use whole-class work at the start and end of lessons very well. For example, pupils' progress in consolidating their knowledge of the 4 and 8 times tables in relation to halving and doubling two digit numbers was manifest at the end of a Year 4 lesson: the teacher used her earlier assessment of pupils' understanding as they worked on problems to reinforce key concepts. Where teaching is very good or better, teachers make imaginative use of visual aids and practical activities. For example, in Year 3, pupils readily followed the problems set by a 'function machine' when working on multiplication and division problems because these were displayed on a suitably large scale for all to see. Importantly, very skilled questioning was well aimed at including all pupils in the ensuing class discussion. Consequently, pupils settled happily to work in pairs on their own 'machines', assured in their own capacity to solve the problems set.
92. Pupils most frequently enjoy their work and express pleasure in what they do. This enjoyment showed during in an excellent lesson in Year 6, for example, when a debate arose spontaneously, as pupils took genuine interest in each other's ideas about the median and how to calculate this from a set of given values. High levels of co-operative work are evident when pupils share tasks or ideas about ways of working. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils talked purposefully about the important words in their 'word problems', then wrote down the equivalent number problem to work out their answer, without in any way depending on others.
93. Good use is made of information and communication technology. For example, in the Year 5 lesson on shape, lower attaining pupils successfully constructed and labelled three rectangles on the computer screen after a brief demonstration from a teacher. Pupils showed independence in their realisation of these rectangles. Elsewhere, displays of work show that pupils across the school use their knowledge of data gathering and graphical representation to make charts, for example, in science lessons.
94. Teachers make very good assessments in the course of lessons and use these not only to inform the lesson in progress, but also to inform future planning. Thus, some lessons were adjusted to take good account of the previous day's work. Very good use is also made of information gathered from tests to set targets for individuals as well as for the school. Pupils are 'tracked' against their targets and these are

adjusted as they are met, so that challenges continue to be set at an individual level. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is most frequently of very good quality. Teachers make pertinent comments about what pupils have done well or where they need to improve. These are generally pursued so that pupils correct their mistakes, with a consequent improvement in work that follows.

95. The co-ordinator provides an excellent lead. She has very good knowledge of classroom practice across the school through regular monitoring. She keeps colleagues well informed about strengths and weaknesses observed and a commitment to improving practice and raising standards is evident throughout the school. The co-ordinator's very good teaching skills show themselves in classrooms, both in partnership teaching with colleagues and to the benefit of pupils with identified learning needs where she has considerable expertise. Resources are of very good quality. They are sufficient to meet curricular demands and are well used.

## SCIENCE

96. Standards are above average at the end of Key Stage 1 and well above average at the end of Key Stage 2 in all areas of science (scientific enquiry, life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes). Pupils with special educational needs make excellent progress in their learning and do much better than might be expected. Those with English as an additional language also make very good progress and attain at least in line with their peers.
97. Teachers' assessments in the 2000 national tests show that pupils attained broadly in line with national averages at the expected Level 2 and above. They attained above this average at the higher Level 3. This is an improvement, overall, on the previous year, especially at the higher level, which no pupil achieved. When comparisons are made with the results of pupils in similar schools, pupils attained broadly in line with these results at both expected levels and the higher Level 3.
98. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in the 2000 statutory tests is very high compared with pupils in all and similar schools at the expected Level 4 and above. It is well above the average compared with pupils in all schools at the higher Level 5 and very high when compared to the results of pupils in similar schools at this higher level. In fact, all eleven-year-olds gained the expected Level 4, and a high proportion of these (67 per cent) gained the higher Level 5. This represents a marked improvement over 1999, particularly at the higher level. The excellent progress of pupils with special educational needs shows in their inclusion in these good test results, with one pupil attaining at the higher level. Over a four-year period, science results have fluctuated, with a downward trend over recent years, although they have always remained above the national average. The school identified areas of weakness in its teaching of science and took determined efforts to overcome these, with its success seen in these latest results.
99. Progress since the last inspection has been good; resources have been improved, especially in quantity, so that class sets of most items are now to hand. However the accommodation is still cramped in some classrooms, posing difficulties for the storage of resources. The last inspection judged standards to be good in areas of knowledge and understanding of science in both key stages, but pupils' investigative skills were seen as somewhat less good. The school saw this as a priority area for development, not only because of the previous report, but also through findings of its own research into teacher confidence and pupil motivation. By taking part in a special project funded by local industry and strongly supported by the local authority, the school has benefited from professional advice, extra funding and staff training for the co-ordinator and all teachers and support staff. The school's own evaluation and inspection findings show many successful outcomes, including the raising of standards in pupils' enquiry skills.
100. Pupils in Key Stage 1 identify similarities and differences based on species' characteristics and are able to group living and non-living things. They observe very carefully, as seen in the Year 2 detailed drawings of insects and other small creatures found in the school environmental area. They discuss their observations knowledgeably and link ideas usefully, when, for example, wanting their seedlings placed on a windowsill because the plant which they re-potted recently is thriving there. They already know that plants need water and light to grow. Pupils in Year 1 know that objects are made from a range of different materials such as wood, plastic and glass. They handle objects from a classroom display carefully and use words such as hard, bendy and smooth correctly to describe the different materials.
101. Pupils in Key Stage 2 appreciate the need for a fair test and are able to identify variables in experiments and agree consistent procedures. They continue to make good observations. For example, Year 3 pupils made

