

INSPECTION REPORT

CAVALRY PRIMARY SCHOOL

March

LEA area: Cambridgeshire

Unique reference number: 110674

Headteacher: Mrs V Spriggs

Reporting inspector: Andrew Clark
21596

Dates of inspection: 17th – 20th September 2001

Inspection number: 230757

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	County
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Cavalry Drive March Cambridgeshire
Postcode:	PE15 9EQ
Telephone number:	01354 652814
Fax number:	01354 652814
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs C Jones
Date of previous inspection:	March 1999

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Andrew Clark 21596	Registered inspector	Mathematics Music	How high are standards? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
Peter Oldfield 1112	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Kath Hurt 24895	Team inspector	Science Design and technology The Foundation Stage	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Ali Haouas 15023	Team Inspector	Art and design Geography Information and communication technology (ICT) Physical education Equal Opportunities	
Carole Jarvis 27276	Team inspector	English History Religious education Special educational needs	

The inspection contractor was:

Schoolhaus Ltd
Suite 17
BPS Business Centre
Brake Lane
Walesby
Nottinghamshire
NG22 9HQ

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Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Cavalry Primary School is situated in the town of March. There are 299 pupils on roll which is larger than the national average of 243 for a school of this type. There are 145 boys and 154 girls aged between four and eleven. The pupils come from a wide range of social backgrounds in a mature residential area. Many parents are in rural occupations and unemployment in the area is high. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (19.7 per cent) is about average. Few of the pupils are from ethnic minority cultural backgrounds and the first language of all pupils is English. The percentage of pupils on the school's register for special educational needs is slightly above average at 28.4 per cent. This includes 1.4 per cent of pupils with a statement of special educational needs which is about average. The pupils enter school with standards of achievement below those typically found.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Cavalry Primary is a good school. Standards in English and mathematics are above average and pupils of all abilities achieve well. The headteacher provides very good leadership and she is supported by a good team of staff and governors. The quality of teaching and learning is good and pupils enjoy their lessons. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in English and mathematics are above average and all pupils achieve well by the time they leave school.
- The quality of teaching is good and as a result pupils are enthusiastic and interested in their work.
- The pupils' social and moral development is very good because of the high levels of care the school provides and very good relationships.
- Good support is given to pupils with special educational needs.
- The school is very well led by the headteacher, and a committed team of staff and governors supports her well.

What could be improved

- The attendance of some pupils.
- Pupils' speaking and listening skills are not as high as reading and writing.
- The pupils' ability to solve problems in mathematics and apply their skills in realistic investigations.
- The role of co-ordinators in evaluating the quality of teaching in their subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvement since it was last inspected in March 1999. Standards in English and mathematics have improved well over time. The quality of teaching has improved from satisfactory to good overall. There is now a much greater consistency in the pace of lessons and the challenge offered to pupils. The use of learning support assistants is much better as a result of good professional development and training. The weaknesses in the length of lessons have been addressed. There is now an appropriate balance to the curriculum and ICT in particular is incorporated well into different subjects. The procedures for measuring how well pupils are doing are very good and used well in English and mathematics. The procedures are not always as well used in other subjects. The governing body is much better informed and analytical in its work.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	B	B	B	B
Mathematics	E	A	B	A
Science	C	A	B	B

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

There has been a good improvement in standards since the last inspection. The trend in improvement over the last three years is above the national average, although there are year-on-year variations. In English, mathematics and science the percentage of pupils achieving the expected levels by Year 6 is above average. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels have consistently increased in English which is not clear from the constant B grade, although they went down in mathematics and science in the most recent results. When compared with similar schools standards are also good. Overall standards are better than might be expected, with pupils achieving well. The school has generally exceeded its challenging targets for English and mathematics over the last three years, although it fell slightly short in mathematics in 2001. In the work seen for the current Year 6, pupils' standards are above expected levels for English and mathematics and average for science. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them.

Standards have also improved for pupils in Year 2, although not as markedly. Standards of writing were above average in 2000 and below average for reading and mathematics. There has been a steady improvement in the percentage of pupils attaining higher levels and fewer pupils are working at the lowest levels. The attainment of the current Year 2 pupils is average in all three subjects and pupils achieve well. The children in the reception class make good progress from their achievement on entry to the school. They reach the levels expected for their age in all areas of learning, and make a good start to their schooling.

The good standards are a direct result of continuous improvements to the quality of teaching and curriculum planning through good leadership. Pupils' reading and writing skills are good throughout the school. Pupils read fluently and write imaginatively, using a rich vocabulary. Speaking and listening skills are less strong as pupils do not often expand on their ideas. There is no systematic planning to develop these skills. Pupils' ability to calculate mentally is good and they set out their sums well, but their ability to apply their mathematical knowledge to real situations and to solve problems is underdeveloped. In science the more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged in some lessons and this limits their achievement. Standards of work in ICT are at typical levels, but they are likely to increase as skills are developed effectively through different subjects. Standards in music are good as a result of very good teaching.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils' attitudes to school are good. They are enthusiastic and enjoy work. Despite this some pupils do not work as hard as they could.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	This is good. Pupils are polite and friendly. There is a small percentage of pupils with identified behaviour problems who are managed well.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is good. Pupils learn to handle their emotions through poetry and music. Relationships are very good throughout the school.
Attendance	This is unsatisfactory. Despite good efforts on the part of the school a small number of pupils are regularly late for school or take days off. This obviously affects their progress.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
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 and learning is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection and has a significant impact on rising standards. Good teaching in English and mathematics ensures that the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are met. Teachers develop pupils' writing skills effectively by giving them interesting reasons to write. Teachers encourage pupils to explain the way they work out their sums in mathematics and this helps them to understand and recall number facts and calculate mentally. However, pupils do not often extend their skills through challenging mathematical investigations, and this limits their learning, particularly for the more able. Lessons are well planned and prepared for, and teachers generally make good use of good quality resources. Teachers expect pupils to produce good quality written work and support this with their marking. The management of behaviour is good and sensitive to pupils' needs. In a few lessons teachers do not expect enough work to be completed in the time available and some pupils take advantage of this and do not work as hard as they could. Pupils enjoy their work because of the imagination and sense of fun teachers bring to many lessons. Pupils with special needs learn well as they are given well-planned support to meet targets set for them.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is good. There are rich opportunities for pupils to learn in interesting ways. Literacy and ICT are used well in many subjects. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are not systematically planned for.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	This is good. Teachers and learning assistants give pupils strong support to achieve challenging targets.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	This is good overall. Moral and social development is very good as pupils are involved in developing their own rules and learn to take responsibility for each other. Spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Opportunities to develop these areas are sometimes missed as they are not systematically planned for.
How well the school cares for its pupils	This is very good. Pupils' achievements are carefully tracked and built upon. There are very good procedures promoting good behaviour and child protection. Attendance is carefully monitored but this does not have sufficient impact.

	Attendance is carefully monitored but this does not have sufficient impact.
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The parents have positive views of the school and the school works hard to promote involvement in pupils' learning. A small group of parents makes a good contribution through work in the school and fund-raising activities.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership. She gives clear guidance to raise standards and has created an effective team of teachers. The role of subject co-ordinators has had a good impact on raising standards in English and mathematics. This is not yet fully developed for all subjects, particularly through the monitoring of teaching.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	They provide good support to the school. They are efficiently organised and well informed. Commitment to the school is high.
The school's evaluation of its performance	This is good. The school has made good use of the analysis of test results to improve boys' performance and raise standards throughout the school.
The strategic use of resources	The school plans very carefully for improvement and makes certain that priorities are matched to the best quality resources.

There have been significant improvements to the accommodation, which have benefited standards of work and behaviour. There are good levels of staffing and resources overall. Support assistants are effectively deployed with the larger classes. There is a very clear focus on continued school improvement and strategic planning to achieve it. The school uses all available resources to achieve the best value it can.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils enjoy school. • The teaching of English and mathematics is fun. • Staff are very approachable and helpful. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons. • Homework. • The timing of information.

The finding of the inspection supports the positive views of parents. The school sends out newsletters giving details of forthcoming events; however, it does not always send out reminders to inform parents nearer the time and this seems to be the concern. The range of activities outside lessons and the amount and use of homework set is typical for a school of this type and generally makes a positive contribution to learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards of attainment are above the national average in English and mathematics by the time pupils leave school. Although there are some normal variations from year to year the school has maintained an upward trend of improvement, above the national average, over the last three years and this is set to continue as the quality of teaching and learning improves. The improvement in results of National Curriculum tests for the more able pupils is very marked, and is continuing with the most recent (2001) test results for English. The school has largely met or exceeded the targets set for pupils each year. Fewer pupils achieved higher levels in mathematics and science in the most recent tests although this was largely anticipated. There are more pupils working at higher levels in English and mathematics in the current Year 6 class, and they are again on track for high attainment overall. The vast majority of pupils of all abilities achieve well throughout the school.
2. By the end of Year 2, pupils are working at standards close to the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2000, the last year when comparative data was available, standards in reading were similar to the national average, writing was below and mathematics was well below. However, the results for 2001 show improvement in all three subjects and are above the 2000 averages. There is particular improvement in the results of more able pupils achieving higher results. There has been a good trend of improvement in writing and reading over the last three years and satisfactory improvement in mathematics.
3. In both key stages there is a continuing trend of fewer pupils failing to reach the expected level. This is because of work that builds effectively on pupils' earlier achievement and of good support given to pupils. Pupils with special needs make good progress towards their individual learning targets. This is because they receive good support from teaching assistants in lessons. They enable pupils to access the main points of lessons and complete their own work. Teachers have regard to their needs and liaise carefully with teaching assistants to ensure they know what is required. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support in mathematics and good support in English. This contributes to their good progress in these subjects.
4. Test results over the last three years indicate some variation in standards with boys relatively under-performing girls in English and more recently in mathematics. The school is aware of this and has taken action to raise boys' achievements through the purchase of non-fiction to heighten their motivation in reading, and through staff training focusing on the needs of both genders. Boys are targeted when they come into Year 5 in literacy and numeracy to boost their scores and some teaching takes place in single sex groups.
5. The high standards are the result of very clear and effective leadership producing continuous improvements to the quality of teaching and planning. There is also good use, in English and mathematics, of accurate measures to find out what the pupils know, understand and can do.
6. In English, standards of speaking and listening are average and although pupils make at least satisfactory progress it is not as marked as for reading and writing. Most pupils listen carefully to teachers and classmates, but a small minority through the school does not. Teachers often ask good questions of pupils to encourage them to explain their ideas, but sometimes do not challenge them to extend and develop their ideas sufficiently. Pupils

