

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **FINMERE C OF E VC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Finmere

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123104

Headteacher: Mrs S Starsmore

Reporting inspector: Mr L Lewin  
22330

Dates of inspection: 29 – 31 October 2001

Inspection number: 225075

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Mere Road Finmere Buckingham
Postcode:	MK18 4AR
Telephone number:	01280 848459
Fax number:	01280 848459
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs A Harris
Date of previous inspection:	October 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22330	Mr L Lewin	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Music Physical education Special educational needs Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
11096	Mrs M Davie	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with the parents?
24675	Mrs G Beardsley	Team inspector	Foundation Stage English Art and design Geography History Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to the pupils?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Finmere Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School is a small school situated in a rural location in the village of Finmere. There are currently 35 boys and girls on roll between the ages of four and 11, taught in two classes by two full-time teachers including the headteacher and one part-time teacher. The school role has dropped slightly over recent years. The school serves the village of Finmere and other surrounding villages. A minority of children have attended playgroups in the area prior to starting school. Most of the pupils transfer to secondary schools in Bicester, Buckingham and Brackley. The great majority of pupils come from the immediate catchment area, which is comprised mainly of private housing. The school has an above average level of pupils moving in and out of the school during the year - last year four pupils joined during the year other than at the usual admission times and six left other than at the normal time of leaving. All of the pupils come from white ethnic backgrounds. No pupils are currently eligible for free school meals. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs, at 17 per cent, is below the national average. However, this figure varies significantly from year to year, and, over recent years the number of pupils with special educational needs has frequently been above the national average. There are no pupils in the school with Statements of Special Educational Need and no pupils in attendance who speak English as an additional language. The attainment of children on entry to school is broadly average.

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

This is a good school. Good leadership and management have enabled rapid improvement to take place over the last few years. Teaching is good and pupils achieve well by the time they leave the school. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Good teaching enables pupils to attain above average standards in English, mathematics and science at Year 6 and in music and religious education at Key Stage 1.
- The school is well led and managed. Staff work together as a highly effective team and are fully supported by the governors.
- Pupils show very positive attitudes towards school. They behave well, form very good relationships with each other and with their teachers and show good personal development.
- The school has established strong and effective links with parents.

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

- The provision for children in the Foundation Stage.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) and its use to support learning in other subjects.

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

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

All aspects of the school's performance have improved. There is a purposeful and enthusiastic ethos, with a particular emphasis on all of the school community working together to promote the quality of education offered to the pupils. At the time of the last inspection in October 1998, the school development plan, the curriculum planning and the systems by which the school monitors the quality of its work were deemed to be in need of

improvement. All of these areas have improved significantly and are now judged to be working well. Improvement in the management of the school has been a key factor in helping the school improve. Teaching, standards and pupils' attitudes have all improved significantly and the school building and facilities have been further enhanced. There is much enthusiasm and commitment amongst the staff and governors to sustain the current good rate of improvement in the future.

## STANDARDS<sup>1</sup>

Observations of pupils' work during this inspection show that standards have improved since the last inspection. The school currently has only one child in the Foundation Stage<sup>2</sup> and one pupil in Year 2. Judgements for standards of attainment for these age groups are therefore not made in this report. The school has eight pupils in Year 1 and inspection observations show that the standards attained by this age group match the expected levels in all subjects except for music and religious education where pupils' attainment is above average and history where there was not enough evidence available to enable a judgement to be made. By the end of Key Stage 2, Year 6 pupils attain above average standards in English, mathematics and science. These pupils attain the nationally expected levels in nearly all other subjects. However, although pupils are beginning to make more frequent use of ICT, standards in this subject are still below the expected level.

The school has clear systems for recording pupils' progress as they move through the school and makes good use of this information to set realistic and challenging targets for pupils' future performance. Teachers are successful in helping pupils to achieve these targets. A scrutiny of the records of pupils' progress and observations of pupils' work over the last year reflects a picture of good progress made by all groups of pupils as they move through the school so that they achieve well by the time they leave.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils show very positive attitudes to work and school life. They concentrate well and are enthusiastic.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave well. They are generally courteous and show respect for the feelings of others.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between pupils and with their teachers are very good. Pupils show good personal development and carry out tasks they are given conscientiously.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Pupils enjoy coming to school.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception (Foundation Stage)	Years 1 – 2 (Key Stage 1)	Years 3 – 6 (Key Stage 2)
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Good

<sup>1</sup> Usually, in inspection reports, this section contains a table to show the school's results for the end of key stage national tests in comparison with other schools. However, if as in this case the numbers of pupils involved in testing is less than ten, the table is omitted.

<sup>2</sup> Children start school in the Foundation Stage, which caters for children aged three to five and generally refers to children who are in the nursery, reception or early years classes.

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

The quality of teaching across the school is good. Planning and preparation of lessons are very effective so that pupils carry out interesting work that matches their current levels of attainment and also challenges them. The needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs are carefully considered and catered for effectively. Particularly good teaching was seen in music and physical education at Key Stage 1 and in mathematics at Key Stage 2. The teaching at Key Stage 2 is especially well geared to cater for the wide age and ability range in the class. Teachers show a thorough approach with preparing equipment and resources so that no time is wasted and lessons therefore flow smoothly. This enables pupils to sustain a good pace of learning. Good use is made of information gained from assessing pupils' work to help plan future lessons. Teachers are good at promoting a calm and purposeful working atmosphere in lessons and make learning an enjoyable experience for pupils who therefore progress well with their learning and gain confidence in their own abilities. Overall, the quality of teaching in English and mathematics lessons is good and the skills of literacy and numeracy are well taught. Teachers generally display confident subject knowledge. However, this confidence is less evident in the teaching of ICT and lessons do not always sufficiently incorporate the use of computers to support pupils' learning. The teaching assistants work very effectively alongside the teachers and provide valuable support to guide pupils' learning.

#### **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. Overall, the school provides a good range of curricular opportunities for its pupils and places a suitably strong emphasis upon teaching the skills of English, mathematics and science. Information and communication technology is not used sufficiently to support learning in most areas of the curriculum. The school is also addressing the fact that at the Foundation Stage, not enough opportunities are provided for learning through sand and water play and through using suitable outdoor play equipment. Very little is currently offered to pupils in the way of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is well organised. Very clear individual education plans are provided for pupils where appropriate.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall. Pupils' moral development and social awareness are well promoted. Satisfactory provision is made for promoting pupils' spiritual awareness and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Thorough procedures are in place to ensure that the pupils are well cared for. Staff know the pupils well and cater sensitively for their individual needs. A good range of procedures is in place to assess pupils' progress.

The school keeps parents very well informed about activities and their children's progress. Links with parents are good. Regular newsletters keep all parents informed about what is

happening in school and they receive termly plans about what is being taught. The parents' support association is a very active group and succeeds in raising a lot of money to help school initiatives move forward.

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

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher provides good leadership and management and has enabled significant progress to be made over the last few years in improving the performance of the school. All staff work together as a highly effective team. The school's aims are very clear and the staff work hard to achieve these.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors are fully informed about and involved in the school's management. They provide strong support for the staff.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school has set in place rigorous procedures for monitoring its own work and performance. Teachers regularly monitor and review each other's work and a full programme of governors' visits is maintained.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school monitors its budget very carefully and finances are managed prudently. All available grants and funds are used to full effect. Governors monitor the outcomes of all spending and take careful account of the school's performance - in this way they show a suitable awareness of the 'best value' principles within all discussions and decisions that relate to the allocation of the current budget.

The school has a suitable number of teaching staff and this is well supported by a good provision of teaching assistants who are very effectively deployed. The standard of the school's accommodation is good overall and staff make effective use of all available space. The school has identified rightly the need to improve the accommodation for the Foundation Stage and plans are well advanced to add a sand and water play area inside and to improve the outdoor play facilities for children in this stage of learning. Overall, the school has an appropriate range of resources and equipment to support teaching and learning. However, the school has realised the need to upgrade the provision of resources to enhance play facilities for the Foundation Stage.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>Parents generally have a high regard for the school. They feel particularly strongly that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the school expects their children to work hard;</li><li>• teaching is good;</li><li>• the school helps their children to become more mature;</li><li>• the school is well led and managed;</li><li>• their children like school;</li><li>• their children are making good progress.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nearly half of the parents responding to the inspection questionnaire indicated that they are not satisfied with the school's provision for extra-curricular activities (very little provision is currently made).</li></ul>

The inspectors agree with all of the points made by the parents. Provision of an extra-curricular activities programme is a difficult problem for a small school. The school has recognised this as an issue and is actively seeking ways to create some kind of provision.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

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

*Note: Inspection reports usually comment on the standards of attainment, in particular, attained by children at the end of the Foundation Stage, pupils in Year 2 and pupils in Year 6. As there is only one pupil currently in the Foundation Stage of learning and one pupil in Year 2, it is not possible to report in this way. Therefore, where the standards currently attained by pupils are discussed, the paragraphs below refer to the standards attained in Year 1 and Year 6.*

1. The end of key stage national testing carried out by the school involves less than ten pupils each year at each key stage. Such low numbers mean that it is not possible to make a meaningful analysis of these results. Nonetheless, the results taken together with observations of pupils' work, lesson observations and records of assessment maintained by the school show that standards have improved since the last inspection and that pupils generally make good progress and achieve well by the time they leave the school. Observations made also show that the school is successful in extending the higher attaining pupils as they move into Key Stage 2 - especially in mathematics. The school has identified that there are differences in the performance of boys and girls and teachers monitor this carefully. However, the differences overall by Year 6 are less marked than nationally with, for example, boys and girls achieving the same results in science - indicating that the teachers and teaching assistants are successful in supporting pupils and encouraging them all to achieve their best. No differences were noted in the overall performances of boys and girls during this inspection.
2. Over the last few years, the school has set itself appropriate targets for pupils' future attainment, which, in the main, it has reached. The school reviews its targets regularly and, whenever necessary, readjusts them in the light of the progress pupils have made. Improvements in the assessment procedures and the greater use by teachers of the information gained in this way mean that the setting of targets is now more precise. Targets for the future are suitably ambitious.
3. The baseline assessments made when children enter the reception class show that the general level of attainment on entry is broadly average. Only one child currently attends the school in the Foundation Stage so it is not possible to judge standards for this age group. However, it is clear that teachers of the Foundation Stage/Key Stage 1 class ensure that there is suitable provision to fully integrate Foundation Stage children into the work of the class. Although there are some areas of the Foundation Stage that do not currently receive sufficient emphasis (see Part D of this report), good deployment of teaching assistants and a voluntary assistant help to ensure that children of this age are working at the appropriate level.
4. In English most pupils in Year 1 attain the levels expected for their age while in Year 6 most pupils attain above average levels. Standards in speaking and listening are good at both key stages. Year 1 pupils speak with confidence - often in sentences and listen carefully to what others have to say. This confidence develops well as pupils move through the school so that in Year 6 most pupils talk fluently and join in discussions enthusiastically using a good range of vocabulary. Pupils' reading in Year 1 matches the level expected nationally and current lesson observations and

scrutiny of their work shows they make good progress. This is also supported by the provision of a well-organised programme of phonics teaching. By Year 6, pupils' reading skills are above average and they make good progress. They read fluently and many show knowledge of and talk enthusiastically about a wide range of authors. They use their reading skills well in other subjects and show good levels of comprehension. Discussion with pupils shows that they have well-developed research skills making full use of the library, and some use of the Internet to find out about specific topics. Year 1 pupils produce writing of an average level. Most pupils write simple words and phrases with varying degrees of accuracy. They have a sound knowledge of how to form letter shapes. Year 6 pupils' writing is mainly above average. They produce varied and interesting accounts that demonstrate a lively and imaginative approach. Their handwriting is legible, usually joined up and neatly presented. Pupils benefit from the very well organised and structured approach that has come with the teachers' confident usage of the National Literacy Strategy. This helps pupils to progress well in all areas of their learning in English as they move through the school. In particular, the teachers have targeted writing and spelling for improvement and there are clear signs that pupils' work has improved in these areas in recent times.

