

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **ST ANDREW'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Grove Terrace, Taunton

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123803

Headteacher: Mr N. Bright

Reporting inspector: Mrs A. J. Pangbourne  
23818

Dates of inspection: 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> October 2000

Inspection number: 225018

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:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Grove Terrace Taunton TA2 6HA
Telephone number:	01823 275906
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs C. Cornell
Date of previous inspection:	July 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs A. Pangbourne 23818	Registered inspector	Mathematics	How high are standards?
		Information and communication technology	How well are pupils taught?
		Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage	How well is the school led and managed?
		Equal opportunities	
Mrs J. Telfer 19504	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Dr T. Simpson 10428	Team inspector	Science	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
		Design and technology	
		Geography	
		History	
		Religious education	
Mrs V. Emery 14997	Team inspector	Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		English	
		Art	
		Music	
		Physical education	

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London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>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>12</b>
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>28</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Andrew's Church of England Primary School is situated in the town centre in Taunton. It draws its pupils mainly from the local area, which comprises a mixture of Victorian terraced properties, flats and housing association properties. Children's attainments on entry are below average, with language and social skills being particularly poorly developed. At the time of the inspection, there were 245 pupils on roll. There were 58 pupils with special educational needs and nine of these pupils have statements of special educational needs, which is above average. There are slightly more boys than girls. There are few pupils from ethnic heritages. The socio-economic circumstances of the pupils are broadly average, with nine per cent entitled to a free school meal, which is also broadly average. However, a significant number of pupils come from disadvantaged backgrounds.

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

This is a very effective school with many very good features. Standards are above the national average in English, mathematics and science by the time pupils leave the school. Pupils achieve well, even though many start school with underdeveloped skills. They do so well because the quality of teaching is very good and the provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent, enabling many to reach national standards. The headteacher provides very good leadership, supported by governors and staff, and all are committed to enabling each pupil to do their best. The school provides very good value for money.

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

- Standards are above national expectations in English, mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 2 because the quality of teaching is very good overall and basic skills are taught well.
- Pupils do better than expected for their ages in history throughout the school and in music by the end of Key Stage 2 because teachers have an enthusiasm for history and use interesting resources. The school provides a specialist teacher for music.
- The school is very well led and this has had a positive effect on improving the school since the last inspection and has made a significant contribution to the good ethos of the school, where all are valued.
- The school takes very good care of its pupils, including those with special educational needs, for whom it makes excellent provision. This enables them to make very good progress.
- Provision for social and moral development is very good and as a result, pupils behave very well, show very good attitudes to their work and work very well together.
- Parents have very positive views of the school because the school takes every effort to keep them informed.

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

- Planned opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking skills are underdeveloped. This leads to weaknesses in their use of formal language.
- Reading records contain few comments that would help pupils and parents know how to improve their reading.
- Some activities for children in the foundation stage are not always well matched to their needs and this leads to some inequality of opportunity between the two classes.
- The excellent assessment procedures for English and mathematics have not been developed to include science, information and communication technology and religious education.

*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 good improvement since its previous inspection in 1996. Standards have improved significantly, particularly at Key Stage 2. Teaching and learning have also improved. The school has worked hard to successfully address the issues pointed out in the previous inspection.

Curricular planning has improved and the roles of the subject co-ordinators and the governors have been successfully developed.

## 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	C	A	A	A
Mathematics	C	C	B	B
Science	B	A	A	A

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

The information shows that the performance of pupils in 2000 was well above average in English and science and above average in mathematics when compared to all schools. In comparison with similar schools, results were also well above average in English and science and above average in mathematics. The school has a significant number of pupils with statements of special educational needs so pupils are achieving well.

Inspection evidence shows that standards are above national expectations in English, mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 2. The difference between inspection evidence and statutory test results are due to the differing abilities of the year groups. There are a higher number of pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 6. There are significant variations in the number of pupils with statements of special educational needs in each year group and this has an effect on standards year on year. Pupils do particularly well even though so many start school with underdeveloped skills. Pupils do better than expected for their ages in history throughout the school and in music at Key Stage 2 because teachers are enthusiastic about history and use interesting resources to motivate the pupils. A music specialist provides good quality teaching. Standards are as expected in all other subjects by the end of both key stages.

Results over time have steadily improved, but there are significant differences between the attainments of different year groups and this contributes to variations year on year. The school has set challenging targets and it is on course to meet them this year.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school because they know that they are valued. They want to learn and work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very well and follow the school's expectations on behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Good. As pupils get older they take on a range of duties around the school. Relationships are very good, particularly towards those with



	special educational needs.
Attendance	Very good.

- The attitude of pupils towards those with special educational needs is a strength of the school. Pupils voluntarily support and encourage those with special educational needs.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Taking all aspects into account, including the consistently good teaching across the school, the quality of teaching is very good overall. Overall, teaching was satisfactory or better in all lessons seen during the inspection and 59 per cent were good. Twenty six per cent of lessons were very good and two per cent were excellent. Examples of good teaching were seen in all classes and in all subjects. The very good quality of the teaching leads to very good learning. Teaching in English and mathematics is very good, enabling pupils to make very good gains in their learning and contributing to the good progress made. Strengths in the quality of teaching include very good subject knowledge, very well planned lessons, which meet the needs of all pupils and very high expectations. A particular strength is the way in which teachers explain what pupils are going to learn and continually reinforce this during the lesson. Consequently, pupils have a very good knowledge of their own learning and work hard to succeed. In the small number of satisfactory lessons, pace was slower and occasionally, group tasks were insufficiently challenging and consolidated skills which pupils already knew. In the foundation stage, some tasks for the older children were not always sufficiently matched to their needs.

The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good and contributes to the high standards achieved by the time pupils leave the school. Teachers take every opportunity to extend language and are very competent in teaching the basic skills.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a good curriculum. The contribution made by the community is very good. There is very good equality of opportunity. Provision for extra-curricular activities is good. All statutory requirements are met.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Excellent provision. Very good quality support. The school is committed to the inclusion of these pupils in all activities.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good provision for moral and social development and good provision for spiritual and cultural development. The school is good at promoting local cultures but is not as successful in raising pupils' awareness of life in multicultural Britain.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils very well. Staff know the pupils well and effectively monitor their personal development.

- The school enjoys a very good partnership with its parents. They have very positive views of the school and the school has good links with them.
- Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and attendance are very good. There are very good procedures for promoting pupils' personal development.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher provides very effective leadership, achieving much since his appointment three years ago and successfully raising standards. He is well supported by the deputy headteacher, the Key Stage 1 co-ordinator and the co-ordinator for special educational needs.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governors have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and they are very supportive.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. One of the reasons for the school's success is the attention it gives to identifying and addressing areas of weakness. The quality of teaching is very effectively monitored and this leads to consistently good teaching through the school.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The major commitment from its budget to the provision of support staff and staff training has a positive effect on pupils' attainment and progress. The provision of a specialist musician to teach music has a positive impact on the standards attained.

- The school is adequately staffed. The accommodation is satisfactory, having been improved recently to include a computer suite. However, there is no grassed area and the playgrounds are small. There is no direct access to the outdoor play area for children in the foundation stage and this inhibits its use. Resources are satisfactory.
- Thorough monitoring of all aspects of the work of the school contributes strongly to its success.
- The principles of best value are applied very well.

## 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>• They can approach the school with any questions or problems.</li> <li>• Their children enjoy coming to school.</li> <li>• The teaching is good and children make good progress because they are expected to work hard.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• The school has a good partnership with parents who are made welcome.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some parents would like more extra curricular activities to be provided.</li> </ul>

The team agreed with the strengths mentioned by the parents, but found that provision for extra-curricular activities was good.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Attainment on entry to the school is below average in all the areas of learning. A significant number of children start school with particularly poorly developed language and social skills. Children in the foundation stage make good progress and achieve well, firmly consolidating and broadening their understanding. By the time they leave the foundation stage, at the end of Year R, most children have not quite attained the early learning goals in any of the areas of learning. This is because many start school with such poorly developed language skills and they have not yet developed sufficient skills to enable them to express themselves clearly.

2. Taking the three years 1998 to 2000 together, the results of national tests, at the end of Key Stage 1, show that standards have been broadly rising in reading, writing and mathematics. However, there was a slight drop in 1999, due to the high number of pupils with special educational needs in that cohort. Results for pupils in Key Stage 2 indicate significant improvement in English and improvement in mathematics and science. The school set challenging targets to raise standards in 2000 and exceeded them.

3. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests taken by pupils at the end of Key Stage 1, the results achieved by the pupils were below average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. However, this cohort of pupils included a significant number with statements of special educational needs. Significantly more pupils attained higher than the expected level in writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1. Poor oral language skills and reading records, which are insufficiently rigorous to monitor progress, contribute to lower standards in reading. Teacher assessments in science show that the proportion that reached the expected standard was well above average. This is because pupils do better in the practical aspect of the subject. In the tests taken by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2, results were well above average in English and science and above average in mathematics.

4. There are several reasons why the pupils do so well by the time they leave the school. The excellent provision for pupils with special educational needs enables many of them to reach national standards by the end of Key Stage 2. The consistently high quality of the teaching and the attention paid to identifying areas of weakness both as a school and for individuals also contributes to the high standards. However, there are significant differences between year groups, depending on the number of statemented pupils in each year group.

5. Compared to schools in a similar context, with between eight and 20 per cent of pupils who are entitled to a free school meal, in 2000, attainment at the age of eleven was well above average in English and science and above average in mathematics. The data does not take into account the fact that the school has an above average number of pupils with statements of special educational needs.