develop good reading skills. By the age of seven, the majority read fluently and by the age of eleven they read with deep understanding of characters and events. Pupils' writing skills are very well developed. They write imaginatively with a good choice of vocabulary. This is because of the many opportunities teachers offer pupils to improve their skills through stimulating themes involving stories, letter writing and reports rather than grammar exercises. As a result, punctuation, spelling and handwriting are good.

7. In mathematics pupils make good progress in computing sums mentally, and in ordering and organising numbers. They learn a good range of strategies for tackling addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. This is because of the good planning and generally good pace of teaching. They do not have enough opportunities to identify and select the mathematics to be used in real situations and to investigate extended mathematical problems. This limits the progress of the most able. The school has identified the problem and is beginning to provide better opportunities for this, although the work is still not always challenging enough for the more able pupils.
8. Standards in science are about average at seven and eleven. Most pupils achieve at least the expected level for their age, but the percentage of pupils reaching higher levels has declined in the last two years. This is partly due to the earlier ability of the year groups, but also because the most able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently. These pupils sometimes have to undertake work which is too easy for them although methods of recording may be more demanding. Standards have improved well over the last few years, however, because of the good emphasis given to practical investigative tasks in both key stages.
9. In ICT standards are similar to those expected in the National Curriculum and have markedly improved. The school is well placed for further improvement because of enthusiastic leadership and good resources. A particular strength is the way in which pupils make use of ICT in other subjects. This is a result of careful planning and timetabling for use of the computer suite. This is a developing area and is not fully extended, for example, into mathematics.
10. Standards in all other subjects are at least at the nationally expected levels and above that for music. Standards in art and design, design and technology and music have all improved, as there is now a better balance to the time spent on the subjects and the quality of planning. The higher standards in music are largely the result of very good teaching from a specialist teacher and support from all staff.
11. The continued improvement in English and mathematics is partly the result of careful planning and monitoring of teaching. Although co-ordinators are make a strong contribution to many subjects, the rigorous monitoring of teaching and standards has not yet been developed sufficiently.
12. The children make a good start to their education in the reception classes. Children enter the reception classes with attainment that is below that expected for their age. They make good progress so that by the time they are ready to start in Year 1, most attain the early learning goals in each area of learning. Their writing skills are still relatively weak however, and in this aspect they do not reach the early learning goal. The teachers are very successful at promoting personal and social education and children quickly develop positive attitudes to learning.
13. A small but significant proportion of pupils often arrive late for school or are regularly absent. This obviously affects the progress they make and additional time has to be spent making sure they understand the content of lessons.

14. Overall, pupils' progress is good and they reach standards that are higher than would normally be expected. The school is well placed to continue to drive up standards still further. There is good support from parents who are very proud of the work their children do.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

15. Pupils have good attitudes to school and this has a positive impact on their learning. They enjoy coming to school and are enthusiastic about their work. They play well together and are polite and thoughtful.
16. Teachers have high expectations of pupil participation; most pupils work with enthusiasm, and teachers give praise and reward those with good efforts. Such effort can be rewarded by house marks, which are collected; the winning house is given a weekly trophy. Younger pupils are proud to wear 'well done' stickers. Behaviour is particularly good in the playground and at lunchtimes. Adults supervise pupils well and this leads to happy and enjoyable times.
17. Boys and girls and pupils from all ethnic backgrounds work and play together and enjoy harmonious relationships throughout the school. Behaviour in classrooms is good but a few pupils still find it very hard to be fully involved and their behaviour can be distracting to others. In and around school, pupils are expected to behave well; agreed rules are displayed in most classrooms. These rules are further underlined during assemblies. Pupils respect the rules and the property. There are no signs of graffiti or wilful damage. The school works hard to create a good environment for learning and pupils are aware of and support this wish. The school is calm and orderly; pupils move along the corridors and in the playground in a sensible way. There have been no exclusions.
18. A few pupils with identified behavioural problems attend a lunchtime social skills club; this shows a good wish by the school to be fully inclusive. These pupils are already making suggestions to conduct research at lunchtimes and receive encouraging support. Pupils' personal development is good, and the school's provision helps them to develop into mature young people as they progress through the school. Pupils at a very young age act as register monitors, whilst older pupils happily take on a number of duties to assist the daily work of the school. Year 6 pupils especially are very involved; for example, they help with preparing and tidying the hall after assembly. A very good scheme of responsibility has been introduced whereby some older pupils are distinguished by wearing a blue cap – these are team leaders for playground games at lunchtimes. They distribute, supervise and arbitrate in – if needed – the excellent range of games provided. The pupils enjoy friendly relationships with each other and older pupils happily play and support younger children.
19. Relationships throughout the school are very good. The head and deputy headteacher give a good lead, carried through to teachers and all staff. This is a positive contribution to the strong progress made by the school.
20. Because of the strong relationships which exist in the school, all pupils feel secure. Pupils are aware that should they not follow the accepted code of understanding, their actions could impact upon others. Should behaviour be less than good, staff in the school are always close at hand to give support and guidance.
21. Parents expressed praise for pupils' behaviour when on outings; pupils know that they are ambassadors of the school and respond well.
22. Pupils' attendance is still well below the national average. Attendance in the past year was just over 91 per cent with very high levels of unauthorised absence. The school has taken sound steps to impress upon pupils and parents the importance of good attendance and the effect upon progress. However, these measures have only had limited results so far. In keeping with the procedures the school had adopted, a 'first day' contact is made and a strong stance taken about time-keeping. At 8.50 a.m., the start of the day, any pupils arriving late are marked as having unauthorised absence.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

23. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. It is good for children in the Foundation Stage and for pupils in both key stages. In the lessons observed, the quality of teaching was good or better in 70 per cent of lessons, including 30 per cent very good and excellent teaching. The remaining lessons were satisfactory with a very small percentage of unsatisfactory teaching. The good teaching is a significant improvement from the last inspection and results from supportive and focused leadership. The pace of teaching has generally improved and work is more challenging to the majority of pupils.
24. The quality of teaching and learning is good in English and mathematics throughout the school. Teachers make very good use of the guidance from the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy to ensure lessons are planned well and matched effectively to pupils' needs. Teachers develop pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy well. For example, teachers read well-chosen texts to pupils in a lively manner to motivate their writing and reading. They introduce a strong game element into mathematics lessons and even the oldest pupils are engrossed in numerical quizzes with a kangaroo puppet. Speaking, listening, writing and reading skills are given a high priority in many subjects and teachers question pupils well about their understanding and the strategies they use. As a result the majority of pupils are eager learners and take a pride in their work. Despite their enthusiasm, the speed at which some pupils work in English and mathematics is not always as fast as it could be and teachers do not always use a sufficient range of strategies to encourage pupils.
25. The quality of teaching is also good in ICT and physical education. It is very good in music. In all other subjects teaching is at least satisfactory. Good quality teaching arises from increased knowledge of their subjects through focused and purposeful training. There is a specialist teacher for music who is very effectively used throughout the school.
26. Teachers' understanding of the key requirements of different subjects is good. For example, in science and design and technology, pupils are encouraged to discuss the quality of their work and share their ideas with others. In this way they learn to evaluate the quality of their work and make suggestions to improve it. In music, pupils are taught a good musical vocabulary and are encouraged to use it when composing and performing. As a result their learning is very efficient and little time is wasted in having to explain basic terminology. However, although oral skills are developed well in individual lessons, there is no overview to ensure speaking and listening skills are progressively developed overall.
27. Lessons are generally well planned. The purpose of the lessons is usually very clear to the pupils so that they are able to measure their own success in achieving it. In several lessons time is given at the end for pupils to evaluate their own progress and that of others. However, in some lessons such as geography and occasionally ICT, the objectives of the lesson are not precise enough. This leads to a slower pace of teaching and the setting of work which is not challenging enough to all pupils. This is often related to planning which is more appropriate to a set of lessons rather than the individual one. However, most planning is very effective and the excellent practice in displaying written plans on the classroom walls is very helpful to support staff so they are familiar with the course of the lessons in advance. This means their time is used efficiently and they bring good support, particularly to less able pupils or pupils with special educational needs. This is a good improvement since the last inspection.
28. The quality of teaching in the reception classes is good. It is particularly good for children's personal, social and emotional development as staff are sensitive to their individual needs and plan a stimulating range of activities. However, there is not always enough adult involvement in role-play activities to guide and encourage children.