5. Pupils are achieving appropriate standards in mathematics in Year 1 and work samples seen and lessons observed show that they are currently making good progress. They demonstrate sound ability to use and apply their mathematical knowledge, for example, in exploring different types of number patterns. A few higher attaining pupils show a good ability to talk about mathematical ideas. Pupils show appropriate skills with counting in ones and twos up to 20 and a suitable early knowledge and understanding of addition and subtraction. They know how to measure length using non-standard units and competently sort shapes according to their properties. Pupils make good progress at Key Stage 2 so that Year 6 pupils attain above average standards in mathematics. They use and apply their numeracy skills well in problem solving tasks and investigations. They work competently with ratios and find percentage and fractional quantities of numbers. Overall, their numeracy skills are good and they know number facts by heart and use this knowledge well to work out calculations mentally. Mathematics standards have improved since the last inspection partly as a result of the schools thorough implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. In particular, it has led to a strongly practical approach so that pupils have confident knowledge and understanding based on a solid background of practical experience.
6. Standards in science are average in Year 1. A scrutiny of their work and evidence from lesson observations show pupils to be currently making good progress. Pupils name parts of the human body correctly and compare the human body to the bodies of other animals. They learn to record results of their work carefully. Pupils make good progress at Key Stage 2 and attain above average standards in Year 6. They cover a wide range of work in all of the National Curriculum science attainment targets and in particular, gain a confident approach towards carrying out practical investigations. They learn to work in a systematic way, make predictions and produce clear hypotheses based on their scientific knowledge.
7. In both art and design, and design and technology, pupils in Year 1 and Year 6 reach nationally expected standards and make sound progress. Key Stage 1 pupils paint lively and interesting pictures and work with a range of different materials. They design and make items in a systematic way and explore different ways of fixing items together. Key Stage 2 pupils investigate shape, colour and pattern and

often illustrate work with carefully produced line drawings. They design and make a range of interesting items and have a secure understanding of the design process.

8. In geography pupils make sound progress and reach appropriate levels by Year 1 and Year 6. Year 1 pupils gain a suitable knowledge of life in the wider world through their studies of maps. Key Stage 2 pupils also develop their skills of understanding maps in the context of studying the local area. They also develop an appropriate knowledge of environments in different parts of the world.
9. In history there was insufficient evidence to make judgements on attainment at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, by Year 6, pupils have made sound progress and attain standards in line with the nationally expected level. Pupils raise suitable queries during their research and gain a sound knowledge for example, of life in ancient Greek times. They also develop the ability to compare features of the different civilisations they study.
10. In ICT, pupils in Year 1 work at an appropriate level for their age and make sound progress. They know how to use some basic programs to help them with their work and, with help, they save or print out items. In Year 6, although pupils are beginning to make more frequent use of ICT, standards in this subject are still below the expected level and, although they currently make sound progress, pupils skills are not as far developed as they should be particularly in terms of using ICT to support their learning in other subjects.
11. Standards in music are above the expected level in Year 1 and in line with expectations in Year 6. At Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress and show an advanced ability to follow sound pattern sequences and then create/compose their own pattern using clapping, finger clicking and foot-stamping percussion effects. At Key Stage 2, pupils also make good progress with developing their knowledge of musical terms and show appropriate skills with describing pieces of music using the correct terminology.
12. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 6 attain appropriate standards in physical education. In the lessons seen, they progressed well with their learning and showed suitable skills for their ages, for example with throwing and passing a ball or bean bag. Key Stage 2 pupils showed increasing precision with these skills and the ability to work together during team games. Records of Achievement show that pupils reach above average and sometimes well above average standards in swimming by the time they leave the school, with many pupils undertaking personal survival awards.
13. Standards of attainment in religious education are above the level expected in the locally agreed syllabus in Year 1 and pupils make good progress, while at Year 6 pupils attain levels that meet the requirements set out in the locally agreed syllabus and make sound progress. Year 1 pupils gain a sound understanding of the use of some Christian symbols and have a good knowledge and understanding of some of the stories in the Old and New Testaments. By Year 6, pupils also acquire a sound knowledge of Bible stories and discuss these in depth, gaining a good insight into the life of Jesus. They also gain an appropriate knowledge of other faiths in the world.
14. The staff work hard to ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to achieve as well as possible. The level of expertise offered by support staff working with pupils identified as having special educational needs ensures good progress for these

pupils towards the specific targets in their individual education plans. The school also uses its assessment procedures well to monitor the progress of all different groups of pupils including those with special educational needs.

15. The school has made significant progress in raising standards since its last inspection in 1998. Standards have improved in most subjects, although improvements are most noticeable in English and mathematics particularly at Key Stage 2. Given the standards of attainment when they enter the school, nearly all pupils achieve well. The improvements have resulted from the school's determined efforts to raise standards, the good leadership provided by the headteacher and a better standard of teaching than at the time of the last inspection.

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

16. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development have improved since the last inspection. Pupils enjoy school and have very good attitudes to learning. This is now a strength of the school. They are full of enthusiasm when they arrive in the morning and settle to their activities quickly. They respond positively to lively teaching. In a mathematics lesson the youngest children were immediately caught up in the learning because they were interested in the way the teacher showed how number patterns worked by demonstrating clapping sequences. They became engrossed in identifying increasingly more complex patterns and enthusiastically suggested patterns themselves. They were keen to create their own patterns and were given the opportunity to do this successfully with a good range of resources such as pegs, plastic models and unifix cubes. Because they were so absorbed in the lesson they achieved well. The older pupils work similarly well and, in a mathematics lesson seen, they remained focused throughout because of the good pace of teaching and the clear and succinct introduction to their tasks.
17. Behaviour is generally good in lessons and around the school. This makes a positive contribution to pupils' achievements. Pupils are kind and courteous, very friendly towards visitors and happy to discuss school life. They are aware of what is expected. For example, the oldest pupils have all signed their statement of class rules to show they are fully committed to abide by them. Parents also feel that behaviour is good and that the older children can be relied upon to act responsibly towards the younger ones. During break times there is an admirable mix of ages in games and play. Parents also report that the school often receives favourable comments about the children's behaviour and enthusiasm when on trips. The pupils say they are very clear about what to do if bullying should occur, but that it is not a feature of school life. There were no exclusions in the last school year.
18. Relationships across the school are very good. In lessons, this means there is useful interaction between adults and pupils that leads to good performance. In a physical education lesson, for example, the Year 4 pupils eagerly worked on improving their ball skills and appreciated the need to co-operate with each other because of the precise coaching and encouragement they received. Pupils say they like and respect teachers and they try hard to please them. They get on well with each other in lessons, working well in mixed age groups when this is appropriate. They do not abuse their environment or resources following the good role models provided by adults. This was clearly demonstrated in a religious education lesson where a selection of candles was displayed and handled very carefully by the class teacher.

19. Personal development is good. Pupils are responsible and reliable. They all get an opportunity to help with daily routines, willingly carrying out duties in their own classroom and around the school. They take their responsibilities on the school council seriously and appreciate the opportunity to have a forum for discussing their concerns. They are aware of their own learning targets and respond positively when given the opportunity to assess their achievements. For example, Year 1 pupils described very clearly how they had improved their performance on the small apparatus during a physical education lesson and were able to learn from each other's evaluations.
20. Attendance is satisfactory overall and pupils are happy to come to school. There is very little unauthorised absence or lateness.

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

21. The quality of teaching across the school is good and has improved since the school was last inspected. A great deal of hard work has been undertaken by the headteacher and her colleagues in upgrading all of the curriculum planning and ensuring appropriate schemes of work are in place to support this planning. Planning is now good. It is very clear and used well by teachers to ensure that pupils' learning takes place in a way that ensures they build on their skills, knowledge and understanding, step by step. As a result, planning and preparation of lessons are very effective and pupils carry out interesting work that matches their current levels of attainment and also challenges them. For example, in music lessons at both key stages, pupils became enthusiastic and well motivated because of the interesting themes that the teachers introduced. These themes focused very closely on the pupils' own interests, and on ideas that attract them such as the use of TV themes in the Key Stage 2 lesson. At Key Stage 1, the music lesson caught pupils' interest by focusing on them using their own bodies to produce percussive effects of clapping and stamping. This kind of approach ensures that all of the pupils want to participate fully – nobody wants to be left out because the work is a lot of fun! In a similar vein, the teachers have a strong rapport with the pupils and know their individual needs very well. The Key Stage 1 teachers, for example showed a very perceptive and intuitive approach towards dealing with a Year 1 pupil who occasionally had bouts where he was over excited and a little uncooperative. The teachers did not confront him directly but monitored him very closely and drew him back into activities skilfully through a calm yet firm approach. The establishment of very good relationships between the teachers and the pupils is a strong factor in helping the pupils to progress well with their learning. This is because the pupils feel confident in working with their teachers and, at the same time, clearly respect them and are keen to work hard for them. Teachers are good at promoting a calm and purposeful working atmosphere in lessons and make learning an enjoyable experience for pupils who therefore progress well and gain confidence in their own abilities.
22. The needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs are carefully considered and catered for effectively. Carefully constructed individual education plans contain sharply focused targets that enable the teachers to emphasise areas of development for individuals within the daily work schedule. Beyond this teachers also prescribe targets for all individuals on a regular basis. These targets are shared and displayed and thereby place a classroom focus on individuals helping each other to improve. The teachers make the most of the small school situation in this sense by enabling interaction between the age groups on occasions so that

older pupils support younger ones. A good example of this was noted in the plenary session of a Key Stage 2 mathematics lesson when, as the teacher was waiting for a work group to return, she asked the older pupils to think of suitable questions to ask the returning individuals to consolidate the work that had been undertaken. This produced a very productive session where all pupils worked hard together - asking and answering their own questions.