6. Inspection evidence shows that standards are above national expectations overall by the end of Key Stage 2 and that pupils are achieving well. Standards have significantly improved since the previous inspection, particularly at Key Stage 2. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards are in line with expectations in English and mathematics and above expectations in science. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are above expectations in English, mathematics and science. The reasons for the differences between inspection evidence and the results of the 2000 tests are due to the differing abilities of the year groups and the high number of pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 6. There are fewer pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 2. Improvements in reading and mathematics at Key Stage 1 are because the school has closely monitored the quality of teaching to ensure consistency through the school and teachers have improved their subject knowledge. Excellent assessment procedures for English and mathematics ensure that work is well matched to the needs of all pupils. Very good teaching, which provides challenge for pupils of all abilities, including a thorough understanding of how to teach the literacy and numeracy strategies, makes a significant contribution to the high standards attained.

7 Standards in information and communication technology, religious education, art, geography and physical education meet those expected by the end of both key stages and pupils achieve as they should. Pupils also meet expectations for their age in music by the end of Key Stage 1. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils exceed the expectation for their age in music because of the specialist teaching they receive. They exceed the expectation for their ages in history at the end of both key stages. There have been significant improvements in standards in information and communication technology since the previous inspection, where standards were below average. The school has improved its provision for the subject, including the appointment of a classroom assistant who teaches groups in the computer suite. This is having a positive impact on standards. The school has also maintained the strengths in history, which were identified then. Pupils do so well because teachers have an enthusiasm for the subject and use interesting resources, which motivate the pupils. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on standards in design and technology due to the timing of the inspection, early in the school year.

8. Standards in literacy and numeracy are in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1. They exceed expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils use their literacy skills to enhance learning in other areas, for example, to record their investigations in science and in design and technology. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 use their reading skills effectively to read instructions on the computer screen. Pupils in Year 4 use their writing skills in history to record problems and solutions when studying Henry the Eighth. Numeracy lessons start with brisk mental problems and pupils use their numeracy skills well across the curriculum; for example, when recording their findings graphically in science and measuring materials to make wall hangings.

9. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. This is because of the high quality of the teaching and the generous and very effective classroom support provided. Higher attaining pupils achieve as well as might be expected. The school is committed to equality for all and their needs are well met. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys or girls.

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

10. Pupils' attitudes to the school are mostly very good. They enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in the high level of attendance. Most are interested in the work provided. They want to learn and work very hard to succeed. This very positive attitude contributes to the standards attained. Most settle quickly in lessons, are enthusiastic and listen well to their teachers and to one another. In a Key Stage 1 literacy lesson, for example, the pupils were very attentive and involved during a whole class discussion. They were keen to contribute to the discussion, but also prepared to listen to the opinions of others. They settled quickly to their tasks with a minimum of fuss. Very occasionally, as in a Key Stage 2 history lesson, some pupils find it hard to concentrate on what others are saying.

11. Pupils with special educational needs develop good attitudes to their learning. They know that they are valued because teachers and support staff take every opportunity to fully involve them in all activities. Children in the foundation stage enjoy coming to school because they are offered interesting activities. In their first weeks in school they have already settled happily. They show very good attitudes to their work and behave very well.

12. Pupils' behaviour in lessons, in the playground and around the school is very good, contributing well to a safe and orderly environment that supports learning and personal development. Playtimes and lunch times are civilised occasions where pupils of both genders play well together and circulate with care. Several older pupils voluntarily support younger ones and those with special educational needs. No bullying was seen during the inspection and there have been no exclusions. Pupils throughout the school are polite and friendly. They respect and follow the school's expectations on behaviour, and relationships at all levels are very good. Very occasionally, some pupils talk out of turn or call out inappropriately in a lesson, but this is usually due to their very enthusiasm for the topic they are studying.

13. Pupils' personal development is good. Most have a high level of respect for the opinions of others and appreciate the contributions of those with special educational needs. For instance, at the end of a Key Stage 2 literacy lesson, all pupils applauded the poem composed by a boy who had some learning difficulties. When given the opportunity, pupils work well independently. This is particularly the case in literacy lessons, when the teacher is focusing on one particular group. It was also noted during the inspection in a Key Stage 2 art lesson when pupils exercised individual choice well and in a Year 6 drama lesson, where pupils co-operated well together in groups to produce imaginative ideas for creating different scenes. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility for a number of minor class and school responsibilities. Several pupils from each year in Key Stage 2 represent their class in the School Council. They take this responsibility very seriously indeed. The high standards noted at the time of the previous inspection have been maintained.

14. As was reported in the last inspection, the level of the pupils' attendance is very high. The level of unauthorised absence is low and it has improved since the last inspection. Pupils enjoy coming to school and almost always arrive on time.

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

15. Taking all aspects of teaching into account, the quality of teaching is very good overall and leads to very good learning. All teaching seen was at least satisfactory, with two per cent being excellent, 26 per cent being very good and 59 per cent being good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, where some lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching is consistently high throughout the school, with examples of very good teaching at both key stages and in the foundation stage. Examples of good teaching were seen in all classes and in all subjects and this consistency contributes very favourably to the standards attained. As a result of the high quality of teaching, including excellent provision for those with special educational needs, all pupils make good progress from their below average attainment on entry to school. This is because their needs are well met. Consequently, by the time the pupils leave the school at the end of Key Stage 2, they are exceeding the standards expected in English, mathematics and science.

16. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages in science, history, music, religious education, art and physical education. It is very good in English and mathematics. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement in information and communication technology, design and technology and geography. Features of the lessons where the quality of teaching is particularly strong include very good subject knowledge, very well planned lessons which develop what pupils already know and very high expectations. Teachers' subject knowledge has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Pupils are managed very well and teachers use questions very effectively to extend learning. As a result, pupils make very good gains in their learning. A particularly strong feature is the way in which teachers explain what pupils are going to learn and continually reinforce this through the lesson. For example, pupils in a Year 2 mathematics lesson reinforced what they were learning by reciting 'There are 100 centimetres in a metre'. In a Year 1 literacy lesson, the teacher continually reminded pupils to use capital letters and full stops and in Year 6, pupils learned to order decimals because the teacher questioned them throughout the lesson, reinforcing what they had learned. Consequently, pupils have a very good knowledge of their own learning and are motivated to work hard to succeed.

17. Other features of the high quality of teaching include the use of challenging questions to extend learning. Teachers are particularly skilful in matching their questions to the needs of individuals in whole class sessions in literacy and numeracy. This contributes positively to the standards attained. Teachers take every opportunity to extend and enrich learning through their questioning. For example, pupils in Year 6 were challenged to decide why there is a zero in 5.20 metres and pupils in Year 3 learned the importance of labels and pictures on packaging in a design and technology lesson because of the challenging questions posed by the teacher. The use made of talented support staff is another factor that leads to very good teaching and learning. All support staff are well prepared and work very well with teachers to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met. Consistent expectations, where the contributions of all are valued, and the use of interesting resources, which motivate the pupils, are other features of successful teaching.

18. In the small number of satisfactory lessons, pace was sometimes rather slow with too long spent sitting on the carpet prior to group activities. Occasionally, group tasks were insufficiently challenging to promote good learning and consolidated skills which pupils already know. For example, pupils in Year 1 spent too long tracing numerals that they could already achieve with confidence.

19. Strengths in the quality of teaching in history and music contribute to better standards than are expected for eleven-year-olds. In history, very good use is made of resources to stimulate and motivate pupils and teachers know the subject well. For example, in a lesson about Henry the Eighth for pupils in Year 4, very good quality pictures and the teacher's clear explanation about the reasons for Henry's marriages enthralled the pupils and stimulated their interest. Younger pupils, in Year 1 and 2 were interested by photographs of their teacher as a baby, child and adult and sequenced them with enthusiasm. In music, the specialist music teacher provides well-focused teaching, based on very good subject knowledge. Lessons proceed at a brisk pace and include a variety of activities. Expectations are very high and pupils strive to meet them. For example, pupils in Year 4 gained a good understanding of how to recognise changes in pitch through the teacher's very good demonstration of how music moves in steps on a staff.

20. The quality of teaching for children who are in the foundation stage is good overall and contributes to good learning. In the class for the youngest children, the majority of lessons seen during the inspection were very good and the children made very good gains in their learning. In the class for the small number of older children, who are accommodated in a class with a larger number of Year 1 pupils, the quality of teaching is sound. Here, tasks are not always sufficiently matched to the needs of the children in the foundation stage. Although the teachers plan together, there are differences in the way in which the activities are organised and this contributes to some mismatch of tasks. The school has already identified this as an area for development. Where teaching is very good, activities are exciting and fully involve the children. Well-established routines and the consistently high expectations of all adults ensure that children make good progress. A very good variety of activities are provided and all adults take every opportunity to extend language. For example, after a visit to the church, children learned the correct terms for items they had seen, such as 'font' and 'pulpit' because the teacher provided good quality photographs to remind them of what they had seen. A particular strength is the way in which the very youngest children are managed. In their first weeks in school, they already understand that they stop and listen to the teacher when she plays a wooden wind chime and that they are expected to come and sit together when she plays one made of shells. Strategies such as these contribute positively to the development of listening skills and also promote a calm and purposeful atmosphere.