very good predictions as a result of what they had noticed about their rock samples, before testing their predictions in order to select materials to make a step. When they compared their results with their original ideas, they proposed reasons to account for some of the differences (as when they found that, although slate appears hard when pressed with the fingers, it does not stand being rubbed and begins to flake). Year 5 pupils were meticulous in measuring the amounts of sugar and water in their experiment to find which sugar dissolved quickest. They recalled suitable language, such as particles and crystals, and used knowledge of previous work very well to suggest outcomes. They plan investigations thoroughly and record the stages and resulting information in detail.

102. Whereas, at the time of the last report, quality of teaching was good, overall, quality of teaching and learning is now very good, overall, and it is never less than sound. Where teaching was shown as sound in the lower Key Stage 1, time was not as well managed as in other lessons, with a consequent loss of pace. Teachers build effectively on existing knowledge and use questions skilfully to check and expand pupils' concepts. There is a sense of excitement and fun in all science lessons and pupils love the high level of practical work. Scientific skills are well taught, within a relevant context, as seen in Year 4 where pupils made good progress in learning to use Newton meters to measure force. Scientific concepts are developed very well through a range of strategies. For example in Year 6, pupils investigated aspects of light energy for themselves. By experimenting with angled and curved mirrors, they gained a good insight into the direction of light travelling and how refraction occurs. The teacher maximised their newly acquired knowledge via further work, meant to help visual impairment. Through such means, science makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
103. Support staff are used very well in science lessons. They are always well prepared and have benefited from a specialist training. They are skilled at asking open-ended questions and have a good familiarity with science process skills. Parents who come in to help in lessons are also well briefed and support science lessons well. Teachers plan work very well and work is suitably matched to pupils' different attainment levels. Co-ordination of the subject is very good. There is a very good policy and scheme of work – both recently updated to take account of the revised National Curriculum. The co-ordinator presents a good model of effective teaching and is committed through her monitoring to the continued raising of standards. She has a clear view of what needs to be done for the further development of the subject and she ensures that science maintains its high profile as a core subject, despite recent national initiatives in English and mathematics.

## **ART**

104. The good standards found in both key stages in the previous inspection have been built on successfully. Pupils reach standards better than might be expected for their age at the end of Key Stage 1. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are very high. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make very good progress. Although only three lessons were observed, a wealth of pupils' work on display in classrooms and public spaces around the school gives ample support for judgements. In addition, further evidence is taken from pupils' sketch-books, discussions with the subject co-ordinator and a scrutiny of planning and policy documents.
105. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils weave a variety of leaves and flowers into the warp of a small 'loom' to produce pleasing, natural, effects in their finished product. They see the need to go 'over and under' the warp thread and work hard to this end. Other pupils handle a ball of clay with dexterity. Almost all can press their thumbs down to create a 'thumb' pot similar in shape to the leaves they study, using water when the clay dries out at the edges. Pupils use tools correctly to copy the veining of the leaves they study on to the clay. They note the stalks of the leaves and make a short stalk by pinching and pulling the clay to desired effect. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils work in pairs to select a book illustration as a basis for their own space pictures. They pick out the size and type of paper they will work on and then choose media to create the effects they are after. Pupils are very good at using the picture space to best effect. They mix colours accurately from prime colours and take care to match the shades and tones of these against the original picture. They paint directly on to paper or sketch out the position of the picture elements to pinpoint where they will place the media and colours they choose.
106. In the lessons seen, teaching was good, overall. In a Year 5 lesson, the excellent quality of teaching enabled pupils to design footwear with a specific customer in mind. A teacher's very perceptive monitoring around the classroom ensured that all pupils were regularly challenged to recall the objectives set for the lesson and make judgements about their work in relation to these. Very good quality support from a

classroom assistant further ensured that pupils needing additional help made progress in line with their peers. So, for example, a pupil in the relatively early stages of acquiring English as an additional language could talk in a revealing way about the task. Teachers are secure in their subject knowledge and make informed decisions about when to intervene to highlight a teaching point. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, a teacher helped a pupil understand how he could succeed at creating a hole in the ball of clay by showing with her hands exactly how he must position his thumbs and then press down really hard. What had been a problem ("This is very hard!") suddenly became easy and work could go on.