29. Pupils with special educational progress learn well because good relationships between adults and pupils are very good. This builds pupils' confidence. Teaching assistants support their learning effectively and handle pupils with emotional and behavioural needs firmly but sensitively.
30. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well. All classrooms are calm and friendly. In classrooms where pupils have identified behavioural problems, teachers and support staff are clear about the approach they take and are calm and sensitive in handling difficulties. Teachers use praise appropriately to the benefit of all pupils but are firm in the instructions they give so that pupils learn in a harmonious situation.
31. In the majority of good lessons pupils work at a good pace in response to the high expectations of the teachers. However, in a minority of lessons, pupils do not complete as much work as they could. This is largely because the teachers do not chivvy the pupils enough or make it clear how much they expect pupils to achieve in the time given. Occasionally, the teacher and support staff spend a little too long working with small groups before ensuring that all pupils are on task. This means that pupils do not apply themselves to their work as effectively as they should.
32. The parents appreciate the fun that teachers put into the learning and this was reflected throughout the inspection. Teachers use resources such as video and computers to make learning more interesting in many subjects. They often use overhead projectors and white boards well to make teaching points clear and colourful. The quality of resources is always good. Occasionally, books and posters are not large enough or well placed for all pupils to see, resulting in slower learning as pupils struggle to follow instructions. Teachers are good humoured and use this to keep pupils involved and interested. Pupils are always interested in their work, even though a few do not work as hard as they could, as described above.
33. Teachers mark work well and generally use their prior knowledge of the pupils' achievement to set suitable work. In a few lessons in science, mathematics and ICT, the work is not challenging enough for the more able. This is largely because the pupils are working on a class-based task before going on to more demanding work. In the best lessons the teachers ask a few well-chosen questions to make pupils think more deeply or slightly adjust the task from the start. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Key Stage 2, the teacher asked the same question to all the pupils, but gave a different range of numbers to groups of pupils. In ICT pupils with more familiarity with computers were encouraged to explore different aspects of the program with their classmates.
34. Some of the classes are large which places a heavy planning and marking responsibility on the teachers. However, the school has been able to target extra support staff into literacy and numeracy lessons and, as a result, teachers are effective.
35. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good and continues to improve.

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

36. The school provides a good range of stimulating learning experiences that meet the needs of the pupils, the requirements of the National Curriculum and the Cambridgeshire Agreed Syllabus for teaching religious education. It has successfully dealt with the weaknesses in provision for ICT, art and music, and standards in these subjects are rising. There are good planning systems guided by clear and relevant schemes of work in all subjects and these all have a suitable amount of time on the timetable. This ensures that pupils build systematically on their skills, knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. Planning in the Foundation Stage provides a good range of interesting experiences to promote children's development in all areas except physical development. In this aspect there are still too few resources to extend children's skills through outdoor play activities.

37. There is a good emphasis on numeracy and literacy. Effective planning to national guidelines is having a strong impact that shows in the significantly improved standards. There are valuable opportunities for pupils to use their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects. For example, pupils use computers to create patterns in their art work; they also write reports and use graphs and grids to record their science investigations. More could be done to improve speaking and listening skills. There is too little guidance to help teachers plan for this aspect in their lessons. In mathematics pupils' investigative skills are relatively weak because there are not enough opportunities for them to use their learning to solve problems. However, this is a strength in the science curriculum where a good emphasis on experiment and investigation strengthens pupils' skills.
38. All pupils have full and equal access to the curriculum. Boys and girls participate on an equal footing in most of the extra-curricular activities on offer. Some aspects of the curriculum are used to develop pupils' insights into other cultures, notably in religious education and geography, for instance in relation to the study of Egypt and the use of resources like video programmes. However, these opportunities are not systematically planned across the curriculum and insufficient use is made of pupils' cultural and linguistic backgrounds as a resource to draw on. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The weaknesses in the use of teaching assistants identified in the last report have been successfully addressed. Individual education plans set clear and achievable targets that are reviewed regularly and used to adapt pupils' tasks as necessary. Classroom assistants support pupils well as they work, so that they understand what they are doing, sometimes at the same level as their classmates.
39. The school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities, including instrumental music tuition. There are clubs to cover a range of interests including football, golf and drama. Residential visits to places like Stibbington in Year 3, and Wales in Years 5 and 6, make a good contribution to subjects like geography through the fieldwork opportunities they provide. They also encourage pupils' growing independence.
40. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. The new scheme of work has placed a greater emphasis on this area in teachers' planning. It has been introduced with enthusiasm by staff and pupils. There are now regular sessions where pupils explore issues like dangers and relationships. 'Problem Books' enable pupils to record their own concerns, which are then used as a basis for discussion, so raising awareness generally. There are clear programmes for sex education and to teach pupils about the dangers of drugs misuse. Health education is taught satisfactorily through the science curriculum. There are good opportunities for pupils to appreciate the importance of health and safety issues. For example, they learn how to handle electricity safely in science lessons and to warm up their bodies before exercising.
41. There are good links with the community and other schools in the area. The school oversees a thriving playgroup, planning a curriculum that is giving a significant boost to children's attainment on entry to the reception classes. There are good arrangements for children to visit school before they start so that they soon settle into their new classes. Regular planning and other meetings with the secondary school, and a range of visits by staff and pupils, ensure a smooth transition for pupils. Visitors, like the paramedic and school crossing patrol, visit the school and give pupils a better insight into people's lives and work. Pupils gained a deeper understanding of farming when they visited a farm. They used their knowledge to prepare a website and demonstrated their work at the East of England Show, winning an award for their efforts. There are strong links with the local church. Members visit school to talk to pupils and lead assemblies.
42. These all make a positive contribution to the school's good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Provisions for social and moral development are

very good, and help pupils become more mature and responsible. They make a strong contribution to the way pupils learn and the very good relationships found in the school. Throughout the school, staff act as good role models and discuss incidents thoroughly so that pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong. Pupils understand and abide by the school rules because they have been involved in deciding them. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to work in groups. For instance, they work on group writing tasks, science investigations and computer projects. Teachers expect them to co-operate, and they do. Right from the start children learn to take on responsibilities, like the new entrants taking registers to the school office. Older pupils help younger ones in the playground. They elect their own captains and vice-captains to lead their house teams. These all successfully prepare pupils for future citizenship.

43. Provision for spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory, but the weaknesses found in the last inspection still remain. Acts of collective worship meet statutory requirements and provide valuable opportunities for pupils to reflect on people's lives, their own and others achievements, and stories. However, the school has no structured plans to guide teachers to where they might promote spiritual awareness in their lessons. This means that opportunities for pupils to reflect, for instance on works of art and music or the wonders of nature, are often missed. There is a similar weakness in the provision for cultural development. Pupils learn about a range of world faiths and people's lives in countries like Egypt. Visits to places like West Stowe Anglo-Saxon settlement give them a good insight into life in the past. However, there is still too little emphasis on teaching and preparing pupils for life in a multicultural world.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

44. The school offers a very safe, welcoming environment. There is a high number of adults in the school and all pupils are valued and supported. Parents feel very positive about the school and find it easy to approach it with any concerns.
45. Good procedures are in place for ensuring pupils' welfare. Staff have a genuine concern for all pupils whatever their needs; all classes have support staff who work very well with individuals or groups, whatever their need, to promote learning. The headteacher is the designated person for child protection; she maintains appropriate contacts and follows the requirements of the Local Area Child Protection Committee. Support staff have appropriate training and consult closely with teachers upon these matters.
46. Detailed first aid records are kept and treatments are appropriate. Suitable fire-fighting and electrical apparatus has been tested.
47. Good procedures are in place for monitoring and improving attendance. These have resulted in some improvements to attendance in some years. However, there are still small groups of pupils who are regularly absent. This causes disruption to both themselves and other pupils.
48. The school procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. Adults and teachers in the school effectively promote good behaviour; the strong relationships which do exist in the school create a sound environment and pupils respond well. Incidents of unacceptable behaviour are duly recorded and appropriate sanctions are imposed. Clear procedures are used to identify needs and target support for pupils who are identified as underachieving. The school shows great care in catering for the needs of pupils who are at risk of exclusion by providing a supervised social skills club held at lunchtime. The school's analysis of assessment data is well used to identify and support boys who are underachieving but not sufficient account is taken of the needs of the highest attaining pupils.

49. Pastoral care is very good in the school. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress are very good. Assessments are frequent and provide a wide range of information about pupils. All teachers carry out the current procedures effectively. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The school uses the results of statutory tests, along with a range of further tests, to track pupils' progress and predict their performance. Teachers record pupils' achievements against objectives for learning in different subjects. They use this information to make secure judgements of pupils' levels of attainment in mathematics and English and address weaknesses in learning and the curriculum. The information helps form groups within classes and set individual targets. Teachers evaluate all their termly subject plans to adapt the future curriculum if necessary. However, the information recorded about pupils' attainment in subjects other than English and mathematics, does not link directly with the National Curriculum levels of attainment. Therefore, it does not always provide sufficiently detailed information about what pupils can and cannot do to allow teachers to continuously build upon their skills.
50. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are very good. Learning support assistants and teachers keep a record of pupils' development and know the pupils very well. The school has a high regard for the development of its pupils and gives strong support, in a very caring environment, in which all adults and other pupils contribute. The theme of some lessons offering support as part of the comprehensive personal and social programme 'Tell Someone' does mean that shared worries can be very effectively dealt with and supported.
51. The school is a haven of peaceful support and encouragement to its pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

52. Parents fully support the work of the school. The school has a positive ethos and encourages parents to become involved. Parents of reception class children enjoy a parents' afternoon, to learn more about helping their child with reading and school activities.
53. Each term the school holds a parents' evening when parents can see work and be aware of the progress of their children. Parents receive a class plan of the term's work which is also displayed on the classroom wall, as well as other specific letters about events and school life.
54. A few parents were concerned about the short time between some events and of specific letters received by them. This may be justified. Main events for the term and year are well documented in the school prospectus and are advertised at the school. Parents find staff very approachable and the headteacher very enthusiastic and supportive.
55. Generally the quality of information for parents is good. Pupils' reports of progress give a detailed description of the work and progress undertaken and are well received by parents. Homework is set regularly throughout the school – in early years mainly reading and spelling and in Year Six appropriate work, including independent research – so as to prepare pupils well for secondary education. There are termly topics of work supplied by the school. Although the prospectus meets statutory requirements, there is very little information about the Foundation Stage curriculum.
56. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are well informed. The school informs parents of any concerns the school has regarding pupils' progress or behaviour. They are invited to contribute to reviews of individual education plans and given details of their child's progress.
57. Whilst the school values parents' contributions, a very small number of parents are involved with the work of the Friends Association who have a regular programme of social and fund-

raising events to give the school increased resources. No parents attended the last Annual Meeting of the governing body and few work regularly at the school helping in classes. However, the inspectors' meeting for parents was well attended and very positive. Generally parents feel the school supports and develops their children well and appear content. Parents feel there have been dramatic improvements since the last inspection; this has been borne out by the inspection team.