21. The very good quality of the teaching impacts significantly on the very good progress made by the pupils with special educational needs. Their needs are viewed as a high priority by the school. This is based on a higher than average number of pupils with statements, covering a wide range of difficulties. The inclusion of all pupils underpins the good ethos of the school and is of mutual benefit to the whole school community. The quality of teaching of these pupils is very good overall and there are examples of excellent teaching. Such an example is when the teacher worked with a pupil with particular learning and attention difficulties; she provided a wide range of practical and purposeful activities to reinforce basic counting skills. For example, the teacher traced the outline of a shape on the pupil's back and the pupil was required to point out the correct shape. This was followed by the opportunity to trace the shape in sand. This multi-sensory approach, which was perfectly matched to the needs of the pupil, enabled her to make excellent gains in learning. The pace of the session, good relationships with the pupil and quiet insistence on attention to a range of interesting and practical tasks was highly effective. Teachers match work closely to the needs of the pupils and it is both based on relevant and well thought out targets from individual educational plans.

22. Teachers show a good understanding of how to teach the literacy and numeracy strategies. Strengths include the very good use of support staff, who provide valuable support and encouragement during group activities. This ensures that pupils remain on task and that their particular needs are met. Teachers take every opportunity to extend language and this contributes to improvement in standards in English and mathematics. Teachers are competent in teaching reading and spelling, taking every opportunity to develop their skills. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 were encouraged to use phonic and context clues to decipher the text in the story of 'Grandma's bell'. Older pupils in Year 4 learned to

appreciate the connection between double consonants such as 'super' and 'supper' during a lesson about Haiku poetry. In numeracy, good emphasis on correct mathematical language effectively promotes learning. For example, pupils in Year 4 develop their understanding of mathematical terms for shapes such as triangles, quadrilaterals and pentagons, when the teacher explains the roots 'tri', 'quad' and 'pent', effectively linking these terms to events with which the pupils are familiar, such as 'pentathlon' in the recent Olympic games.

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

23. The curriculum provided by the school is good overall. It has breadth and balance and fulfils the statutory requirements for all the National Curriculum subjects, including those for religious education and collective worship. Provision for health, sex and drugs education is good and it is addressed well through the science curriculum. The quality and range of learning opportunities is good overall.

24. The curriculum for children in the foundation stage is good overall and is based appropriately on the specified areas of learning for children of this age. Teachers plan this carefully in accordance with the early learning goals and provide opportunities for child and adult-initiated activities, purposeful play, whole class and small group work. They share plans effectively with the valued support staff, who make a positive contribution to the curriculum. The school takes every opportunity to compensate for the difficult outdoor access from the classrooms to provide appropriate opportunities for physical development. There are some inconsistencies in practice between the two classes, partly due to the small number of children in the foundation stage in a class for pupils in Year 1. Consequently tasks are not always matched well to the needs of these children.

25. Since the last inspection, the curriculum has improved in that the National Curriculum requirements are now met in information and communication technology and in design and technology. Additionally, the school's very good framework for planning for the curriculum is now implemented consistently in all subjects by all the teachers. The literacy and numeracy strategies have been effectively introduced and rightly there is a good emphasis on the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills. The school has usefully adapted the literacy strategy to take account of the identified need to give more time to extended writing. It allocates one session each week to this activity with positive results. The inclusion of additional literacy support lessons in Years 3 and 4 and booster classes in Year 6 reflects positively on the school's aims to further raise standards. In some classes there are mixed year groups and teachers take great care to ensure that there is not replication within subject area coverage through the school. In general, the particular needs of pupils in these mixed age classes are met in full, but on occasions there is not equality of provision for all children in Year R.

26. Equality of access for all pupils is fundamental to the ethos of the school. The school is vigilant about organising opportunities fairly. With the exception of the small number of Year R pupils in the Year 1 class, who do not always receive the same provision as the other class, equality of opportunity is very good. Pupils with special educational needs, and particularly those with complex needs are included fully in all aspects of school life. For example, teachers include all pupils in class discussions and all adults and pupils value their contributions.

27. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent. The number of these pupils has grown significantly over the last three years. Although the numbers of these pupils are broadly average, there is an above average number of pupils with statements of special educational needs. The school currently has nine such pupils, encompassing a wide range of specific difficulties. The school is highly committed to the inclusion of these pupils and the very good school ethos supports this well. The needs of those pupils with learning difficulties are identified clearly through good quality individual education plans and well-focused targets. These plans are used well to plan work and reviewed carefully on a termly basis. Class teachers, learning support assistants and the special educational needs co-ordinator give very good support to pupils with special educational needs.

28. The school provides a good programme of extra curricular activities. It contains a wide range of sporting, musical and other activities such as French and drama. Its only weakness is that provision is



for the older pupils only. Some parents felt that more extra-curricular activities could be provided, but the inspection team judges provision to be good.

29. Provision for health and social education is good. It is carefully planned through a clear scheme of work. Overall, the curriculum is designed to develop a broad range of skills and the local environment is used well as a stimulus and resource. A residential visit for pupils in Year 6 offers opportunities to develop personal and social skills and good links are made with this trip and many areas of the curriculum.

30. The school enjoys a very strong and mutually supportive partnership with the local community. This has a highly beneficial effect on the pupils' learning and on their personal development. The school welcomes old pupils, with a party every year and a special celebration of its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary recently. Several generations of ex-pupils are still involved in school life, contributing well to the pupils' understanding of local history and their awareness of the continuity of society. Close links with the church support the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. The local environment is used well as a context for work in history, geography and science. The community policeman and the nurse contribute their experience and expertise to the pupils' understanding of citizenship and health. Local firms, such as an engineering company, a pizza establishment and a chemist, support studies in technology and science, making the work more interesting and memorable for the pupils. By offering the pupils a wide range of opportunities to participate in activities in the area and nationally, such as dance productions, art workshops, cricket and fencing clubs, the school is providing great enrichment to the pupils' educational experience.

31. The school has established constructive links with the local playgroups, enabling their children to transfer to the school with confidence. Particularly effective liaison with all the agencies involved supports the transition of pupils with special educational needs from the local Opportunities Playgroup. Very good partnerships have been established with local secondary schools. Their expertise and facilities are used to enrich the pupils' curriculum in music, mathematics, design and technology, information and communication technology and physical education.

32. The provision for pupils' personal development is very good overall and is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. There is a very strong Christian ethos in the school, which is well encapsulated in its powerful mission statement, and all adults provide very positive role models through the way they relate to each other and to pupils of all aptitudes.

33. Provision for spiritual development is good. Particularly strong contributions come from assemblies and religious education lessons. All assemblies contain a relevant act of corporate worship, including a time for reflection or prayer. Music, candles and other appropriate objects create a spiritual atmosphere and pupils are given regular opportunities to consider both God's mercy and their own personal development. In one assembly, seen during the inspection, the committed singing of 'Here I am Lord' and 'Peace, perfect peace' was a moving experience. In a Year 3 religious education lesson, pupils reflected well on the meaning of prayer. Every opportunity is taken in religious education and personal and social education lessons throughout the school to develop pupils' awareness of who and what they are, and to encourage their personal and spiritual growth. However, the potential to develop spiritual awareness through the other subjects of the curriculum is not yet fully exploited.

34. Provision for moral development is very good. There is a wide range of very successful behaviour and reward strategies in place. For example, each class has its own set of rules and behaviour targets, while individual successes are regularly shared and celebrated during weekly assemblies. All staff handle inappropriate behaviour consistently and well. For some pupils with poorly developed social skills, a structured programme is set up to develop these. The pupils see this as fun and a challenge, and most respond very well.

35. Provision for pupils' social development is also very good. Pupils are encouraged to involve themselves in a wide range of community activities. These include raising considerable sums of money for charity and singing for community groups. Pupils are given a wide range of minor class and school responsibilities. Older pupils, for example, are encouraged to support younger ones at play and lunch breaks. A school council has recently been set up and the headteacher and staff take the opinions of its

representative members seriously. One particular strength of the school's provision is its social inclusiveness. Both pupils and staff value the contribution of all pupils, regardless of aptitude or social background. In a Key Stage 2 literacy lesson, for example, a pupil with special educational needs was positively, but not patronisingly, supported by the teacher while he read his poem to the class. When he finished, the rest of the class burst into spontaneous applause. In an assembly, another pupil with specific special educational needs successfully accompanied hymn singing on a keyboard and again was applauded. Every week, a group of Year 6 pupils integrate during playtime with a group of adults with learning disabilities. All join together in a relaxed fashion for movement and dance. The pupils and the adults involved all gain greatly from this two-way interaction. An annual residential visit also contributes well to the social development of the older pupils.

36. Provision for cultural development is good. It is enhanced through art, literature, history and music. During the inspection, for example, pupils successfully identified characteristics associated with the paintings of Matisse and reproduced these in their own work. Others empathised well with the conditions of people in various eras of our past. Contributions are also made through a wide range of out of school visits to places such as museums and through participation in a number of events, productions and festivals. In religious education and some other lessons pupils explore aspects of major non-European cultures and relevant issues such as racism are touched upon. However, the school is not proactive enough in raising pupils' awareness of Britain beyond the immediate neighbourhood as a multi-cultural nation.

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

37. As was reported at the time of the previous inspection, the school provides very good care for all its pupils in line with its aims and mission statement. Throughout the school community, the adults share a philosophy that 'all children count' and are committed to offering them a secure, happy and stimulating environment in which their needs are very well met. Parents value the positive ethos of the school and the attention given to each child as an individual.

38. Provision for health, safety and security is very good. There is a widespread adoption of safe procedures, affecting such areas as first aid, medication, supervision and fire. Staff treat distressed or sick pupils with kindness and vigilance. All staff are alert to any concerns affecting the welfare or protection of the pupils in their care. Child protection procedures follow local guidelines and co-operation with outside agencies is full and appropriate.

