

INSPECTION REPORT

**BULMER ST ANDREW'S C of E VOLUNTARY
CONTROLLED PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Sudbury, Suffolk

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 115067

Headteacher: Mr R J Murray

Reporting inspector: Mr John Messer
OIN: 15477

Dates of inspection: 11 – 14 February 2002

Inspection number: 242795

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:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	5 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Church Road Bulmer Sudbury Suffolk
Postcode:	CO10 7EH
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr L Crumpton-Taylor
Date of previous inspection:	17 March 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
15477	John Messer	Registered inspector	Art and design Religious education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
12289	Susan Burgess	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
2905	David Shepherd	Team inspector	Science Music Foundation stage Equal opportunities	
27426	Terence Aldridge	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
29378	Kenneth Watson	Team inspector	English Geography History Physical education Special educational needs	

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	19
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	19
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	21
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	23
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This village school has 152 pupils on roll and is smaller than most primary schools. There is an almost equal mix of boys and girls. It draws its pupils from a wide area and most travel to school by bus, taxi or car. Fewer than three per cent of parents claim free school meals, which is well below average. A significant proportion of pupils enter and leave the school part way through their primary education. Assessments of children's attainment on entry to the school indicate significant variations from year to year but overall it is below average though in each year group the full range of ability is represented and there is a significant minority of higher attaining pupils. There are no pupils from ethnic minority groups. There are 28 pupils entered on the register of special educational needs which is broadly in line with the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school that has significant strengths and few weaknesses. The school provides a rich curriculum that is particularly strong in developing pupils' creative talents in writing, drama, art and design and music. The good leadership and management provided by the headteacher and key staff are underpinned by the very effective support provided by the governing body. Teachers are hard-working, caring and committed to doing their best for all pupils. The good and often very good teaching has resulted in a steady improvement in the school's performance and, by the end of Year 6 pupils attain standards in English and science that are above average. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- As a result of mostly good teaching, pupils achieve well and by the end of Year 6, attain standards that are above average in most subjects.
- The school provides a rich and varied curriculum that stimulates pupils' enthusiasm.
- The leadership and management by the headteacher and key staff are good and there is a shared commitment to raising standards further.
- Governors give strong support and make a very good contribution to improving the quality of education provided.
- Learning support assistants make a major contribution to the quality of education provided.
- Pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour are very good and this has a positive impact on their learning.
- Relationships throughout the school are excellent.

What could be improved

- The standards pupils attain in mathematics.
- Learning opportunities for children in the foundation stage.
- The use of computers to support teaching and learning across the curriculum.
- The use of the library to support teaching and learning.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the school was last inspected in March 1997, there have been significant improvements. The quality of teaching has improved. The standards that pupils attain by the end of Year 6 in science have improved. The above average standards attained by pupils in English by the end of Year 6 have been maintained. Standards in music are good but are not as high as reported at the time of the last inspection. The installation of new computer to support information and communication technology is a major improvement and pupils are on course to attain standards that are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 6. At the time of the last inspection, standards in information and communication technology were judged to be above average but expectations of pupils' performance are now much more demanding. Pupils' attitudes to work and their behaviour have improved further. Accommodation has improved with the building of a new school hall and classrooms but a third of the classes are still in temporary accommodation.

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
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	B	A	A	B
mathematics	D	B	B	D
science	C	B	A	B

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

Children enter the school with standards of attainment that are below average. Their achievement in the reception class is satisfactory and many are on course to attain the early learning goals, specified in national guidance, by the end of the reception year. Pupils generally achieve well in Years 1 and 2. By the end of Year 2, most pupils attain average standards in all subjects except art and design, history and music where standards are above average, and information technology where standards are below average. They continue to achieve well in most subjects in Years 3 to 6, so that, by the end of Year 6, standards in most subjects are above average. Standards in mathematics are not as high as they should be because tasks are not sufficiently modified to meet the learning needs of all pupils. Standards in religious education exceed the expectations described in the locally agreed syllabus. Last year the school set reasonably challenging targets of 81 per cent for the proportion of pupils in Year 6 who would attain the national target of at least Level 4 in English and 88 per cent in mathematics. It exceeded its target in English and narrowly missed its target in mathematics. More challenging targets have been set for this year and the school is likely to meet its targets. Particularly good work is produced in art and design.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are enthusiastic about their work and are eager to learn. They have very positive attitudes to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are courteous and very well behaved in lessons and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent relationships have a positive effect on learning. Pupils work and play happily together.
Attendance	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school.