107. Teachers' planning and the work on display demonstrate that National Curriculum requirements are fully met across the school year. Planning takes very good account of links with other subjects and the study of famous artists. For example, in Year 1, pupils produced small pieces of work after the style of Paul Klee. The pastel pictures were extremely well done, showing good control of the medium and a very close observation of Klee's work. A display of Year 2 work on close observation of insects, in connection with a science theme, is of a very high order. Similarly, pupils in Year 6 studied stamps from around the world in connection with geography studies. The paintings are many times larger than the original stamps and beautifully painted, faithfully reproducing the details of the originals. The care of all work on display and the high standards underline the seriousness with which art is taken as a vital means of extending pupils' awareness of their world, as well as being a worthwhile creative activity in its own right. Good time is given to the teaching of new skills so pupils can practise and apply these for a variety of purposes and extend their range as they move through the school. A pleasing facet is the individual creativity of the work seen. For example, Year 3 pupils have made repeating patterns using string after the Celtic style in connection with history studies. In spite of obvious similarities, each pattern has a striking individuality.
108. Pupils enjoy their lessons. By Year 6, they can explain that they like the freedom to make their own decisions about both the content of their work and the media they will use to realise their ideas within the framework of tasks. Pupils enjoy the challenge of these tasks and work hard to meet teachers' high expectations. For example, those learning how to weave in Year 2 studied hard to choose the leaves and twigs that would weave in and out whilst paying good attention to the overall effect they wanted. Pupils assess their own and one another's work constructively as an integral part of learning.
109. The subject co-ordinator has a very good overview of work across the school. She visits classrooms informally to see work-in-progress and has monitored teaching and learning in some classes. She provides good support to colleagues through this means. Monitoring has highlighted areas of weakness (for example, the need for more close observational work) and these are addressed systematically through In-service sessions in school and through ensuring that appropriate resources are available. Resources are of good quality and sufficient to meet curricular demands. Very good attention is paid to making sure that resources are varied. For example, there is a good selection of drawing pencils and other drawing media (such as charcoal and pastel) available for pupils to use in their sketch-books when trying out ideas. The policy sets out what is seen in practice in lessons and displays of work: the possibility of including spiritual, moral, social and cultural dimensions as a facet of learning. After a period of some neglect because of other priorities, art is again high profile and is seen by the school as an important means of realising its general educational aims.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

110. By the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, pupils attain above average standards. This marks an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. Across the school, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress in design technology. Staff organise an interesting range of tasks and assignments, frequently overlapping fruitfully with other curricular areas. This cross-curricular dimension adds purposefully to pupils' growing understanding of the design and make process. Because of time-tabling arrangements, only two lessons were observed. Pupils were also seen in some art lessons making good use of skills relevant to design and technology. Evidence is drawn from the lessons seen and from a scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussion with pupils.
111. Pupils in Year 1 design and make their own coat of arms linked to their history topic on castles. In discussion starting a lesson, they demonstrated a very sound understanding of the purpose served by medieval coats of arms and what they had to think about when producing their own. With adult support, they evaluated their work to good effect as the lesson progressed and they adjusted their original ideas. Pupils are confident in choosing from a variety of materials and can explain their choices well in relation to

what they want to achieve. They also use tools confidently and can follow instructions. At the end of the lesson, many contribute to a whole class discussion and make simple statements about what they like about each other's efforts. In an art lesson, pupils in Year 2 used a secure grasp of processes integral to design and technology to make thumb pots with clay and weave patterns on small looms with plant materials (see paragraph 105).

112. In Key Stage 2, pupils build well on earlier learning. In Year 3, they investigate and evaluate the appearance of a range of commercially produced sandwiches in preparing their own designs. All pupils can explain their preferences and identify their favourite and least favourite sandwich. The quality of the evaluation is good; pupils explain the criteria for their judgements, mentioning things like the fillings are not colourful and the ham is untidy as it sticks out of the sandwich. For example, they make statements such as 'The sandwich is bright and colourful, it is cheerful and the lettuce looks fresh.' Pupils apply their mathematical learning well and use a tally count to help identify the most and the least favourite sandwich.
113. The design and make process is very well established by the time pupils are eleven. Pupils reach high levels of attainment in fabric work, as evident in a patchwork hanging made by previous Year 6 pupils, showing different symbolism in each section. A range of stitches such as cross-stitch, running stitch and backstitch have been used. Pupils demonstrate a really good ability to sew simple samplers in the style of those made by children in previous ages; stitching is neat and designs are imaginative. The school has a strong tradition of Year 6 pupils designing and making such artefacts as a memento of their time in school, embodying skills they have learned, prior to their leaving. Problem solving is well used in design technology. Pupils in Year 5 weave with a range of materials, including recycled materials. They visit a local shoe factory and investigate shoe materials. Pupils design and make a shoe, assessing materials and production costs.
114. Pupils are motivated by the work set. For example, in a Year 3 lesson, pupils' interest was captured in part by the idea of designing sandwiches to take on a space journey in connection with their science theme of work. In Year 1, pupils were intrigued by the idea of being known by their personal shield, like the knights of long ago in battle. Pupils persist with tasks individually and also collaborate effectively in small groups, listening to each other's ideas. Pupils enjoy good relationships with teachers and adult helpers; they value advice and respond well to suggestions for improvement.
115. In the lessons seen, teaching was very good or satisfactory. In a very good lesson, in the lower Key Stage 2, a teacher's skilful questioning guided pupils through tasks, so that they built on existing skills and knowledge to produce work of good quality. A sharp focus on lesson objectives was evident throughout. In a satisfactory lesson in the lower Key Stage 1, the good impetus of the introductory session lost some of its impact when a teacher did not always remind pupils to stay close to their initial design. Teachers make very good links with other subjects – noticed in both the lessons seen and in the work on display. For example, the weaving produced by pupils in Year 5 used recyclable materials, as far as was practicable, to produce attractive landscape pictures (the environment being a theme in geography).
116. The co-ordinator has recently been appointed, is enthusiastic, conscientious and monitors the subject well. The Curriculum 2000 is securely in place and good use is being made of new subject guidelines to ensure that all curricular elements are properly planned for and delivered. Now that other, national, initiatives are incorporated into the work of the school, design and technology is receiving a higher profile than has been possible over recent years.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