39. The school provides very well for inclusion of those pupils from families in financial or emotional difficulties, supporting them and responding to their needs with great sensitivity. In this way, the pupils are happy to come to school, feel secure and able to learn. The school caters extremely well for a wide range of special educational needs. The special educational needs co-ordinator and her team of learning support assistants are very skilled, knowledgeable and competent. They provide a variety of appropriate individual and group support, planned in discussion with visiting therapists and support services, through which all pupils are able to be included fully in the life of the school.

40. Throughout the school, all the adults know the pupils and their families well. They give them friendly help and guidance to overcome difficulties in lessons. This contributes positively to the standards attained. They monitor their attendance, behaviour and personal development closely, being alert and responsive to any concerns. There is consistency in their expectations of the pupils' conduct and prompt and sensitive intervention when any incidents arise. As a result of the warmth and caring attention of all the adults they encounter, the pupils are given the confidence to succeed and to develop into mature and responsible individuals, fully prepared for the next stage of their school careers.

41. Assessment procedures were judged to be good at the time of the last inspection. They remain good overall, but there have been significant improvements in English and mathematics, where procedures are now excellent, and in the overall consistency of the teachers carrying out the procedures in the school. The school carefully analyses and records very regular assessment tests that take place for English and mathematics. There are now very good systems for tracking pupils in English and mathematics from entry into school, to the time that they leave in Year 6. The school collects and analyses the regular

assessment information in these subjects and uses it well to set targets for individual pupils and to help ensure that pupils reach them. Additionally, regular termly writing assessments take place to track progress. These excellent systems do not yet apply to the other core subjects of science, religious education and information and communication technology. Also, assessments in other subjects are informal. Assessment information is used well to identify pupils who need additional support. For example, through additional literacy support and booster classes for identified Year 6 pupils. Analysis of last year's Key Stage 2 statutory test results also highlighted the need to give pupils more support in developing their inference and deduction skills in their reading and the curriculum has been changed to support these developments.

42. The school uses baseline assessments well to group children according to their ability. As children move through the foundation stage, termly assessments are made of their progress in writing and the goals to be achieved by the end of the year are reviewed. Progress in literacy and numeracy is carefully recorded each term. Very good procedures for assessment of pupils with special educational needs are in operation. Children are identified quickly at an early age in the Reception classes or on entry at another point of the school. Carefully constructed and relevant individual education plans provide clear guidance for targets and how pupils will achieve these. These plans are appropriately and regularly reviewed, as are the statements of special educational need. The school fully meets the requirements of the Code of Practice and the provision for the nine pupils with statements.

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

43. Parents have a very high regard for the school. They value the effect it has on their children's academic progress and personal development, the quality of its teaching and leadership and the way in which it is open and responsive to them. Their children are happy at school.

44. The school has established an effective partnership with parents, which has a positive impact on the progress the children make and on the quality of life in the school. It keeps parents well informed about the school, both through its formal publications and through its friendly accessibility and willingness to share its concerns with them. The prospectus clearly conveys its ethos and expectations, curriculum and outcomes. The governors' annual report to parents also gives a good view of such matters as the school's community links and building developments. A weekly newsletter keeps the parents in touch with the wide range of activities and events in the school and the local community. Each class sends home useful information on the work to be covered, in order that those parents who wish may support their children's learning at home. Reports to parents clearly show the pupils' strengths and weaknesses, progress and attitudes. They list the pupils' targets and provide an opportunity for them to comment on their work and set themselves goals. There is no formal procedure for the views of parents to be recorded or agreed strategies to be noted other than for pupils with special educational needs or those causing concern.

45. Parents make a good contribution to the work of the school and to their children's learning at home. Many regularly share books with their children and help them learn their spellings. They support the teachers in school by hearing pupils read, accompanying trips and sharing their expertise and experience, for example in computers or Indian musical instruments. There is a very active parent teacher organisation, which organises events for the community and raises substantial sums for the school. They also renovate the school resources and buildings, contributing to its ethos of high standards. The school responds very well to the concerns of parents. When it was realised that a significant minority wanted more extra-curricular provision, talks were entered into with the local providers of after-school care in order that the range of activities in the community might be extended. In this innovative way, the school uses its partnership with the local community to the benefit of all.

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

46. The overall leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are very good. The headteacher provides very strong and caring leadership and he has a clear vision for the development of

the school. In the three years since his appointment he has achieved much, successfully raising standards, improving curricular planning, developing the roles of the subject co-ordinators and improving the role of the governors. This represents good improvement since the previous inspection. The ethos of the school is one of a committed team who work very well together for the benefit of all pupils.

47. The headteacher is very well supported by the deputy headteacher, the co-ordinator for Key Stage 1 and the co-ordinator for special educational needs, who have a very good understanding of the demands of their roles. The co-ordinator for special educational needs provides very good leadership. Her role is both teaching and consultative and ensures that the requirements of the Code of Practice are met in full. She provides a wide range of very good knowledge to support the teaching of the complex needs of these pupils, ensuring the greatest possible inclusion for all pupils. Most teachers have responsibility for curricular management and they have a very good understanding of areas for development in their subjects. For example, the co-ordinators for science, information and communication technology and religious education have already identified the development of assessment procedures as a priority. They undertake their roles successfully.

48. There are several reasons why the school is so successful. The consistently high quality of teaching is fundamental to its success. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have closely monitored classroom teaching, providing very effective feedback to staff, so ensuring that all teachers give of their best. As part of its commitment to its Investors in People award, training for both teachers and support staff has high priority. Consequently, all staff have very good subject knowledge and this contributes very positively to the standards attained. Another reason for the school's success is the attention it pays to assessment in English and mathematics. It has worked hard to develop excellent procedures in these subjects, which it uses very effectively to ensure that pupils are offered well-matched tasks, resulting in pupils making good gains in their learning. The school sets challenging targets to raise standards in English and mathematics still further and pupils also have their own individual targets. Other reasons for the very good quality of education provided by the school include very effective evaluation of its performance. The school closely analyses the results of statutory tests and identifies areas of weakness, which it successfully addresses. Areas of weakness are identified for both individuals and groups of pupils and teachers carefully address these in their planning. The school is committed to the inclusion of pupils with special educational needs and the excellent provision enables all these pupils, including the above average number of pupils with statements of special educational needs, to achieve well. This contributes very positively to the high standards attained.

49. The governing body plays an important role in the success of the school. The way in which it fulfils its responsibilities is very good. Most governors have received training in aspects of their work. The training they receive for interviewing new staff has resulted in the appointment of talented teachers and support staff, who contribute to the success of the school. Each governor has responsibility for an area of the curriculum and also follows a year group through the school. They visit the school regularly to monitor its work. As a result, they have a very good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

50. The school makes very good use of resources and funds made available to it. The school development plan is a very good working document, which has been well constructed to raise standards still further. Spending decisions focus on raising standards in literacy, numeracy, science and information and communication technology. Improvements in developing the curriculum for the foundation stage have also been appropriately identified. Very good information is regularly provided about the budget, to keep governors well informed. The school makes a major commitment from its budget to the provision of support staff and staff training. This impacts favourably on the attainment and progress of all pupils, but particularly affects those with special educational needs. Funds made available for these pupils are used very well to enhance their provision. The recent appointment of a member of the support staff to take responsibility for the computer suite is already impacting positively on standards. The school also employs a specialist musician to teach music and this contributes to the high standards in music by the end of Key Stage 2. The school has successfully addressed the minor weaknesses pointed out in its recent auditor's report. The administrative officer manages day-to-day accounts and office procedure to a high standard. The principles of best value are applied very well in the school's use of resources. For example, the school evaluated several options before undertaking recent improvements

to the buildings and it has decided to employ its own caretaker. The caretaker is very much part of the team, contributing well to its smooth running. He also provides a good role model in his appointment as a lunch time supervisor.

51. There is a very good match of teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. Support staff are well trained and their good expertise makes a very positive contribution to pupils' learning. All support staff are well prepared and share the whole school ethos of valuing all pupils and the inclusion of those with special educational needs. The special educational needs co-ordinator expertly leads a team of highly professional and dedicated teachers and learning support assistants, in providing excellent support for a wide range of needs for the pupils with special educational needs. A very good level of communication exists between all involved with these pupils, through detailed notes in pupils' individual record books and regular meetings for discussion. A very good level of in-service training is provided by both the co-ordinator for special educational needs herself and by sources from outside the school.

52. The accommodation is well cared for and has been enhanced recently by the provision of a corridor, which joins the two buildings and new offices. However, two classrooms are on the upper floor where acoustics are poor and pupils in one of the classrooms can be distracted when others are using the adjacent computer area because there is an inadequate partition between the two areas. The school makes very good efforts to use the cramped site effectively. There is no grassed area and three playgrounds, all of which are small. The playground close to the classroom for most of the reception children is equipped as an exciting adventure playground and it is used well at playtimes and at other times during the day. However, there is no direct access from the reception classroom and this inhibits its use as provision for physical development for these children. Overall, there are suitable resources for all areas of the curriculum and there are strengths in resources for information and communication technology as the school has a good number of computers as well as a dedicated suite of computers.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to continue the good work of the school and to raise standards even higher, the headteacher and the governing body should now address the following in their action plan:

(These are indicated in the paragraphs numbered below.)