Pupils are keen to learn and willing to please. In most lessons a happy, productive working environment is established.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	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.

Overall the quality of teaching and learning is good. In all lessons teaching is at least satisfactory. In nearly a fifth it is very good and occasionally excellent; in over a half it is good. The good teaching enables pupils to learn effectively and achieve well. The teaching of mathematics is broadly satisfactory though there are shortcomings. The teaching of English and science is good and this results in high standards by the end of Year 6. The skills of literacy are taught well and pupils' good grounding in reading helps them to achieve effectively in other areas of the curriculum. There is insufficient use of numeracy skills in practical situations. The teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. The needs of higher attaining pupils are provided for by appropriate grouping of pupils in lessons but they are not always sufficiently extended in mathematics. The good teaching generates an enthusiasm for school and a serious approach to learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. The curriculum is relevant to pupils' needs but in the foundation stage it is not planned effectively and is under-developed.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Classroom assistants are highly committed and make a strong contribution to the provision for these pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. Provision for spiritual and cultural is good and it is very good for moral and social development. Pupils have little understanding of the ethnic diversity of our society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school provides a secure learning environment within which pupils flourish.

The school is well supported by parents who are pleased with the education provided. A good range of visits and other activities outside lessons enriches learning opportunities. Good levels of care are maintained and pupils' welfare is safeguarded effectively. Provision for personal, social and health education is very good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher provides firm leadership and is supported well by the teaching staff who all fulfil their curricular responsibilities well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors provide strong support and are closely involved in shaping the direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school analyses its performance closely and explores areas for development rigorously as it strives to improve standards.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are used wisely to enhance pupils' learning opportunities.

The headteacher, governing body, teaching and support staff work together well as a team committed to improving standards. The school spends money prudently and good systems are in place to review

spending patterns. The school applies the principles of best value to spending decisions. Resources are adequate to support teaching and learning. There is scope for further improvements in the accommodation; a third of the pupils are taught in temporary classrooms, the space for children in the foundation stage is cramped and the library doubles as a computer suite.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and make good progress. • Behaviour is good. • Teaching is good and the school expects children to work hard and to do their best. • The school is well led and managed. • They would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. • The school helps children to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information about how their children are getting on. • The amount of work that children are given to do at home. • The range of activities outside lessons.