117. During the inspection, lessons were observed in three classes. Evidence for other judgements was gathered from teachers' planning, scrutiny of pupils' work, including work on display, and discussions with staff and pupils.
118. The previous inspection found that attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 was average. No judgement was given for Key Stage 2, but the report indicated that attainment was at least average. The school has improved on this and standards in geography are now above average at the end of both key stages. Pupils make good progress throughout the school and pupils with special educational needs make excellent progress in relation to their prior attainment. Those with English as an additional language also make very good progress and attain at least in line with their peers.

119. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils develop a good understanding of different places with a particular bias towards the area where they live. They develop map work skills and fieldwork techniques, as seen in the work retained from last year, where Year 2 pupils had made their own maps of the school garden, plotting the area and drawing in landmarks such as the willow tree and the pond.
120. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have refined map work skills and can produce their own maps, using Ordnance Survey symbols, as was seen in last year's books. They are familiar with maps of many different scales and in their work about life on an island, they use their geographical skills to make decisions during a survival exercise (such as the selection of a suitable campsite). Pupils gave good reasons to justify their choices. As at the time of the last report, older pupils debate complex issues of comparative geography, using a wide range of skills and understanding. This was seen in a Year 6 lesson, where pupils were comparing K. V. Kuppam, a small town in India, with their home town. Their ability to philosophise with their teacher about issues of tolerance for other races, for example, was of a very high standard. From their recent study of North American Indians, the pupils have gained very good insights into the life and culture of many different groups of people and the geographical conditions ruling their lives.
121. The teaching of the subject is very good, overall. Teachers plan lessons well, clearly stating learning objectives. Lessons have a good pace, hinting at teachers' enthusiasm for the subject. High standards are set for the presentation of work, as was seen in the finished topic books of which the pupils are justifiably proud. Pupils are very well behaved and enthusiastic, as was seen in a Year 4 lesson where they were collecting data about the leisure facilities in Wellingborough. They contribute well to discussion, putting pertinent questions in their quest to find out more (in this instance showing a sound grasp of issues affecting customer choice, such as whether or not the facility has a car park).
122. The curriculum is planned mainly through themes, linked imaginatively to other subjects. Very detailed planning ensures that pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are built on successively. The subject makes an excellent contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, because such a contribution is planned and teachers make maximum use of the opportunities provided. This development also marks a good improvement since the last report. There is a high priority placed on fieldwork and residential visits are used well to foster activities that are not possible on the school site, such as orienteering.
123. The co-ordinator has only recently taken over the subject but has got off to a very good start. She is very well supported in this role by the deputy headteacher, so that the very good practices of the previous co-ordinator are maintained and new skills such as monitoring standards are nurtured.

## **HISTORY**

124. Lessons were observed in three classes. Evidence for other judgements was gathered from teachers' planning, scrutiny of pupils' work, including work on display, photographs and discussions with staff and pupils.
125. The previous inspection found that attainment at the end of both key stages was generally good. The school has maintained this position, despite a reduction in time for foundation subjects, due to the introduction of the national strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress. Their written work is of a high quality and is very well presented.
126. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils develop their knowledge of the lives of people and events in the past. As pupils in Year 2 study Guy Fawkes' role in the gunpowder plot, they reveal good factual knowledge of the period. They ask very pertinent questions about the conspirators and many are starting to show a good insight into why people acted in the way they did. They can describe similarities and differences between the interiors of Roman Catholic and Protestant churches and use secondary sources well to help them find out more.
127. Pupils in Key Stage 2 continue to develop their sense of chronology. They learn to use a range of primary and secondary sources to gather evidence. For example, pupils in Year 4 examine portraits to help them build up a picture of how rich people lived in Elizabethan times. By the time they reach the top of the school in Year 6, they have a good recall of key dates and events in British History. They demonstrate very good recall of the Tudor period when in Year 5. Pupils discuss the system of justice of the period and take a

moral stance on some of the punishments meted out to people who were accused of witchcraft or stealing. They had previously re-enacted a court scene and this drama helped them remember a great many facts and details – history really came alive for them. They used their knowledge well, for example to compare it with crime and punishment today, exploring issues such as capital punishment. They have above average skills in interpreting history and can explain how evidence may vary. They are very aware of the need to check sources for reliability and know that some texts reflect a point of view rather than accurately mirror facts.