- (1) Improve the pupils' use of formal language by providing planned opportunities for them to develop their speaking skills throughout the school. (paragraphs 56 and 63)
- (2) Raise standards still further in reading by improving the quality of reading records to help parents and pupils to know how to improve their reading. (paragraphs 3 and 64)
- (3) Improve the provision for children in the foundation stage by ensuring that there is equality of opportunity between the two classes and that all tasks are well matched to their needs. \* (paragraphs 20, 24, 26, 56, 57 and 61)
- (4) Extend the excellent assessment practice in English and mathematics to include science, information and communication technology and religious education to track progress through the school and ensure that pupils achieve their potential in these subjects.\* (paragraphs 41, 47, 79, 99 and 109)

\* The school has already identified these areas as in need of improvement.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	54
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	26	59	13	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

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	245
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	23
<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	68
<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1
<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.1
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

**Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	00	21	14	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	17	19
	Girls	11	13	13
	Total	27	30	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (80)	86 (86)	91 (83)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	91 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	18	20
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	29	31	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (83)	89 (91)	94 (97)
	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
	00	23	12	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	20	22
	Girls	12	11	12
	Total	35	31	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100 (92)	89 (78)	97 (89)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)



Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	21	19
	Girls	9	10	12
	Total	27	31	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (58)	89 (67)	89 (78)
	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	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	239
Any other minority ethnic group	6

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

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

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

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.3
Average class size	28.5

**Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	30

**Financial information**

Financial year	99/00
	£
Total income	417746
Total expenditure	410782
Expenditure per pupil	1664
Balance brought forward from previous year	25761
Balance carried forward to next year	32725

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	248
Number of questionnaires returned	118

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	29	2	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	53	42	1	0	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	48	46	0	1	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	47	43	7	1	3
The teaching is good.	72	25	1	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	40	4	1	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	80	17	2	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	22	1	0	6
The school works closely with parents.	58	33	7	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	60	35	0	1	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	36	2	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	19	40	23	6	13

### Other issues raised by parents

Parents all spoke highly of the school, praising its Christian foundation and its place in the community. Some parents felt that the lack of a grassed area was a weakness.

## **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**

53. Children are admitted to the reception classes on a part time basis at the beginning of the year in which they have their fifth birthday. They become full time after the first half term. At the time of the inspection, all the children were attending part time. They are accommodated in two classes, one of which also accommodates a larger number of pupils in Year 1. The majority of children have experienced some form of pre-school provision. Evidence from the baseline assessments of the present five-year-olds and inspection evidence shows that attainments on entry are below average in all the areas of learning. A significant number of children start school with particularly poorly developed language and social skills. Children receive a positive start to school and participate fully in all the activities provided. They make good progress and firmly develop and consolidate their skills. Evidence from the children who have just left the foundation stage, at the end of Year R, shows that most of them have not quite attained the early learning goals in any of the areas of learning. This is because so many children start school with such poorly developed language skills and they have not yet developed sufficient skills to enable them to express themselves clearly. The previous inspection found that children's attainment was broadly average, but the intake to the school has changed in recent years with more children being admitted of lower attainment. Baseline assessments from the last three years confirm this.

54. Children have good opportunities to develop their personal and social skills. They are keen to come to school because they know that they will be offered interesting activities and that they are valued. The quality of teaching in personal, social and emotional development is very good and all adults place high priority on developing these skills, encouraging them to take turns, share and work together. Consequently, children make very good progress and the youngest children can already work independently while their teacher works with another group. However, because their skills are underdeveloped when they start school, they are unlikely to meet the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Children are already secure in class routines and they begin to develop their independence by taking turns to be helpers for the day and to take the register to the office, which is situated at some distance from the classrooms. The youngest children have very good opportunities to develop their initiative by deciding which activity they would like to experience in 'choose and stay' sessions, where they are encouraged to remain on their chosen task for a sustained period.

55. Children take responsibility for their own belongings. They attempt to undress independently when changing for physical education and leave their clothes tidily. Teachers encourage them to develop their social skills through class discussions and assemblies. For example, during the inspection, children were well motivated to talk about their worries. They could only pick up the attractive fabric 'worries', which the teacher had placed on the floor, if they spoke about their worry. This encouraged all to participate and the children learned to listen to others. As was identified in the previous inspection, very good relationships ensure that children feel secure and the inclusion of children with significant special educational needs contributes very positively to the children's personal, social and emotional development. Children are very well behaved because they know what is expected of them and that good behaviour is very much part of the ethos of the school. The well-established routines, the consistent expectations of behaviour and the caring attitudes of all adults make a significant contribution to the sense of security felt by the children.

56. The majority of children are unlikely to attain the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy by the end of Year R, although many are likely to be very close to attaining them. This is because of their below average skills on starting school, particularly in speaking. All adults take every opportunity to develop these skills in discussion and as a result, children make good progress. Appropriate opportunities are provided for children to develop their speaking skills through role-play in the class shop - Mr Benn's costume shop. However, there is sometimes insufficient focus to these tasks to develop their skills. Most children can trace their name and higher attaining children make a good attempt to write it. Children have good opportunities to practice their writing skills. For example, they practise writing patterns regularly and use the writing area to experiment with a range of mark making tools. The school places good emphasis on reading skills, as was also identified in the previous

inspection. During the inspection, the youngest children learned to sequence the story of 'The three little pigs' correctly. The teacher used an exciting 'story sack' to motivate the children, producing the storybook and encouraging the children to take out toys to represent the characters as she told the story. The teacher questioned the children sensitively to ensure that they understood. Most children enjoy books and try to tell the story using the pictures to help them. However, few children speak in full sentences. The quality of teaching is good overall. In the lessons seen for the youngest children the quality of teaching was very good and as a result children made good gains in their learning from a low starting point on entry to school. The quality of teaching for the oldest children was satisfactory. Here, activities are not always appropriate for the lower ability children and there is insufficient focus on developing their phonic skills. For example, children were expected to build words with three letters when their knowledge of initial sounds was limited.

57. Attainment in mathematics is likely to be just below that expected to meet the early learning goals at the end of the foundation stage. Evidence from the current five-year-olds shows that they can use 'big' and 'small' when comparing sizes in the story of 'Jack and the beanstalk' and that higher attaining children can sequence numbers to ten. Children develop their mathematical skills through a variety of practical activities. For example, the youngest children learn 'more' and 'less' by pretending to be elephants joining others standing on a rope. Older children develop an understanding of money when they take turns to buy currant buns in the baker's shop, when singing the well-known rhyme. The quality of teaching is good overall. In the class for the youngest children the quality of teaching seen during the inspection was very good. Here, resources such as small teddies were used very effectively to reinforce counting skills and the children learned 'longer' and 'shorter' through comparing paper mice and matching bears to beds. The end of session review time was used very effectively to reinforce what the children had learned with the teacher taking every opportunity to extend language. For example, the story 'The biggest bed in the world' was used to consolidate the concept of 'large' and 'small' and the teacher used the story to introduce the terms 'twins' and 'triplets'. As a result, children made very good gains in their learning. In the class for older children, the quality of teaching in this area of learning was satisfactory. Here, the teacher matched questions well to the needs of the children when exploring number stories orally. However, the group activity where children were expected to make their own number lines by making flowers with different numbers of petals was complicated and many did not understand what they were expected to do. Children in both classes develop their counting skills through singing number rhymes such as 'One, two, three, four, five; once I caught a fish alive' regularly. They develop the concept of 'full' and 'empty' through the use of lentils and a variety of containers such as cups.

58. The children's physical development is below the standards expected at five years old and they make good progress. They gain an understanding of finding their own personal space to work in during physical education lessons in the hall. The quality of teaching in the lesson seen during the inspection was good. The teacher used the story 'Head to Toe' effectively to introduce the lesson and, as a result, children also learned the names of several body parts. They stretched, walked, bent and responded well to the teacher's instructions. They used their arms and legs to imitate ears and trunks when responding to music as elephants. Children develop their physical skills well through regular opportunities to use the outdoor adventure playground adjacent to their classroom. However, there is no easy access to this area and consequently it is difficult for this area to be used by small groups throughout the day. The school has already identified the need to provide wheeled toys to further develop physical skills. Children develop their manipulative skills well through opportunities to handle small toys and scissors regularly. For example, they cut out teddies and build playgrounds for 'play people'.

59. The children's creative development is below what is expected for children at the end of the reception year. They learn to use paint appropriately to mix primary colours and make handprints. They learn how to use different materials to make a frieze of 'Mr Benn's Street', after using a hammer and shape board to design the houses. They develop an understanding of collage by making the initial letter of their name. Most children know some simple songs by heart. It was not possible to see any teaching in this area of learning during the inspection.

60. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is below that expected in order to meet the early learning goals at the end of the reception year. They learn to identify parts of the computer and use programs to support their literacy and numeracy skills. They learn the best methods of joining materials

through experimenting with glue and by hammering tacks into a board. They gain an understanding of 'then' and 'now' by looking at photographs of themselves as babies and as they are now. The quality of teaching is very good and consequently children make very good gains in their learning. During the inspection, children learned about Christian symbols after a visit to the church. Good quality photographs and pictures of items seen in the church stimulated them to record their favourite item and to make very good gains in their understanding of the use of the font and the pulpit. This lesson also made a positive contribution to the children's spiritual development as they were asked to close their eyes and think about what they had seen in the church.

61. The quality of teaching is good overall and leads to good learning. In the class for the youngest children, almost all the teaching was judged to be very good. Strengths in the quality of teaching include very effective planning, very high expectations, a gentle encouraging style which values the contributions of all and very well managed children. The talented and experienced classroom assistants are very much part of the team and are used very effectively to ensure that all children, and particularly those with special educational needs, receive as much individual and small group support as possible. This is a similar picture to the previous inspection. Where teaching is less successful, in the class for older children, tasks are not always well matched to their needs and pace is slower. This is because tasks are often more closely matched to the needs of the larger number of pupils in Year 1 in the class.