23. One aspect that has been particularly challenging for the teachers is the need to ensure that the newly produced planning caters for the wide range of ages and abilities that they have in each class. They have been very successful in devising planning that copes very well with and makes the most of this situation. The teaching at Key Stage 2 is especially well geared to cater for the broad spectrum of pupils in the class. The teacher has managed this through skilfully selecting the most suitable resources to enable her to provide a range of manageable group activities; for example, the choice of a mathematics scheme that effectively supports this situation.
24. Teachers are thorough in their approach to preparing equipment and resources so that no time is wasted and lessons therefore flow smoothly. In most of the lessons observed, all the resources required were readily to hand so that there was no unnecessary movement around the classrooms to distract the working atmospheres. This was a particular point that helped sustain good progress in many lessons, with pupils being able to maintain their concentration and momentum within tasks that they tackled.
25. One of the strengths of the recently introduced planning systems is the way in which teachers incorporate assessment procedures ie with the opportunity within the planning to add evaluation comments at the end of each session. Teachers maintain this ongoing assessment very conscientiously, and this means that there is an immediate focus upon looking at how this assessment might impact on future work planned. A good example of this was noted at Key Stage 1 where the teachers had identified that pupils found an area of work rather difficult and therefore built some extra time into their afternoon sessions to give further practice in the area of work concerned. Overall, the assessment procedures that have been introduced for all subject areas are extremely thorough and clearly assist the teachers in tailoring work as precisely as possible to the needs of the pupils. This is a significant factor in aiding the improvement in teaching since the last inspection.
26. The skills of literacy and numeracy are well taught across the school. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are well embedded into the work across the school and teachers are confident in using the strategies in a reasonably flexible way to enhance learning. Teachers generally display confident subject knowledge. However, this confidence is less evident in the teaching of ICT and lessons do not always sufficiently incorporate the use of computers to support pupils' learning. Teachers have undertaken recent ICT training and clearly recognise the need to provide more opportunities for the facilities to be used to a greater extent. With the successful training and the addition of new equipment over recent times, they are now well placed to enter an exciting phase of moving this area forward more quickly.
27. The teaching assistants work very effectively alongside the teachers. They are well briefed and experienced in working with pupils. They demonstrate good skills with teaching groups of pupils. For example, the level of instruction and explanations

provided by them during Key Stage 2 mathematics group work was good and made a significant contribution in helping pupils progress well with the tasks provided. Their deployment in this way is a very valuable asset - enabling the teachers to provide very precise and focused direct teaching to other small groups.

28. It has taken the school some time to reorganise the teaching and introduce new planning and assessment procedures and thereby to raise the quality of teaching to the current good level. It is already clear that this improved quality of teaching has made an impact upon raising standards and this impact is now working its way through the school - building on the progress that has been made. The school is therefore well set to improve standards further as the impact of the work from the last few years is realised.

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

29. The findings of this inspection reflect a good rate of improvement in this area since the last inspection. The curriculum is now satisfactorily balanced and broadly based. It provides a good range of quality opportunities overall and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. A suitably strong emphasis is placed on the teaching of English, mathematics and science. Pupils of all levels of attainment can access the full range of the curriculum and are prepared appropriately for the next stage of their education.
30. Provision for children in the Foundation stage is satisfactory and effective planning in accordance with the Early Learning Goals provides children with learning opportunities that prepare them for the National Curriculum. However, the school has identified that the current lack of the right kind of equipment and appropriate designated spaces means that children do not have sufficient opportunities to learn through sand and water play and through using outdoor play equipment suitable for this age group.
31. Good progress has been made since the last inspection and all the key issues related to the curriculum have been addressed. At both key stages sufficient teaching time is allocated to each subject. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are planned and implemented well and are having a positive impact on raising standards. Policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects and closely linked to the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. Since the last inspection the school has developed long and short-term plans that ensure that all aspects of the subjects are addressed. Teachers' daily planning is well matched to the range of age groups and different abilities in each class. This includes flexible and productive grouping according to individual needs.
32. Provision for personal social and health education is good. The school has an appropriate policy and a scheme of work that provides for both key stages. Sex education and a consideration of drug misuse are planned appropriately as part of personal, social and health education and in the health education programme included in Programmes of Study for science.
33. All pupils have equal access to the different aspects of the curriculum. The school's procedures for pupils with special educational needs are good and fully meet the requirements of the Code of Practice. Other special educational needs identified

through baseline assessment are met through careful monitoring of progress and effective support from learning support assistants. The provision to cater for pupils with special educational needs is precise and, where appropriate, clearly written individual education plans are provided to guide pupils' next steps in learning. The targets within these plans are very sharply focused on specific areas where individuals need to improve. The school's equal opportunities policy offers clear guidance and is reiterated in subject policies so that all teachers have an overview of its implications in different curriculum areas. Even though the spread of ages and abilities is wide in each class, teachers ensure that all pupils are fully included in activities. They achieve this by careful planning and preparation for individuals and groups but also by having a vigilant approach to ensuring that all pupils participate. This was highlighted in a discussion with Year 5 pupils where one pupil commented ... 'you have to listen carefully because you get asked questions even if you don't put your hand up!'....

34. Good links with the local church make a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Four services are held every year in the church to which parents are also invited. Additionally, the rector is a regular visitor at assemblies. Links with the small schools cluster group provide good opportunities for the children to take part in sporting and musical activities.
35. Pupils make suitable visits to places of interest to support the curriculum. They have visited the Dome, gone on walks in the village and on outings to Buckingham to support work in geography and to a 'hands on' science museum. Visitors such as theatre groups, dancers and storytellers also enhance their cultural awareness and governors and parents give interesting talks about their careers and travels. Parents are, however, justifiably unhappy about the lack of provision for extra-curricular activities. The school has itself identified this issue and is actively seeking ways to improve the provision. A new committee of parents has usefully been set up to support this initiative and the school recognises that there is scope to promote opportunities for the community to become more involved in this area of school life.
36. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is good and for their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory overall. The school is successful in promoting pupils' personal development. A particular strength is in the quality of the relationships within the school and the way in which teachers and support assistants relate to pupils. They listen to what pupils have to say, value their contributions and provide them with good role models.
37. Arrangements for the development of pupils' spiritual development are satisfactory. Daily acts of collective worship and religious education lessons meet statutory requirements and include a weekly assembly taken by local clergy. The content of collective worship, religious education lessons and other lessons in the curriculum provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to reflect meaningfully on areas of wonder such as understanding measuring in science, appreciating autumn colours in painting flower pictures or examining a candle burning as a symbol of light.
38. The good provision for moral development is a strength of the school. Pupils have a clear idea of right and wrong and are aware of the standards expected of them. Each class has its own rules of behaviour identified by pupils and the behaviour policy is well understood by pupils, teachers and parents. There is a school council which meets every two weeks to enable pupils to discuss their concerns and encourages pupils to 'treat others how you would want them to treat you'.

39. There are many opportunities for pupils to work with one another and provision for pupils' social development is good. Older pupils show a concern for younger ones in the playground and at lunchtime. There is much cooperation between age groups in learning activities within each key stage. In a lesson on friendship, Year 1 pupils were appreciating what it means to work with one another by cooperating for three minutes on a given task and discussing their responses. At Key Stage 2, pupils were gaining knowledge and making effective decisions together about the features of a healthy lifestyle. Pupils are appreciative of one another's efforts and are pleased to clap if something has been done well, as when a Year 6 pupil presented and talked about photographs of historical enactments, or when a group of pupils performed a play reading. Pupils are given some opportunities to show their autonomy and independence, as noted in assembly presentations made by pupils, but generally, there are not enough of these sort of opportunities provided.
40. Provision for enabling pupils to appreciate their own cultural heritage is limited. They have some opportunities to be involved in the local community through the local fete and through attending harvest festivals at the local church, but otherwise, links with the local and wider community are limited. The school studies other religions as part of religious education lessons which provides a useful range of opportunities for pupils to appreciate the beliefs and customs of other people. However, there is insufficient focus on the understanding of ethnic groups within our intercultural society and pupils have few opportunities to appreciate other ways of life.

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

41. Since the last inspection improvements have taken place in this aspect of the school's work - with particular improvement in the school's assessment procedures. Staff know pupils well and are dedicated to their welfare. They have a good awareness of issues relating to equal opportunities and inclusion to ensure that all pupils' needs are met. This is clearly demonstrated by how carefully they ensure that older pupils do not dominate in any of the mixed aged lessons and their concern about sending homework to the pupil who has been off sick since last year. Support staff are used well to ensure that all pupils take a full part in the lessons. In a mathematics lesson with the oldest pupils, for example, the classroom assistant made a very good contribution, because she was able to quickly move ahead from the teacher's introduction, further clarify required tasks and keep the pupil concerned working at a good pace. Parents praise the school's very open approach, which means that concerns are listened to sympathetically. They are happy with the caring ethos that encourages all year groups to mix freely. Personal targets for improvement are set regularly. In Year 1, for example, targets for mathematics and writing are enhanced by 'working targets', which remind them to ...'check my work and try my best'.... Targets are shared with parents so that they can help their children at home if they wish. Year 5 pupils say that regular marking of their work also helps them to know how well they are getting on. Good provision is made for supporting and guiding pupils with special educational needs. Careful records are maintained and good quality individual plans are written by teachers to guide these pupils' learning.
42. Arrangements for dealing with sickness and emergencies are well established and there are several staff possessing a first aid qualification. Fire drills are undertaken

regularly and there is good attention to all matters of health and safety. The pond is, however, not fully secure, access to it is not sufficiently closed off, and it therefore presents a potential danger to pupils' safety. The school is already looking into the cost of making it more secure and every effort should be made to accelerate the process. Child protection procedures are in place, but not all staff have received recent up-to-date training. Pupils are well supervised at all times during the day. Good behaviour is promoted well. Staff, parents and pupils agree that high expectations and consistent implementation of the positive behaviour policy have brought about considerable improvements since the time of the last inspection. This makes a positive contribution to continued improvement in pupils' achievements because it forms the basis of the purposeful, calm and enthusiastic atmosphere that now pervades the school.