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views. A significant minority of parents feel that they do not receive enough information about how their children are getting on, that the amount of homework set is inappropriate and that the provision of activities outside lessons could be improved. Inspection findings show that parents receive good information, homework is appropriate and a very good range of activities outside lessons is provided.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children enter the school with standards of attainment that are generally somewhat below average. This is confirmed by assessments of pupils' attainment soon after they enter the reception class. Their achievement is satisfactory in the foundation stage so that many are well on course to attain the early learning goals, specified in national guidance, by the time they enter Year 1. As a result of the good teaching they receive pupils learn effectively in Years 1 and 2 and their achievement is good. By the end of Year 2, most are likely to attain standards that are at least in line with national expectations in nearly all subjects. The standards they attain in art and design, history and music exceed national expectations; attainment in information and communication technology are likely to be below the standard normally expected.
2. Pupils continue to achieve well in Years 3 to 6 because they receive good teaching. By the end of Year 6, pupils are likely to attain standards that are above average in English and science and broadly average in mathematics, information and communication technology and geography. In art and design, design and technology, history and music standards exceed national expectations. This represents good achievement.
3. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good from Year 1 to Year 6. They make good progress towards meeting their short-term targets and this helps them to move closer to attaining the longer-term targets described in their individual education plans.
4. The achievement of gifted and talented pupils is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and generally good in Years 3 - 6. They are presented with open-ended problems in some lessons in English, science and history and this challenges their thinking well. This is not always the case though. In some lessons in mathematics, the highest attaining pupils are not challenged enough and they do not make the progress they should.
5. Across the school, there was insufficient evidence to make judgements about standards in physical education. The standards pupils attain in religious education exceed the expectations described in the locally agreed syllabus. Generally standards have improved since the last inspection.
6. Inspection findings do not tally entirely with the latest National Curriculum test and assessment results because the nature of the group of pupils that takes the tests each year varies considerably. Also at Key Stage 2 the groups that took the tests last year was relatively small and each child represented over six per cent of the total. In the tests in 2001 for pupils in Year 2, the school's performance when compared with all schools was average in reading, below average in writing, above average in mathematics and well below average in science. Paradoxically a much lower than average proportion of pupils attained the national target of Level 2 in writing but a much higher than average proportion attained the higher Level 3 standard. This is because the group that took the tests in 2001 comprised a significant proportion of talented writers as well as a large group who found it especially difficult to master writing skills. In reading and mathematics there was less variation from national averages. This does tend to confirm inspection findings, however, that writing is not taught as consistently well as reading. When compared with schools in similar contexts, the school's performance was well below average in reading, writing and science and average in mathematics.
7. The school's performance in the tests for pupils in Year 6 in 2001 reflected inspection findings more closely. The school's performance when compared with all schools was well above average in English and science and above average in mathematics. When compared with schools in similar contexts the school's performance was above average in English and science but below

- average in mathematics. The school's performance in English has been improving steadily since 1998 and there has been an improving trend in mathematics and science since 1999.
8. The test results for pupils in Year 6 indicate no significant gender differences in performance over the past three years in English but, contrary to the national picture, girls do better than boys in mathematics and science. Inspection findings show no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls in any subject in any year group.
 9. Pupils' speaking and listening skills exceed national expectations. The youngest children talk confidently and sensibly about their work. This confidence continues to develop well and pupils in Year 3, for example, chat knowledgeably about shortages in wartime England caused by the blockade and submarines lurking in the seas around our coast. Whilst grating carrots to make buns according to a wartime recipe, they explain that carrots were used as a substitute for sugar. When boiling a mixture of syrup and Demerara sugar to make honeycomb they discuss what a descriptive word 'dollop' is and describe the reaction that takes place when bicarbonate of soda is added as, 'Like a volcanic eruption with lava oozing out'. Pupils enjoy reading and by Year 6 many are well read and recall books by Gene Kemp, Anne Fine, J R Tolkein and J K Rowling as well as the inevitable Enid Blyton. They describe the characteristics of different genres and many enjoy poetry and non-fiction. Most are competent in using reference books for research purposes but there are wide variations in pupils' ability to use the Internet to search for information. Most of the older pupils are able to use e-mail independently and pupils in Year 5 were pleased to receive an e-mail from a former teacher now living in India.
 10. Pupils in Year 6 are good at basic number work, such as using multiplication facts to solve problems and calculating the number of degrees in complex geometrical shapes given a minimum of information to solve such puzzles. Much of this work is not related to real-life situations, however, and exercises are conducted in isolation without links being made to practical applications. As a result learning often lacks an element of purpose. Across the school, standards in mathematics are not as high as they could be because work is not always sufficiently modified to meet the learning needs of all pupils; tasks are too easy for higher attaining pupils and too difficult for those who are less able. In science good links are made with physical education and pupils understand that the heart acts as a pump to circulate blood around the body and why pulse rate increases during exercise. Cooking helps pupils to understand how materials change when they are heated and cooled. One overarching feature of pupils' good achievement is the way that the creative arts are used so successfully to link different areas of the curriculum. Dance and drama are used well to illustrate events in local history and works of literature, music features in lessons in mathematics and English, pupils' advanced skills in art and design support learning in history and an understanding of different times and cultures. The development of the creative arts is a key element in the school's success in promoting effective learning across the curriculum.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils' attitudes, values and behaviour are even better than at the time of the last inspection and are now very good. Pupils are interested in their work, enjoy reading and sustain their concentration during lessons. They work well in groups and pairs, for instance when enacting the story of 'St. George and the Dragon' in Year 2. Pupils share resources sensibly, persevere well with their work, even when they find it difficult, and applaud each other's efforts and achievements such as when Year 5 were devising dramatic dance sequences based on 'The Hobbit'. Pupils respond very positively to opportunities for working independently and do so in a mature and sensible way. For example, pupils in Year 5 log onto e-mail without the need for direct supervision and pupils in Year 6 spend lunchtimes preparing the stories that they are going to read to children in the nursery.
12. Relationships between pupils and staff and between pupils themselves are generally excellent. A few parents, however, were concerned that issues over homework had created unnecessary tensions in one class. There was no evidence of such tension during the inspection and in all classes pupils responded to teachers and other adults confidently. Pupils are polite and talk sensibly with adults about their work.