128. The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall. Teachers make good links with other subjects and the work is always set within a meaningful context. For example, pupils in Year 1 design their own shields as part of their design and technology work. They are aware that pictures and symbols on the shield will say something about its owner. As they hold mock banquets in a castle built in the corner of the classroom, they practise using historical terms, such as goblet, minstrels and dungeon, which are displayed to help them. Teachers foster pupils' empathy for historical periods very well, as was seen in a Year 3 lesson about the lunar landing. Pupils revealed very good factual knowledge from their research using CD ROMs. They used this in their writing and also to help them explain how the astronauts might have felt. This very successful lesson and many other planned opportunities in the history curriculum make an excellent contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development. The school makes very good use of visits (for example; to Holdenby House as part of the Year 4 Victorian topic and to Stoke Bruerne Museum as part of the Year 3 canal study). Visitors come into school to share their expertise with the children, for example as part of an interactive workshop staging a Celtic day and a Roman day. The history curriculum is rich and interesting, and children have very positive attitudes to the subject.
129. The co-ordination of the subject is secure. The very good policy has recently been updated to take account of changes to the National Curriculum. Since the last inspection, the school has acquired more historical artefacts and also makes good use of loan schemes.

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

130. In lessons where teachers advance pupils' knowledge and further their acquisition of new skills, standards attained by pupils of seven and eleven years of age are found at least satisfactory, overall. However, in work displayed in classrooms, in pupils' information and communication technology folders and around the school, good standards are evident as pupils across the age-range apply their skills to subjects across the curriculum. National Curriculum requirements are fully met. This marks a very good level of improvement since the previous inspection.
131. Pupils learn key skills through teacher-directed, weekly lessons. Practical, follow-up activities are well designed to consolidate teaching points. This marks an improvement since the previous inspection, when machines were under-used and pupils reached average standards in a narrow range of elements. Although there is still only one computer in each classroom in Key Stages 1 and 2, these are used to best advantage, so that all pupils have access to them. Pupils with special educational needs make excellent progress through the good support they receive. They attain good standards in relation to their prior attainment. Similarly, pupils with English as an additional language make very good progress and attain at least in line with their peers.
132. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils quickly consolidate new learning in a previous lesson as they explain how to program instructions into a programmable toy. For example, they know how to cancel previous instructions ("press the button *twice*") and can explain why. They know how the arrow keys are used and the correct sequence for keying in the instructions to make the toy turn through 90 degrees. As pupils take turns practising these skills within a circle, their understanding grows noticeably and the speed with which they correct peers' mistakes increases. By the end of a short session, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their learning on the following day, which is to work co-operatively in smaller groups on tasks set. Work on the classroom wall shows pupils have gained very good levels of control in manipulating a computer mouse to use a brush in a paint program for art. Pupils have placed colours carefully within the lines of the patterns they have made, after the style of Mondrian.
133. In Year 6, pupils show very good grasp of the ethical issues related to use of the Internet, which is just beginning to be utilised in the school. About half the pupils have access to computers and the Internet at home, but they are stimulated by the level of discussion and the kinds of opportunities that will be open to them for their learning in school. All pupils know, for example, that they can get in touch with pupils in other schools (both within the British Isles and further afield) as well as having access to a much wider range of sources of information. One pupil suggests the NASA space site would be useful for their work in science, which is about space. A teacher's positive response elicits a thoughtful discussion about how the search might be narrowed down, as the site can give information on a wealth of topics. It also serves well to further a prime learning objective relating to such narrowing down. Some pupils realise a specific request can be keyed in (such as 'Neil Armstrong') but most are helped to understand how a computer acts as a tool, which will only function well if it is well programmed. Pupils' earlier work on display shows how they have used mixed media to create posters, by combining text, symbols, colour and sound ("on request – please ask for demonstration"). The work is attractive and of good quality.
134. Teachers plan and organise their direct teaching sessions well. In Year 1, pupils are suitably taught in small groups so that all have opportunities to be included on a practical level by the teacher as she demonstrates how text and pictures can be combined. In Key Stage 2, teachers make sure that all pupils in a class can see the screen for the weekly lesson. They consistently involve pupils by either getting them to explain a function or by asking individuals to demonstrate its use. For example, a pupil in Year 3 knows he can key his name in to start the program. Pupils explain the term 'simulation' with good understanding, stating that a program tool can help you to imagine something that wouldn't be possible in real life (such as what it is like out in space). In Year 4, pupils use the mouse to highlight brief statements in the order they think most important. They know the purpose of 'drop down' menus and become more proficient in the use of these as they decide what size font should be selected for each statement.
135. Teaching ranges from very good to satisfactory and is good, overall. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. At times, special expertise is evident, as when, for example, Year 2 pupils made good gains learning about programmable toys and a teacher's very secure knowledge led all pupils in Year 5 to explore data bases confidently. Teachers match practical tasks to different learning needs and deploy support assistants effectively to help pupils with identified needs. Such strategies ensure that pupils stay abreast of their peers in their use of machines. In addition, teachers use resources well, so tasks involve pupils fully

and fulfil important learning objectives, often in support of work in other areas. For example, throughout the school, pupils learn good control skills, using art programs. Follow-up 'pencil and paper' tasks to taught sessions are frequently organised by teachers as a means of consolidating teaching points whilst a limited number of pupils have access to machines before the end of a lesson. Such follow-up work is not always well understood by pupils, particularly younger pupils in each key stage. In Year 2, the practice of dividing the teaching and reinforcement of learning objectives into three equal sessions across the week meant skills were built on successively in ways pupils found stimulating.