43. Since the last inspection, the school has developed good systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in all subjects. Teachers' short-term planning incorporates the very useful and well used facility for teachers to evaluate lessons and pupils' performances. This produces good and sometimes very good assessment information, not only to inform planning, but also to give a comprehensive picture of the pupils' development. The assessment procedures include the tracking of levels across year groups. The analysis of these assessments is being used effectively to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses that need to be addressed.

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

44. Parents' views of the school are positive and their partnership with the school has strengthened significantly since the school was last inspected. A high percentage of parents returned the inspection questionnaire and attended the pre-inspection meeting. They rightly feel that the teaching is good and that this is helping their children to make good progress. They are pleased that their children are expected to work hard and behave well. Most feel that their children like school. They are happy with the small classes, but realise if more families selected to send their children to the school it would broaden possibilities. They have justifiable concerns about the range of extra-curricular activities on offer as there is only one regular club. Pupils also say they would like to have after school activities, and really appreciate the parties and discos arranged for them by the Friends of the School Association.
45. Links with parents are good. Plenty of useful information is given to new parents in the prospectus and induction arrangements are well established. Regular newsletters keep all parents informed about what is happening in school and they receive termly plans about what is being taught. There are three consultation evenings to discuss how well children are doing, but parents are welcome to drop in anytime if they have a concern. There is always a good turnout for the twice-termly 'sharing assemblies' and four annual church services to which they are invited. Parents are pleased with the annual reports on their children's progress as they feel rightly that these reports give them a clear idea about how well their children are doing and what they should do to improve. Targets for a Year 3 pupil, for example, to ...'slow down and plan sentences before writing them'... give parents useful guidance as to how they can encourage their children. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed about how their children are progressing with suitable opportunities provided for consultation between home and school as required. Homework is set and marked regularly and this makes a

positive contribution to pupils' attainment. Parents feel that it gives them a good insight into what their children are learning and like the two-way communication opportunity given by the homework books. The governors' annual report to parents is missing some required information - it does not provide information about the address of the chair of governors and the clerk to the governors, the school's targets for Key Stage 2 assessments and an inclusion statement about pupils with disabilities.

46. Parents are supportive of the school, happy to attend both educational and social functions and help their children with homework. The Friends of the School Association is hard working and provides a good opportunity for parents to become involved in the life of the school. Their annual summer fayre is highly regarded and well supported by the community. The substantial sum of money raised by the Friends of the School Association is used well to purchase resources to support children's learning. Recent purchases have included additional computers and means that the school is now well resourced in this area. Good informal communication occurs between the parents and the school and parents are very supportive of the school in this way. For example, occasional appeals through newsletters are quickly responded to - following a request for assistance by the school, the organisation of provision of Christmas dinners for pupils at the end of term has been taken over completely by a team of parents.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. The leadership and management have improved since the last inspection and are now good. The school is well led and managed by the headteacher. She has a clear view of the educational direction that the school must take. This view is shown within the detailed and realistic school development plan, where appropriate actions are laid out and suitably prioritised. The headteacher has created a working atmosphere in which staff work together as a highly effective team. Together they have very effectively addressed a broad range of issues over recent years and have enabled the school to move forward at a rapid pace in improving the quality of education and standards of pupils' attainment. For example, over the last few years, they have created a completely new planning system for teaching in all subjects and put in place suitable schemes of work to support this planning. In addition, they have developed comprehensive procedures to enable them to assess pupils' progress and thereby check the success of their teaching and planning. The aims of the school are very clear and the staff work hard to achieve these.
48. The headteacher has set in place a wide range of systems to enable her to monitor the school's work – this incorporates daily, weekly, monthly and annual monitoring regimes. As a result, along with her colleagues, she has a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses within the school's current work and makes full use of the information to inform the next stage of school development planning. The headteacher and staff work very closely with the governors and are well supported by them. The governors carry out their roles very effectively and in particular, have also established a comprehensive programme to enable them to monitor the school's effectiveness. This means that the majority of governors visit the school on a frequent basis and, by so doing, have a very detailed insight into its day-to-day operation. This overview is further boosted through detailed reports that they receive from the headteacher at their twice-termly meetings and through the close liaison they have with the teachers.
49. The school ensures through good management that all groups of pupils are catered for as fully as possible. For example, the special educational needs co-ordinator manages the provision for pupils concerned very efficiently and liaises closely with all colleagues to ensure the right kind of support is provided for the pupils concerned. Staff are fully aware of the need to ensure that all pupils have full access to the range of opportunities offered by the school and they ensure that all activities are fully inclusive for pupils of all ages and abilities. Much effort has gone into devising curriculum-planning systems that cater for pupils effectively in this respect.
50. The school finances are well managed. The school bursar works very efficiently to provide the headteacher and governors with detailed and clear information. The budget is monitored very carefully and finances are managed prudently. For example, a higher than normal reserve of funds has been built up to cater of extra building costs incurred recently. All available grants and funds are used to full effect. Governors monitor the outcomes of all spending and take careful account of the school's performance – in this way they show a suitable awareness of the 'best value' principles within all discussions and decisions that relate to the use of the current budget. For example, during a monitoring visit, the numeracy governor reviewed the effectiveness of a recently purchased scheme of work for mathematics. The Friends of the School Association raises considerable sums of money that also help the school with improving facilities and resources.

51. As at the time of the last inspection, the school has an appropriate number of suitably qualified teaching staff. The two teaching assistants are effectively deployed and provide valuable support for both teachers and pupils. The standard of the school's accommodation is good overall and has improved since the last inspection with the useful addition of a small computer suite. The conversion of what was previously a server room into a staff room also means there is now a suitable area for staff to meet. Staff make effective use of all available space. The school has identified rightly the need to improve the accommodation for the Foundation Stage and plans are well advanced to add a sand and water play area to the inside accommodation and to improve the outdoor play facilities – there is currently no designated outdoor secure play area for these children. Overall, the school has an appropriate range of resources and equipment to support teaching and learning. A good level of mathematics, science and design and technology resources is helping children to achieve well in these areas and the addition of an ICT suite provides greater opportunities for the pupils to have 'hands on' experience. The lack of climbing apparatus and wheeled vehicles means that there is not enough opportunity for children in the Foundation Stage to develop some aspects of their physical skills.
52. The management of the school is good, the teaching is good and pupils achieve well by the time they leave the school. Nonetheless, weighing these factors against the high expenditure per pupil means that overall the school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

53. The governors and staff should now:
- improve the provision for children in the Foundation Stage by creating suitable outdoor and indoor play facilities; (paragraphs 30, 51, 61 and 63)
  - improve standards in ICT and increase its usage across the school by:
    - ensuring that pupils are taught the full range of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study for this subject in sufficient depth;
    - ensuring that full use is made of ICT to support learning in other subjects. (paragraphs 10, 26, 70, 85, 91, 94, 111, 113 and 114)

Other less important issues that the school should consider for inclusion in its action plan:

- ensure the school pond is secure and safe; (paragraph 42)
- ensure that all relevant information is included in the governors' annual report to parents; (paragraph 45)
- ensure all staff receive up-to-date training in child protection procedures. (paragraph 42)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	24
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	22

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	7	13	4	0	0	0
Percentage	0	29	54	17	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	35
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	6

#### English as an additional language

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

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	2.9
National comparative data	5.2

#### 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.

Note: At this point in the report tables are usually provided to show the number of pupils attaining different levels in the most recent end of key stage national tests. However, when, as in this case the number of pupils involved in the testing falls below ten, the results are not published to avoid any individual pupils being identified.

### **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	0
White	35
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

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

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	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)	2.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	14.58
Average class size	17.5

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

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	39

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	140,640
Total expenditure	135,833
Expenditure per pupil	3,313
Balance brought forward from previous year	15,505
Balance carried forward to next year	20,312

### **Recruitment of teachers**

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

65.7 per cent

Number of questionnaires sent out

35

Number of questionnaires returned

23

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	42	43	0	0	4
My child is making good progress in school.	52	39	9	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	52	0	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	52	35	13	0	0
The teaching is good.	70	30	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35	48	17	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	26	17	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74	22	0	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	30	61	0	9	0
The school is well led and managed.	57	35	9	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	43	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	9	22	35	13	22

## **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**

***Note:** Children start the reception class in September, January and April in accordance with locally agreed procedures. Due to this arrangement, the school only has one pupil currently in the Foundation Stage of learning although more children will start at the other two entry points in the year. Therefore it is not possible to report on standards attained or on the quality of teaching for this age group. Nonetheless, the following paragraphs comment on the quality of provision for this stage of learning – even though at present this only refers to the provision for one child. Much of the commentary below refers to the working of the whole of the Key Stage 1 class in the context of how this applies to the Foundation Stage.*

54. Before starting school, children's experiences vary and some have had no pre-school experience on entry. Children are given simple tests to find out what they can do during their first few weeks in school. The results of these tests show that attainment is generally average.
55. Children enter a mixed age class that covers both the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. As numbers are low, children in the Foundation Stage participate in all lessons with appropriate extra activities also planned for them. They receive effective support from a specially appointed teaching assistant and from a voluntary helper. This enables teachers to provide specific activities to develop the different areas of learning.
56. Teachers have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and make effective use of the local education authority scheme based on the Stepping Stones<sup>3</sup> to develop the Early Learning Goals. This forms the basis of teachers' medium-term plans, which feed into the daily planning and ensure that the appropriate learning opportunities are available. The initial baseline assessment is used well by teachers to establish targets for the children's future learning. Children's progress is carefully tracked and teachers adapt their planning to meet individual needs

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

57. Provision for this area of learning is satisfactory. Expectations of behaviour and work are high and relationships are good. Many opportunities are provided for children to work with one another in pairs and groups. They are able to appreciate the importance of friendship, as in a personal, social and health education lesson where children collaborate with one another in a simple task and learn about issues connected with establishing constructive relationships with other children. Teachers provide suitable activities to encourage children to question and make choices, such as through using a specific computer program and selecting pictures, deciding colours to use when painting and selecting books. Currently, the range of choices of activities at any one time is limited, which does not help children to make independent decisions about which activities to follow.