58. The school informs parents of any concerns the school has regarding pupils' progress or behaviour. They are invited to contribute to reviews of individual education plans and kept well informed of pupils' progress.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

59. The headteacher provides very good leadership and she receives good support from all staff and the governing body. It is because of this that standards have risen significantly over the last few years since the school was first inspected, and aspects of education are very good. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have created an effective team which respects each other's professional strengths and offers good support to each other.
60. The school's aims are apparent in the work of all the staff and the caring ethos. Everyone is committed to raising standards. For example, support staff have undertaken a significant range of training to enable them to be more effective. They feel valued and as a result make a good contribution to the drive to improve standards. The school successfully achieved Investors in People and Quality Mark status as a result of the well-organised and effective processes of professional development. The school has built upon this success to ensure teachers, including the headteacher, have professional targets to achieve and there are good systems in place to support them.
61. The school acknowledges the importance of equal opportunity for all pupils in its aims and this is replicated in the majority of subject policies. However, there is no guidance to help teachers implement the principles highlighted in these policies or to provide planned opportunities for exploring cultural diversity, and there are no clear strategies for monitoring how far equality targets are being achieved. There is a strong drive towards allowing pupils of all abilities full access to the curriculum and the school is successful in this. The school does not have shared and agreed procedures for dealing with racist and sexist incidents. There are very few learning resources reflecting diverse cultures and positive images of black people and women.
62. The school improvement plans give a very clear direction to the school and are based on a thorough evaluation of most aspects of the school's provision. For example, there is a detailed analysis of national test results identifying such issues as gender differences in achievement and the inappropriateness of some aspects of the planning for mathematics in Key Stage 1. Both these issues have directly been addressed and standards have risen as a result. New initiatives are carefully planned for and there is a very useful annual calendar of key events and training courses.
63. The quality of teaching and learning is effectively observed and evaluated to ensure continuous improvement. The headteacher leads a rigorous programme of regular classroom observations and gives detailed feedback to teachers. This has helped to improve the pace of teaching since the last inspection and contributed to the effectiveness of the National Strategies of Literacy and Numeracy. The overall quality of teaching is reported to the governing body and this helps the governors to plan for future training and development. The subject co-ordinators for English and mathematics work with the headteacher and deputy to evaluate the quality of pupils' work and the standards achieved. This is quite rigorous and has led to several improvements such as better resourcing for mathematics and the Foundation Stage. This process is being developed into other

subjects but is at an early stage of development and has not yet had a significant impact. Although the overall quality of teaching is carefully evaluated, the system for monitoring teachers' work does not always ensure that strengths as well as weaknesses are fed back to the appropriate subject leaders. At the present time, lessons are largely observed by the headteacher, which limits the professional development of other senior staff. The school is now well placed to develop the process to more fully involve more staff. Subject coordinators are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about their subjects.

64. The governing body continues to build on its strengths from the last inspection. It is well organised and efficient in its meetings and committee structure. Information is shared well and the governors have undertaken a good range of training to help them understand and analyse many aspects of the school's achievement. The governors are better informed than they were at the time of the last inspection and make good use of available data. They are particularly active in improving the quality of resources and accommodation and ensure that funds are matched well to the greatest need. Since the last inspection the school has had significant building work done to produce separate classrooms rather than shared teaching areas. The governors vigorously supported this work and ensured appropriate funds were available. This has had a big impact on behaviour and the school's ability to teach literacy and numeracy successfully.
65. There are good links between the chair of governors and the headteacher. Both challenge each other to ensure the best results. Governors are assigned specific responsibilities for different subjects. This is at an early stage of development and systems have not yet been established to allow governors to question the quality of provision rigorously and help to improve standards.
66. The management of pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers and teaching assistants support the good progress they make. Funding obtained from specific grants is effectively used to employ teaching assistants to provide extra support.
67. Financial administration and control is good. The school actively seeks a wide range of quotations for any significant work undertaken to make sure it gets the best value. The school has a good level of control over its own finances through operating its own bank account and benefiting from interest on funds allocated to the school. Despite problems beyond the school's control, they make good use of ICT to monitor finances, and to track attendance and pupils' progress. Grants for raising standards and for special educational needs are used effectively. The income per pupil is about average. The school's carry forward will be at the recommended level of five per cent in this financial year falling from a temporary eight per cent year due to anticipated expenditures. The good standards and quality of teaching and learning, very good leadership and good management means the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to improve standards still further the school should:

- (1) Explore all opportunities to make parents and pupils aware of the importance of good attendance and arriving on time. (Paragraphs: 13,23,48)
- (2) Raise standards of attainment in speaking and listening by providing guidance for teachers to support their planning and to ensure teachers plan opportunities for pupils to develop these skills through all subjects. (Paragraphs: 6,38,85,87)
- (3) Increase the opportunities for pupils to develop their ability in mathematics through challenging investigations. (Paragraphs: 7,92,94)
- (4) Develop strategies to further strengthen the co-ordinators role by ensuring that strengths and weaknesses in teaching of all subjects are evaluated and analysed sufficiently. (Paragraphs: 64,98,115,120)

The following minor issues should also be considered for inclusion in the governors action planning:

- Planning for spiritual and cultural development. (Paragraph: 44)
- The pace of work of some pupils. (Paragraphs: 32,97,102)
- The use of assessment to sharpen the provision for the more able pupils. (Paragraphs: 92,94,131)
- Improve the resources for outdoor play in the foundation stage. (Paragraphs: 37,81)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

60

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

30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	15	24	17	1	0	0
Percentage	5	25	40	28	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	299
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	59
Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	85
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.3
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
	2000	16	20	36

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	13
	Girls	17	17	16
	Total	30	30	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (81)	83 (84)	81 (91)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	13
	Girls	16	16	16
	Total	29	29	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (81)	81 (81)	81 (88)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	15	20	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	13	14
	Girls	17	16	19
	Total	29	29	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (77)	83 (74)	94 (85)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	13	13
	Girls	16	16	18
	Total	28	29	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (74)	83 (74)	91 (85)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	253
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.9
Average class size	33.2

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	222

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
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	£
Total income	524074
Total expenditure	504796
Expenditure per pupil	1700
Balance brought forward from previous year	22470
Balance carried forward to next year	41757

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3.6
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
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	299
Number of questionnaires returned	105

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	42	51	6	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	41	6	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	26	61	7	4	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	57	13	4	1
The teaching is good.	56	43	1	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	49	41	9	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	30	1	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	30	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	50	40	9	2	0
The school is well led and managed.	60	35	0	4	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	50	2	1	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	49	12	9	6

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

68. The reception classes give children a good foundation for their education. The teaching has improved and is now good overall, with the teaching of personal, social and emotional development being a strength. In the week of the inspection the children were just beginning to attend school for the whole day. Already, many are settled and showing a keen interest in the interesting new activities provided, because teachers take time to carefully teach them school routines and show them how to behave.
69. The teaching of other aspects is most effective in direct teaching sessions when activities have a clear focus. This is seen particularly in the areas of mathematical and communication, language and literacy development. In these sessions teachers are clear about what children are to learn, ensuring that the activities provided and their own presentations give children a secure understanding. However, children sometimes lose interest and concentration in lengthy sessions where they choose their own activities. These activities sometimes lack a clear focus, and there is too little adult intervention to guide and encourage children.

Personal, social and emotional development

70. Children make good progress in their personal and social development because teachers place a strong emphasis on this aspect and their teaching is effective. By the time they leave the reception classes most children achieve the early learning goals in this aspect. They are eager to learn because activities are interesting and they have access to an improved range of good quality toys and equipment. There are useful opportunities for children to learn to be independent and take responsibility. They happily and sensibly take the registers to the school office and most will tidy away when asked at the end of sessions. Many children struggle to dress and undress for physical activities, relying heavily on the adults.
71. Teachers are sensitive to children's limited concentration spans when teaching the whole class, and adapt their lessons when necessary so that children do not become restless. Children concentrated very well in a first music session where, although they were excited and eager to play the instruments, they responded quickly to their teacher's instructions. However, they sometimes do not become as absorbed when choosing their own activities as they might if the adults joined in to extend their play and help them concentrate.
72. Relationships are very good because all the adults working in the reception classes are caring, and establish good routines and expectations of behaviour that give children security and confidence. They work effectively as a team and provide good role models for children. Teachers take time to explain to children the impact of their actions on others. For instance, in a dispute over toys, the teacher takes the time to sit with an agitated child encouraging him to understand how the other feels. This calms him down and he is able to join in the play again. Most children play happily and co-operatively with others.

