

INSPECTION REPORT

WALTHAM ON THE WOLDS CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Waltham on the Wolds

Melton Mowbray

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 120170

Headteacher: Mrs. C. P. Townson

Reporting inspector: Mike Capper
23239

Dates of inspection: October 8th – 10th 2001

Inspection number: 230138

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

School category: Voluntary Controlled

Age range of pupils: 4 – 10

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Melton Road
Waltham on the Wolds
Melton Mowbray
Leicestershire

Postcode: LE14 4AJ

Telephone number: 01664-464269

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr. T. Bates

Date of previous inspection: March 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mike Capper Registered inspector Original Inspector Number (OIN) 223239	Mathematics Science Religious Education Physical Education History Information and communication technology Equal opportunities Special Educational Needs	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
Kevin Greatorex Lay inspector OIN 9545		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Alison Cartlidge Team inspector OIN 23609	English Art and design Design and Technology Geography Music Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage	How well are pupils taught? How good are curricular opportunities?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Waltham on the Wolds CE Primary School is located in the village of Waltham on the Wolds, near Melton Mowbray in Leicestershire. Pupils come from the local and surrounding villages, and are admitted between the ages of 4 to 10. Pupils transfer to the local high school at the end of Year 5. There are 67 pupils on roll, and they are taught in three mixed-age classes: a Reception/Year 1 class, a Year 2/3 class and a Year 4/5 class. Pupils come from a range of social backgrounds, with an increasing number from outside the local village. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. There are 9 pupils on the special educational needs register, including one pupil who has a statement of special educational needs. These figures are below average. Test results show that pupils' attainment on entering school varies significantly from year to year, but it is broadly average overall. The school has recently admitted two pupils in Key Stage 1 who do not have English as their first language. Their first language is Finnish.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school which provides a good quality of education whilst successfully retaining many of the traditional virtues of a village school. Pupils are friendly and welcoming, and they achieve good standards in many subjects. The quality of teaching is good overall. The headteacher, who was appointed shortly after the last inspection, provides very strong leadership and has helped the school to improve rapidly. The cost per pupil is well above average, even for this type of school. Overall the school provides sound value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher has high expectations of how good the school should be, and has successfully inspired and motivated staff to achieve her goals.
- Pupils achieve good standards in reading, speaking and listening, mathematics, history and music throughout the school, and in writing in Key Stage 1.
- Provision for children in the Reception year is good and helps them to attain well and make good progress in their first year in school.
- Throughout the school, good teaching helps to make learning interesting.
- Pupils behave very well and enjoy their work.
- The school has very good links with parents, and they make a significant contribution to its effectiveness.
- All members of staff work hard together to make sure that pupils develop good self-esteem and confidence.

What could be improved

- Develop day-to day assessment procedures and improve short-term planning so that it is clear what different groups of pupils will learn in a particular lesson.
- Give pupils more opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning by planning, organising and reviewing their own work.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress since the last inspection in 1998. Standards of attainment have improved and there are no longer any subjects where pupils' attainment is unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching has improved. Two out of three lessons are now good, and teaching is never less than satisfactory. The headteacher has worked hard to ensure school improvement and has managed the necessary changes very effectively. School development planning is more thorough and is now based on a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Teachers' planning is more rigorous, although further development of short-term planning and assessment is still needed. As a result, on occasion, work does not meet the needs of all pupils. Nevertheless, the teamwork and shared sense of purpose apparent throughout the school place it in a strong position to continue its fast rate of improvement in the future.

STANDARDS

The table showing the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2, based on National Curriculum tests, has been omitted because of the small number of pupils taking the tests in each year.

In the Foundation Stage (Reception year), children are on target to exceed expectations for their age in all areas of learning.

By the end of Year 2, inspection findings show that pupils' attainment is above average in reading, writing and mathematics, and average in science. Standards vary significantly from year to year because of the small size of the year groups and the variations in the number of pupils with special educational needs. This means that in 2000, National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 2 were low, whilst in 2001 they were very high. Nevertheless, test results show that there has been a rising trend in attainment since 1999.

By the end of Year 5, pupils' attainment is above average in English and mathematics, and average in science. In English, pupils' attainment is better in reading than in writing. Standards are good in reading and satisfactory in writing. Handwriting and spelling are comparative weaknesses in pupils' attainment. Pupils' good reading skills are not reflected in their choice of vocabulary when they are writing. In mathematics and science, pupils are less confident about using and applying their good knowledge to practical situations.

By the end of Years 2 and 5, pupils' attainment is above national expectations in history and music. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations in information and communication technology, art and design, geography and design and technology. Pupils achieve good standards in swimming, with almost all exceeding national expectations by the end of Year 5. There is insufficient evidence to make judgements on other aspects of the physical education curriculum. In religious education, pupils' attainment is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.

Since the last inspection, the school has begun to make far greater use of test data to help to set targets for individual pupils and year groups. Targets are realistically challenging.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are very well motivated and keen to learn
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very sensibly in the classrooms. Pupils of different ages play together well at playtimes.
Personal development and relationships	Good, overall. Relationships are very good between pupils and with members of staff. Pupils are confident and willingly take responsibility for aspects of school life. However, they are not sufficiently encouraged to work independently and use their initiative.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance rates are in line with national averages.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 5
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching is good in English, mathematics, history, music and physical education. It is satisfactory in religious education and art and design. There is insufficient evidence to make a

judgement on the quality of teaching in information and communication technology, geography and design and technology.

In the Reception year, the teacher and nursery nurse work together exceptionally well as a team. They plan exciting and challenging lessons that meet the needs of young children effectively. This means that the activities provided and the methods used to teach the children are fun and very effective in capturing and holding their interest. The constant use of praise and the genuine appreciation of children as valued individuals ensure that they learn successfully. Day to day assessment is well developed for children in the reception year.

In Key Stage 1 and Years 3, 4 and 5, teachers show good knowledge of the subjects they teach, which ensures that basic skills are taught well. Teachers have very good relationships with the pupils, built on a friendly but firm approach. Their very successful management of lessons enables pupils to concentrate on their work and to try hard. Lessons are well organised so that time is used effectively, and good use is made of learning resources so that lessons are interesting and meaningful. Teachers use a range of methods to make learning enjoyable.

Pupils are encouraged to use their numeracy skills in subjects such as science and physical education. Teachers are less successful in promoting the use of literacy skills in subjects other than English. Although pupils are encouraged to carry out research, an overuse of copy writing in some subjects means that opportunities for pupils to write purposefully are missed.

The use of daily assessment information in order to decide what needs to be taught next requires further improvement in Key Stage 1 and Years 3, 4 and 5. Teachers' marking rarely identifies what pupils have achieved or how they could improve. Teachers' lesson planning does not always show clearly the purpose of an activity, and they rarely share this information with the class. Pupils are often given the same work, whatever their age or ability. This means that on occasions the needs of all pupils are not fully met and there is still some lack of challenge for groups of pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides a wide range of stimulating learning activities for its pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Learning support assistants help pupils with special educational needs to make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. High levels of support from a local authority teacher and volunteer helpers ensure that pupils with English as an additional language make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. The school successfully helps pupils to develop good moral and social values through well-planned assemblies and lessons. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to show initiative when they are working.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides good quality support and guidance, and effectively promotes the pupils' welfare in a caring and secure environment. However, the considered decision to keep many assessment procedures informal means that teachers do not always have enough information to help them plan what pupils need to learn next.

The school has a very good partnership with parents. They are very supportive of the school's work, and feel that it has improved since the appointment of the current headteacher. There are very good links with other local primary schools and the high school. These links make a very good contribution to pupils' learning and help to ensure a smooth transfer at the end of Year 5.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher and subject co-ordinators work together well to promote high standards and set challenging targets for school improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors fulfil statutory duties and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They understand and successfully apply 'best value' principles.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The work of the school is monitored thoroughly. Effective action is taken when weaknesses are identified.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Budgeting is systematic and is based on a good understanding of the needs of the school. Decisions are made on the basis of ' <i>Will this help the school to improve?</i> ' The school successfully seeks additional funding from a range of sources, and these grants are used effectively so that they have a positive impact on learning.

Staffing levels are good and enable class sizes to be kept relatively small. This has a positive impact on standards. Teachers have a wide range of skills for so small a school, and these are used effectively to support learning. The good number of well trained support staff help pupils to learn well, especially those pupils who have special educational needs.

Accommodation is satisfactory. The school is kept very clean and is well maintained. Although classrooms are spacious and attractive, there is a lack of space for indoor physical education and the cloakrooms are rather cramped. However, the school does well to overcome these problems so that pupils' learning is not adversely affected.

Resources are satisfactory, with no significant strengths or weaknesses. The school makes effective use of its available resources, with the exception of its computers, which were under used during the inspection period.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The leadership of the headteacher. • The caring and friendly atmosphere. • The good quality of teaching. • The good quality information. • Children are expected to work hard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision for extra-curricular activities. • Homework.