## **ENGLISH**

62. Standards in English are in line with the national expectation at the end of Key Stage 1 and above expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils are achieving well. The trend over recent years, since the last inspection, has shown continuing improvement at Key Stage 2. This was true also of Key Stage 1 until 1999, when there was a drop in attainment to below average in reading and average in writing. This was because of a significant number of pupils with special educational needs in the Year 2 class. The results for 2000 show a continuing high level of attainment at Key Stage 2 and improvement in reading at Key Stage 1. The overall rise in standards is due to the very good teaching and in particular, the regular and systematic teaching of basic skills. Additionally, there are excellent systems in English for the assessment and tracking of pupils' progress through the school, together with excellent provision for pupils with special educational needs. Standards have improved since the previous inspection, particularly at Key Stage 2. The reason for the difference between inspection evidence and the results of statutory tests is the high number of pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 6.

63. The pupils' abilities in speaking and listening are at a similar level to that which is expected for their age at both key stages. Children enter the school with below average skills in these areas and make good progress through the school in their listening skills. On entry, clarity of speech is a problem for a significant number of pupils, as is a limited vocabulary. Good progress is made in the pupils' clarity of speech and their understanding of an increasing vocabulary as they go through the school. Teachers work very hard for example, to ensure that pupils have a good understanding of the technical vocabulary that goes with different subjects in the curriculum. A good example of this is a Year 4 mathematics class, where pupils were exploring root words of 'tri', 'quad' and 'pent' to aid their understanding of triangle, quadrilateral and pentagon. The pupils' understanding of vocabulary is good, but there is a weakness in their use of formal language in formal situations. Too often teachers accept from pupils either very simple sentences or words that are not sentences, in answer to questions. At present, there are insufficient regular and systematic opportunities for pupils to develop formal speaking skills throughout the curriculum and the development of speaking skills is not planned sufficiently as part of the curriculum.

64. The teaching of reading is a strong feature of daily literacy lessons throughout the school. Parents and a range of adults within the school, give good support to hearing individual reading. Inspection evidence indicates that the majority of pupils read at a level expected for their age by the end of Key Stage 1. There are more pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 6 than last year and inspection evidence indicates a drop from well above to above average standards by the end of Key Stage 2. All the pupils are encouraged to love reading and many older pupils express preferences for a range of authors. For example, at the time of the inspection, the school was holding a Book Fair, which was supported well by parents and pupils. Pupils have good access to a range of non-fiction and fiction

books that they are able to read at home. Teachers ensure that a broad range of reading skills is taught systematically through the school. The pupils' library skills and ability to research for information are well developed. Pupils are heard to read regularly and standardised reading tests, which are administered annually, are carefully recorded. Pupils' reading records note which books pupils have read and contain comments which are encouraging and give praise. However, they contain very few comments that would help both the pupil and parent to know how to improve their reading.

65. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in writing are in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and above expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. Writing has been a particular focus of development throughout the school and a close eye kept on its development. For example, writing is assessed regularly on a termly basis, monitored by the headteacher and work is stored in an individual pupil portfolio. Additionally, the curriculum has been modified to include one extended writing session each week. Results of both national tests at Year 6 and Year 2, as well as yearly optional tests, are closely scrutinised. This information is used very well to inform both teachers' and school planning. The introduction of the national literacy strategy has given a good framework for teachers to provide structured opportunities to improve their writing. Pupils use a wide range of writing across the curriculum. There are, for example, good opportunities for pupils to write stories, poems, and instructions, write up experiments and to write about class visits outside the school. A particularly good example of this is the Year 6 residential visit, which is carefully planned at the start of the academic year, to maximise opportunities to record and write about the visit in different styles. The previous inspection identified weaknesses in opportunities for pupils to write in a sustained manner. This weakness has been effectively addressed.

66. When marking pupils work, there are many good examples of remarks, which help to identify what each pupil needs to do to improve their work. Additionally, teachers and pupils agree literacy targets annually for individual pupils, which are recorded in the annual report. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent. Teachers and learning support assistants, who take careful account of the targets on their individual education plans, provide a very good level of support. Good communication exists between all concerned with these pupils through very regular notes written in the pupils' progress book. Highly skilled support is offered to those pupils with particular needs. Additional literacy support in Years 3 and 4 and booster classes in Year 6 are further good examples of extra support provided by the school. All these factors, in addition to the good teaching, contribute to the good progress which pupils make throughout the school.

67. The quality of the teaching throughout the school is very good. All teachers have a very good knowledge of the subject and basic skills are taught thoroughly and regularly reinforced. Teachers' planning is also very good and group work is well matched to three levels of ability. A particularly good feature of the teaching is the way in which teachers clearly identify the objectives for the lesson to the pupils, and refer back to these during the lesson, helping pupils to understand how they are progressing. Teachers plan subsequent lessons accurately since they use the end part of each lesson profitably to assess what pupils have learned. They use additional adult help in the classroom very effectively, to support the pupils' learning. For example, when pupils were focusing on instructional writing, the learning support assistant was able to support the pupils with special educational needs in sequencing sentences correctly. The good teaching provides well ordered classrooms and suitable tasks, which challenge all pupils. Consequently, pupils are well behaved, well motivated and apply themselves with great concentration to their work.

68. The management of English is good. Good monitoring of both teaching and learning, in addition to the careful scrutiny and use of assessment information, make a strong contribution to the good standards attained in the school.

## **MATHEMATICS**

69. Inspection evidence shows that standards in mathematics are in line with the national expectation by the end of Key Stage 1. Standards are above expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. This represents improvement at both key stages since 1999 where results of statutory tests were below

average for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 and average for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2. The most recent statutory tests for 2000, confirm this improving picture and show that standards are above average by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils are achieving well at both key stages from their below average starting point on entry to school.

70. There are several reasons why pupils do so well. The quality of teaching is consistently very good throughout the school. This is because the headteacher and deputy headteacher monitor the quality of teaching very closely and help teachers to improve. Staff training has high priority and as a result, all teachers have good subject knowledge. Analysis of the results of statutory tests is very well established and areas of weakness are quickly identified and addressed. Excellent assessment procedures ensure that areas for development are identified for pupils of all abilities and that work is very well matched to their needs. Another reason for the improvement is the excellent provision made for pupils with special educational needs. In addition to very good quality support from classroom assistants, pupils with special educational needs use a commercial computer program regularly to develop their mathematical vocabulary. The teacher is able to set up this program at the appropriate level for each pupil and the resulting data itemises individual difficulties and assesses progress. As a result of this excellent provision, many pupils with special educational needs reach the expected level in their statutory tests, contributing to improvement in overall results.

71. The national numeracy strategy is well established and this has made a significant contribution to teacher confidence and to the pupils' rate of learning. Lessons start with mental work and teachers match their questions well to the needs of individuals. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, a good range of questions required pupils to change fractions into their equivalents. In a lesson for pupils in Year 1, pupils responded well to counting forwards and backwards from given numbers, using attractive card frogs to jump along the number line. As a result of the attractive resource, pupils were well motivated to have a turn and consequently made good gains in their learning. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils use numbers to 100 confidently, roll dice in pairs to make numbers, understand odd and even numbers and undertake a range of investigations to explore numbers. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils show a good understanding of place value to 1000. They estimate the answers to calculations and solve them using all four operations. They calculate large numbers by rounding up or down and explain their reasoning clearly. They know what each digit represents in a number with up to three decimal places.

72. There is no difference in standards between the different areas of mathematics at either key stage. In Year 2, for example, pupils recognise and name shapes such as circle, triangle, square, rectangle. They identify a sphere, cuboid, cube and cylinder. Higher attaining pupils identify a pentagon, hexagon, pyramid and prism. By Year 4, pupils show a good understanding of the properties of shapes and test their theories about symmetry by folding two-dimensional shapes. Pupils in Year 3 read an analogue clock and most can convert analogue to digital time. In Year 2, pupils draw lines accurately to a given length and by Year 6 pupils calculate the angle sum of triangles and show a good understanding of area of regular shapes. Regular attention is given to data handling. For example, pupils in Year 5 use graphs to show their favourite secret ingredient in rock cakes.

73. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their work and this contributes very positively to their learning. They are well motivated because they are taught well and activities are well matched to their needs. The quality of teaching is very good overall at both key stages and contributes to very good learning throughout the school. Very good lessons were characterised by very effective planning that ensured that the aims of the lessons were met, encouraged constant reinforcement of skills and suggested challenging activities which promoted very good learning. For example, pupils in Year 2 were asked to investigate how to measure a curved line. They were keen to succeed and worked well together sharing their ideas until they had found the solution. In another very good lesson, pupils learned to use correct mathematical language when describing three-dimensional shapes because the teacher gave them interesting ways of remembering the name for prism, sphere and pyramid based on their own experiences. At Key Stage 2, lessons are characterised by very good planning with activities which are well matched to the pupils' needs, very good use of assessment, very good use of interesting resources and good use of support staff. A feature of mathematics lessons throughout the school is regular reinforcement of what pupils have already learned. For example, pupils are told the aims of the lesson at the beginning and this is reviewed at the end. Younger pupils often recite what they have learned; for



example, 100 centimetres in a metre. An example of excellent teaching was seen for a pupil with special educational needs. This pupil made excellent gains in learning because a very good variety of practical activities, which reinforced learning was provided. The teacher was highly skilled in using an approach in which the pupil used all his senses to learn to identify shapes. The teacher used praise to motivate the pupil and supported him in a friendly but firm way. Teaching of this quality for pupils with special educational needs makes a significant impact on their progress.

74. Pupils use their numeracy skills well across the curriculum. For example, pupils create graphs in science to record their findings, use their measuring skills in art when making wall hangings and in design and technology when designing a craft for an egg to fall for a given drop without cracking. Effective use is made of displays where pupils can develop their mathematical skills. Examples seen during the inspection include a display in Year 2 where pupils could sort a range of solid shapes by their properties and another in Year 3 where pupils could investigate the time taken for a marble to run down a channel. Interactive displays such as these contribute positively to the standards attained.