13. Behaviour in class, in assemblies and around the school is very good. Pupils play amicably together during breaks and lunchtime is a pleasant social occasion. There is a harmonious atmosphere throughout the school with no evidence of children bullying one another. There have been no occasions over at least the last two years when the headteacher has been obliged to exclude any pupils from school due to poor behaviour.
14. Pupils' personal development is very good and is enhanced by the increasing responsibility that pupils take as they progress through the school. Pupils in Year 6, for instance, help to take care of younger children when they walk to church and older pupils who sit at the head of the dining tables serve the others sensibly and politely. Pupils from Years 5 and 6 have planted hedging in the newly-acquired Baker's Field at the start of an exciting long-term environmental project for the school. Older pupils run lunchtime clubs for younger pupils. Personal development is also reinforced by pupils' participation in school productions, an Arts Fortnight, a festival of music, dance and drama, sporting fixtures and an annual residential trip for Year 6 to the Lake District.
15. However there are few avenues for pupils to develop notions of citizenship and they have limited opportunity to take responsibility for decision-making.
16. There is good support for the various extra-curricular clubs and for charities such as the National Children's Homes, Children in Need and a local Sue Ryder Home. Pupils enjoyed a very successful Harry Potter Day to raise money for Children in Need.
17. Attendance, at 94.8 per cent, is good. There is minimal unauthorised absence. Most children are punctual to school and registration is orderly and efficient.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. Overall teaching is good. It is sound for pupils in the foundation stage and good for pupils in Years 1 to 6. There are many strong features of the teaching in the foundation stage but there are too few opportunities for children to engage in practical activities and occasionally they spend too long sitting listening, rather than being actively involved in their learning. All teaching is at least satisfactory and this represents a significant improvement since the last inspection when a significant proportion of teaching was unsatisfactory. Teaching is good in just over half of lessons and in nearly a fifth it is very good and occasionally excellent. Teaching in the core subjects of English and science is good in Years 1 to 6, as it is for art and design, history, and music. The teaching of mathematics is broadly satisfactory but there are shortcomings. Teaching is satisfactory in all other subjects except physical education where there was insufficient evidence available to make judgements about the quality of teaching. In religious education too few lessons were seen to make secure judgements about the quality of teaching generally but the pupils' good knowledge and understanding indicate that teaching is effective. It was most unfortunate that two of the regular teachers, representing a third of the class teachers, were absent due to personal reasons for periods during the inspection week. This situation was managed well, however, as relief teachers and a governor succeeded in maintaining at least satisfactory teaching during the week.
19. The key features of the teaching that have a particularly positive impact on pupils' learning concern excellent relationships between teachers and pupils, the serious approach to lessons and the enthusiasm for learning that are generated. Teachers and other adults demonstrate respect for pupils' views and opinions. They listen to pupils and show clearly that pupils' contributions to discussions are equally valid and important, as indicated by 'Thank you, that's really interesting'. In many lessons it was evident that teachers and classroom assistants deliberately allowed pupils time to think about answers to questions and allowed them time to express themselves without interruption. Such relationships are developed successfully from children's earliest days in school as made explicit, for example, in a learning objective for a lesson in the reception class, 'To be confident to try new activities, initiate ideas and speak in

familiar groups.' Coupled with appropriate praise and encouragement, the deliberate emphasis on developing pupils' self-esteem helps them to be confident in their learning and promotes success.