The inspection team supports the positive views of parents. Inspection findings show that the school provides a reasonable range of extra-curricular activities for its size and number of staff. Homework makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards of attainment vary significantly from year to year because of the small number of pupils in each year group. Nevertheless, pupils' attainment has improved in many subjects since the last inspection, and pupils are now achieving well, overall, in relation to their prior attainment. Standards of attainment are now higher in reading, writing, mathematics and history in Key Stage 1. In Years 3, 4, and 5, which is where there were weaknesses in teaching at the time of the last inspection, standards are higher in reading, mathematics, religious education, design and technology and information and communication technology (ICT). There are now no subjects where pupils do not achieve at least satisfactory standards.
2. Children's attainment on starting school in the Reception class varies significantly from year to year but, overall, is broadly average. This is confirmed by a variety of teacher assessments made in the children's first few weeks in school. Overall, children achieve good standards in their first year in school. They are on target to exceed expectations for their age in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical and creative development. Weaknesses in provision for children's physical development, which were identified at the time of the last inspection, have been addressed and standards in this area of learning are now good. A weakness in communication, language and literacy is that, even by the start of Year 1, children do not always form their letters correctly when writing.
3. By the end of Year 2, inspection findings show that pupils' attainment is above average in reading, writing and mathematics, and average in science. National Curriculum test results vary significantly from year to year because of the size of the cohort and the variations in the number of pupils with special educational needs in each year group. Test results in 2000 were average in reading, below average in writing and well below average in mathematics when compared with all schools. When compared with similar schools, results were well below average in reading and writing, and very low in mathematics. In contrast, standards in 2001 were much higher, being very high when compared with all schools in reading, writing and mathematics. When compared with similar schools, pupils' attainment was well above average in reading and mathematics, and above average in writing. The school has acknowledged that this was an exceptional year group. Nevertheless, test results show that there has been a rising trend in attainment since 1999.
4. By the end of Year 5, pupils' attainment is above average in English and mathematics, and average in science. In English, pupils' attainment is better in reading than in writing. Standards are good in reading and satisfactory in writing. There is no national comparative test data for pupils at the end of Year 5. However, non-statutory tests taken at the end of Year 4 and Year 5 show that most pupils are on target to achieve at least the expected levels by the end of Year 6.
5. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls in mathematics and science. Overall, boys do not achieve as well as girls in writing tests, although this difference is less evident in their class work and no greater than that found nationally. Pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs receive effective support from learning support assistants and make good progress. At the time of the last inspection, the progress of these pupils was unsatisfactory. They are now given detailed individual education plans, which ensure that they are challenged in lessons at a level appropriate to their prior attainment. Pupils with English as an additional language are also well supported. In addition to extra teaching from a local authority support teacher, they are also helped in class by learning support assistants and volunteer helpers. This high level of support has helped these pupils to make good progress in learning spoken English.
6. Standards of literacy are good in Key Stage 1 and Year 3, and satisfactory overall in Years 4 and 5. Pupils throughout the school have good speaking and listening skills and become

confident readers. They make satisfactory progress in writing, producing their best work when they are given opportunities to write purposefully. However, handwriting and spelling are weaker than they should be in Years 4 and 5. Pupils' good reading skills are not reflected in their choice of vocabulary when they are writing.

7. Pupils have a good knowledge of number and a good understanding of scientific concepts. However, in both numeracy and science, pupils' ability to use and apply their good knowledge to practical situations, although satisfactory, is less well developed than other aspects of their learning. This applies to pupils in both key stages. Teachers do not give pupils enough opportunity to apply their skills to problem solving and investigative activities, for example by devising, planning and organising their own simple experiments or investigations in science. This has the greatest impact on the learning of higher attaining pupils.
8. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations in ICT by the end of Year 2 and Year 5. The pace at which pupils learn new skills is limited, though, because teachers do not give pupils enough opportunity to use ICT in their everyday work. Nevertheless, when given the opportunity, pupils use their skills to research topics on the Internet, to word-process their writing and to produce data in different forms, especially in mathematics and science.
9. By the end of Year 2 and Year 5, pupils' attainment is above national expectations in history and music. Teaching in these subjects is good, with the teachers' enthusiasm having a positive impact on standards.
10. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations in art and design, geography and design and technology. Pupils achieve good standards in swimming, with almost all exceeding national expectations by the end of Year 5. There is insufficient evidence to make judgements on other aspects of the physical education curriculum. In religious education, pupils' attainment is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.
11. The school has not yet identified any gifted and talented pupils, but has recently introduced a policy to ensure that this omission is addressed. However, a lack of challenge in some lessons means that their skills are not always fully extended in class. Nevertheless, more able pupils are given appropriate opportunities to extend their skills in subjects such as music and physical education through extra-curricular activities.
12. Since the last inspection, the school has begun to make far greater use of test data to help to set targets for attainment, including targets for attainment by the end of Year 6, even though pupils transfer to the high school at the end of Year 5. The targets that are set are realistically challenging and based on a good knowledge of the differing capabilities of various year groups.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. The positive attitudes of pupils and their respect for others' feelings, values and beliefs are a very strong feature of the school's work. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. The willingness to learn that is evident in all classes and the caring family atmosphere that has been established by the headteacher and members of staff make a good contribution to pupils' learning.
14. Children in the Reception year consistently behave well and have well-developed social skills, for instance in waiting their turn patiently and concentrating hard when listening to others. They play together amicably and share and look after resources without fuss. They are confident and enthusiastic about trying out new activities, and are happy to make choices about what they are going to do. Members of staff have high expectations of children's independence, and new children quickly learn the class routine, how to dress themselves and how to pack away resources at the ends of lessons.
15. Pupils in Key Stage 1 and Years 3, 4 and 5 have very good attitudes to school, and this has a very positive impact on their learning. Pupils are very keen to come to school and enjoy the work they are given. Teachers and classroom assistants are quick to praise, which

encourages pupils to respond well to the work they are given. Pupils' positive attitudes are demonstrated by their willingness to undertake monitor duties around school. They are pleased to explain to visitors what they are doing in lessons. The school building, with its stairs and narrow cloakrooms, could so easily pose problems, but pupils move calmly and sensibly around school, showing very good levels of co-operation.

16. Parents are very satisfied with the behaviour of their children. It is very good in classrooms and on the playground. Pupils play together well and have a good understanding of the school's rules. They know that they are expected to behave well at all times, and they achieve this. For example, behaviour during swimming lessons is exemplary. Pupils come into the swimming area sensibly, listen carefully to their teachers and respond quickly to any instructions that they are given. There have been no exclusions from the school in living memory. Lunchtimes are very pleasant social occasions where pupils chat together. Pupils are well supervised by experienced and kindly midday staff.
17. The very good relationships that exist between pupils and their teachers help to make the school a happy place. All adults are helpful and friendly, with the result that pupils enjoy talking to adults and to visitors. This was very noticeable during the inspection. In assemblies, pupils respond well to prayers and listen carefully to pupils who are playing music and singing songs. There is a strong caring ethos within the school, and pupils from different backgrounds play together happily. Pupils work happily together in lessons, supporting each other with help and advice when necessary. Pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language are well integrated and given good support by their classmates.
18. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory and teachers know the pupils very well. They give them appropriate opportunities to take responsibility for aspects of classroom routines but pupils do not often show initiative when they are working. This is largely because they are not given enough opportunity to do so. When pupils are given the opportunity to work independently, for example when writing and performing a play about Noah, they do so well. However, in lessons, too many activities are teacher led, and in subjects such as science, art and design and mathematics, pupils are rarely encouraged to devise their own work or take a lead in what they are doing. Personal development is therefore an area for further development.
19. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory, with attendance rates broadly in line with national averages. There is no unauthorised absence. The punctuality of pupils is good, which means that little time is wasted at the start of each day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

20. The quality of teaching is good overall and satisfactory or better in all lessons. The quality of teaching has improved since the time of the last inspection when 1 in 8 lessons was judged to be unsatisfactory. Parents are pleased with the quality of teaching.
21. Consistently good teaching of children in the Reception year has been maintained since the last inspection in all areas of learning. The teacher and nursery nurse work together closely to plan exciting and challenging lessons that meet the needs of young children effectively. Children are taught in a mixed Reception and Year 1 class, working as one year-group for part of some lessons. The teacher and nursery nurse work exceptionally well as a team and have a good understanding of the needs of young children. This means that the activities provided and the methods used to teach the children are fun and very effective in capturing and holding the children's interest. In one literacy lesson, for example, children hunted for 'monsters' in the school grounds after sharing a story about monsters. Members of staff have very good relationships with the children and manage their behaviour very effectively. Questioning is used skilfully to encourage all children, including those with special educational needs, to take an active part in class discussions. The constant use of praise and the genuine appreciation of children as valued individuals ensure that children learn successfully. Members of staff write helpful comments on the children's work and on lesson plans to show the level of support provided and what the children need to learn next. This good practice

could usefully be shared with other teachers of other year groups, where the use of assessment to help decide needs what to be taught next is not as well developed.