Communication, language and literacy

73. Good teaching, with regular checks of how children are progressing, ensures that most children make good progress and attain the goals in this area of their learning overall. Adults encourage children to talk and to listen when others are speaking. When children were discussing a picture of a birthday party, they began to give fuller explanations about what they saw because the teacher asked questions that encouraged them to think harder.

Children build a growing vocabulary as adults introduce and constantly repeat new words, such as the names of mathematical shapes and musical instruments. They use language appropriately to negotiate with others. For instance, a group of children discussed and decided which two children should play in the water tray.

74. Children show a keen interest in reading, sometimes choosing to 'read' a book with a friend in the book corner. They turn the pages carefully and many will tell the story from the picture clues. Very few show interest in the text as yet. Teachers use parts of the National Literacy Strategy well to promote this. They choose interesting stories with a simple text so that children can follow as they read. Children in one class particularly enjoyed the humour in 'A Very Hot Day' that stimulated some to read 'pants on the cat'. The structured approach to reading is helping children to learn letter sounds and build a bank of key words they can read on sight. Children are encouraged to read at home and to learn new words. These ensure that children make good progress in learning to read.
75. By the time they start in Year 1 the majority of children do not attain the goals in writing. Most will write their name and some letters correctly. There is a good emphasis on learning letter sounds and this helps children to identify initial letters as clues to reading and spelling simple words. Only the more able children learn to write independently. One child wrote about her visit to the park spelling simple words correctly and beginning to use full stops. More could be done to promote this aspect by encouraging children to act as writers beyond the direct teaching activities, for instance in their play.

Mathematical development

76. The quality of teaching is good overall and most attain the goals in this area of learning. There is a good emphasis on developing mathematical language so that children learn to use terms like bigger, smaller, heavier and lighter, and order the people in their families from taller to shorter. They count and recognise the numerals to ten. Constant repetition is a feature of good teaching that strengthens children's learning in mathematics. For instance, children gained a good understanding of shapes because their teacher reminded them constantly in her introduction and subsequent group work. Then the children made and decorated differently shaped cakes, emphasising their corners with chocolate buttons. They enjoyed this and remembered it well, so that most children could name shapes like square, circle, and triangle and knew the number of corners each one had.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

77. Teachers provide a good range of activities to extend children's very basic knowledge and understanding of the world when they enter the school. Teaching is satisfactory overall and by the end of the reception year most are approaching the goals in this aspect. Children know about the jobs people do because visitors, like the paramedic and school crossing patrol, give them good first-hand experiences. Children learned how to select and join materials to make junk models, like a rocket, car and tractor, when working with a classroom assistant who talked to them skilfully. This helped them to think about the shape and features of their vehicle and the most suitable box to use.
78. Children enjoy their new experiences and are keen to share these with visitors. Some children played with the Noah's Ark toy and could identify a number of the animals. Others played with construction kits and eagerly showed their creations, for example a 'dinosaur'. A few already control the mouse to click on objects in a computer game. However, there is sometimes too little planned intervention by the adults as children move around the different activities. This means that opportunities to extend their learning, and encourage them to think harder, are missed, which slows the progress they make in this aspect.

Physical development

79. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and most children attain the early learning goals in physical development generally. Teaching is good in sessions in the school hall. Children showed great excitement in a game of traffic lights. They quickly learned the rules because their teacher gave clear explanations and controlled them effectively. They moved around the hall confidently, using the space well. They quickly stopped, started and changed their movements to her instructions because she joined in and demonstrated as they worked. They soon learned to move in different ways, like 'a mouse' and 'an elephant', for example.
80. The school has a suitable outdoor play area, which has recently been improved, but only a limited amount of equipment for outdoor play activities. Planning in this aspect, already identified as an area for development, is unsatisfactory and is in urgent need of improvement. The progress children make is slowed because there are insufficient opportunities for children to learn to ride, climb, balance and extend their physical skills and imagination in outdoor play.

Creative development

81. Children attain the early learning goals in this aspect by the time they are ready to start in Year 1 and teaching is satisfactory. It is more effective in the development of the art and music aspects than in role-play. On entry their skills are sometimes weak. Some children struggle to draw recognisable figures. They soon improve because adults talk to them as they work so that their figures become more detailed with recognisable facial and other features. Adults show them new techniques and encourage them to use different media. Children were proud of their efforts when they created printed patterns using paint and objects like cotton reels.
82. Very good teaching in a music session enabled children to make rapid progress in developing their music skills. Children soon learned the names of several percussion instruments because the teacher discussed them and gave clear instructions about how each is played. Her effective control meant that they listened intently, stopping and starting on her signals in spite of their obvious excitement. They learned the words of a new song and sang tunefully. Then they played their instruments to accompany the singing, successfully maintaining the beat.
83. Each class has an area set aside for role-play but these activities are not always promoted or planned carefully enough to develop children's imagination or creativity. Children did not stay long in the home corner and their play was very limited. There was too little adult involvement to stimulate new ideas and demonstrate role-play so that they could learn to improvise and act out their own stories.

ENGLISH

84. Standards in reading and writing are above expectations and continue to rise so that the school has exceeded its targets over the last two years. By the time pupils leave the school, they attain standards in reading and writing above those expected for eleven year olds and above those found in similar schools. This is an improvement since the last inspection when attainment was average. All pupils achieve well, particularly given the below average attainment on entry to school. This is because of good teaching and opportunities for pupils to use reading and writing skills effectively in literacy lessons and in other subjects of the curriculum. However, pupils attain about average standards in speaking and listening, with fewer pupils attaining higher levels than in reading and writing. Planning for literacy concentrates on these areas with the resulting high standards, whereas pupils have few planned opportunities to extend their speaking skills, so standards remain average. The school recognises this and is preparing a policy for the teaching of speaking and listening.

85. There is now no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. The school has addressed under-achievement by the boys successfully, with a resulting rise in standards among boys. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. They receive effective support from teachers and learning support assistants in most lessons. Well-planned, interesting activities and effective questioning linked to very good relationships promote pupils' confidence and enthusiasm.
86. Pupils' progress in speaking and listening is sound overall, and sometimes good. Teachers encourage pupils to listen carefully, particularly when sharing texts or listening to explanations. This they do well although they do not always listen as attentively to each other's answers. Teachers use and reinforce grammatical words and encourage pupils to use them. For example, pupils in Year 5 explain similes, alliteration, rhythm and rhyme in poetry and provide a number of examples of onomatopoeic words. Another time, these pupils speak clearly and confidently when reading their poetry in assembly. Acting the part of the cat owners in 'Six dinner Sid' in Year 2 develops expressive speech. Although all teachers ask a range of questions to encourage pupils to develop confidence and fluency when speaking, they do not always provide opportunities for pupils to extend their answers. When they do, such as in a Year 6 discussion about an autobiography, pupils confidently offer their ideas and opinions. Some opportunities for discussion in other subjects of the curriculum, such as discussing psalms in religious education lessons, ensure pupils express their feelings and opinions. However, a number of pupils are reticent when questioned and offer little to class discussions.
87. Pupils develop reading skills well and make good progress throughout the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection. An improved range of good quality books encourages pupils to want to read. Teachers very effectively link reading and writing activities and provide plenty of opportunities for pupils to share books with adults or to read alone. Pupils learn a range of strategies to help them read and understand new words. By Year 2 many pupils read fluently and accurately, attaining standards typical for seven year olds. They explain the text and express their opinions. Throughout the school, pupils develop good comprehension skills through the effective use of well-chosen texts. For example, good questioning and discussion enable Year 6 pupils to distinguish between fact and opinion in autobiographical writing. Pupils justify their answer by referring to the text, for example, "Where it says, 'horrible, sticky sweets' is an opinion because of the word 'horrible'." A carefully planned programme and opportunities to find information, extend pupils' research skills and contributes to high standards. Year 6 pupils use the library confidently, explain the cataloguing system and efficiently find information using the index and skimming for relevant points. Pupils use research skills in other subjects. In history, some pupils found out about the history of medicine. They used books from the school and public libraries and searched the Internet to access information for homework projects.
88. Pupils do well and achieve high standards in writing. This is because teachers plan a wide range of interesting writing tasks, such as stories, poems, and letters, to reinforce and extend pupils' writing skills rather than emphasising the use of grammar exercises. This gives pupils confidence to write, experiment with language and extend their vocabulary. For example, a group of brighter pupils in Year 2 were writing sentences to describe pictures of Sid the cat going to the vet. Most of this group used capital letters and full stops correctly and attempted words such as 'basket'. In a Year 3 lesson, all pupils continued the story of a magic puddle in the playground. They used action and description in their story and a small number started to use speech marks and exclamation marks. Years 5 and 6 pupils wrote poems using metaphor to describe love and anger. The teacher encouraged them to edit their writing to improve its impact. They chose words imaginatively and for effect, for example, 'anger is a knife piercing through my heart', '...a predator seeking its prey' and '...red hot lava flooding inside you'. Pupils learn to punctuate their work correctly and organise it into paragraphs. Spelling becomes more accurate although lack of confidence

with spelling hinders the pace of writing in some lessons, particularly in Year 3. Pupils do not always have a full range of strategies to support their spelling. Work is well presented and pupils develop a consistently joined and neat handwriting. This contributes to pupils' good attitudes to writing and pride in their work. The use of ICT to write and print pupils' work encourages pupils to present work neatly and extends their confidence. For example, pupils with special educational needs in Year 3 copied the adult's writing of their own composition onto the computer. They can see their success and this aids their progress.