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<sup>3</sup> The Stepping stones are the component parts of the Early Learning Goals – together these form the basis of the curriculum taught to children in the Foundation Stage throughout England.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

58. A suitable range of activities and resources are available to encourage speaking, listening, reading and writing. The curriculum and the setting provide many opportunities for children to interact with others, negotiate plans and take turns in conversation. There are good opportunities to contribute to class discussions. There are suitable chances to share and enjoy a range of rhymes, stories and non-fiction. There are good opportunities for sustained attentive listening to stories, retelling and predicting endings. Shared reading sessions also give chances for children to explore the sounds and meanings of new words. They learn the sounds that letters make through a carefully structured programme of initial sounds and letter combinations. There is satisfactory provision for pupils to practise their writing skills in structured settings but opportunities for writing in free play situations are limited. The role-play areas set aside for children to engage in imaginative play are underdeveloped, as are the materials available to make them a productive means of motivating early writing. There is a small book area and an appropriate range of simple and more complex story and information books that enable children to gain knowledge of how books work and appreciate the sequences of stories. Children are expected to take books home regularly to share with their parents and establishing such routines helps them to gain confidence and enjoyment in their reading.

## **Mathematical development**

59. Children have access to a range of satisfactory experiences to support their learning in this area. They are given clearly presented activities to encourage them to recognise numbers and to count confidently to ten and to 20 through the use of puzzles, games and number lines. They have suitable opportunities to learn the correct vocabulary, for example with counting forward and back and to use language such as greater or smaller than, heavier or lighter. Children are given objects to match according to shape and size in a sequence. Teachers provide suitable encouragement to help with solving practical problems through manipulating objects such as blocks to build a tower or number of cars in a garage. There are also appropriate opportunities for manipulating two and three-dimensional shapes and learning about the relationships between them. Work is well planned to cover all aspects of early mathematical development.

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

60. Teachers have satisfactory resources to plan topics that interest children in the world around them. The local environment of the school enables children to talk about the features they like and dislike and observe the range of different buildings or the living things they see around the pond. They are able to notice similarities and differences and patterns of change such as the seasons. Technology is available to support children's learning as in the use of a 'Goldilocks' computer program, where the skills of dragging and dropping items are needed. There are opportunities for children to build and construct models and to learn to assemble and join a variety of materials to be displayed for other children. The understanding of their own lives through past and present events in their families and the culture and beliefs of other people is also fostered through classroom topics and the personal, social and health education programme.

## **Physical development**

61. In physical education lessons children have satisfactory opportunities to move confidently and safely in both indoor and outdoor areas. They learn to travel around at different speeds and at different levels to develop their control and co-ordination. They use a range of small apparatus such as balls, beanbags and hoops for developing precision in throwing, catching and throwing to a target. Although the school has considerable outdoor play space there is not a specified area for children in this stage of learning, nor is there a sufficient range of small and large outdoor play equipment. The school is aware of this and intends to improve provision in this area. The school does have suitable tools, construction equipment, paintbrushes and drawing materials available for pupils to develop their hand control. However, opportunities are limited for the development of imaginative and creative skills on a regular basis.

### **Creative development**

62. There is a range of suitable activities and materials available for children to explore colour, texture, shape, form and space in two and three-dimensions. They communicate their ideas, thoughts and feelings through involvement in drawing, painting and modelling. The class has a satisfactory range of small toys such as farm animals, lego, 'streetmap' style carpet and cars to enable children to experiment and develop their imaginative ideas. The role-play area is not sufficiently featured to support children's creativity and imagination or sufficiently linked with other areas of work in the classroom. There are sufficient percussion instruments and opportunities for music within the school to support this age group and children successfully develop their singing and build up their own sequences of sound.
63. The school recognises the need to expand the provision for the Foundation Stage and encourage more children into the school. For example, the school development plan has identified rightly the need to establish a larger enclosed area for sand and water play and other construction activities. The limited space in the classroom for these activities currently limits the range of learning opportunities available. The school also correctly identified the need to develop an outside play area with an appropriate range of wheeled toys and climbing equipment suitable for this age group.

***Note:** Inspection reports usually comment on the standards of attainment, in particular, attained by pupils in Year 2 and Year 6. As there is only one pupil currently in Year 2, it is not possible to report in this way. Therefore the paragraphs below refer to the standards attained in Year 1 and Year 6.*

### **ENGLISH**

64. Standards in English have improved since the school was last inspected. Inspection evidence shows that Year 1 pupils attain average standards while Year 6 pupils attain above average standards. Work samples scrutinised and lessons observed showed pupils to be currently making good progress.
65. The school has identified that there are differences in the performance of boys and girls and teachers keep a careful check on this. However, the differences are less marked than nationally by the time pupils reach Year 6. In lesson observations, no differences were noted in the performance of boys and girls.

66. In Year 1 pupils' speaking and listening skills are above national expectations. The good teaching pupils receive through the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 means that they develop their speaking skills effectively. During Key Stage 1 pupils develop confidence in their use of language through taking part in discussions and being encouraged to respond to one another. Pupils in Year 1 are encouraged to predict what will happen to the farmer in the shared story of 'Farmer Duck'. They speak with enthusiasm, clearly, and in sentences, and are prepared to listen to one another's ideas. They vary the tone of their responses when reading from a class shared story and try different kinds of expression, appreciating that bold type can be said loudly and expressively. Opportunities to comment individually on what they learnt in a physical education lesson also encouraged thoughtful responses from pupils. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to develop their speaking and listening skills through discussions of their shared text and word level work in the literacy hour. By Year 6 standards are above average. In one Key Stage 2 lesson, on building up a play scene, pupils in Years 3 and 4 successfully rehearsed a play by prompting one another and repeating the parts they stumbled over. The final reading was carried out clearly and with appropriate expression. In a science lesson pupils made good use of their spoken language to give clear explanations of how to measure forces using appropriate scientific language. In a history lesson older Key Stage 2 pupils raised their own questions in a lively way. For example, they asked about what it was like to go to school in ancient Greece with such comments as ... 'Was it boys only?' ... 'How long were they in school?' ... 'Did they have school lunches?' .... All of this was carried out as a useful preliminary to their later research.
67. Overall, pupils in Year 1 demonstrate average ability with reading. Pupils' reading records show that they are currently making good progress and doing well as a result of careful teaching and a comprehensive programme of phonics. Word level work in Key Stage 1 provides many focused opportunities for pupils to learn initial consonants and vowel sounds and manipulate them as in three-letter words such as 'pen' 'hen' 'ten' and 'pin' 'tin' and 'tip'. They also identify rhyming words from a story such as 'about' and 'shout'. At Key Stage 1 the more able readers know the difference between stories and information books. They choose books to take home to read to their parents and a valuable dialogue is maintained through the use of reading records. Lower attaining pupils have made good progress as a result of careful teaching, effective support from the teaching assistants and a comprehensive spelling programme, which enables all pupils to work at their own level. They are confident in attempting new words by using their phonic knowledge. This focus on phonics and spelling with average and lower ability pupils is having a valuable impact in encouraging confidence and improving literacy standards.
68. Overall, Year 6 pupils read at an above average level. They read fluently and with a satisfactory level of understanding in subject areas such as science history and religious education. They make use of all their reading knowledge to interpret books and talk with enthusiasm about the books they read and about favourite authors such as J K Rowling, Philip Pulman and Anne Fine. Lower attaining pupils read accurately but with little expression and make use of phonic knowledge as required. Pupils at both key stages have opportunities to use the library in order to develop their library skills. Pupils in Key Stage 2 locate authors and publication dates and make comparisons between books on similar topics. They have appropriate opportunities for researching elements of their work through raising their own questions and finding information from books and from the Internet.

69. Standards of writing are now average for most pupils in Year 1 and a scrutiny of their work shows that they have progressed well since the beginning of the year. Good progress continues at Key Stage 2 so that pupils attain above average levels in Year 6. This reflects the hard work of the staff in providing opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills through a range of writing tasks across curriculum areas. Good progress is made at Key Stage 1 where pupils are encouraged to write independently and attempt spellings for themselves. They have many opportunities for recording information. They write stories or word lists and develop growing confidence in forming their letters and creating meaning. All pupils have realistic targets for their writing and they are well supported by careful marking and comments from their teachers on how they might improve in areas such as spacing letters and spelling.
70. During Key Stage 2 progress in lessons is often good and builds on the skills and knowledge of different kinds of writing such as web maps, writing in the style of a fairy story or poetry and writing in other curriculum areas such as science mathematics and history. By Year 6 pupils are able to identify effectively, the modern equivalent of sentences from the Shakespearian play, Macbeth as in ... 'Whence is that knocking?' ... translated as 'what?' or 'where?' .... Higher attaining pupils are challenged to use dictionaries and are successful in collecting words beginning with groups of letters such as 'circum' and 'trans' to increase their written vocabulary. Standards in writing have also been improved as a result of careful and constructive marking that encourages pupils to improve their work. In samples of pupils' work seen on display and in their books, most pupils produce imaginative, lively and thoughtful writing when asked to do so. They often write in complex well-punctuated sentences and in legible joined up writing that is usually neatly presented. Some examples were seen of pupils making appropriate use of ICT to present poems and stories, although discussions with pupils indicates that use of the computers in this way is fairly limited at present.
71. Pupils have very good attitudes to their work in English and show enthusiasm and enjoyment in their activities. They support one another when working in pairs or small groups, as when Key Stage 2 pupils were locating spellings or reading plays. In most lessons they are eager to share their efforts with one another in plenary sessions. For example, in a Year 1 lesson pupils built up their confidence through 'report backs' on their activities. Behaviour is good in English lessons. Pupils take a keen interest in their work and concentrate well on the tasks they are given. They work cooperatively when discussing the planning of their work for writing tasks.
72. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in English throughout the school. They benefit from having carefully focused targets that are promoted through carefully differentiated work in most lessons and through good support from the teaching assistants. Support staff are well informed of the lesson objectives and work very well with class teachers.
73. The quality of teaching in English is good overall at both key stages - reflecting detailed planning and good subject knowledge. The good and very good teaching is characterised by the high expectations of learning, brisk pace of lessons, very clear explanations and often a sense of enthusiasm engendered in the pupils. Teachers also make good use of focused and probing questions to develop pupils' knowledge and maintain interest. Activities are mostly well matched to pupils' abilities apart from a few occasions at Key Stage 1 where the higher attaining pupils are not fully extended. One of the strengths of English lessons at both key stages

is the effective organisation of pupils in groups that enables them to develop their skills and knowledge according to their abilities. The subject co-ordinator ensures that the assessment and monitoring are maintained through both key stages and has introduced fresh initiatives such as the Early Writing Project from the National Literacy Strategy - to help develop further writing activities. Overall, the staff have moved forward enthusiastically with using the National Literacy Strategy and have used this effectively to build up their own comprehensive planning systems. This has helped ensure that the learning for different groups of pupils moves forward at a good pace through the use of carefully targeted activities. Pupils have a reading record book in which parents comment on the books their children take home to read. This helps to build the liaison between home and school and encourage the involvement of parents in their children's work. Average and above average pupils in Years 5 and 6 maintain their own reading record and comment on likes and dislikes in a responsible manner. This is helpful in developing their skills of independent learning.