22. The quality of teaching of pupils in other year groups has improved since the last inspection and is now good overall, with significant improvements in Years 4 and 5. At the time of the last inspection, there were significant weaknesses in the teaching of older pupils, with unsatisfactory teaching in one lesson in five. Throughout the school, time is no longer wasted in lessons by pupils completing worthless tasks. There is still some lack of challenge for groups of pupils when teachers do not use their knowledge of pupils' prior attainment to provide different work that meets the needs of all pupils. Marking requires further development. Pupils' work is regularly marked, and teachers often discuss with the pupils what has been achieved or how they could improve. However, teachers rarely add written comments and this means that pupils do not always correct errors or learn from their mistakes.
23. All teachers show good knowledge of the subjects they teach, ensuring that basic skills are taught well. Teachers have very good relationships with the pupils, built on a friendly but firm approach. Their very successful management of lessons enables pupils to concentrate on their work and to try hard. Lessons are well organised so that time is used effectively, and good use is made of learning resources to make lessons interesting and meaningful. Teachers use a range of methods to make learning fun. For example, pupils in Years 4 and 5 enjoyed working in small groups composing music, and pupils in Years 2 and 3 enjoyed discussing the possible contents of a 'treasure chest'. Pupils are encouraged to use their numeracy skills in subjects such as science and physical education.
24. The school is less successful in promoting the use of literacy skills in subjects other than English. Pupils are given good opportunities to carry out research. However, an overuse of copy writing in subjects such as science and history means that opportunities for pupils to write purposefully are missed. The school is aware of this need to further improve the quality of writing, and has already begun to address the problem through projects such as the 'Vale Writing Project', where pupils wrote purposefully under the guidance of a visiting author/poet.
25. Learning support assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning and guide those with special educational needs and English as an additional language effectively. This means that all pupils can take a full and active part in lessons. Weekly meetings with the class teachers enable the assistants to share information about individual pupils' needs and clarify the support needed in the following week. This information is updated daily as appropriate. This is a good example of regular assessment being used to help decide what pupils need to learn next. It is a weakness that other groups of pupils do not benefit from the same attention to detail.
26. There has been an improvement in the quality of teachers' lesson planning, although this is still a relative weakness throughout the school. Teachers do not always show clearly the purpose of the lesson and share this information with the pupils. Pupils are sometimes given the same work, whatever their age or ability. This means that on occasions the needs of all pupils are not fully met. In addition, teachers give pupils insufficient opportunities to take the initiative in their learning and work independently.
27. The quality of homework has improved since the last inspection when it was not set consistently. Although 15% of parents who replied to the pre-inspection questionnaire were not happy with the amount of homework given to their children, inspection findings are that provision is now satisfactory. During the inspection, teachers made little use of ICT to support pupils learning, partly due to some problems with faulty computers.

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

28. The quality and range of learning experiences provided is good throughout the school and the curriculum meets statutory requirements well. The curriculum has improved since the time of the last inspection when it was insufficiently balanced, with weaknesses in design and

technology and ICT. The curriculum for religious education is now meeting the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. The quality of long- and medium-term planning has been developed, ensuring that pupils cover all aspects of science, history and geography over four years. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is now good. Parents are pleased with improvements in the curriculum.

29. The curriculum for children in the Reception year continues to be good from the time of the last inspection. The curriculum is based on the nationally accepted Early Learning Goals for children of this age. The teacher and nursery nurse work together effectively to plan a wide range of interesting activities for each area of learning. Since the last inspection, there have been improvements in the outdoors' provision.
30. The school's numeracy strategy has been effective in raising attainment throughout the school. The literacy strategy has improved reading effectively, but there are still some weaknesses in pupils' writing, and strategies have not been in place long enough to have improved writing in Years 4 and 5 to the same extent as reading. The school has a good understanding of further action needed to improve attainment in writing, such as reviewing the handwriting policy and encouraging pupils to take a more active role in checking their work for careless errors.
31. At the time of the last inspection, there were few extra-curricular clubs. The school has improved provision in this area and now provides a satisfactory range for its size, with pupils from Year 2 onwards having the opportunity to take part in football, art and musical activities. Although almost a third of parents are unhappy with extra-curricular provision, the inspection team feels that the school is doing as much as it reasonably can to provide out-of-school activities. There continue to be good links with the community and very good links with other schools. For example, a recent 'nostalgia day' hosted by the school looked back over the village's recent history. Pupils have many opportunities to visit the school they transfer to at the start of Year 6. Teachers from both schools have worked together to improve the usefulness of records that are passed on.
32. The school enables all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, to take a full part in all activities provided. There is good provision for pupils to develop their personal, social and health education in specific lessons and at other times during the school day. For example, older pupils collect Reception children from their class before whole school hymn practice and sit with them.
33. The quality of provision for pupils' personal development, including drugs and sex education, is good overall. This is an improvement since the last inspection when provision was satisfactory. Moral and social development are promoted well in assemblies and personal, social and health education lessons. Members of staff continue to provide good role models for behaviour and pupils are given good opportunities to work collaboratively. Parents are pleased with the values of tolerance and understanding taught at the school. Pupils are encouraged to try hard because effort as well as skill is rewarded. For example, pupils who show the greatest commitment during football practice receive a trophy for the 'footballer of the week'.
34. The provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. At the time of the last inspection, there were insufficient opportunities for quiet reflection or understanding the values of people from differing faiths. This is no longer a weakness. Pupils are given opportunities to join in with prayers at the end of the morning and afternoon as well as in assemblies. A contemplative atmosphere is created in assemblies by the expectation that pupils should sit quietly and listen to the calming music being played at the start. Pupils use skills learnt in other subjects to express their spirituality. For example, following a visit to an exhibition in the church, pupils made an attractive multi-coloured illustrated text of the Lord's Prayer to display in the assembly hall.
35. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory overall, with traditional English culture being well promoted. For example, girls and boys enjoy taking part in Maypole dancing and

Morris dancing and performing in local music festivals. The school has identified in its development plan the need to further extend multicultural activities.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. The school provides good quality support and guidance, and effectively promotes the welfare, health and safety of its pupils in a caring, stable and secure environment. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. The warm and friendly ethos stems from the headteacher and staff, and encourages pupils to learn and develop as individuals with high aspirations and a love of learning. In this small school, all members of staff know the pupils well and have a clear picture of their strengths and weaknesses. The teachers are sensitive to the needs of the pupils and consistently monitor well their personal development and their ability to cope on a day-to-day basis. Older pupils are well prepared for the transfer to their next school and look forward confidently to the move.
37. The school has improved assessment procedures since the last inspection, and they are now satisfactory overall. Good use is made of test data to track pupils' attainment and progress over time in all aspects of reading, writing and mathematics. The school has made a conscious decision to keep assessment procedures to a minimum in order to maintain a manageable workload for teachers. Teachers keep their own records of pupils' progress in other subjects but these vary in quality. Where they are detailed, for example, for children in the Reception class, they provide good information on what pupils have achieved and what they need to learn next. However, this level of detail is not found consistently throughout the school, and this can lead to pupils of differing prior attainment being given the same work. The lack of clear assessment procedures in subjects such as science and ICT has a negative impact on pupils' learning.
38. The school continues to have appropriate systems to monitor and promote attendance. Registers are marked speedily, correctly and efficiently at the start of the school day and after lunch. Attendance figures are properly aggregated and all absences are properly noted. Where needed, contact is made with parents to explain an absence.
39. The headteacher and other staff provide very good role models in promoting high standards of good behaviour. Procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour are in place. The consequences of unacceptable behaviour have been made clear and are understood by all pupils. All members of staff consistently apply the school's rules. They act with firm, calm intervention, maintaining good control.
40. Child protection issues continue to be handled effectively. All members of staff are aware of the need for vigilance and the steps to take if suspicions are aroused. Health and safety are promoted effectively in the school. Potential hazards are identified and remedial action taken as necessary. All staff members are safety conscious, as shown during the design and technology lesson when the use of knives was very well supervised, with clear direction and monitoring a strong feature. All members of staff work hard to create a secure environment in which the well being of pupils is promoted effectively.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41. The school's links with parents continue to be strong. They are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and confirm that it has many strong features. All parents who responded to the questionnaires would feel comfortable in approaching the school with a problem and feel that it is well led and managed. Virtually all those responding agree that their children like school and are making good progress. They believe that the school expects their children to work hard and helps them to become more mature and responsible. They feel that the teaching is good and that children behave well. They feel well informed about how their children are getting on and agree that the school works closely with parents.
42. A very few parents expressed reservations about the amount of work that the children are expected to do at home and the range of activities outside lessons. These reservations were not supported by inspection evidence. Homework is consistent with what would be expected

of pupils of this age, and for a school of this size there is an appropriate range of extra-curricular activities, which includes music, sport and crafts.