89. The quality of teaching is good overall, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers use the National Literacy Strategy effectively and adapt it confidently to meet the needs of the lessons. They balance the time spent on oral work and pupils' tasks well so there is sufficient time for pupils to use their reading and writing skills effectively. Interesting introductions and lively reading of well-chosen texts capture pupils' attention and get lessons off to a brisk start. Effective questioning encourages pupils to think carefully about their ideas, promotes their learning and assesses their understanding. Teachers explain tasks well; they match them appropriately to pupils' differing abilities and have high expectations of work. This contributes to the high standards, particularly in reading and writing. All adults have very good relationships with the pupils. They use praise well to build pupils' confidence. Consequently, pupils behave well, are eager to answer and have good attitudes to learning. Teachers use the learning support assistants very effectively to record pupils' achievements, help groups and support pupils with special educational needs. They enable pupils to access the general work of the class with the result that they achieve well. Sound preparation, good relationships and effective liaison between teachers and learning support assistants coupled with well-targeted training ensure that learning in the many large classes is good. However, when pupils are engaged in activities in some lessons, the pace of work slows because teachers forget to remind pupils of their expectations or set time limits for completion of work. High expectations of work and behaviour, such as in the Years 5 and 6 classes, ensure there is a quiet working atmosphere and good concentration.
90. The subject is well led and this contributes to the good standards. The systems for assessing and recording pupils' attainment are very good. They indicate what pupils can and cannot do and form the basis for setting targets and forming groups. Targets enable teachers to plan the next steps in learning and pupils to be aware of their achievements. Comments in teachers' marking help to build pupils' confidence but do not always provide sufficient guidance for improvement. Although teachers plan efficiently for reading and writing, they do not use what they know about pupils' achievements in speaking and listening to build further on these skills.

MATHEMATICS

91. Standards in mathematics are above average by the time pupils leave school and pupils of all ability generally achieve well. The pupils' attainment by Year 2 is now average and pupils also make good progress. The weaknesses in standards for these younger pupils have been successfully addressed through changes to planning and resources that were identified through good monitoring. The standards are the results of good teaching and effective planning, making good use of the National Strategy for Numeracy. There was a decline in pupils achieving the higher levels of attainment in 2001 and although this is likely to improve this year it is evident that pupils, particularly the more able, are not given enough opportunities to extend their ability to select and use mathematical skills and understanding independently.
92. A particular strength of pupils' attainment in most classes is their increasing ability to handle and sort numbers mentally and to perform calculations quickly. The brisk pace of short sessions of challenging mental and oral work at the start of all lessons helps pupils develop these skills. Teachers make good use of attractive resources such as large number lines and number squares. By Year 2, even at this early stage of the year, pupils are quick to

answer addition and take away sums to 20. By Year 6 pupils add, divide, subtract and multiply one and two-digit numbers quickly. In both key stages the pupils use a good mathematical vocabulary with understanding. For example, Year 2 pupils understand minus, subtract and take away as well as less than and more than. By Year 6 pupils are confident to define and use terms such as 'product', 'increase and decrease by'. There is a dip in Year 4 where pupils are less competent in multiplying, particularly when doubling and halving. However, they made very good progress during the lesson observed because the teacher recognised the weakness and structured activities to challenge pupils to improve. Pupils make good progress in sequencing and ordering numbers and identifying patterns. In Year 1, for example, pupils identify missing numbers on a number line from 1 to 10 accurately and by Year 2 they are able to identify missing numbers in a sequence taken from a 100 square.

93. An area for further improvement in the pupils' learning is in their ability to select the mathematical skills and techniques through solving problems and following through extended investigations. Pupils generally make satisfactory progress in learning to identify the key elements in simple word problems involving number and money calculations but this is not challenging enough for more able pupils. Pupils do not often undertake investigations to find simple algebraic formula from patterns and shapes for example. Similarly, older and more able pupils do not undertake extended investigations incorporating different aspects of mathematics such as numeracy, measure and data handling. Teachers often guide pupils to develop different strategies for their work but do not encourage them to explore and develop their own skills sufficiently.
94. Pupils make good progress in understanding the value that a different position gives a number. By Year 6 pupils accurately give the value digits in large numbers and know how to multiply and divide by tens and hundreds including decimal places. Teachers encourage pupils to explain to each other the strategies they use to complete calculations and this helps to reinforce their learning. There is a strong and appropriate emphasis on number work through the school. Pupils achieve well in understanding shape and measures. Older pupils have a good understanding of angles using terms such as 'reflex' and 'acute' accurately in their work. They use a suitable range of strategies to calculate areas and perimeters. They make sound progress in their understanding of fractions.
95. Progress in data handling is sound. Pupils use line graphs, bar charts and pie charts and draw them accurately. They collect data, for example, on pets and present their information accurately. However, they do not often ask sufficiently deep questions to improve their understanding.
96. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Pupils are often enthusiastic and eager to answer because of the teacher's enthusiasm and well-planned questions. There is often very good use of support staff to ensure all pupils have full access to the mathematics lesson. Therefore pupils with special educational needs work on division for example, which is neglected in some schools because it is more difficult than other number operations. There is a good use of games and humour in many lessons to motivate the pupils. Resources are good, although they are not always clearly displayed to the pupils. For example, a poster showing key skills in solving number problems was hard to see by many pupils and they therefore chose to ignore it and did not make the progress they could have. In the best lessons teachers set very clear targets for pupils to achieve in the time given and pupils work hard towards them. Occasionally the teacher and support staff are too involved in tasks with groups or individuals to ensure all pupils are working at the best rate for some of the lesson. Teachers have high expectations for both behaviour and presentation and this makes a good contribution to standards and to the positive attitudes pupils have to their work and the pride they take. Pupils use mathematical skills appropriately in scientific investigations but this is not developed significantly in other subjects such as design and technology. The school is at an early stage in using ICT other than for sums and games.

97. The subject is well led by the co-ordinator. She has analysed past test results and this has led to improvements to the scheme of work and to resources. For example, they realised that some younger pupils spent too long on presenting their work and not enough time doing the mathematics. As a result new resources were purchased and standards rose. Although the co-ordinator receives some feedback on the quality of teaching from the headteacher's monitoring, she has not yet been sufficiently involved herself to strengthen her own knowledge of the overall quality and to share strengths.

SCIENCE

98. Standards in science for the pupils currently in school are average, following a period of higher attainment. The results of national tests show that, although the majority of pupils reach expected levels, the percentage of pupils reaching the higher levels in Year 6 has declined over the past two years. This partly reflects the needs and abilities of different groups of pupils in each year group. However, more could be done to challenge the more able older pupils, with tasks focused at providing more scientific challenge. The school has good systems for checking pupils' attainments in each year group. Tasks are sometimes adapted in Year 6, but in most other year groups brighter pupils generally have work that is set at a similar level of scientific understanding to others, but with a slightly different recording task. The co-ordinator analyses pupils' test performance thoroughly and identifies areas that need strengthening. This information is used as a basis in planning for Year 6 pupils, such as in revision activities. However, more could be done to identify weaknesses in planning and teaching throughout the school that cause these to develop, and to take action to address them.
99. The latest information from assessments in 2001 shows that standards have improved considerably in Key Stage 1 and more are now reaching the higher levels in science. The co-ordinator now works in this key stage and the teaching has improved overall. Pupils make good progress in lessons as a result of good, and sometimes very good, science teaching. Teachers plan and prepare carefully so that their introductions are lively, clear and thorough. In lessons where pupils were learning to connect simple electrical circuits in Years 1 and 2, teachers successfully used questions to check that everyone understood and reinforced this in class demonstrations. Constant repetition ensured that children here, and indeed in all the classes, developed a good scientific vocabulary. There were plenty of good quality resources so that everyone could experiment. By the end of these lessons pupils had a good understanding of electricity, and could confidently explain their circuits.
100. Pupils throughout the school show a keen interest in their science work, particularly the practical activities, because teachers make it interesting. They co-operate well when asked to work in small groups and willingly help each other. "Shall I help her?" asks a pupil when another struggles to connect wires to a battery. There is a strong emphasis on pupils' involvement in investigative work and pupils have good skills in this aspect of science. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 confidently planned investigations into the effects of exercise on muscle performance. Teachers ensured that they thought hard and evaluated their plans by skilfully questioning and encouraging other pupils to offer suggestions. They reinforced pupils' knowledge of muscles by asking "Which muscles will you be using?" and following with further questions to check their knowledge. More could be done to give brighter pupils opportunities to take responsibility by choosing their own methods, equipment and ways of recording their work. Pupils throughout the school develop a good report writing style, taking care to present their work clearly and neatly.
101. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Pupils' behaviour is generally good because teachers manage them well. There is a good emphasis on oral work. Teachers provide clear explanations and useful discussions so that pupils understand their science work. Good attention is given to safety aspects so that even young pupils appreciate possible dangers, for instance in working with electricity. Teachers do not always

ensure that pupils work hard enough in independent group work when they are asked to record their work. Sometimes pupils are slow to settle, and waste time in inappropriate chatter. In one lesson, pupils copied information into their books from a text they were unable to read because it was too small. This did not reinforce their learning sufficiently, so that by the end of the lesson many were unable to remember what they had been taught. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from close support by classroom assistants who ensure they concentrate. As a result, they work hard and their attainments are often similar to those of their classmates. The writing of reports contributes to the pupils' progress in literacy and it makes some, though not a strong, contribution to mathematics through data handling and some measuring.