74. Resources for the literacy hour and the library are satisfactory. The school carries a good range of fiction and factual books for pupils to work with independently when researching their own topics.

## **MATHEMATICS**

75. Since the school's last inspection in 1998, there have been improvements in the standards pupils attain. Inspection findings show that the level of attainment for pupils in Year 1 is in line with national expectations but good teaching is helping these pupils make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of the additional support and guidance they receive. All groups of other pupils also make good progress apart from occasions when the higher attaining pupils are not always fully extended by the work provided and then make satisfactory progress.
76. Inspection findings show that most Year 6 pupils achieve above average standards. Pupils of all abilities make consistently good progress throughout Key Stage 2. Higher attaining pupils are given work that stretches them, whilst lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are given additional support to enable them to keep pace with others.
77. The very small cohorts of pupils involved in sitting end of key stage national tests make it difficult to read too much into the results. Nonetheless, the differences between the results of boys and girls in Year 6 are less apparent than the difference found nationally. The school analyses all test results carefully and is well aware of such differences and provides suitable support to counteract these differences where appropriate. For example, teachers are very careful to ensure that all groups of pupils/individuals are given a full opportunity to participate in lessons.
78. The school has embraced the principles of the National Numeracy Strategy enthusiastically. Much in-service training has been provided and all staff have had the opportunity to observe others teaching and to be observed themselves. This has raised awareness of good practice and has resulted in more challenging lessons in which pupils are encouraged to use different strategies and to think more carefully about how they arrive at their answers. Teachers have very skilfully adapted the structure provided by the National Numeracy Strategy to work within the context of planning for the wide spread of ages and abilities in their classes.

Teaching assistants provide particularly good value in helping to cater for this wide range of needs. This was noted, especially at Key Stage 2, where the two well-briefed and knowledgeable teaching assistants provided very clear guidance as well as some good direct teaching for groups of pupils and individuals.

79. Year 1 pupils have a sound knowledge of recognising and using simple relationships and patterns. For example, they organise numbers of objects using different classroom apparatus such as pegboards to create 'growing' number patterns. They distinguish between this and other repetitive patterns that they make. A few of the pupils show higher-level skills with this work - talking about their patterns using the correct mathematical vocabulary. They show appropriate skills with counting in ones and twos up to 20 and show a suitable early knowledge of using addition and subtraction. They acquire a satisfactory knowledge of identifying and using coins, although the teachers recognised that this was an area that some found difficult and, very usefully, built an opportunity into future planning of work to enable extra chances for consolidation of understanding through further practical work. Pupils carry out simple measuring activities appropriately and identify correctly the features of different shapes, and sort shapes into groups by their properties. They build on their skills at a good rate and their workbooks and class work seen, show that concepts are built up solidly through practical activity and discussion. This good rate of progress continues into Key Stage 2. Year 4 pupils show that they are adept at using a variety of methods to solve problems. For example, they competently explain their different methods of approach to adding two-digit numbers to two-digit numbers. They acquire a good knowledge of place value and are good at using mental recall of addition and subtraction facts to 20 in solving problems. Similarly, in Year 6, pupils applied their numeracy skills well and made good use of calculators in one lesson to solve challenging problems - involving finding the missing numbers in equations. They showed confidence in this work in dealing with numbers to two decimal places. Year 5 and 6 pupils also worked well with mental addition problems while working out time progression on digital clocks. The work was made interesting for them through the useful approach of getting them to construct their own cardboard representations of a digital clock and by the teaching assistant running the activity as a game. With help the group managed fairly complex time additions. Year 6 pupils work competently with ratios and finding percentage or fractional quantities of numbers. They measure angles to the nearest degree, calculate the angles in triangles and have a good knowledge of the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes. They are familiar with handling data in different ways; they interpret graphs and understand the concept of using a probability scale.
80. Year 6 pupils have developed good numeracy skills. They have a good sense of the size of a number, know number facts by heart, and use what they know by heart to work out answers mentally. They calculate accurately and efficiently, both mentally and with pencil and paper and explain their methods and reasoning.
81. The overall quality of teaching in mathematics is good at Key Stage 1 and very good at Key Stage 2. The teaching has improved since the school was last inspected and this is clearly impacting upon raising standards. The teachers' confidence with using the numeracy strategy has been further enhanced by the way in which planning has been very thoroughly upgraded. In addition, the suitable use of a commercial scheme of work is clearly helping teachers provide a broad range of challenging and interesting work that focuses on developing pupils' knowledge and understanding through a good range of practical investigations and

explorations. Consequently, pupils are confident and enthusiastic in their learning because they have a solid background on which to base their understanding. This is very apparent in lessons, with pupils listening intently to their teachers and joining in with discussions without any reservations. The extra support for group work and individual work provided by the two classroom assistants and the voluntary support assistant at Key Stage 1 further promotes pupils' understanding and helps to ensure that the needs of all individuals are effectively catered for. Teachers have a very good rapport with the pupils, which means that they are also very sensitive and aware of the needs of individuals. The detailed approach to planning ensures that the wide spread of attainment and ages in each class is catered for effectively. In both classes resources are also very well prepared so that no time is lost and activities flow smoothly from one section of the lesson to the next. This was noted in the Key Stage 2 lesson observed where pupils had a clear insight into the way in which they should work and rapidly moved from one task to the next without any fuss and, as a result covered a good amount of work during the lesson. All groups were fully extended including those pupils with special educational needs - through the careful monitoring guidance and support. Very occasionally at Key Stage 1, the work set does not fully extend the higher attaining pupils and occasionally there are not enough resources immediately available to support pupils work in counting activities - for example, there are few permanently displayed mathematical wall charts or number lines. The improvements in the teaching are clearly helping the pupils to progress well and the school is yet to fully reap the benefits of all of the hard work that has gone into improving planning. The school is in a strong position to raise standards in mathematics further as the impact of the good and very good teaching works its way through the school.

82. Teachers are very clear about their objectives for each lesson. In many lessons, these objectives are shared with the pupils and used as a yardstick by which to measure progress at the end of lessons. The teachers set high expectations for behaviour and participation and treat the pupils with great respect. The pupils respond well, and the very good relationships that exist between teachers and pupils are a significant factor in helping pupils to make good progress. Teachers are generally good at introducing new mathematical vocabulary orally, and, in this way effectively promote aspects of literacy within these lessons. In the plenary section of a lesson the Key Stage 2 teacher promoted this aspect of work particularly well by inviting pupils to make up precisely worded questions about time to ask another group of pupils. This made the pupils concentrate very hard.
83. Teachers set homework for mathematics on a regular basis and the work is geared to suitably support ongoing class activities. The school sets clear expectations that the parents should be actively involved in the homework process and the homework books show that a useful two-way dialogue is maintained between home and school.
84. Pupils show very positive attitudes to their work and this contributes significantly to their progress. They answer teachers' questions enthusiastically and participate well during the mental mathematics sessions. The older pupils apply themselves well to their written tasks, and many pupils complete an impressive amount of written work in the time available. Standards of presentation are mainly good throughout the school.

85. There is evidence of pupils supporting mathematics through the use of ICT, for example with data handling, but discussions with pupils indicate that this is currently still on a limited basis and that opportunities to use ICT are not fully exploited.
86. The co-ordinator manages the subject well. As a local education appointed 'Leading Mathematics Teacher' she is well placed to lead her colleagues and has worked closely with them in enabling the improvements to the mathematics curriculum, teaching, learning and standards. Procedures for assessing pupils' mathematical progress are good and teachers make good use of the information gained in this way to help them plan future lessons and to help them improve the precision with which they set targets for pupils' future performance. There is a good range of resources for teaching and learning in mathematics and these are readily accessible and well used.

## SCIENCE

87. Standards in science have improved since the last inspection. Inspection findings show that most Year 1 pupils attain the nationally expected level while at Key Stage 2, most Year 6 pupils attain above the expected level. The improvement in standards is borne out by the clear indication of good progress reflected in the pupils' workbooks and in the lessons seen. No significant differences are noted between the performances of girls and boys, either in lessons or in any tests taken. This means that the staff are particularly successful in equally promoting the learning of girls and boys in this subject.
88. As it is close to the beginning of their time in Key Stage 1, Year 1 pupils have only just embarked upon the National Curriculum Programmes of Study in science. Nonetheless, planning indicates that they are scheduled to carry out a good range of work across the year in life processes, the variety of living things and the environment in which we live, physical processes, forces and their effects, the properties of sound, electricity and work concerning the properties of materials. A judgement on attainment is based upon the limited amount of work seen within one lesson and a few pieces of work on display and in their books. Scrutiny of the previous work of Year 3 pupils - when they were in Year 2 - shows that last year, they covered an appropriate range of work at a satisfactory level. In the lesson seen, pupils all managed to name the external parts of the body correctly after practising in different ways with their teacher, correctly identifying 'head', 'knee', 'leg', 'elbow' and all of the other parts with increasing confidence as the lesson progressed. During the activities they gained appropriate skills of scientific enquiry through discussing the work with their teacher. They confirmed their understanding by recording appropriately on a chart, listing the words correctly and filling in the labels on a diagram of the body. Most recorded facts neatly, with a few needing extra support in this respect. One higher attaining pupil was noted to be finding the work rather easy and was not fully challenged by the work at times. Lower attaining pupils managed the work successfully through carefully targeted support from the teacher and the teaching assistant. Pupils helped the teacher make a chart for humans, dogs, fish and birds to check/discuss which of the body part features were common to all. Very useful discussion ensued with pupils beginning to ask questions and think about ideas such as ... 'Does a dog have (an equivalent of) a hand or an elbow?'.... Overall, pupils made good progress with their learning in this session.