20. There is a great deal of laughter as teachers and pupils share amusing aspects of their work, as for example when noting ambiguities in meaning such as, 'Baby changing room.' In another lesson the teacher used the piano to accompany the children's singing of a song entitled, 'Don't Forget the Title', as pupils settled to independent written tasks. A good balance is struck between making learning fun yet retaining a serious approach to the quality of work produced. Teachers have high expectations of the quality of pupils' performance. This was typified in a very good dance lesson where pupils were developing sequences of movements depicting scenes from 'The Hobbit'. Here the teacher had composed, on the electronic keyboard, a series of appropriate sound effects for pupils to interpret. He demonstrated, prompted and energetically urged ever more refined sequences until work of high quality was produced. Here learning was rapid. In a lesson for pupils in reception and Year 1, pupils were weaving with wool and decided to sing 'Baa Baa Black Sheep' as they worked. Again high expectations of their performance was evident in that they sang, for example, 'Yes, sir, yes sir, twenty four bags full' and calculated that eight could be shared between the dame, the master and the little boy who lived down the lane. Such a good grasp of simple division is exceptional for this age group. Pupils settle to tasks willingly and concentrate well. The enthusiasm generated is evident where, towards the end of lessons, they are bursting to read their pieces of writing to the class, 'Please, please can I read mine?', or to share their group's dramatic performances with the rest of the class.
21. In most lessons pupils are provided with interesting activities that are appropriately matched to their particular stages of development so that all can experience success. In these lessons pupils work willingly and the management of behaviour is simply not an issue. Any minor irritation is dealt with gently, 'I can hear your brain working, which is fascinating but also rather distracting'. Whilst behaviour is generally very good, frustrations occur when tasks are not well matched to pupils' learning needs and this occasionally leads to restlessness. This occurred in a mathematics lesson, for example. Although the brightest children in the class left to work with older pupils, those that remained were presented with the same task. The more able coped well but the least able, despite support from the learning support assistant, found the task beyond them. They were clearly not succeeding in their learning and their resentment and frustration surfaced. Generally sound provision is made for gifted and talented pupils and they are taught satisfactorily although there are occasions when they are not challenged sufficiently in mathematics. Their achievement is mostly sound in Years 1 and 2 and often good in Years 3 to 6.
22. Basic skills are generally taught well. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented successfully and the teaching of literacy is good. Reading is taught well so that across the school standards are above average. Writing is taught effectively in most classes but skills are not developed as consistently well as in reading. Pupils use their skills of reading and writing well in many other areas of the curriculum, such as history and science. The teaching of numeracy, though satisfactory overall, is not so effective. The structure of the National Numeracy Strategy is not firmly embedded in the school's routines and work is not always well matched to pupils' particular stages of development. The introductory mental sessions are often not productive and review sessions do not always consolidate learning effectively. There are examples of pupils using their skills of numeracy in other areas of the curriculum, such as measuring weights and liquids accurately when cooking, but generally there are too few planned opportunities for pupils to practise their skills across the curriculum.
23. Time is generally used well. Pupils are urged in lessons to change for physical education quickly and to get on with tasks swiftly. Sand timers are used in several classes to help pupils to get a move on and in others reminders, such as, 'You have three minutes to finish your sentences,' are common. Lessons proceed at a brisk pace. The use of resources is mostly satisfactory. Generally classroom assistants make a strong contribution to the quality of pupils' learning. They are especially good at taking groups for specific purposes, such as personal, social and health education sessions, while the teacher works elsewhere with other groups, in the computer suite for example. They are increasingly skilled and give particularly good support to pupils who require

extra learning support. There are occasions, however, when they are not well deployed by teachers and they spend time giving general encouragement but are not actively involved in giving focused, active support. There are instances where technology is used well to support learning, as for example the use of the electronic keyboard in dance lessons and a digital cameras in art and design. Computers are not always used effectively, however, and the school has recognised this clearly as an area for development.

24. Teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs are good. They are invariably included fully in all class activities, and are given good quality extra support both in the classroom and when withdrawn for extra help with their learning. The open and active learning promoted in most lessons is very successful in helping all pupils to feel positive and confident. Where extra help is given by the co-ordinator for special educational needs, teachers or classroom assistants, it is usually of a high quality. Occasionally pupils with special educational needs do not receive sufficient guidance and support for written work in lesson times.
25. Teachers plan and prepare lessons well. In preparation for one art lesson, for example, a good range of flowers, fruit and vegetables was gathered together and formed the basis for lively discussion. In most lessons the learning intentions are clear and are shared with pupils to generate purposeful learning. There are occasions, however, when the reason for setting tasks is not made explicit to the pupils. In mathematics, for example, pupils are taught how to relate fractions to division but there is no attempt to explain why it might be useful to develop this skill. Without any clear idea of how activities might have a bearing on practical, real-life situations, learning lacks a degree of purpose.
26. In review sessions towards the end of lessons teachers use good questioning strategies to assess how well the learning objectives have been met. Work is generally marked thoroughly and the best marking gives pupils a clear understanding of how they might improve their work. A reasonable amount of homework is set to consolidate and in some cases extend learning. One good initiative is the way pupils are encouraged to record in their home/school logs the spelling errors that they make in their everyday work so that they can learn them at home. This helps to ensure that pupils are learning words that they do not know how to spell rather than revising ones which they can spell already.
27. Teachers have mostly good knowledge of the subjects they teach, especially knowledge of the creative arts and this good knowledge has a major impact on the high standards attained in music, art and design, creative English and drama. The school makes good use of local people's knowledge and expertise. During the inspection governors and parents, for example, helped to create excellent lessons in geography and art and design. Learning is enriched by visits from a company of Shakespearean actors, for example, who recently added a great deal of expertise and enhanced the quality of teaching exceptionally well. Resources, such as overhead projectors and electronic keyboard instruments, are used well to enhance learning. Tape recorders are used well to play soft music that promotes a calm learning environment. Teachers' knowledge of how to use computers effectively is still developing and further training is planned for later in the year. Overall teachers are hard working, caring and conscientious and are successful in supporting pupils' learning effectively. The confidence that pupils have in their abilities and their enjoyment of lessons are clear indications that teaching has had a positive impact on learning.

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

28. The curriculum for pupils in the Years 1 to 6 is well established and includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum, religious education, and personal, social and health education. The curriculum is broad, well balanced and relevant to the needs of the pupils. It is enriched with a wide range of extra-curricular activities, visits to places of interest and visitors to the school, which successfully extends the curriculum beyond the classroom. There are some good links developing between subjects for example in history and design and technology where pupils

design and make castles or Roman chariots. Provision for sex and drugs education is satisfactory. The curriculum for children in the foundation stage is broadly satisfactory but there is considerable scope for development. The needs of the youngest children are not always catered for appropriately and they are not always sufficiently involved in practical, first-hand experiences. Also the outdoor area is underused as a learning resource.