136. Pupils' work folders give extremely useful insights into work over time. It is plain what skills have been taught, how these are built on and the progress pupils make. Teachers' marking is good and their annotations setting, the context of tasks, for example, are helpful. Work samples are well used to assess pupils' levels of attainment against national criteria for each element of the curriculum and to plan future learning.
137. The co-ordination of the subject is excellent. It benefits from the combined skills of two staff members, whose subject knowledge is complementary so that each has a sharply defined role whilst sharing responsibility for moving the subject forward. Their view of this is well crystallised, reflecting a good knowledge of where strengths and weaknesses lie in provision. For example, whilst they recognise that the quality of machines has been much improved, they know these are only adequate numerically. One co-ordinator takes a lead in monitoring classroom practices and has also given very good support, involving appreciable amounts of support teaching time in classrooms, to each class teacher for the purposes of improving subject knowledge and teaching skills. A good start has been made on furthering information and communication technology through links with the Internet and co-ordinators have devised a time-line for its use across the school. An excellent policy for this has arisen through discussion with all staff, pupils, governors and parents so that everyone involved fully grasps its moral and social implications. Software resources are carefully chosen to support work across the curriculum and are readily available for teachers' and pupils' use. The subject is in a strong position for further development.

## MUSIC

138. As in the last inspection, music is a real strength of the school. Although mainly singing was seen during the inspection, with no composing and performing observed because of time-tabling arrangements, a scrutiny of teachers' planning and discussion with the co-ordinator shows that all National Curricular requirements are fully met. In addition, a scrutiny of pupils' music files in Key Stage 2, together with other documentation, reveals the kinds of activities undertaken in pursuit of goals. These are many and varied.
139. In Key Stage 1, pupils reach good standards in singing. By the end of the key stage, they know a wide range of familiar songs as well as hymns by heart. Pupils sing tunefully. They can follow a teacher's conducting and understand the hand signals for singing 'very very softly' or 'very very loudly', although they do not always follow them. Older pupils can, with a little prompting, explain 'dynamics' in response to a teacher's questions. They know that 'pitch' means 'high or low'. Reception class pupils join in their key stage lesson enthusiastically and work hard to learn the words of a hymn that is new to them in readiness for Christingle festivities. They listen attentively to their older peers and watch their teacher closely. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 clap in time to music played as they enter the hall, changing their claps to different body taps, in line with a teacher's visual directions. All the pupils, including the youngest, join in the claps in a Hallowe'en song they learned recently.
140. In Key Stage 2, standards are high. Pupils' have a good repertoire of songs they sing by heart in their weekly key stage lesson. They learn new songs quickly, listening to phrasing and repeating this with reasonable accuracy from the first attempt. Pupils can exemplify the difference between tuned and untuned instruments. By the end of the key stage, they have a good grasp of musical terminology for each element of the curriculum (dynamics, pitch, pulse etc.) and how the teacher refers to these when conducting. All pupils are interested in learning new vocabulary and enjoy the challenge of defining what new terms mean. They are helped in this by the good visual aids the teacher employs and the way she encourages an open discussion through skilled questioning and probing. For example, pupils make good links between 'crescendo' and its musical symbol to state its meaning ("the sound increases"), and a boy realises that 'decrescendo' with its opposing symbol must mean the opposite. Year 6 pupils show their very good singing skills when leading whole school singing during assembly. At such times, they sing without inhibition, modelling a good posture, good lip movements and clear diction for their peers. In a lesson on developing listening in the classroom, these oldest pupils listen attentively to a selection of orchestrated

Beatles' songs. In a short space, they express a variety of responses as they listen, in single words, phrases and small drawings. These echo the music well. They can pick out a bass drum and triangles from the main brass instruments.