89. At Key Stage 2, pupils carry out a broad range of investigative work covering all of the Programmes of Study in depth. The work carried out over the year shows that pupils often use their literacy skills well to write about science investigations as was seen in detailed work carried out by Year 4 pupils to show distances over which magnets would attract a range of objects. Year 6 pupils show advanced skills of scientific enquiry. They choose apparatus carefully while investigating the way in which different parachute designs work and plan the activity carefully to compare different factors such as the size of the canopy and how this effects the rate at which the parachute falls. In this and other investigations they make predictions such as ... 'We think the small parachute will drop down first as there is less air in the canopy' ... and draw useful conclusions based on what they have found out. They record their findings systematically and repeat their observations and measurements to check the consistency of the results. They gain appropriate knowledge of life processes and living things by looking at and comparing different environments. They draw and identify the parts of a typical flowering plant and learn how different organs such as stamens and stigmas function. Pupils have an above average knowledge and understanding of concepts concerning materials and their properties and apply this knowledge well, for example, in deciding how to separate mixtures of materials by way of using sieves, filters, magnets or distillation. They classify materials by their properties correctly and understand the changing states of solids, liquids and gases. Pupils study a good range of physical processes and carry out in-depth investigations into the effects of forces. For example, detailed and well-recorded work was noted with an experiment into how efficiently different model boat designs would move through water. The work contained good quality labelled diagrams, precise recording of results and well formulated conclusions such as ... 'The boat with the pointed end went fastest because their was less friction'.
90. Overall, pupils make good progress throughout Key Stage 2 and clearly cover a wide range of interesting work. The work is based fully upon finding out by practical investigation and pupils therefore gain a very clear understanding of the concepts taught. Higher attaining pupils are well extended through the work and the lower attaining pupils are given appropriate extra support and guidance to ensure they keep up with the rest of the class.
91. The overall quality of the teaching in science is good, and has improved since the previous inspection. Work is well planned and resources are carefully prepared so that no unnecessary delays occur in the transition from whole-class instruction to practical activity. The teachers are good at involving all pupils in discussion and ensuring that all have a full chance to join in. Teachers are especially perceptive in their monitoring of pupils and draw in the participation of all individuals. They show confident knowledge and therefore the explanations they provide are clear and succinct. They are sufficiently confident to encompass the views of pupils in the lessons and use the ideas raised to move the learning forward. In this way pupils become confident in their learning and are keen to contribute ideas. This was noted in the Key Stage 1 lesson seen where pupils became very interested in the discussion about whether different animals have similar joints and body parts. Work samples seen at Key Stage 2 indicate that the skills of scientific enquiry are very well taught, enabling pupils to acquire a good range of strategies and a particularly confident approach to exploring and investigating science topics. Pupils are clearly encouraged to cover a wide range of work over the year and this underlines the judgement that they make good progress with their learning. Some evidence was

noted of pupils using ICT in science, but this is limited and the use of computers is not as fully exploited in this subject as it could be.

92. Teaching assistants provide good support during lessons and in particular monitor and guide the progress of lower attaining pupils well.
93. Pupils work enthusiastically. They enjoy science work, listen well and many join in discussions and ask questions confidently. They also collaborate very effectively and this was noted to increase the levels of motivation. The confidence and enthusiasm are significant factors in helping pupils to make good progress with their learning.
94. The subject is well managed and the co-ordinator maintains a clear overview of the work across the school. Planning has been substantially upgraded and is well supported by the local education authority scheme of work. Suitable assessment procedures have been introduced but are not yet consistent with the approach established in other subjects. The school has a good range of resources to support teaching and learning and these are well used, except for the insufficient use of ICT mentioned above.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

95. No teaching of art and design was observed during the inspection but there was sufficient work on display to suggest that attainment is in line with national expectations and progress is satisfactory. This indicates that standards have been at least maintained since the last inspection.
96. Pupils in Year 1 experiment with a variety of media. They explore colour mixing and use this knowledge in painting lively pictures of flowers using autumn colours and attempting self portraits to show facial characteristics. Pupils are also successful in producing firework pictures through the use of a computer program. Drawings of religious artefacts show that these pupils are able to note detail and make appropriate representations through the use of line drawings. They also develop their skills in designing through selecting different materials in a collage of Joseph's technicolour dream coat. At Key Stage 2, pupils investigate shape, colour and pattern through mixing colours using paint, making effective use of line drawings to illustrate their work in other curriculum subjects such as science and history and experimenting with designs to develop Muslim prayer mats. Two and three-dimensional work is evident as part of their designing and making chairs in design and technology.
97. There is a policy and scheme of work for art, which is due to be updated this year. Resources are satisfactory but the school recognises the need to carry out an audit in this area to ensure that it is developed further in the future.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

98. No lessons were observed in design and technology during the inspection and it is therefore not possible to make secure judgements about the quality of teaching. However, a sufficient range of previously carried out work was available, a scrutiny of which shows that pupils in Year 1 and in Year 6 make satisfactory progress with their learning and attain appropriate standards for their ages through carrying out a

good range of interesting projects. Standards have been at least maintained since the last inspection.

99. At Key Stage 1, pupils have carried out an interesting project to design and make a 'coat of many colours' - to accompany their religious education work on the biblical story of Joseph. They drew designs, used a paper template to trial ideas, carefully cut out pieces of cloth, designed different patterns for the fabric and used a range of fabric materials to create the desired effect. Pupils also evaluated different methods of joining the materials together including sticking, stitching and stapling. Pupils clearly generate ideas within the work carried out, and use tools and materials appropriately. The outcomes are attractive and the accuracy in making a few of the pieces was of above average standard.
100. At Key Stage 2, Year 3 and 4 pupils work on design projects to meet specific requirements. For example, they design a classroom making good use of ICT to draw up and edit attractive designs. Key Stage 2 pupils also engage in interesting projects 'to design a model monster'. They plan their designs carefully under the headings of 'what we will need', 'a description of the parts' and 'how we will make it'. The planning is accompanied by clear, labelled diagrams. Their approach to the work is well guided with the good use of planning sheet templates, giving indications of good teaching. Pupils have experience of working with a range of different materials and design and make their models using card, plastic, cloth and tissue. They make models of structures used in buildings and demonstrate how designs can be strengthened by fixing these structures in different ways. Pupils also carry out interesting work to look at existing items to see how the designs can be adapted to suit another purpose. The work completed, converting chairs into some quite amusing new designs, shows accuracy in using various materials properly and appropriate attention to detail and finish.
101. The subject is well managed and teachers have worked very hard to upgrade all of the planning. As a result, a suitable range of work is covered and opportunities are provided for all pupils to participate fully in the work. The school has a good range of resources and equipment to support teaching and learning.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

102. Judgements are made on the basis of the scrutiny of pupils' work and one lesson observed at Key Stage 1. The evidence suggests that pupils' attainment is in line with national standards at both key stages and progress is satisfactory. Standards have been at least maintained since the school was last inspected.
103. At Key Stage 1, pupils are developing their awareness of the wider world through the use of maps, globes and a computer program which helps them make simple links between pictures of cold and hot places. Pupils in Year 1 make use of a limited geographical vocabulary to answer questions about places and environments. They make observations about what they know and have found out as in comments such as ... 'Globes tell us where Africa is' ... 'It is cold here in Antarctic' ... 'I was in Spain and I could not speak it (the language) but now I know a few words'.
104. Pupils at Key Stage 2 continue their exploration of the use of maps through mapping their journeys to school and creating classroom plans using the computer. They make use of their geographical skills to see how people try to sustain their

own environment. They study maps of the local area and identify how the local land is used. They also continue their investigations by studying photos they have taken of the locality and through interviews they have conducted with local people and other recorded observations.

105. The quality of teaching in the one lesson observed was good. In addition, a scrutiny of pupils' work shows that they are presented with interesting and well-resourced activities that enable them to focus on both world and local activities.
106. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The school has recently acquired additional resources such as globes and maps for use at both key stages. The subject co-ordinator is keen to develop geography across the school and objectives and assessments are being developed to support the policy and schemes of work already in place. The subject is in a good position for further development in the future.

## **HISTORY**

107. It was not possible to see any history being taught at Key Stage 1. As it is relatively close to the beginning of the school year, with the Year 1 pupils at the start of their time in Key Stage 1, there is not enough evidence of their work in history to enable secure judgements to be made about the standards of their work or the quality of the teaching. At Key Stage 2, judgements are made on the basis of the scrutiny of pupils' work, displays and the evidence of one lesson seen. This evidence suggests that pupils' attainment is in line with national standards and that progress is satisfactory. This means that standards have been at least maintained since the last inspection.
108. At Key Stage 2 history is well taught. The teacher is particularly successful in developing a spirit of enquiry amongst her pupils so that they feel confident to raise queries about their focus of study. The lively display on ancient Greece reflects this and shows clear detail to inspire pupils' thinking about the different areas to be studied. In the lesson seen on ...'Going to school in ancient Greece'... pupils raised useful questions to aid their enquiries and carefully selected relevant pieces of information to help them write about a day at school in different cities; for example Athens, Sparta, or Corinth. Pupils develop a satisfactory understanding of and an in-depth knowledge of the different aspects of life in ancient times and learn to make comparisons between one period of history and another. They also develop their investigative abilities, gaining suitable information from texts about different beliefs and achievements and making effective use of this information in their writing. In other work seen, pupils showed their ability to competently interpret pictures, for example, about the life of Henry VIII, and successfully responded to questions about his character.
109. Pupils enjoy history and show much enthusiasm. They listen and respond well and are keen to contribute their ideas. Higher attaining pupils make satisfactory use of the Internet to gather additional information and show pride in displays of their work.
110. There is a policy for history and schemes of work that cover both key stages. Resources in the form of materials, books and artefacts are satisfactory. The subject manager is planning to review and extend these, and has plans to give greater consideration to the provision for history at Key Stage 1.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