43. Parents and other adults are encouraged to involve themselves in the life of the school and many respond enthusiastically in a wide range of activities. Many help regularly within the classroom, around the school and with swimming. The helpers are given clear directions, their activities are well structured and they are deployed effectively. In addition, parents are very supportive of the work that their children are expected to do at home. Good links with parents when children first start school help to make for a happy start to school life for the children. There is an active Friends of Waltham School association that helps out in practical ways around the school, in addition to raising finance to support its work. The school values highly the contributions made by parents that materially enhance the children's learning and personal development.
44. Information to parents is good overall. The school prospectus is clear and comprehensive. It gives parents a good overview of the school's values and its curriculum. The governors' annual report to parents is well presented. Reports to parents provide much good information about what their children know and can do. They consistently contain information about progress and areas or targets for improvement for all pupils.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

45. The leadership and management of the school have improved significantly since the last inspection, when it was found to be unsatisfactory. This is no longer the case. The very strong leadership of the headteacher has had a very positive impact on the overall effectiveness of the school. She is well supported by an active and committed governing body and hard working and conscientious members of staff. The many changes that have taken place since the last inspection have enabled staff to become more involved in the management of the school, both in their roles as co-ordinators and as class teachers. The teamwork with a shared sense of purpose that is apparent throughout the school is a significant feature of the school's work, and means that it is well placed to improve further in the future.
46. The headteacher has established a strong commitment to school improvement. This is based on a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. School development is carefully planned. The school development plan has been improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. It is detailed and sets a clear and appropriate agenda for improvement, including criteria for how achievement is to be measured. However, at present it only covers one year and does not reflect the headteacher's longer-term vision for the future of the school. The governing body has identified this as an area for improvement when the development plan is reviewed.
47. The monitoring of the school's work is far more effective than it was at the time of the last inspection. Test data is carefully analysed to show trends in attainment and to identify areas of weakness. Where areas for development are identified, the school takes effective action. A good example of this is the way the school responded to the weaknesses in writing that are indicated by test results. The school, along with neighbouring schools, set up a writing project where poets and authors worked alongside pupils and members of staff to provide purposeful writing opportunities. Although this project has not yet had a significant impact on standards, the more positive attitudes towards writing that pupils are now displaying are likely to help to raise pupils' attainment in the longer term.
48. Subject co-ordinators are actively involved in monitoring the school's work. The headteacher has established a climate within the school where the monitoring and evaluation of teachers is accepted as an everyday part of life. Teachers are regularly observed at work in the classroom. The information gained from this is used successfully to acknowledge strengths in teaching, to set individual targets for improvement, and to identify priorities for personal and professional development. Training for teachers and other members of staff has been given a clear priority and this has helped to develop teachers' confidence. At the time of the last inspection, staff training and appraisal were identified as weaknesses. Members of staff are

now given good opportunities to attend a range of training courses. Training is carefully linked to the school development plan or targets identified as part of the teacher's own professional development. This has had a good impact on standards. For example, the mathematics co-ordinator was able to attend a 5-day numeracy course, which has helped her to gain a better understanding of how provision in the subject can be further improved. Taken together, these different strategies have had a good impact on the quality of teaching throughout the school and have led to teachers becoming more reflective about the effectiveness of their own teaching.

49. The governing body makes a good contribution to the work of the school and successfully fulfils all its statutory duties. Omissions in school documentation, which were identified at the time of the last inspection, have been rectified. The good relationship that exists between the governing body and headteacher means that improvement can be carefully and sensitively planned. The governing body has begun to be more pro-active in initiating change and taking responsibility for managing it. This is a good feature of the governors' work because it means that the workload is shared and does not all fall on the headteacher. A good example of this is the recent initiative to encourage more community use of the school out of school hours. Working together, governors took on this initiative and there has been regular community use of the school hall since the start of the present school year.
50. Financial planning is good. The school maintains a small contingency fund, but rightly spends most of its available budget on benefiting the pupils currently in the school. Budgeting is systematic and based on a good understanding of the needs of the school. Decisions are made on the basis of '*Will this help the school to improve?*' A good example of this is the way that the school has continued to employ a full time nursery nurse for children in their first year at school. Although this is a substantial financial commitment, the outcome is good in terms of quality of education provided and fully justified by the standards achieved in the Reception year.
51. The school successfully seeks additional funding from a range of sources, and these grants are used well so that they have a positive impact on learning. The school applies the principles of 'best value' to its work, for example by ensuring that competitive bids are sought for all large purchases. Parents make a significant contribution to the financial security of the school. The money they raise is spent well to improve resources or accommodation.
52. Staffing levels are good and have a positive impact on standards. Teachers have a wide range of skills for so small a school, and use them effectively to support learning. The good number of well trained support staff help pupils to learn well, especially those pupils who have special educational needs. The secretary and bursar help the school to run smoothly on a day-to-day basis, with routine tasks such as the upkeep of attendance registers well managed.
53. Accommodation is satisfactory. The school is kept very clean and is well maintained. Although classrooms are spacious and attractive, there is a lack of space for indoor physical education and the cloakrooms are rather cramped. However, the school does well to overcome these problems and pupils' learning does not suffer. Good use is made of the playground and playing fields for physical education lessons, and pupils also have swimming lessons at a nearby leisure centre. Outdoor facilities have been improved since the last inspection, with the youngest children, in particular, benefiting from the attractive new play area. The school has realistic plans for further improvements to the school's accommodation, including developing a wild life area.
54. Resources are satisfactory, with no significant strengths or weaknesses. They have improved since the last inspection in ICT and for children in their first year in school. The school now has satisfactory resources for pupils with special educational needs. In some art lessons, a shortage of resources slows the pace of learning as pupils wait for equipment to become available and they select from a limited range of tools. The school makes effective use of its available resources, with the exception of its computers, which were rarely used during the inspection period. The well-resourced library is also used effectively by pupils who are carrying out individual research.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

To further raise standards of achievement, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- Develop assessment procedures and improve planning so that the needs of all pupils are consistently met by:
 - Sharing existing good practice;
 - Ensuring that lesson planning focuses on identifying what pupils of different ages or abilities are expected to learn in a particular lesson;
 - Introducing a consistent but manageable approach to assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress;
 - Making better use of marking to identify what pupils have learnt well and how they could improve in the future;
 - Sharing the purpose of each lesson with the pupils.

(Paragraphs 11, 22, 37, 80, 95, 105)

- Give pupils more opportunity to take responsibility for their own learning by:
 - Ensuring that there is a balance between teacher-led and pupil-initiated activities;
 - Ensuring that pupils take more responsibility for proof-reading their own work;
 - Giving pupils more opportunities to develop skills in writing by recording their learning in other subjects
 - Providing more opportunities for practical work in mathematics and science;
 - Teaching pupils to plan and carry out their own investigations and record their findings in a variety of ways, including applications of ICT.

(Paragraphs 7, 8, 18, 26, 80, 90, 100, 111)

In addition, the following areas for improvement should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- Use the school development plan to set longer term targets for school improvement.

(Paragraph 46)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	25
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	19

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	1	16	8	0	0	0
Percentage	0	4	64	32	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 four percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y5
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	67
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	1
Special educational needs	YR – Y5
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	8
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2
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	5.3
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.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	6	4	10

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC level 2 or above	Total	10	10	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100	100	100
	National	84	86	91

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC level 2 or above	Total	10	10	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100	100	100
	National	85	89	89

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	64
Any other minority ethnic group	3

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 – Y5**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.7:1
Average class size	22.3

Education support staff: YR – Y5

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	67.5

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
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	£
Total income	191704
Total expenditure	186561
Expenditure per pupil	3109
Balance brought forward from previous year	-548
Balance carried forward to next year	4595

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1

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

Number of questionnaires sent out	67
Number of questionnaires returned	40

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	78	20	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	55	40	0	0	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	60	38	2	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	38	13	2	7
The teaching is good.	65	33	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	40	50	5	0	5
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	32	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	23	2	0	7
The school works closely with parents.	40	58	0	2	0
The school is well led and managed.	75	25	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	68	25	0	2	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	35	28	2	2

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

55. When children start in the Reception class, in the year that they turn five, their attainment is broadly average, although this varies for year to year depending on the number of children with special educational needs. All children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress, so that most are on target to exceed the national expectations in all areas of learning by the end of the Reception year. Good standards of attainment and progress have been maintained since the last inspection, with an improvement in standards in physical development.
56. Children are taught in a mixed Reception and Year 1 class, working as one year-group for part of some lessons. The quality of teaching by the class teacher and nursery nurse is consistently good in all areas of learning. They work exceptionally well as a team and have a good understanding of the needs of young children. This means that the activities provided and the methods used to teach the children are fun and very effective in capturing and holding their interest. Members of staff have very good relationships with the children and manage their behaviour very effectively. Questioning is used skilfully to encourage all children, including those with special educational needs, to take an active part in class discussions. The constant use of praise and the genuine appreciation of children as valued individuals ensure that the children learn successfully. The good quality teaching has been maintained since the last inspection. Members of staff write helpful comments on the children's work to show the level of support provided.
57. The curriculum for the Reception year is good and based on the nationally accepted Early Learning Goals for children of this age. The teacher and nursery nurse work together effectively to plan a wide range of interesting activities for each area of learning. However, further development in short-term planning is needed to identify the purpose of activities and to help the teacher share this information with the children. Since the last inspection, there have been improvements in the provision of an outdoor area; educational resources are now colourful, of good quality, accessible to the children and used effectively to support learning.
58. There are effective methods for assessing children's attainment and progress. Children are assessed shortly after they start school, and ongoing assessments are maintained for all areas of learning. These assessments are regularly updated, discussed with the children and used to plan lessons. Children visit the school after their fourth birthday for one session a week before starting school full-time. This helps children settle in quickly when they start school.
59. The teacher and nursery nurse work together successfully in monitoring and developing provision for the early years. They have a good vision for how they can further improve the curriculum. The school development plan includes a review of the use of the outdoor area and the further development of links with the local pre-school. Members of staff have good ideas about how they can make more flexible use of the two classrooms and the outdoor area to support children's learning in the early years.