ART AND DESIGN

102. Pupils' attainment is similar to that normally expected of pupils at seven and eleven with standards and provision improving since the last inspection. Soon after the last inspection, there was no co-ordinator for the subject for a period of 18 months. However the new co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and has the potential for bringing about further improvements.
103. In Key Stage 1, pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop understanding for the care and use of equipment and media and begin to understand primary and secondary colours. They use observation of the teacher's demonstration carefully and learn about setting a workstation. They show understanding of the need for safety and apply the advice well in their work. Higher attaining pupils apply instructions successfully and use the correct techniques of dipping and loading the brush with the right amount of paint. Pupils in Year 2 demonstrate skills in observational drawing linked to their work in geography as they study the environment and record colours as the seasons change.
104. In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to build on skills acquired earlier. In Year 6, they show awareness of shape and texture using Albert Durer's drawing of praying hands to draw their own hand. They show observational skills and use some of the techniques of the artist like cross-hatchings to create texture. They pay close attention to outline, shading and proportion. Much of what the pupils achieve in this work is due to a large extent to the meticulous care the teacher takes in explaining how to obtain the right effects and ensuring that pupils try their ideas in their sketchbooks before considering using other material.
105. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well as they learn a range of techniques and styles, often using the work of other artists to inspire them and employ appropriate techniques to communicate their ideas. The majority of pupils use their sketchbooks well to gather ideas and test particular techniques.
106. Pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour in art are positive in both key stages and contribute to the good progress they make in lessons and over time. They listen attentively, participate actively in discussions and evaluate their work at the end of lessons. They share resources sensibly and show responsibility when asked to clear away and store resources.
107. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers' introductions effectively focus pupils' attention on key ideas. They build on pupils' previous knowledge and use the end of lessons effectively to enable pupils to evaluate their own and other pupils' work. The classroom assistants support pupils with special educational needs well. The majority of teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject, which is often reflected in well-timed and helpful interventions and opportunities for pupils to evaluate their work. Teachers manage pupils effectively. They organise resources well and prepare them in advance, enabling

them to focus pupils' attention on key concepts and development of specific skills and techniques.

108. Since the last inspection, training has been provided to increase teachers' confidence. This has now resulted in improved teaching and learning. The co-ordinator has made a good start in her role and has already started collecting samples of work and responding to requests for support. Monitoring is limited to reviewing the scheme of work as it is trialled and no monitoring of teaching and learning takes place.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

109. Standards have improved significantly since the subject was last inspected and most pupils now attain the expected levels by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. A new scheme of work has been introduced and planning now provides a sound balance of experiences in each year group. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject because the scheme of work outlines clearly what pupils are to learn at each stage. By the time they leave the school pupils have a clear understanding of the designing, making and evaluating processes. They have worked with a good range of media and learned to handle tools safely and competently.
110. The quality of teaching is satisfactory throughout the school, and pupils make sound progress in the subject. They show a keen interest in design and technology, speaking enthusiastically about projects that they found interesting. Only occasionally do pupils lose interest. This happens, for instance, when introductions go on too long and some pupils struggle to concentrate.
111. Teachers use discussions effectively to establish clearly what pupils are to do so that they think carefully about the best design for the purpose. In Year 2, pupils designed a template of a vehicle to use in sewing a picture for a calendar. The teacher encouraged them to discuss the difficulties they would face if they made their design too complicated. This enabled them to make pertinent observations when they later evaluated their own and others' work. As a result they were later able to improve their designs.
112. Pupils learn useful joining techniques, for instance corner fasteners for their vehicle chassis and suitable fasteners for a fabric bag, because teachers provide clear explanations and useful demonstrations. Pupils take pride in the finished product. In Years 3 and 4 they learn a stab quilting technique and then follow instructions in a 'Guide Book' to create intricate quilted pictures.
113. There is a good emphasis on evaluation skills. Pupils of all ages learn to evaluate the effectiveness of their work. Pupils in Year 6 discussed a project where they designed a wheeled vehicle powered by an elastic band. They identified weaknesses in the type of wheels used that constantly fell off in use, and suggested improvements. They confidently talked about the size and tension in the elastic bands being important factors in the vehicle's efficiency.
114. Because of the tight structure of the scheme of work, however, there are too few opportunities for older pupils in the school to develop independence and initiative in responding to design and technology challenges in their own way. Teachers sometimes over-direct activities so that there are not enough opportunities for pupils, particularly in Years 5 and 6, to select the materials and techniques they will use for themselves. This means that they do not achieve as much independence in their skills as they might. The co-

ordinator's role in monitoring the subject is not sufficiently developed to identify what works well and what needs improvement in the teaching of design and technology.

GEOGRAPHY

115. Attainment for the majority of pupils in geography is similar to national expectations by the age of seven and eleven with standards being maintained since the last inspection.
116. In Year 1, pupils show understanding and distinguish between objects in a photograph and when they are represented from an aerial view. They identify everyday items and draw them appropriately on the board as a plan view. In Year 2, using the same concept, pupils use a computer program as a tool for the same purpose and show a better understanding of these differences in the light of the difficulties they encountered in a previous lesson. This is helped greatly through the use of judicious questioning and demonstrations enabling pupils to improve their understanding.
117. Pupils in Year 3, studying the various features of rivers based on a viewing of a video programme, showed understanding and recall of technical terms like 'meander', 'source' and 'tributaries'. The teacher's approach as she paused the programme to exploit its visual impact, enabled pupils to extend their grasp for instance of the circumstances in which floods occur, drawing on recent experience of last year's floods. Pupils ask questions and show clear interest and enthusiasm for the lesson. Pupils in Year 6 studying co-ordinates and four-figure grid references show a good grasp of these features and other mapping skills. They use a range of geographical vocabulary, such as latitude and longitude, and show good understanding of their functions. They use examples of grid references discussed and demonstrated on an overhead projector to work out other examples. This makes a good contribution to their mathematical development. High attaining pupils use such references to identify a fictitious buried treasure on an island, enjoying the challenge as they do so. The majority of pupils achieve appropriately against their prior attainment. Where their achievement is higher, it is due, to a large extent, to the outstanding quality of teaching in one class, and particularly the skilful presentation of complex concepts in a way which is accessible. This is often combined with pupils' positive attitudes and their willingness to respond to questioning.
118. The quality of teaching observed was mainly satisfactory. In the best teaching, visual resources are used skilfully to bring the subject alive. Teachers build on pupils' previous learning by revisiting areas of difficulties, for instance when explaining differences between aerial views and three-dimensional objects. Skilful questioning and examples enable pupils to quickly grasp a concept and apply it in a following task. This was clearly and effectively illustrated in a Year 6 lesson on the use of grid references to locate places or landmarks. Where teaching has less impact, this is due to long introductions without pausing to explain key terms and failing to use the potential of resources like video programmes fully. Occasionally, the work is not suitably challenging to the more able.
119. The geography curriculum is appropriately enhanced by fieldwork and through residential journeys. The school works hard to ensure all pupils can participate. Since the last inspection, a scheme of work has been developed and a better focus on learning objectives is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' learning. At present there is particular difficulty matching the curriculum to the ability of all mixed age classes, and the guidance to teachers is not yet clear enough to lead to sufficient challenges to older pupils. Whilst ICT is used in geography to develop their research skills, not enough emphasis is given to enquiry skills based on fieldwork. Monitoring by the subject leader is limited to reviewing the scheme of work in the light of teachers' comments. Targets for developing the subject are not sufficiently focused on improving standards and the success criteria are not easily measurable to help assess their impact on learning.

HISTORY

120. As at the time of the last inspection, standards of attainment are average when pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6. However, clear guidance for teachers now ensures all history topics relate to the National Curriculum, a weakness in the last inspection. Teachers plan lessons that build on pupils' historical skills as well as extending their historical knowledge and understanding. This has improved pupils' investigational skills and their understanding of how the past is represented.
121. By the time pupils leave the school, they have a satisfactory knowledge of life in the past from Ancient Egyptians to World War 2. They know the order of different periods in history and events that occurred within them. However, they are less sure of the order of events within the Victorian period, for example, and comparisons between the different periods. Pupils understand and use the correct terminology, such as 'cartouche', 'hieroglyphs' and 'shaduf' when describing life in Ancient Egypt. They understand that events in the past affect us now, for example, "children go to school because schooling started for all in Victorian times" and "we have electricity".
122. They formulate their own questions to investigate historical topics, such as the history of medicine, and use the library, the Internet and computer software for their research.
123. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers use a range of interesting resources to stimulate pupils' enthusiasm for history. For example, Year 3 pupils experience an 'archaeological dig' organised by the teacher. Through locating, brushing and washing artefacts, they become aware of the work of an archaeologist. This interesting approach motivated pupils' interest and helped them to learn. Teachers question pupils effectively to assess their understanding and give clear explanations. Interesting stories and graphic descriptions, using pupils, encourage them to listen carefully. In a Year 1 class, pupils learn how close houses were in London before the Great Fire by leaning across to shake hands. Teachers encourage pupils to ask and answer questions about the past. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils formulated their own questions about famous people who discovered or invented new medicines, and researched from a variety of sources. Very good relationships with pupils and effective use of learning support assistants ensure all pupils learn soundly. However, although teachers use the scheme of work to plan work for different year groups in their classes, they do not use the assessment systems effectively to plan work for pupils of differing abilities. Teachers' plan interesting tasks for pupils to carry out individually, but there are times when pupils lack motivation and the pace of work slows.
124. Teachers use and develop pupils' literacy skills effectively by encouraging different forms of writing, such as living as a child in Victorian times, and through researching to find information. They incorporate ICT skills through presentation of work and research. Numeracy is also involved in the creation of time lines. Educational visits, such as to a Victorian school, bring history alive and promote pupils' enthusiasm.
125. The headteacher is caretaking the subject now. She is aware of the strengths and weaknesses within history. Improved resources and guidance for teachers ensure pupils receive the full curriculum but assessment procedures are not always used effectively.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

126. Pupils' attainment is that expected for their ages by seven and eleven year olds. The majority, including those with special educational needs, achieve well against their prior attainment. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection when provision for the subject was deemed inadequate and pupils' ICT capability below national expectations. Achievement is mainly reflected in the confidence pupils have in learning new skills and in the range of applications where learning is being enhanced in several

subjects.. Provision since the last inspection has improved substantially with the addition of an ICT suite, which is effectively managed and deployed to raise pupils' standards. One key factor in this improvement is the increased confidence of staff in teaching the subject. This is the result of effectively targeted training and the expertise of the subject leader whose guidance to colleagues is highly appreciated. Clear priorities for the subject have been identified. Assessment in the subject is well integrated into the teaching but is not closely linked to levels of attainment and used to set pupils targets.