75. There have been significant improvements in mathematics since the previous inspection. The experienced co-ordinator provides very good leadership and has worked hard to address the weaknesses identified then. Standards have improved at Key Stage 2 and older pupils now calculate accurately and at speed. The quality of teaching has improved and there has been good improvement in assessment. All these improvements have a positive impact on the standards attained by the time the pupils leave the school.

## **SCIENCE**

76. In the 1999 teacher assessment for seven-year-olds, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level was well above average, while the percentage reaching higher levels was average. The reason that pupils do better in science than in English and mathematics is due to the more practical nature of the subject. In the statutory tests for eleven-year-olds, results were well above average. In the Year 2000 statutory tests and assessments, results were a little lower at the end of Key Stage 1, but well above average at the end of Key Stage 2.

77. The findings of the inspection are that standards are currently above expectations at the end of both key stages. This is an improvement on the last inspection. This finding is broadly similar to the most recent National Curriculum assessments at Key Stage 1, but below these at Key Stage 2. The reason for this is that standards in investigative science at Key Stage 2 in the school are below those in the more knowledge-based elements of the subject, and only the latter are tested in the statutory tests. Children enter the school with below average standards in knowledge and understanding. They leave with higher than average standards in science. This indicates that their achievement is good. Younger Key Stage 1 pupils are clear about some physical changes associated with pregnancy and most can evaluate the relationship between different members of a family. By the end of the key stage, the pupils have a good understanding of the effects of heating and cooling on a range of materials. They are also beginning to understand the meaning of 'fair testing' in an investigation. By Year 5, most pupils conceptualise well about the process of evaporation and the conditions that accelerate this. For example, they are aware that the greater the surface area of a container, the quicker a liquid in it will evaporate. Some can effectively define how evaporation involves a changing state of matter. Nearly all the pupils are clear about the necessity for fair testing in their investigation. Most pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 have a good understanding of a wide range of scientific phenomena. For instance, they recognise the relationship between the position of the sun in the sky and the length of shadows. However, they are less clear about how to design an investigation in order to solve a scientific problem.

78. Pupils' enjoy science and their attitudes in lessons are frequently very good. From the earliest years of Key Stage 1, pupils are very interested in the topics they study and are often excited by the tasks they are presented with. Key Stage 2 pupils are very attentive during preliminary discussions. They are keen to share their ideas with the rest of their class, but still prepared to listen carefully to the views of others. Behaviour in science lessons throughout the school is mostly very good and is never less than satisfactory. Pupils particularly enjoy practical, investigative activities. Teaching is also never less than satisfactory and in most lessons it is good or better. It was very good in half of the lessons seen during

the inspection. Teachers' clear planning ensures a good focus to lessons. Objectives are often made clear to the pupils at the beginning of a lesson, so that they know exactly what they are hoping to achieve. Discussions are open-ended and challenging, and a good range of different kinds of activities within a lesson maintains pupils' interest. Discipline is positive but firm and has very effective outcomes in terms of pupils' behaviour, attitudes and relationships. In some lessons, however, the teacher plays too dominant a role and this detracts from pupils' capacity to exercise control over their own learning and slows down the progress they make in developing investigative skills.

79. Schemes of work are currently being revised in line with recent national initiatives and the school's overall provision for the subject is good. However, structures for assessing and recording individual pupils' attainment and progress in science have not yet been implemented, and assessment is not used enough to inform planning. This means that work set is not always matched finely enough to the needs of different groups of pupils in a class. This, again, is particularly the case in investigative science. At the time of the inspection the subject co-ordinator was on sick leave, and the role was being fulfilled by the headteacher who has a clear view of the subject's developmental needs. Good use is made of information and communication technology to support learning in science.

## **ART**

80. Pupils develop their knowledge, understanding and skills of art well across both key stages. At the ages of seven and eleven, pupils' standards are as expected for their ages with some good standards seen in particular aspects of art. These judgements are similar to those of the last inspection.

81. At Key Stage 1, an appropriate range of work is covered. Evidence from classroom displays for example, includes collage using natural material, a woodland walk in silhouette style, observational drawings of cats, clay animals and good links with computer art programs. At Key Stage 2, the range of work is consolidated and extended and includes collage, Batik work, charcoal and printing. Throughout the school, there is good use of the study of the work of famous artists to develop pupils' skills and to encourage different styles in their work. Pupils reach good levels of attainment in this aspect of their work. Good examples of this include abstract pictures based on the work of John Constable and those showing the effect of light on a variety of objects, using pastel and paint in the style of Monet. Art is planned to integrate well with other subjects. The school's Year 6 residential trip for example, provides good opportunities for close observational work of birds and insects and good examples of batik wall hangings are prominently displayed.

82. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. Lessons are well planned and clearly identify what pupils are going to learn. Skills are taught clearly and directly. For example, in one close observation lesson, when making a detailed study of the hand, pupils were taught how to use their pencils to apply shading and tone to their work. Good use is made of pupils' sketch books for planning purposes. This was shown in a lesson concerning the study of Matisse, when pupils were looking at patterns in everyday objects. Teachers ensure that there is a good range of materials and artefacts which stimulate pupils. Pupils are managed well in a pleasant and effective manner. As a result of the good teaching, the pupils' response is also good and they make good gains in their learning. Pupils' level of behaviour is good. Levels of concentration are also good and because of the varied and interesting work planned, the pupils' interest is maintained.

83. The art co-ordinator is newly in post and provides sound leadership. Art is under review and about to become a focus for development. The scheme of work is also being revised to meet new government guidance. The school capitalises on opportunities to extend the art curriculum. For example, pupils made a visit to Cleve Abbey to study the work of artists such as Suzie Best.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

84. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection. It is not possible, therefore, to make absolute judgements about standards or the quality of teaching in the subject. Examination of planning documents, scrutiny of some previous work and discussion with staff indicates that an appropriate range

of activities is being provided in the subject and that National Curriculum requirements are being met. The previous inspection identified some shortcomings in the subject. Since then, the school has appropriately focused on raising standards in literacy and numeracy, but design and technology is identified as a priority on the current school development plan.

85. Younger Key Stage 1 pupils, for example, work successfully together to make an attractive fabric hanging depicting mini-beasts in their natural environment. Year 2 pupils design and make a coat of many colours after deciding how many parts they need and testing their ideas using paper and various adhesives. Their final products are completed in cotton and attractively decorated. Younger Key Stage 2 pupils produce model land yachts using wood, cardboard joints and wheels. Year 6 pupils design craft that enable an egg to fall three metres without getting broken. They label their designs and list the resources they need. They then test and evaluate their results.

86. In the one lesson seen, for pupils in Year 3, where they prepared trial packages in preparation for the construction of small cereal boxes, the pupils enjoyed the activity, although some were over enthusiastic and noisy. Teaching was good. Tasks were well matched to the needs of different groups within the class and questions were challenging.

87. New planning strategies are currently in the process of implementation in line with recent national initiatives and resources have been appropriately updated to match these new demands. The headteacher is the subject co-ordinator. He has a clear view of the subject's current developmental needs.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

88. No geography lessons were seen during the inspection and, therefore, no judgements are made about the quality of teaching in the subject. Analysis of previous work, inspection of planning documents and discussions with staff and pupils indicates that a full geography curriculum is provided and that standards are broadly as expected at the end of both key stages. Pupils are achieving appropriately. This judgement is similar to that of the last inspection.

89. Young Key Stage 1 pupils can draw their route to school in simple map form. By Year 2, pupils are able to make a map of an imaginary place and describe key human and physical features. Younger Key Stage 2 pupils successfully study a tribe from a rainforest region. They empathise with the problems caused by western influence – such as the spread of unfamiliar diseases – and appreciate the negative effects of deforestation. By Year 5, pupils understand how to use grid references and recognise symbols on an Ordnance Survey map. They have a good understanding of different world climates. They locate and label continents, oceans and countries on a map of the world. By the end of the key stage, pupils understand scale in mapping and successfully record aspects such as rainfall and temperature on graphs.

90. The school is currently implementing new schemes of work for geography in line with national initiatives. The recently appointed co-ordinator has a clear view of the subject's strengths and areas for future development.

## **HISTORY**

91. Standards in history are generally above expected levels at the end of both key stages, a finding broadly similar to that of the last inspection. Key Stage 1 pupils, for example, have a good understanding of chronology and a developing understanding of different ways we can find out about the past. They successfully compare similar artefacts from Victorian and modern times. Many are able to provide a number of credible reasons why some objects are older than others. They appreciate a range

of key features associated with age and can place artefacts in chronological order. Younger Key Stage 2 pupils are aware of the different kinds of historical information they might gain from studying artefacts and from other sources, including information and communication technology and documentation. Others have a good understanding of the reasons for Henry the Eighth's marriages to Anne Boleyn and Jane Seymour, and the results. Older pupils at this key stage have a good understanding of periods that they are studying. Year 5 pupils have a good understanding of salient aspects of life at school in Victorian times. They effectively compare these with life at school today and make good use of relevant resource materials to gain relevant information. They empathise with the plight of Victorian child labourers working in factories. Pupils at the end of the key stage have a good knowledge of many aspects of the life and culture of Ancient Greece.