Personal, social and emotional development

60. Children consistently behave well and have well-developed skills in waiting their turn patiently and concentrating hard when listening to others. They play together amicably, and share and look after resources without fuss. They are confident and enthusiastic about trying out new activities and are happy to make choices about what they are going to do. Members of staff provide effective guidance in how the children should behave in various situations, and good behaviour and effort are praised and celebrated constantly. Discussions where children take turns to share their ideas are used effectively in building self-esteem and confidence. For example, children were encouraged during one discussion to suggest how another child had helped them at school. This task was effective in helping children to think about others and to become less selfish in outlook, at the same time as reinforcing their understanding of what

actions are kind. Members of staff listen carefully to the children's comments and ask questions to show interest and to clarify what they are saying. Members of staff have high expectations of children's independence and new children quickly learn the class routine, how to dress themselves and how to pack away resources at the ends of lessons.

61. Children are given sound opportunities to learn about cultures other than their own. For example, they held a celebration in honour of the Chinese New Year.

Communication, language and literacy

62. By the end of the Reception year, all children are confident speakers, and sit and listen sensibly to adults and each other for long periods of time. The exciting curriculum and the high expectations of members of staff help children to be enthusiastic, and they are very keen to share their experiences and what they have learnt with each other. Children know the sounds different letters make and recognise several words by sight. When sharing a story poster with the teacher, most children join in with 'reading' repetitions. They write short sentences independently, spelling some words correctly without adult help. Higher attaining children complete a page of writing with many everyday words spelt correctly. Their attempts at unfamiliar words show their good knowledge of the sounds that groups of letters make. They sometimes choose to write without adult prompting, and this is praised and encouraged by the teacher and nursery nurse. Lower attaining children copy the teacher's writing and write their own names correctly.
63. Members of staff are skilled at reading stories and make them fun and exciting. This encourages children to choose books and share them with adults. The children have been taught successfully to handle books with care and to discuss the pictures and stories. Members of staff work with the children to make class books and posters, which help to show children the relationship between reading and writing. For example, all children helped to write lists for a teddy bears' picnic, and these were used to prepare a real picnic in school.
64. A weakness in attainment is that even by the start of Year 1 many children do not form their letters correctly. Whilst members of staff show children the correct way to form letters, they have not been successful in discouraging some children from mixing capital letters with lower case letters in the middle of words.

Mathematical development

65. Most children recognise, write and match numbers to ten. They know the names of regular shapes and compare the size of various objects using non-standard measures. They learn to order events, such as the method used when making harvest soup. Higher attaining pupils add together small numbers. Lower attaining pupils count and write numbers to five. A strength in teaching is the way members of staff reinforce children's learning by discussing size, shape, number and position of various objects when working in different areas of learning, and by making effective use of time at the end of lessons by all joining in counting songs and rhymes. For example, children were encouraged at the end of one literacy lesson to describe where they had found the hidden 'monsters' by correctly using position words, such as 'behind', 'under' and 'in'.
66. Mathematical activities are made fun, with various methods used to reinforce learning. For example, a lesson on learning the names and properties of regular shapes started with children describing to the class the shapes they could feel in a bag. After this whole-class discussion, children hunted for shapes in the sand tray and sorted them into sets, made pictures by nailing shapes to a board and made buildings with a selection of bricks. Members of staff are skilled in asking probing questions about size, shape and position while the children work, so extending their knowledge and understanding at the same time as assessing what the children already know.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

67. Most children can sort living from non-living things and know that sounds can be produced by blowing, scraping, shaking and striking instruments. They learn to identify the parts of the human body by painting a self-portrait and labelling the body parts correctly. They point out important buildings in the village, and make attractive imaginary maps using the computer or a range of reclaimed materials. Children are happy to discuss their homes, which village or town they live in and how they travel to school. A good feature of teaching is the many opportunities provided for children to learn at first hand through practical activities and visits in the local community, such as a recent visit to a Victorian house and a butterfly farm. Information about butterflies from this visit was used to help children create their own edible butterflies from Swiss rolls and cardboard.

Physical development

68. Many children have weak hand control when they start in the Reception class, but a good range of activities helps them to improve these skills rapidly. For instance, children use scissors and sticky tape effectively when making shakers as part of a lesson on how sound is produced, and use apples to make careful prints for a harvest 'counting' tree. A wide range of tools and materials is available for children to improve their manual dexterity. Children show good control over wheeled vehicles in the small fenced play area outside their classrooms.
69. Members of staff use praise effectively to encourage children to make interesting shapes by stretching and twisting their bodies. Children move around the hall making controlled movements and enjoy finding different ways of moving. The nursery nurse and teacher give clear instructions and join in with activities, providing good role models and enabling children to extend their skills safely. Children are given good opportunities to work with a partner as well as on their own, refining movements and sharing ideas.

Creative development

70. Children use a range of materials to create pictures and models. For example, they use fabric crayons effectively when helping to make a class quilt and make interesting, colourful paper sculptures of 'wiggly worms'. Children sing well-known rhymes unaccompanied with actions and clap in time with the music during dance lessons. Members of staff provide interesting areas for children's imaginative play, such as a 'car' and 'caravan', a 'mole's house' and a 'space rocket'. These areas are popular with the children and enable them to extend their vocabularies and develop their creativity effectively whilst playing together.

ENGLISH

71. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is above average in speaking and listening, reading and writing. There are few pupils in Year 2, so results in the National Curriculum tests vary significantly from year to year depending on the number of pupils with special educational needs. The trend over the last few years has been rising, with results in 2001 being in the top five per cent nationally. Overall, boys do not achieve as well as girls in the writing tests, although this difference is less evident in their class work and no greater than that found nationally.
72. By the end of Year 5, pupils' attainment is above average overall in English. Speaking, listening and reading are strengths. Standards in writing are satisfactory overall, though writing is less well developed than other aspects of the subject.
73. Standards in reading have improved throughout the school since the time of the last inspection, and there is now little difference between the attainment of girls and boys. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress overall. Parents are pleased with the standards their children achieve.

74. Throughout the school, pupils have good standards in speaking and listening. They listen carefully and speak confidently and articulately. Pupils who have English as an additional language learn to speak English very quickly. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are pleased to talk about areas of personal interest and to answer the teachers' questions. Pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 talk in depth about a range of topics using correct speech and stating their views clearly. All pupils are given good opportunities to speak in public either in end-of-term productions or during assembly.
75. Pupils attain good standards in reading in all year groups. By the end of Year 2, pupils are enthusiastic about reading aloud and enjoy discussing what they have read with others. They have a well-developed understanding of the needs of an audience and read fluently with good expression. They use a wide range of strategies to work out unfamiliar words, and they correct themselves when what they have read does not make sense. Lower attaining pupils use their knowledge of the different sounds that letters make to help them work out new words. Higher attaining pupils have extensive sight vocabulary and read challenging texts, stressing important words to dramatic effect.
76. Pupils in Year 5 have clear preferences for certain authors and discuss the story line and characters in a book in depth. They have a clear understanding of how books are arranged in the non-fiction library and know how to find information quickly by using the library catalogue and book contents page. Higher attaining pupils have started to piece together information they have found in the text to answer more complex questions where the answer is only inferred. Lower attaining pupils are keen to improve their skills and persevere even when the text is challenging.
77. Pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 attain good standards in writing. By the end of Year 2, pupils write several sentences with appropriate punctuation and spell many common words correctly. They are beginning to use vocabulary to make their writing more interesting to an audience. For example, they used alliteration effectively when making a fun, alphabet book. Whilst their handwriting is neatly presented, not all letters are formed correctly and this leads to problems when they start joining letters together. Higher attaining pupils have a good awareness of the needs of an audience, and use more interesting words and more complex punctuation to clarify meaning.
78. Pupils' writing skills are satisfactory in Years 4 and 5. There are more lower attaining pupils in these year groups and they have particularly weak spelling and punctuation. Pupils attain better results when the work set is purposeful, such as when they took part in writing poems for a published book, after working with other schools and local poets. Pupils have weak handwriting skills, and these are insufficiently developed throughout the school, with the result that pupils often form letters incorrectly.
79. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers are particularly good at asking questions to focus pupils' attention at the start of lessons and at developing pupils' confidence and self-esteem by respecting their answers. Pupils learn to enjoy reading expressively by listening to the effective role models provided by the teachers and by taking part in dramatic readings in class. For example, pupils in Years 4 and 5 were enthusiastic about reading the parts of different characters in a play script. Pupils with special educational needs are given well-structured guidance by learning support assistants and the teachers, enabling them to learn effectively. Teachers are careful to ensure that all pupils are included in lessons by giving them opportunities to speak to the class about their work. Teachers give clear instructions and use a range of activities to keep pupils interested during lessons. For example, in a lesson for Years 2 and 3, pupils enjoyed guessing what might be inside a 'treasure chest' before discussing in small groups their ideas for a story. Teachers are successful in encouraging pupils to concentrate hard, maintain their enthusiasm and work quickly.
80. Teachers do not always make clear the purpose of the lesson in their planning or remember to share this with the pupils. When this happens pupils are less involved in their own learning and are not helped to evaluate what they have learnt at the end of the lesson. In addition, teachers' written comments do not show pupils how they can improve, and older pupils are

not given enough opportunity and encouragement to check their own work. As a result, pupils often make careless spelling mistakes and do not use interesting vocabulary unless this is a focus of the lesson.