111. Overall this area has moved forward significantly since the school was last inspected. In particular, resources and facilities have been suitably upgraded, with the purchase of new computers and the creation of a small ICT suite. Pupils in Year 1 now make satisfactory progress and attain standards that match those expected nationally. Although there is clear evidence of increased usage of ICT, pupils at Year 6 mainly work at a below average level and do not use ICT sufficiently to support learning in other subject areas. In the lesson seen, Year 6 pupils made satisfactory progress but their skills are not as far developed as they should be.
112. At Key Stage 1, Year 1 pupils know that information can be viewed and explored in a range of different forms and are familiar, for example, with seeing and using computers to generate pictures, play games to support learning and as a means of word processing. With help, they know how to save pictures and writing and print out examples of their work. In this context they have made colourful and attractive representations of November the fifth festivities using an art program on the computers. They successfully log on to the computers in the suite and with help from the teacher and teaching assistant, navigate their way correctly to the program required. Under careful guidance from their teacher they type their names. Most use two fingers to type on the keyboard. They make suitable use of a 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' program to consolidate and practise their skills of dragging and dropping items on the screen, using the mouse. All are successful in this work and many show good co-ordination with using a mouse. The pace of learning in this lesson is satisfactory overall, but tends to slow too much at times due to rather lengthy explanations from the teacher and a slightly hesitant approach in getting the pupils started.
113. Key Stage 2 pupils use ICT to produce writing and poetry. They have a clear understanding of how to use the facilities to change the way that the work is presented, for example, changing font style, colour and size. They know how to import clipart pictures into their work. Similarly they use programs to help them produce pictures, for example, of a Moslem prayer rug. They have used computers to help with design and technology work (see above design and technology paragraph) and also to produce simple island map pictures in geography. Some research work is in evidence, with pupils accessing the Internet to find out about Sikhism and some pupils spoken to have visited a 'virtual' Mosque on the Internet. Additionally, pupils have used CD-ROM encyclopaedias to find out about topics such as ancient Greece. Pupils also mentioned that they have some experience of using e-mail facilities. Although all of the ICT usage mentioned here is relevant and worthwhile, it is not sufficiently widespread and, use of equipment, though much increased is still sporadic. Observations during the inspection indicated that opportunities to use ICT to support learning in other subjects are not sufficiently exploited. As a result, attainment and progress are inhibited because pupils do not have sufficient regular opportunities to extend their skills. Discussions with pupils showed that whilst they have a range of experiences with ICT work, the breadth and depth of what they do is too limited. In particular, they possess very limited knowledge of areas of work such as control and modelling and interrogating information using computers or other ICT equipment.
114. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers provide clear introductions to lessons in the ICT suite and prepare work carefully for the sessions. Although not yet extensive, suitable opportunities are seized to develop pupils' usage of ICT in other subjects.

They choose the right kind of programs and tasks to match with the attainment levels and age groups in their classes. They run the lessons in the suite at a suitable pace. However, the pace of working is constrained by the need for lengthy explanations about how to use program facilities - as they are not using the demonstration facilities easily possible over the network ie using a software package that makes all of the machines follow what is being demonstrated on the 'teacher's computer'. The pupils are mainly well supported by their teachers and in the Key Stage 1 lesson observed, the teaching assistant provided good support. However, activities are sometimes quite easy for some of the higher attaining pupils who therefore consolidate their skills, but do not progress as fast as they could. Whilst clear planning for work across the year has been established there is not always enough detail concerning the use of specific ICT applications in other subject areas. The relationships between the teachers and pupils are good so that there is a useful sharing of ideas in lessons. The pupils are enthusiastic and try hard with the tasks. They collaborate well with each other and a good example was seen of Year 6 pupils using their initiative - when they had quickly finished the tasks provided before the others, they volunteered to assist slower members of the class.

115. Teachers have worked hard to upgrade their own skills through recent ICT training and are currently building up their expertise further. Good co-ordination of the subject has enabled significant progress to be made in improving the provision of facilities to a good level since the last inspection and the school is now well placed to move forward with developing the use of ICT.

## **MUSIC**

116. Two lessons were observed during the inspection - one at each key stage. These observations indicate that standards of attainment and the quality of teaching have improved at Key Stage 1 since the last inspection and are at least as good as they were last time at Key Stage 2.
117. The lesson at Key Stage 1 showed pupils in Year 1 making good progress and working above the level expected for their age. The teacher showed confident subject knowledge, planned the lesson very well and worked pupils at a good pace so that they gained a solid understanding of how sounds can be arranged in sequences. They worked very effectively with creating short compositions with 'percussive body sounds', for example stamping feet, clicking fingers and clapping hands. They adeptly followed a sequence that the teacher wrote on the board and suggested their own ideas for improving the performance. The pupils were enthusiastic and showed much pride in their own resulting performances - especially when the teacher praised them. The good working atmosphere was a significant factor in enabling the good progress in learning that they made. Pupils remained fully attentive throughout the session and enjoyed the work very much. The pupils showed good listening skills which helped them rapidly learn a new song introduced in this session and they responded in a well co-ordinated way in following the actions for the song. The lesson was very well taught and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, made very good progress with their learning and achieved well.
118. Pupils progressed well in a lesson for Key Stage 2 and all of the different age groups including the Year 6 pupils performed at the level expected for their ages. Most pupils sang in tune with about four out of 20 in the class singing in a monotone. The teacher kept the activities moving along at a good pace, which

helped pupils to sustain full attention and interest. Pupils gained a suitable understanding of terms such as 'pitch', 'timbre', 'texture', 'tempo', 'dynamics', 'duration' and 'structure'. They listened to a selection of TV themes - and then worked hard to sort these tunes into different types of themes and then apply the above musical terms when describing each piece. All pupils managed the task. Four higher attaining pupils finished all of the work quite quickly while a few lower attaining pupils managed a certain amount of the task with good support from the teacher. All pupils participated enthusiastically in the work. Many pupils show a good level of confidence in contributing during discussions, with one pupil, for example, offering to sing the melody of a tune discussed (slightly embarrassed when she remembered that a visitor was sitting watching the lesson). The lesson was well taught with tasks gauged carefully to match the attainment and interests of pupils in the class. Concepts and musical terms were carefully explained and resources were well prepared so that the lesson flowed smoothly. As a result, pupils progressed well with their learning and gained a confident understanding about the way in which musical terms can be used to describe pieces of music.

119. The subject is well managed across the school by the staff. Planning is clear and teachers use a good range of commercial materials to support the work where appropriate. There is a suitable range of musical instruments and equipment to support teaching and learning.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

120. In physical education, three lessons were observed during the inspection and, in these lessons, pupils in Year 1 and Year 6 attained the nationally expected standard. Swimming records were also scrutinised and these show clearly that the majority of pupils attain well above the nationally expected standard by the time they leave the school. Many pupils are already engaged in work leading towards personal survival swimming awards - this reflects an improvement upon the situation reported in the last inspection report. In addition, the school has improved the provision of indoor physical education equipment.
121. In the lesson observed at Key Stage 1, pupils showed appropriate skills of running, throwing, catching and moving small pieces of apparatus with their hands and feet. They followed a sequence of instructions carefully and thereby collected apparatus quickly and efficiently. They showed suitable precision for their age with throwing and catching bean bags and balls and also showed appropriate co-ordination and control. In the session observed, they gained a suitable awareness of how to improve further by discussing and analysing their performances. The teaching was very good. The work was carefully planned and the teacher showed particularly good subject knowledge and coached the pupils very effectively to help them progress rapidly with developing their skills. For example, she gave the pupils very specific instructions as how to best place their feet in preparation for throwing. Explanations were very clear - giving pupils a full understanding of what they could already achieve and the next steps they needed to take in order to improve their performances. This helped all groups of pupils to progress very well. The teacher made very good use of praise to encourage pupils and pupils responded well to this by working enthusiastically and with their full efforts. Pupils listened carefully at all times, collaborated effectively with each other and enjoyed the lesson.
122. In a Year 3/4 lesson, pupils showed appropriate skills with passing and receiving a ball. They learned how to execute a 'chest' throw/pass properly and showed

suitable precision for their ages with catching and throwing and made good progress with increasing their accuracy as the lesson progressed. They also progressed well in learning appropriate game strategies and tactics and showed a good ability to collaborate with one another. In the Year 5/6, lesson pupils acquired an appropriate understanding of the basic principles of playing basketball and most showed suitable ability to bounce and throw a ball in co-ordination with their running. In this work there were clear signs of developing precision and fluency in their performance. Both lessons at Key Stage 2 were well taught. The teacher planned the lessons carefully, ensured that suitable warm-up was incorporated and ran the lessons at a good pace enabling pupils to practise and develop their skills and progress at a good rate in improving their precision and understanding of games strategies and skills. Instructions were clear and succinct so that no time was unnecessarily wasted. The good relationship between the teacher and the pupils meant that the pupils worked confidently and responded well to the praise offered by the teacher – this in turn helped to promote enthusiasm and motivation so that pupils worked to the best of their abilities in the sessions. The pupils also clearly worked hard because they enjoyed the content of the lessons and therefore also listened closely to and followed all instructions carefully.

123. The subject is well managed and planning has been fully upgraded to ensure that lesson content builds pupils' skills progressively throughout the year. The school has recently improved the range of indoor equipment for gymnastics work and overall there is an adequate range of equipment and resources to support teaching and learning. Appropriate time is allocated for pupils at Key Stage 2 to carry out a swimming programme during the year, and Year 2 pupils are also incorporated into this programme where possible. The school also joins with other schools in the local cluster for sporting events. This is useful because it gives pupils a chance to participate in full size teams at their particular age group. Residential trips are also arranged for pupils at Key Stage 2 to provide opportunities for them to be involved in an appropriate range of outdoor adventurous activities.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

124. Pupils' attainment in religious education Year 1 is above what might be expected nationally and pupils make good progress. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. By Year 6, attainment is in line with national expectations and progress is satisfactory and this reflects a picture that is at least as good as the last time the school was inspected. Attainment at both key stages fulfils the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils in Year 1 are developing a good knowledge of Christian religious symbols through examining artefacts such as a chalice, in order to understand its use. They talk about the Bible and show good understanding of the New and Old Testaments and how they relate to each other. At Key Stage 2, pupils starting a series of lessons on Jesus as a historical figure studied illustrations by various artists. Through these studies, they realised that there was no authentic visual image of Jesus. Their discussions were thoughtful, showing sound knowledge of the New Testament. For example, they gave their reasons why Jesus may have been depicted as ... 'sad', 'kind' or 'mean ... because he has no expression'. Key Stage 2 pupils also gain an appropriate understanding about other religions such as Buddhism and Islam by comparing places of worship and considering ideas and beliefs.
125. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with some good features at Key Stage 1. Teachers have sound subject knowledge and there is effective co-ordination

between assemblies and lessons. In the development of the theme of light in religious worship, pupils had opportunities to think about Jesus as the light of the world. This was suitably followed up in a Key Stage 1 lesson where skilful questioning reinforced the use of candles as a symbol for light. Pupils also study artefacts such as a Diva Lamp and offering bowls and investigate to find out what these represent.

126. The policy for religious education and the topics for collective acts of worship offer breadth and balance and meet the statutory requirements as outlined in the locally agreed syllabus. The content of the curriculum at Key Stage 1 is mainly Christian but later other religions such as Buddhism, Islam, and Hinduism are suitably included in some depth and incorporated in other subjects of the curriculum such as the four way symmetry in designs for a Muslim prayer mat. Resources for the subject are satisfactory and include artefacts lent to the school from the local church. Overall the subject makes an effective contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.