141. The choir is popular and draws in girls and boys from across Key Stage 2. Its weekly practices are characterised by a serious attention to set objectives, reflecting their teacher's very high expectations of behaviour and work. Pupils strive hard to improve their performance as they repeat phrases or verses, paying good attention to a teacher's instructions and examples as she sings to illustrate a required effect. They achieve a very pleasing sound, keeping good time to a piano accompaniment and following their conductor to maintain correct dynamics and tempo. The choir is accomplished at performing at many venues. For example, practice during the inspection week prepared for a performance with other schools in the area. More generally, all pupils in Key Stage 2 participate in musical performances held every year. Mostly, these take the form of musical drama, which are performed publicly at a local theatre and / or local church. They involve the playing of instruments on work composed by pupils and dance sequences, as well as singing. Photographic evidence and newspaper reviews suggest that these performances are of a high standard.
142. Co-ordination of the subject is excellent. The co-ordinator teaches singing in both key stages and gives good support to class teachers in developing pupils' listening and composing and performing skills. Listening skills are taught throughout the year and planned to maximise links with other subjects, in so far as is practicable. For example, music is well used to support learning in religious education. These lessons are also well aimed at teaching about famous composers. Pupils' progress is monitored not only through learning outcomes, but also by the co-ordinator's work on their music files. These reflect tasks set in class lessons or for homework purposes and show good coverage of all aspects of the curriculum. Resources are of good quality and there are many musical instruments to hand, with a good selection from different music traditions. A good selection of different types of music is also played in assemblies and lessons, although lists of suggested pieces in the scheme of work are weighted towards examples from Western European culture on the whole.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

143. Standards in physical education have remained stable since the last inspection. By the end of each key stage, pupils reach average standards generally. In some elements, however, pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 achieve good standards. Progress in learning is satisfactory, overall, though it is good in swimming, where specialist expertise as well as good quality teaching from school staff give effective support for promoting necessary skills in the upper Key Stage 2. Consequently, by the end of the key stage, eleven-year-olds reach good standards. All pupils work towards their Star Awards and they are well on course to achieve these by the end of the year. There is no difference between the attainment of girls and boys in the work seen. Due to time-tabling arrangements, no games lessons were observed in either key stage. Discussions with pupils, a scrutiny of planning and of the resources available in addition to the lessons observed, allowed judgements to be made.
144. In Year 2, pupils reach good standards in their sea dance. Very good teaching contributes markedly to pupils' progress. Lesson preparation starts in the classroom, where pupils brainstorm words to describe a torrent of water splashing over rocks. They describe the angry sea, fierce, frightening and exciting. This description sets a scene, allowing pupils to enjoy the stimulus of the sea. Good expression in both body movements and faces show as pupils move with fast and slow movements, twisting, turning, jumping and pouncing. High attaining pupils change direction easily as they travel around the room. Resources are well used to capture the mood of the water and pupils react quickly to a picture of a tidal wave and fast running water. Movement vocabulary is extended well as pupils practice a ripple movement with their teacher; they are taught how to 'ripple' and make good progress. Year 1 pupils move carefully alongside others in the hall. Resilience and spatial awareness are well rehearsed during a movement lesson as pupils run around the space on the balls of their feet, weaving in and out of spaces. They balance on different combinations of hands and feet and show good extension in their responses to a teacher's challenges. In dance work, however, pupils are over-challenged with tasks more suited to older pupils. For example, pupils are asked to choreograph dance phrases before they have acquired a range of relevant vocabulary and movement ideas to use for this purpose.
145. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils explain the effect of exercise on the body and have some understanding of attack and defence strategies in games, as observed in after school clubs. They work hard to copy a

teacher's hand movements in an introductory dance/drama session on Indian dance. Pupils manage a creditable 'Asian style' in their movements and gestures when trying to capture bird movements with their fingers and learn the role of a 'stopping action' to bring movements to a close. In Year 4, pupils can form a movement sequence, incorporating running, jumping, landing and shape. They creatively follow up a teacher's suggestions about how to improve their work: for example, some strive hard to put 'stretch' into their movements and the shapes they make.

146. Teaching is good, overall, although, at times, a degree of uncertainty about curricular demands is evident in a few lessons. This is owed to some teachers' inexperience and still developing professional skills in planning lessons. In better lessons, teachers regularly check pupils' recall of the main focus and match work well to pupils' ages and different levels of learning. Most lessons contain a good level of activity. Pupils gain a good awareness of how to perform to an audience and evaluate their work. For example, Year 2 pupils are helped to recognise dance qualities while individuals perform sinking, rising, twisting, turning and rippling movements. Pupils are eager to talk about the performance of others and evaluative aspects are good. Teachers give some pertinent points to guide improvement, as when pupils in Year 4 come to see how to introduce 'stretch' into their sequences. At times, however, insufficient attention is paid to such vocabulary so that pupils' range of movements becomes limited.
147. The school has worked at developing teachers' planning so necessary curricular elements are covered beneficially. Teachers link to other subjects whenever possible. For example, the Indian dance/drama lesson in Year 6 was connected to a study of Diwali in religious education. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. He provides good subject leadership. He has monitored some teaching and learning in lessons and so has a measure of insight into the strengths and weaknesses of classroom practices. Such monitoring could usefully be extended. He also monitors curricular coverage through scrutinising teachers' planning to ensure that National Curriculum requirements are met. The Curriculum 2000 is now in place and the policy suitably updated. The co-ordinator is well organised and keen to develop the subject. This is seen as more feasible now that major government initiatives are in place. Resources are satisfactory and the school has worked hard to improve these since the last inspection. The size of the hall means that space is limited for Key Stage 2 pupils for gymnastics and movement purposes, especially for older pupils in Years 5 and 6. The school makes good use of a local park for some games lessons, because its own grounds are cramped and barely adequate for the teaching of games skills (again, most notably for the oldest pupils). Key Stage 2 pupils can develop skills in outdoor activities through residential visits. A commendable number of pupils take part in football and netball club activities after school. The school competes against others in a local league.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