81. The school provides suitable work for pupils to complete at home and the members of staff are developing ways of increasing the opportunities for parents to support their children with their writing. Parents make a good contribution to helping pupils with their reading.
82. The curriculum is broad and balanced and the literacy strategy provides a sound basis for teachers' planning. Pupils are given good opportunities to write using various formats within literacy lessons, such as letters, factual accounts, stories, poems and book reviews. However, they are not given enough opportunity to expand their skills when writing in other subjects. Travelling theatre companies regularly perform at the school, and these performances, together with productions written by the older pupils, help to enrich the curriculum.
83. The school carries out a suitable range of tests and keeps sound records of pupils' progress over time, including useful samples of work. Individual targets in English are set for all pupils each term, and these are shared with the pupils and their parents.
84. The subject is managed effectively. The subject co-ordinator has developed a good knowledge of strengths and comparative weaknesses in the subject by analysing test data and observing teachers and pupils at work. Several initiatives have been started to help raise attainment in writing although these have not been in place long enough to have made a significant difference to the attainment of pupils in Years 4 and 5. The school development plan identifies correctly the need to rewrite the handwriting scheme.
85. The library has improved since the time of the last inspection and is now clearly laid out and accessible to the pupils. Appropriate use is made of ICT to type and print poems and to find out factual information on the topics being studied in other subjects.

MATHEMATICS

86. Pupils' attainment is above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 5. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when standards of attainment were broadly average. National Curriculum test results for pupils at the end of Year 2 confirm inspection findings. Since 1998, there has been a year-on-year improvement in test results.
87. There are several factors which explain the improved standards of attainment. The quality of teaching has improved and is now good. The numeracy strategy has also had a good impact on pupils' learning, especially in improving number skills. Improved assessment procedures mean that pupils' skills are developed more systematically. As a result of these improvements, all pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, are achieving well according to their prior attainment.
88. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of basic number concepts. They count forwards and back in ones, twos and fives, and add and subtract using numbers up to at least one hundred. More able pupils confidently work with larger numbers than this. When handling money, most pupils add together small sums using pence and solve simple shopping problems. Pupils can halve shapes and numbers and sort objects into sets according to colour, shape and size. They measure accurately using everyday objects, and are developing an awareness of the need for 'standardised' units of measure. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to develop a good understanding of place value.
89. By the end of Year 5, pupils have begun to work confidently with larger numbers. They have a good understanding of multiplication and division, and estimate accurately with numbers up to a 1000. Pupils recognise equivalence in fractions and tell the time accurately. They have a good knowledge of shape, correctly identifying different 3-D shapes, rotational and reflective symmetry, and calculating the perimeter of regular shapes.

90. Pupils have sound skills in using and applying their mathematical knowledge, but this aspect of attainment is less well developed than others. Teachers do not give pupils enough opportunity to apply what they have learnt to investigations or problem solving. As a result, pupils sometimes lack confidence in applying their skills to practical situations.
91. The quality of teaching is good. There have been improvements in teaching over the last three years. Teachers are now giving far greater emphasis to teaching mental mathematics skills and they are assessing learning more accurately. These changes have had a good impact on standards. Teachers plan lessons carefully, using the format recommended by the numeracy strategy. However, they do not always identify in their planning what they expect pupils of differing prior attainment or age to learn from a particular activity. This is a weakness of teaching because it means that on occasions the needs of all pupils are not fully met.
92. Teachers make effective use of praise, ask suitable questions to ensure that pupils understand and make appropriate use of a review session at the end of lessons to share and reinforce what has been learnt. Behaviour is managed effectively and, as a result, pupils behave well in lessons. Teachers are enthusiastic and resource lessons well. This leads to pupils being well motivated and keen to learn. For example, in a Year 4/5 lesson, a game involving matching fraction cards helped pupils to quickly develop an understanding of 'equivalence'. Pupils were enthused by the practical emphasis to the activity and there was a buzz of purposeful conversation as they discussed which cards went together. In this lesson, pupils supported each other well and showed good tolerance of each other's ideas, even when they were wrong.
93. Teachers give pupils appropriate opportunities to use their numeracy skills in subjects other than mathematics. For example, they measure in science and design and technology, and count in physical education lessons. A scrutiny of previous work shows that pupils are able to use ICT to support their learning. Attractive displays of work show how pupils have used ICT to present data in different ways. However, this use of ICT was not evident during the inspection period, with computers rarely in use during mathematics lessons.
94. The curriculum is broad and balanced, and the numeracy strategy is firmly embedded in school practice. A commercial scheme is used to good effect to support teachers when they are planning work. However, the needs of all pupils are not met when work from the scheme is allocated merely on the basis of year groups, with all pupils of the same age doing the same piece of work. There are satisfactory procedures for monitoring pupils' attainment and progress, and teachers often use this information effectively to decide what needs to be taught next. The school makes effective use of National Curriculum tests and other assessments to measure progress through Key Stage 1 and Years 4 and 5. These results are carefully analysed to identify how pupils' attainment could be improved. The school has chosen not to use any standardised testing in Year 3. This means that there is less information to measure the progress of this year group.
95. Work is regularly marked, although teachers rarely add written comments to identify how pupils could improve. However, the teacher and pupil often mark work together, and on these occasions they do discuss progress. The school has thorough systems in place to track pupils' progress and this information is used very successfully to set targets for what pupils should be achieving. A good feature of target setting is the way that pupils are involved in the process.
96. Management of the subject is good. The subject co-ordinator is well trained and takes a good lead in improving teaching and learning. Effective monitoring of teaching and learning has helped the co-ordinator to develop a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses in provision throughout the school and identify many good ideas about improvements that could still be introduced.

SCIENCE

97. Pupils' standards of attainment are in line with national averages by the end of Year 2 and

Year 5. They have a good knowledge of scientific concepts, but their ability to apply these skills to practical situations is less well developed, although still satisfactory overall. Standards of attainment are broadly similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. Whilst most pupils are achieving standards that are appropriate to their prior attainment, potentially higher-attaining pupils are not always challenged in lessons. This is because teaching does not consistently meet their needs, with pupils often doing the same activity whatever their ability.

98. Pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language are well supported and make good progress in many lessons. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys or girls or pupils from different backgrounds.
99. By the end of Year 2, pupils know where electricity comes from. They understand that electricity is dangerous and can explain how we use electricity in our everyday lives. Most pupils can build a simple circuit to light a bulb. They know which types of food are good for you and which are less healthy. They understand that plants need light and water to grow and describe different habitats in simple terms. By the end of Year 5, pupils have improved their knowledge of various habitats as they begin to describe in more detail their distinctive features. They successfully categorise materials using more complex criteria, such as natural and man-made. They can explain the different phases of the moon and make different sorts of electrical circuits. They successfully apply this knowledge to the task of making a Christmas tree that will light up.
100. Pupils' ability to apply their scientific knowledge to practical situations is satisfactory. Pupils are beginning to understand what is meant by a fair test and measure accurately, using equipment such as thermometers. However, teachers give pupils insufficient opportunity to devise, plan and organise their own simple experiments or investigations. On many occasions, activities are teacher led. This is a weakness of teaching. It has most impact on the learning of more able pupils, who are not consistently challenged by the investigative work that they are given.
101. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall throughout the school, with an example of good teaching seen in Years 2 and 3. This lesson was particularly successful because of the good practical approach, which enabled pupils to learn quickly about the importance of cleaning their teeth regularly. The lesson was very well resourced, with moulds of teeth and x-rays of mouths used to good effect to help pupils remember the names of the different types of teeth.
102. Throughout the school, teachers prepare carefully for lessons, making good use of resources, including ICT where appropriate. Behaviour is well managed and pupils quickly become engrossed in their work. Lessons are carefully planned, though teachers' planning does not always identify expectations for pupils of differing ability or age. Higher-attaining pupils often do the same work as other pupils. This means that they are not consistently challenged and do not learn as quickly as they should. Although activities are interesting, teachers rarely share the purpose of a lesson with the pupils in order to increase their involvement in their own learning.
103. Teachers use questioning well to encourage pupils to think about what they are learning and to assess their understanding. In a lesson with Years 4 and 5, for example, the teacher led an interesting discussion about why the amount of water in a bottle changed the noise that is made when someone blows across the bottle's lip. Teachers are careful to use the correct scientific vocabulary; a good example of this was seen when the Year 2 teacher spoke to the pupils about molars, incisors and canines when describing types of teeth.
104. Pupils are given appropriate opportunities to use their numeracy skills in science lessons. For example, pupils in Years 4 and 5 draw graphs showing the changes in water temperature over a day. In contrast, the overuse of copying as a way of recording means that pupils have too few opportunities to use their literacy skills.
105. The school provides a broad and balanced science curriculum, and since the last inspection has adopted an appropriate scheme of work to ensure that skills are developed more

systematically. However, the school does not yet have a consistent approach to assessing attainment throughout the school. This is unsatisfactory as it means that pupils' learning does not necessarily build on what has already been taught. Teachers regularly mark work, but rarely write useful comments to help pupils identify what they need to do to improve.