92. Pupils' attitudes in history lessons range from satisfactory to very good but are good overall. In most lessons they contribute enthusiastically to discussions and listen politely to the opinions of others. Pupils settle quickly to tasks and focus well on these. Often they show the ability to work effectively without direct teacher supervision, sharing resources and ideas very well. Occasionally some talk out of turn and are more inclined to express their own opinions than to listen to those of others. Behaviour overall, however, is good. Teaching is consistently good and is sometimes very good. Resources, including photographs and original artefacts, are mostly used to good effect in stimulating pupils' interest. Methods are suitably varied and there is a good level of challenge to questions and tasks, some of which are well matched to the needs and aptitudes of different groups of pupils within a class. This contributes well to the development of pupils' historical skills and knowledge. Teachers have a good understanding and enthusiasm for the aspect of history that they are teaching. Discipline is positive and generally effective, although in some lessons pupils are allowed to interrupt others without appropriate rebuke. In an occasional lesson there is an over reliance on drab photocopied teaching materials.

93. The co-ordinator has only been in post for a short time. Already, however, she has a clear idea of the subject's strengths and areas for development. A good balance in the delivery of history is ensured by a satisfactory planning structure, which is supported by nationally produced materials. For example, historical skills are taught, as well as historical knowledge. There is scope, however, for assessment information to be used to inform the delivery of more advanced skills to some pupils at the later stages of education in the school. Good use is made of local museums and other sources to support the school's overall good provision of the subject.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

94. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with the national expectation by the end of both key stages. Pupils achieve as well as they should and this is an improvement since the previous inspection, where attainment was below average and there were weaknesses in the curriculum.

95. There are several reasons why standards have improved. An important factor is the recent provision of an information and communication technology suite, which is well equipped with sufficient computers of good quality to allow for large groups of pupils to be taught at the same time. Another area of the school has also been equipped with several computers to give easy access to pupils in the middle years of Key Stage 2. The improvement in resources for the subject is contributing positively to rising standards. A member of the support staff has been employed to take responsibility for the computer suite and provides good quality teaching to groups of pupils throughout the school. For example, during the inspection, pupils in Year 2 learned how to change the width of the line when using a drawing program to compose pictures in the style of Mondrian. The regular teaching of skills, based on a new scheme of work is impacting positively on the standards attained. Pupils now develop their skills steadily and systematically as they move through the school. Most classroom assistants and teachers have received training in the subject and provide very good support when pupils use the computers in the classrooms and corridor. This also contributes to the improvement in standards.

96. Pupils show positive attitudes to the subject and are proud of their achievements. They are keen to demonstrate their skills. For example, during the inspection, pupils in Year 3 confidently demonstrated their skills in sending a programmable toy along a route and described how they use computers in

school. Pupils in Year 6 showed that they can make a square on screen and showed perseverance in trying more complicated patterns.

97. The school uses information and communication technology effectively to support other areas of the curriculum. For example, pupils use word processing skills in literacy to write poems, captions and instructions, using a range of functions to enhance their work. In Year 2 they use the keyboard confidently to write poems based on the story of 'Funnybones', showing their use of a range of fonts and sizes of print. By Year 4, word processing skills have developed further and pupils import pictures into their text when they compile class newspapers. By Year 6, pupils use a wide range of word processing features when they write accounts of their residential visit, including photographs taken with the digital camera. In geography, pupils in Year 1 make simple maps, showing that they can 'click and drag' as well as changing the font and size of text. Older pupils use their research skills effectively to search the Internet and CD Roms for information about the planets. Younger pupils use databases to compile graphs based on birthdays and eye colour, while older pupils use spreadsheets in science to compile tables about water evaporation. Drawing programs are used effectively throughout the school to support artwork. For example, pupils in Year 4 produce attractive designs based on the work of Seurat. Pupils in Year 2, design Joseph's 'coat of many colours' to illustrate work in religious education. The use of information and communication technology in other areas of the curriculum helps pupils develop their skills.

98. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the quality of teaching at either key stage because few lessons were observed during the inspection. However, in the lesson seen for pupils in Years 1 and 2, pupils used the computers independently and with enjoyment. They made good gains in their learning because the classroom assistant encouraged them to make choices to discover who had stolen the cookie from the cookie jar. The pupils answered questions on screen and the responses which they made led them to a digital photograph of one of their classmates. This amused the pupils and encouraged them to persevere.

99. The new co-ordinator has a clear view for the development of the subject and has already identified the need to develop formal assessment procedures to track pupils' progress through the school. Currently, assessment is informal because the school has rightly focused on raising standards. Assessment and monitoring standards is a priority on the school development plan. The co-ordinator has also correctly identified the need to improve software for simulation programs.

## **MUSIC**

100. The school has a strong musical tradition, particularly in singing, and provides very well for its pupils. A specialist musician provides strong musical expertise and enthusiasm to support good music teaching and participation in musical activities as an entitlement for all and this has a significant effect on the standards attained.

101. Since the last inspection, standards in music have improved. Pupils make good progress through the school, reaching the standards expected for their age at the age of seven and above average standards at eleven years old. At Key Stage 1, pupils are taught well and they learn to sing a suitable range of songs, which are well matched to their interests. Teachers plan for pupils to play a wide range of untuned instruments, which pupils learn to name and group by the way in which they are played. They are taught to take account of musical instructions and to rehearse and perform with others. By the age of seven years old, they recognise and explore ways in which sounds can be arranged and played, and recognise and use symbols to represent sounds. Their understanding of how different effects can be created is also appropriately developed to include such elements as dynamics and speed. The good teaching provides well-planned lessons, which have clear learning objectives for the lesson and a good emphasis on the teaching of basic skills. At Key Stage 2, the teaching is also good and sometimes it is very good. Very good knowledge of music and high enthusiasm supports well-planned lessons and regular good assessment practice. A wide variety of activities, which includes access to a range of good quality tuned instruments, underpins the good progress which pupils make and the above average standards which they reach. All pupils learn to play the recorder and a good number play other

instruments, such as the keyboard played by a pupil in a Key Stage 2 assembly. Teaching gives a good lead to the development of singing, providing relevant and knowledgeable advice. As a result, the pupils sing very sweetly and tunefully and there are examples of good quality solo singing.

102. Music is well led by the co-ordinator, providing good professional musical support for all teachers and good quality extra-curricular activities. These include the band and recorder clubs and musical productions such as the summer concert. Good numbers of pupils are motivated to take part in these activities and additionally there are good regular opportunities to perform in school assemblies.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

103. Only two lessons were seen during the course of the inspection, one in each key stage. It is therefore not possible to make judgements about the quality of teaching. Evidence from these two lessons, from scrutiny of teachers' planning and from discussions with the co-ordinator, indicates that pupils reach the expected standards their age at the end of both key stages and achieve appropriately. This judgement is similar to that of the last inspection.

104. At Key Stage 1, pupils were seen to be working on a theme of balancing and rolling activities. The lesson was well planned with clear learning objectives and pupils were developing suitable control and co-ordination in their movements. Appropriate skills were used to enable pupils to build and link short sequences of movements on the floor and on the large apparatus. They reached expected levels for their age. At Key Stage 2, the lesson again was well planned with a good order of activities to develop skills' systematically. Pupils were observed practising and improving their tennis skills. They were gaining appropriate control of their actions to enable them to use the right amount of force to return the ball in a desired direction. Standards are as expected for the age of the pupils.

105. Planning and records indicate that the pupils reach good levels in swimming activities and there is good support from parents for this activity. The school's curriculum benefits from a good range of sporting activities and there is good involvement by teachers in outside activities, such as the Cliff Richard Tennis Scheme, the Tops Scheme and the Taunton Athletics Club for extra training. A scheme of work is in place, but is currently being revised to meet new requirements. The accommodation makes some restrictions on the physical education curriculum, but the school makes every effort to address its difficulties. For example, there is no grassed area and the playgrounds are small. However, the school makes good use of the local recreation ground to provide space for older pupils to have physical education lessons.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

106. Standards in religious education meet and sometimes exceed expectations at the end of both key stages – an improvement on the findings of the last inspection. The work provided is appropriately based on the most recent locally Agreed Syllabus and statutory requirements are fully met. The subject has an established place in the school's curriculum and makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development.

107. Key Stage 1 pupils are clear about the rules they, themselves, follow in everyday life and those that are an attempt to make the larger world a better place. They have a developing awareness of the biblical meaning of 'love your neighbour' and of ways of fulfilling the commandment in their own lives. Younger Key Stage 2 pupils have a good understanding of the concept of prayer and what this means to believers. Others reflect deeply on a wide range of issues, conflicts and concepts related to the life of Ghandi. They are beginning to appreciate how the values held by Ghandi influenced the way he led his life. Some are able to consider their own attitudes and the behaviour of others in terms of prejudice and peace. Year 6 pupils compare Babushka dolls with human personality – the smallest doll being the real inner self, known only to the individual.

108. Pupils' attitudes in religious education lessons are generally good and are sometimes very good. They are interested in stories and keen to contribute sensibly to discussions. They respect the feelings and views of others. Frequently they become deeply involved in the significant issues that are being shared. Teaching is always at least good and is sometimes very good. This is the key reason for the interest that nearly all pupils have in the subject. Planning is usually very detailed and is always closely related to the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus. Concepts presented are often very challenging but handled sensitively. Class management is positive and effective. In the most successful lesson seen during the inspection, the teacher had very good subject knowledge. This effectively informed her exposition and successfully advanced pupils' understanding of some difficult ideas.

109. Although much of the religious education curriculum is appropriately related to Christianity, due regard and respect is also given to other major world faiths. There are sufficient resources to deliver the subject effectively, and overall provision is enhanced by very good links with the local church. Formal strategies for assessing and recording pupils' attainment in religious education have yet to be implemented to track their progress through the school. The enthusiastic co-ordinator has a very good understanding of the subject's current strengths and of areas in which it might be developed further in the future.