148. By the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, standards in religious education are good in relation to expectations set out for seven and eleven year old pupils in the locally agreed syllabus. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress in their learning. Pupils with special educational needs are helped to participate in all aspects of lessons and often offer valued insights for discussion. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds with different faith traditions are also helped to contribute first-hand knowledge fruitfully. Religious education is well taught through drama and art in addition to the regularly time-tabled lessons and assemblies. Good links are also made to other subjects, such as dance and music.
149. Since the last inspection, the good standards found then have been built on to good effect. The school has developed close links with local churches. Visiting clergy regularly make a welcome contribution to curricular programmes. The school's range of resources and artefacts for religious education has been extended to further enrich provision.
150. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils demonstrate secure subject knowledge. Very good cross-curricular links are forged in the way the subject is taught. For example, the history of Guy Fawkes and the gun powder plot is plotted against the religious situation at that time and Year 2 pupils show their understanding of this in the work they do. The school has very good links with the local Anglican Church. Pupils know the function of a church and why it is special. Those in Year 1 are beginning to see why there are church leaders and discern similarities and differences between them. They name events and activities church leaders are involved in, such as baptism, weddings, funerals, preaching and telling stories about the life of Jesus. Pupils are aware that Sunday is a special day.

151. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils show their secure understanding of aspects of Christianity, Judaism, and Sikhism. Throughout the school, diverse religious traditions and ceremonies are celebrated at the relevant times, such as the Hindu and Sikh festival of Diwali, the Chinese New Year and the Christian festival of Christmas. Pupils across the age range demonstrate how they can reflect sensitively on their own and others' feelings. They show great respect for religious artefacts.
152. In Year 6, pupils empathise with people of different religious beliefs, knowing that people feel strongly about different things. They explain elements important to religious practices, such as ceremonies and holy books and have good understanding of this. High attaining pupils grasp the significance of symbolism and visits to special places for pilgrimages. These pupils use their knowledge of data handling (learned in mathematics) to show the number of people in the major faith communities in Britain in graphical form. Pupils' thinking about spiritual matters is further improved by their engagement with moods created by different styles of music. Pupils know that music can affect emotions and talk about how this might relate to faith and religious belief. They appear to think hard about their own beliefs as they listen to different pieces of music. Pupils write statements such as 'I believe happiness is when you give your love away' and 'I believe if you bring happiness to a family it will stay with you for eternity' and share these beliefs with their class. Year 4 pupils have very good knowledge of the biblical story 'Feeding the five thousand' and can empathise with those who heard and watched Jesus. For example, pupils think people might have felt frightened as they watched Jesus feeding such a large crowd and healing so many people. Very good teaching contributes to the excellent chances pupils have to reflect during lessons. Skilled questioning stimulates pupils to reveal feelings such as astonishment. A teacher's enthusiasm and very good subject knowledge adds to pupils' growing interest in the content of the bible during a Year 5 lesson. Pupils realise that Jesus' life is recorded in a diary form and that tales of Noah, Danielle and Goliath are stories. They work very well in pairs, exploring biblical sources and so marking out their genre, applying skills learned in literacy to good purpose. They enjoy the challenge of this work.
153. Pupils have developed a curiosity and interest in religion by the end of Key Stage 2. This is reflected in such questions as 'What is the main religion in Japan and the Far East?' Homework tasks are well used and relevant, as when older pupils pick out differences and similarities between religious faiths. Pupils are extremely well motivated by their religious education lessons. They seriously consider the meaning of life, are eager to take part in class activities and contribute to discussions. Particularly good work occurs when pupils are asked to consider their feelings so as to show concern for others. They write personal prayers for lunchtime, which form a valuable resource of prayers to be used before the meal. Pupils are keen to take turns in reading these prayers and the list for this is already full for this term.
154. Teaching is good, overall, and sometimes very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and a commitment to teaching it well. They devise interesting ways of making pupils think. Question and answer sessions forge links between learning about religion and learning from religion. A strength of the teaching is its provision for enabling pupils to explore the subject, using a range of stimulating resources. The many opportunities given for discussion and reflection are also strengths. Local clergy integrate well into the school, making a valued contribution to its work, especially at the end of Key Stage 2 where pupils' conceptual progress is well served by such links.
155. The curriculum is planned well to incorporate all the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Co-ordination of the subject is very good. The co-ordinator monitors and supports teaching effectively through formal and informal discussion with teachers and by giving practical advice on how themes can be developed and how books and resources might be used. Resources are well labelled and made easily accessible for staff. Religious education makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, giving pupils the chance to study issues that do not arise in other areas. The school makes good use of resources from the local church and education centre, including visitors. It visits places of interest, such as a local Baptist Church and Hindu temple.