127. Pupils throughout the school make good gains in a range of skills and programs, which are used regularly in the ICT suite. In Year 1 and 2 pupils show a good grasp of how reality can be simulated when they use an adventure game and demonstrate skills in exploring the potential of the software. The majority know how to log on and use appropriate icons to manipulate events on the screen. They compare computer representations with real life and make valid suggestions as to why they are different and the merits of each.
128. In Key Stage 2, pupils build on previously acquired skills. In Years 4 and 5, pupils using a graphics program to create a set of graphic elements that they use to present a plan of a fictitious bedroom. They show skills in manipulating geometric tools, using straight and curved lines and creativity in exploiting the potential of the program. The majority of pupils know how to log on, save their work in a folder and log off. They use group discussion well to solve problems, for instance when faced with the challenge of representing objects as seen from the air. Pupils in Year 6 use the Internet and access websites to research information about famous people linked to their historical studies. They show understanding about how information is stored and express opinions about the quality of information they come across compared to other sources.
129. Pupils throughout the school are interested in and motivated by the use of ICT. They listen attentively during presentations and are eager to try programs. They collaborate well when working in pairs and groups of three and this is true even of the youngest pupils. Pupils are tolerant and patient when waiting to take their turn on the computer.
130. The quality of teaching is good overall and has improved markedly since the last inspection. There is a good balance in teaching ICT skills and its use to enhance the learning in other subjects. Lessons are well structured and have clear learning objectives which are shared and made accessible by frequent reference to them at different points in the lesson. Demonstrations of new skills are effectively illustrated on the white board or in the class before pupils go to the suite. Skilful questioning is used to focus on the key learning points and effective interventions and support for individuals enable all pupils to have equal access to the activities. Pupils in mixed classes are carefully grouped and pupils with specific problems are well supported by the teaching assistant or strategically paired with peers who are supportive. Evidence of improving subject knowledge enables pupils to make good progress in lessons and over time. However, teachers do not take sufficient account of the needs of the most able pupils

MUSIC

131. Standards are above those normally found by the age of eleven and at least as good as expected by seven. Progress over time and during lessons is good for all pupils. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning because of the high quality of teaching and emphasis given to music in assemblies and other communal gatherings.
132. Standards of singing are high. Pupils are challenged to be increasingly tuneful and to hit high notes accurately. They make good progress by using hand signs for the different notes. This challenges pupils to concentrate and visualise the music as they sing it. They are quick to improve during lessons. They sing a wide range of songs including action songs from different cultures. The songs are well chosen to interest pupils through humour

and repeated phrases, but also to challenge them through two- and three-part singing and complex rounds. The specialist teacher provides a very good role model for pupils to follow.

133. A strength in the work is the good vocabulary pupils are expected to use. Older pupils recalled terms such as 'pentatonic scale' and 'ostinato' accurately. The teacher skilfully encourages pupils to learn new words by relating them to other familiar phrases. As the pupils develop this technical vocabulary less time is wasted in lessons on simple explanations as was seen in the more mature understanding of Year 6 pupils over others in Key Stage 2.
134. Pupils have a good knowledge of the names and sounds of musical instruments and this develops through the school. Most pupils of all abilities maintain a beat or pulse well on different percussion instruments. Again, linking the sounds to phrases in songs or words and patterns helps them. Pupils are developing well the ability to create their own musical patterns to a specific time signature or beat. By singing songs from different cultures, pupils develop a wider appreciation of music. This is enhanced by musical themes to assemblies and on other occasions.
135. The quality of teaching is very good. A specialist music teacher now takes all classes. Lessons are well planned to build on earlier learning and the pace of work is often breathtaking as pupils move through a seamless range of activities. The pupils evaluate their own performance and make suggestions for further improvement. Pupils' attitudes are very good in response and they are highly motivated and well behaved.
136. The provision for music has improved significantly since the last inspection. There is a large group of pupils who play recorders to a good standard and several pupils learn to play brass instruments.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

137. Pupils' attainment in physical education is in line with what is expected of pupils at seven and eleven. Overall, standards have improved markedly since last inspected. Pupils including those with special educational needs achieve well against their prior attainment. This is mainly the result of improved teachers' knowledge following on-going staff development, careful planning focused on specific skills and effective interventions to evaluate and improve pupils' performance.
138. In Years 1 and 2, in dance, pupils practise and perform the technique of marching, in the manner of soldiers on parade. They execute movements in unison and in time with the music. They show skills in listening and follow instructions, changing direction and varying the speed in response to the beat. The majority of pupils show reasonable skills of co-ordination, for instance when stretching, marching on the spot and when moving in different directions. In Year 2, in games, pupils show basic competence in dribbling a ball in a straight and curved line. As they practise, they explore technique and make suggestions about how to control the ball. Pupils show basic control, for instance when changing direction. In Year 6, pupils competing in an indoor tournament demonstrate skills in using space appropriately and an appreciation of rules in a non-contact game. They apply the rules in response to the teacher's clear instructions and show an eagerness to compete.
139. Pupils' attitudes to learning in physical education are positive throughout the school. They are motivated, keen to participate in lessons and understand the importance of listening and following instructions, especially those related to safety. They work well individually and with a partner. They wear an appropriate kit, change quickly and help willingly in carrying equipment at the end of sessions.

140. The quality of teaching is good. Where teaching is good or very good, clear objectives are identified and used to evaluate pupils' achievement. Teachers brief pupils about the skills to be practised and use effective demonstrations and interventions to enable them to improve their performance. This was clearly demonstrated in a Year 2 class, where through careful questioning and prompting, pupils were enabled to assess the quality of dribbling in a curved line and appreciate the importance of negotiating obstacles using cones. Teachers and pupils use demonstrations to reinforce techniques and influence performance. Effective management skills often result in well-behaved pupils who respond well to instructions.
141. Opportunities exist for pupils to take part in competitive games in conjunction with other schools. There is currently no monitoring of teaching and learning and the priorities for developing the subject are not sufficiently focused on raising standards. The development of physical education is a priority in the school development plan.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

142. Satisfactory standards have been maintained since the last inspection. By the time they leave the school, pupils' attainments meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils experience different world religions as they move through the school, and explore their own beliefs and opinions. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a sound understanding of Christian beliefs and practices and knowledge of the Bible. They have a basic understanding of other world faiths, particularly Judaism and Islam.
143. In the infant classes, pupils learn about the life of Jesus and other stories from the Bible. They visit the local church and this experience promotes sound learning. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a sound understanding of stories from the Bible and the life of Jesus. They identify artefacts from the church, such as the cross, the pulpit and the organ, and give clear explanations of their purposes. Although they are aware of other religions, pupils are less secure talking about them.
144. Junior pupils learn more about Christianity through studying the work of a Christian minister, the beliefs and practices of Christians, and special people, such as St Francis of Assisi and Martin Luther King. Pupils learn about other world faiths, for example, Years 3 and 4 learn about Jewish and Sikh customs and festivals. Year 3 pupils enthusiastically experiment with some of the food from Rosh Hashanah and make suitable Jewish New Year cards. Pupils learn from stories and teachers' explanations but have fewer opportunities to record their ideas. However, when given opportunities, Year 6 pupils offer their ideas and opinions about the meaning of psalms, such as, "It's a way of celebrating," and "He's saying thank you." They give reasons for their answers and reflect sensitively on their own and other pupils' opinions.
145. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Very good relationships mean that teachers create a calm atmosphere that promotes pupils' reflection and careful listening. Interesting explanations and lively activities, such as tasting apples dipped in honey for Rosh Hashanah, help motivate pupils and assist learning. Teachers question pupils effectively to assess their understanding and reinforce earlier learning. When given opportunities to discuss their ideas, pupils deepen their understanding and thinking. They make sensible suggestions and respect each other's answers. However, teachers do not always plan for discussions or allow them to develop. This limits pupils' abilities to explore their own beliefs and understanding. Teachers organise and manage pupils and activities well. This contributes to effective learning and good pace in lessons. Although teachers use books and worksheets soundly to illustrate new learning, there is a need for larger pictures and more artefacts, to enable all pupils to see photographs of the synagogue for example.
146. The co-ordinator has a clear idea of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and has plans to review the guidance for teachers. Improved resources generally have improved attitudes to religious education, which are now good.