Teachers evaluate learning at the end of lessons and sometimes record their evaluations on their planning. This is most effective when the evaluations clearly identify those pupils who have achieved well or who will need additional support.

106. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has a good working knowledge of strengths and weaknesses in the subject and realistic expectations about how to further improve provision.

ART AND DESIGN

107. Pupils' standards of attainment are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 5. All pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress throughout the school. Pupils develop a good range of skills and techniques such as printing, modelling, and painting. They make attractive collages from various materials, such as pasta. Pupils show good skill when using art tools and their work is completed carefully. For example, older pupils used watercolour effectively when making pictures depicting 'The Eye of Horus', and younger pupils made skilful charcoal drawings of animals in the style of African tribal art. Pupils have suitable opportunities to study the distinctive work of famous artists such as Van Gogh. The school has not identified any gifted or talented pupils, and pupils have limited opportunity to use their own ideas in their work. Standards of attainment and progress have been maintained since the time of the last inspection.

108. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers provide helpful demonstrations of new techniques, explain tasks clearly and ask effective questions to help pupils evaluate and improve their own work. The good relationships between the teachers and pupils mean that pupils are confident when trying something new and so they concentrate well. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to show independence by choosing and preparing the materials they are going to use, which means that they have little chance to communicate their own ideas.

109. Overall, the curriculum is broad and balanced and the school follows a suitable scheme of work. However, there is a greater emphasis on making than on designing. Effective links are made between art and other subjects. For example, pupils in Years 4 and 5 each made a cartouche from play dough as part of a history project. The subject is managed satisfactorily. Pupils' work is monitored informally, but teachers do not use the information they have collected from assessing pupils' attainment and progress to help plan work to meet the differing needs of individuals. In some lessons, a shortage of resources slows the pace of learning as pupils wait for equipment to become available and pupils select from a limited range of tools. The school development plan identifies the need to upgrade resources. There is little evidence of ICT being used to support learning in the subject. An art club is well attended and makes a valuable contribution to pupils' knowledge of the subject.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

110. Pupils' standards of attainment are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 5. All pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress throughout the school. Pupils learn a wide range of skills for cutting and joining various materials and show good control in their work. However, their skills in designing and planning are less well developed and their drawn plans do not always show materials to be used and the intended dimensions of their designs. Younger pupils cut with scissors competently and use glue and sticky tape to join a range of materials successfully. They score card to make working hinges. Older pupils carefully cut and join wood to make useful picture frames and model clay to make attractive holders for candles and floral plaques for calendars. Overall, standards have improved since the time of the last inspection when they were unsatisfactory for older pupils.

111. There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching, but the quality of teaching was good in the one lesson observed. The teacher in the Years 2 and 3 class involved all pupils effectively in learning about making sandwiches as a commercial process. Clear instructions were given, enabling pupils to follow the process sequentially with minimum prompting from adults. The teacher asked probing questions encouraging pupils to evaluate the process and consider factors such as hygiene risks, cost effectiveness and possible improvements to the process. The lesson was particularly effective because pupils were enthusiastic about the practical activities provided and they enjoyed eating the end-products. Evidence of pupils' work and teachers' planning indicates that the quality of teachers' work has improved since the time of the last inspection and they now have sufficient subject knowledge to teach a range of making skills. However, teachers provide too few opportunities for pupils to solve problems by creating their own designs for specific purposes.
112. The curriculum is satisfactory overall, with teachers basing their planning on an appropriate scheme of work. However, there is a greater emphasis on making skills than on the design element of the subject. Teachers sensibly plan projects to enhance pupils' learning in other areas of the curriculum, such as history or science topics. For example, older pupils made cardboard Christmas trees with electric circuits supporting a light at the top as part of a science topic. Throughout the school, there are good opportunities for pupils to learn about food technology. For example, younger pupils made vegetable soup as part of a topic about harvest.
113. Management of the subject is satisfactory. Design and technology is not a current focus for school development but the co-ordinator monitors provision informally. There are no formal arrangements for monitoring pupils' progress so that teachers can plan for pupils' differing needs. Limited use is made of ICT to support learning in the subject. There is a suitable range of tools and materials for making products.

GEOGRAPHY

114. No geography lessons were timetabled during the inspection. Judgements on attainment and progress have been made by scrutinising pupils' work and teachers' planning.
115. Pupils' standards of attainment are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 5. All pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress throughout the school. Older pupils carry out traffic surveys and make effective use of their numeracy and ICT skills to record their findings. They develop an appropriate knowledge and understanding of differing cultures, for instance describing and comparing life in different parts of Kenya with their own experiences. They discuss geographical features in their local area in the United Kingdom, such as buildings, natural features and main transport routes. They understand that symbols are used to represent features on maps. Younger pupils are skilled at drawing imaginary maps showing key features such as woodlands and important buildings. They understand the need for various types of transport and reasons why people choose to travel. Standards of attainment and progress have been maintained since the time of the last inspection.
116. There is not enough evidence to make a judgement on the quality of teaching. However, teachers' planning and pupils' work shows that teachers provide pupils with an appropriate range of factual knowledge and pupils complete a suitable amount of work in the time allowed for the subject. Nevertheless, pupils of differing prior attainment are set similar tasks, which means that the work does not always provide sufficient challenge for all pupils. Teachers' marking does not show pupils what they need to do to improve their work.
117. There is a satisfactory, broad and balanced curriculum for the subject. Effective use is made of the local community to study various aspects of the curriculum such as key features. The school has identified in the development plan, the need to further adapt the scheme of work to meet the needs of mixed age classes. However, the time allocated to the subject in Years 1 and 2 is lower than the amount recommended nationally, which limits the standards achieved

by pupils. Satisfactory use is made of pupils' literacy skills in recording findings from their research.

118. The subject is managed satisfactorily by the co-ordinator. The subject has not been a recent area of focus and the monitoring of teaching and learning is informal. Teachers keep their own records of what individual pupils have achieved, but do not use this information to plan for differing needs in lessons. There are sufficient resources to meet the demands of the curriculum.

HISTORY

119. Pupils' standards of attainment are above national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 5. Good teaching and a well-planned and stimulating curriculum have had a good impact on standards, which are higher than they were at the time of the last inspection, when they were only satisfactory by the end of Year 2.
120. All pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, develop a good factual knowledge. Pupils in Year 1 learn about different types of houses from different periods of time. Pupils from Year 2 onwards study similar topics at the same time. This enables them to develop good knowledge, for their age, of topics such as the Tudors and the Egyptians. By the end of Year 2, pupils can explain how life in Tudor times differs from life today. Pupils are able to describe key features of life in Egyptian times; for example, they can explain what is meant by hieroglyphics. By the end of Year 5, pupils have a more detailed knowledge of the topics they have studied. They describe in detail the hierarchical nature of Egyptian society and know the names of various Egyptian gods. They have a good knowledge of features of Tudor life, describing in their writing what life would have been like in a Tudor town or as a Tudor sailor.
121. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan carefully. The enthusiasm of teachers and their clear love for the subject ensures that pupils are involved and motivated by the work they are given. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons. However, on too many occasions all pupils do the same piece of work, whatever their prior attainment or age. This is a weakness of teaching, caused by the lack of detailed assessment procedures. Teachers make good use of resources, including a selection of computer programmes. In a lesson in Year 2 and 3, pupils were encouraged to learn about hieroglyphics in a practical way by writing their own names using hieroglyphs. The local community is a rich source of historical evidence that is used effectively by teachers. For example, pupils in Year 1 have walked around the local community looking at different sorts of houses. Visits to places further afield are carefully linked to what is being taught in lessons and successfully extend learning. A recent visit involved pupils dressing up and spending a day 'being Victorians'.
122. The curriculum is broad, balanced and carefully planned, using a nationally recommended scheme of work. Teachers give pupils good opportunities to use their literacy skills by carrying out research and writing about their findings. Good use is made of ICT to support learning. Pupils confidently use computers to record work and make discoveries through CD-ROMS or the Internet. The well-resourced library is also used effectively by pupils who are carrying out individual research.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

123. At the time of the last inspection, provision for ICT was unsatisfactory. This no longer the case, although there remain areas for further improvement. The school has improved resources and is now using a nationally recommended scheme of work to help teachers in planning work. Standards of pupils' attainment have risen and are now satisfactory overall.
124. Throughout the school, pupils develop satisfactory word-processing skills. By the end of Year 2, pupils can type in simple texts using a computer, and they play a limited range of language and mathematical games. Pupils know how to move shapes around the computer screen using the 'mouse' and change the colour and size of different shapes. They successfully use

their ICT skills to design and make different sorts of greetings cards. By the end of Year 5, pupils have improved their word-processing skills. They change the font-type, colour and size of their text. They successfully use data handling programmes to produce graphs, for example based on data banks on the children in their class. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 produce poems that they have written in literacy lessons that show a good awareness of how word-processing can make their writing attractive to an audience. Pupils are beginning to use the Internet to find information, with older pupils finding web pages that give them information about the Egyptians.

125. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the quality of teaching. Teachers are more confident about using computers than at the time of the last inspection and are beginning to use ICT to support teaching in other subjects. However, this aspect is still under-developed, partly due to problems with the reliability of hardware but also because teachers' lesson planning does not consistently identify how ICT will be used. On the few occasions that ICT was used during the inspection, pupils worked purposefully and with great enthusiasm. They were well supported by teachers and made steady gains in knowledge, for example learning how to put word-processed text into a 'box' and using a digital camera to take pictures of the inspection team.
126. The school is now teaching all aspects of the National Curriculum, although the available resources limit pupils' learning in the 'control' element of the curriculum. Good use is made of the new scheme of work to identify what pupils should be learning from year to year. However, there is no consistent approach to assessing pupils' attainment and progress. At the moment, the school relies on teachers' informal observations of pupils at work and their own records to show progress over time. This arrangement is unsatisfactory because it does not provide sufficient information to help decide what individual pupils need to learn next. In particular, the needs of pupils who bring good skills from home are not identified, and planning does not show how these higher-attaining pupils are to be challenged.
127. Resources are satisfactory. The school has an appropriate number of computers for its size, although problems with their reliability mean that they are not always all in use.

MUSIC

128. Pupils' standards of attainment are above national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 5. Throughout the school all pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, achieve well and make good progress in developing a wide range of skills. A particular strength is the pupils' hearty and tuneful singing. In addition, pupils are successful in maintaining a steady beat, keeping to their own part when singing in harmony and identifying tunes from just a few notes. Older pupils make good use of a range of interesting percussion instruments when composing atmospheric music to accompany a dramatic reading. Many older pupils read musical notation correctly when learning to play the recorder or flute. Pupils are less secure when copying rhythmic patterns, particularly when these are played on more than one note. Younger pupils have a good knowledge of the names of various percussion instruments, and make sensible choices to accompany themselves. Whilst no gifted or talented pupils have been specifically identified by the school, higher attaining pupils have good opportunities to extend their skills. Good standards in music have been maintained from the time of the last inspection, and parents are pleased with the standards that their children achieve.
129. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and are careful to promote the correct musical terms, such as 'ostinato' and 'pentatonic'. Specific skills and techniques are taught effectively. Particular strengths in teaching are the infectious enthusiasm of members of staff during lessons, the clear and confident use of their own voices to demonstrate techniques, and the skilful management of the pupils' behaviour ensuring that learning is effective and fun. Pupils enjoy performing and listening to music, and work together sensibly in small groups refining their compositions. The practical emphasis on the subject means that pupils behave well, concentrate on the tasks they have been given and show interest in their work. Teachers take great care to ensure that pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language understand

the tasks they are set and are enabled to take a full and active part in the lessons. Effective links are made with pupils' learning in literacy lessons. For example, pupils in Years 4 and 5 wrote dramatic phrases about dragons for their literacy homework and later set edited highlights to their own music. Teachers evaluate pupils' work during lessons and keep informal records of their progress.

130. There is a good, broad and balanced curriculum for the subject and teachers follow an appropriate scheme of work. A good range of interesting resources is used well in lessons, including instruments made by the pupils in design and technology. There are good opportunities for pupils to extend their learning outside lessons by learning to play the recorder or flute, by taking part in regular, local music festivals and by performing in public. These activities are well supported by the pupils, are greatly appreciated by the parents, and make a good contribution towards pupils' social and cultural development. Co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator regularly monitors teachers' lesson planning and has a good understanding of the standards achieved by pupils. Information and communication technology is used effectively to record and compose music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

131. During the inspection, only lessons in swimming for pupils in Years 1 to 5 and a dance and drama lesson for pupils in Year 1 were timetabled. Judgements on the attainment of pupils have been based on the work seen in the timetabled lessons and discussions with pupils and members of staff.
132. The school has maintained the standards found at the time of the last inspection, when pupils' attainment in swimming was found to be good. This continues to be the case, with the very good quality of teaching and the high adult to pupil ratio in swimming lessons having a good impact on standards. The youngest pupils who have only just started swimming lessons are quickly gaining confidence in the water, with some already moving around the beginners' pool using different swimming aids. By the end of Year 5, nearly all pupils are able to swim more than 25 metres, with most using well developed swimming strokes. Higher attaining pupils swim confidently for longer distances on their front and back, and are able to swim fluently on the surface and under water. Pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language are well integrated into lessons and are quickly gaining new skills. They are well supported by the teachers or adult helpers in swimming lessons.
133. In the dance lesson in Year 1, pupils showed satisfactory skills for their age. They are able to move in time to music, walking on the spot, clapping to the beat, stretching arms and bodies and swinging their hips. Pupils handle resources sensibly and work co-operatively when required to do so. They are beginning to show a good awareness of the effects of exercise on their bodies.
134. The quality of teaching is good overall, with very good teaching of swimming. Visits to the swimming pool are very well organised, with a very good awareness of health and safety issues. Lessons are taken by teachers from the school or the leisure centre, as well as experienced volunteer helpers. All of these adults have very good subject knowledge. They introduce new skills carefully, ensuring that pupils are given many opportunities to practise new skills in order to improve their confidence. Praise is used effectively to help the less able, and one-to-one support is provided when needed. The behaviour of pupils during swimming lessons is excellent. They listen carefully to instructions and help each other when necessary.
135. In the dance lesson, good use was made of music, and activities were carefully planned to allow pupils to develop and practise a range of movements. Pupils were given good opportunities to show the rest of the class examples of their good work. Behaviour was managed effectively, and pupils responded well to the sensitive way in which the teacher helped them as they worked. A learning support assistant gave good support in the lesson, ensuring that lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs were given individual help so that they too could improve their skills.

136. The curriculum is carefully planned to include all aspects of the National Curriculum. Although the school does not have access to a large hall, very good use is made of outdoor facilities to compensate for this. Planning is detailed and shows how pupils are to develop skills over time.
137. A satisfactory range of extra-curricular provision enriches learning opportunities. There is a football club, which is well attended and gives pupils good opportunities to practice and develop skills outside lessons. Good use is made of visits by coaches from various sports clubs to introduce pupils to new activities and supplement learning that takes place in the classroom. Pupils are able to compete against each other in lessons and at sports days, as well as in football matches against other schools.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

138. There has been a significant improvement in provision for religious education since the last inspection. Standards are higher because the quality of the curriculum and of teachers' planning has improved. A new scheme of work and more detailed planning means that learning is no longer fragmented, with pupils' attainment meeting the expectation of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2 and Year 5. Pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language make satisfactory progress and achieve standards appropriate to their prior attainment.
139. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall in developing an appropriate knowledge and understanding of several major world faiths. For example, pupils in Year 5 know how Jews worship and the importance of the Torah in Judaism. They successfully learn about different places of worship, and show sensitivity and respect for the beliefs of others. Younger pupils develop an appropriate knowledge of various festivals and the purpose of religious artefacts. For example, pupils in Year 2 are able to explain why the festival of Passover is important in Judaism. They understand why Easter is a significant Christian festival, and can retell different stories from the Bible, such as the story of the Creation. Throughout the school, pupils are successfully encouraged to consider the needs of others through work about Oxfam and various contributions to both local and national charities.
140. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with an example of good teaching seen in Key Stage 2. In this lesson, pupils were encouraged to relate issues of faith to their own lives. The teacher led an interesting discussion about friendship and linked this effectively with the story of David and Jonathan. Pupils were interested, well motivated and took a good part in the discussion. Questioning was used well to encourage pupils to think about the life of David, and this helped pupils to develop their own ideas about the importance of friendship. Some of the contributions of pupils showed a good level of sensitivity; for example a pupil commented that *'You should not judge people by what they look like but by who they are'*.
141. Teachers' lesson planning shows that good use is made of a range of resources to make lessons interesting, including visits to the local Church of England. However, teachers make little use of ICT to support pupils in their learning. Similarly, pupils are not encouraged to use their literacy skills, with samples of pupils' previous work showing that, throughout the school, insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to use writing to record their ideas.
142. Collective worship makes a valuable contribution to pupils' understanding of faith and beliefs. Prayers are said at different times during the school day, and pupils are encouraged to think about how they can help those who are less fortunate than themselves. For example, pupils have been raising funds to help a child in Ghana.
143. There is an appropriate curriculum. The scheme of work, which has been introduced since the last inspection, is closely linked to the locally agreed syllabus and provides good coverage and support for teachers' lesson planning. However, there is no formal procedure for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, with teachers keeping their own records. Where these are detailed, as in Years 4 and 5, they are helpful in identifying what needs to be taught next. However, this level of detail is not consistent across the school, which means that on occasions pupils are given the same work, whatever their previous learning or their age. This

has an impact on the pace at which some pupils, particularly more able pupils, acquire new skills or knowledge.