29. Recently revised policies for all subjects provide useful guidance for teachers in the planning of their work. Subject planning and guidance, which were identified as areas for development at the time of the last inspection, are much improved and are now good. National guidance has been successfully adopted by the school to plan the teaching of the curriculum and is being used well to plan lessons. There is a clear long-term overview based on year group activities which clearly links with medium and short-term plans. In design and technology, information and communication technology and geography these draft plans are to be reviewed and amended at the end of the school year to ensure they fully meet the needs of the school. Useful guidance for teachers about encouraging citizenship is being introduced but this area of the curriculum is under-developed. There are designated co-ordinators in place for all subjects and they, along with the headteacher, carefully monitor termly planning to ensure that National Curriculum requirements are met.
30. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good for pupils in Years 1 to 6, and satisfactory for children in the foundation stage. There are difficulties in catering for the specific learning needs of the youngest children in a mixed age class in cramped conditions. Provision in the rest of the school is good because the procedures for identifying, target setting and review are well established and effective in meeting pupils' needs. The co-ordinator is only in school for one day a week, but systems for liaising with staff, meeting parents and providing expert support for pupils are very effective. She attends parents' evenings and staff meetings and works closely with teachers to ensure that pupils withdrawn for extra help do not miss out on their entitlement to a full curriculum. Staff are fully aware of the pupils' termly objectives and take responsibility for breaking these down into short-term achievable targets. The co-ordinator has good contacts with other support agencies, and they are appropriately involved where necessary.
31. Satisfactory provision is made for gifted and talented pupils overall. Provision is particularly effective in lessons for pupils in Years 3 to 6 when challenging questions extending pupils' thinking are posed and high expectations of the work that they produce are maintained in most subjects. There is scope in several classes to provide greater challenge for these pupils, especially in mathematics.
32. Strategies for teaching basic literacy skills are good and those for developing skills in numeracy are satisfactory. The school gives high priority to developing basic skills in these areas and this is helping to raise standards. However, there is still the potential to adapt the teaching of numeracy so as to provide more opportunities for pupils to use and apply their knowledge and understanding in solving real problems.
33. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities including football, netball, rugby, rounders, country dancing, recorders, drama club and choir. All these activities have a positive effect on the pupils' social development. They are well supported and popular but are mainly for the older pupils. A very good range of educational visits within the local area and further afield, for example to museums and wildlife areas, extends the curriculum very well. Book weeks and an art weeks further enhance the curriculum. Visits from the English Shakespeare Company and a friendly 'Viking' and 'Roman' soldier add interest and further extend the curriculum. Extra instrumental music tuition is provided by the local education authority.
34. There is very good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and the link with a healthy lifestyle. Sex education is delivered through the science curriculum and, for older pupils, more specifically through targeted lessons where the community nurse assists by providing expert knowledge. Satisfactory procedures are in place for teaching pupils to be aware of the dangers associated with drugs. All classes have regular well-planned 'circle time' sessions where

pupils sit in a circle and discuss issues and share problems. This enables them to develop confidence, good relationships and respect for different views and attitudes.

35. There are good links with the local community. The neighbourhood policeman and community nurse visit regularly to help with aspects of health education and personal safety. Visits are made to the local church for an annual harvest festival service and produce is sent to the local Sue Ryder home. Pupils take part in a public carol service with other schools and the candle-lit service in the church and summer fete are open to the local community. Ipswich Town Football Club and Sudbury Rugby Football Club run successful coaching sessions for pupils after school. Friends of the school often help with cultural activities such as local Roman and other period history and sharing experiences and memorabilia from World War Two. These links add to pupils' knowledge of the environment outside school and help to develop their social and cultural understanding. The school is successfully developing the opportunities available through the use of the Internet to extend pupils' learning, for example in geography and history.
36. The school has very good links with other schools in the area through the Colne Valley Consortium which is a self-help group providing professional development and support. This has resulted in an 'Arts Fortnight' with interaction between the schools and festivals of music, dance and drama. There are regular meetings between staff and joint professional training sessions are organised to address common professional development needs. There are also regular inter-school sporting activities for pupils that provide opportunities to promote personal and social development. Very good relationships have been developed between the school and the nursery that shares the same site. This helps to promote a smooth transfer of children from the nursery into the reception class. There are very good links with the nearby secondary school with secondary phase students visiting the primary school for work experience. Pupils also visit the secondary school for specialist subject days where they experience what it is like to be taught mathematics, for example, in the secondary school learning environment. These good relationships promote the smooth transfer of pupils from primary into secondary education.
37. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall with moral and social provision being particularly strong.
38. The provision for spiritual development is good. Daily acts of worship are well planned and organised and legal requirements are clearly met. Good opportunities are provided for reflection and celebration of achievements and special events during assembly time including a 'work of the week' assembly to which parents are invited. The school visits the local church for a candle -lit carol service and a harvest festival which further offer opportunities for spiritual development. A visitor from a local church group visits fortnightly to take an assembly in the absence of a local vicar. In lessons across the school, there are good opportunities to develop spiritual awareness and reflection in subjects such as English, science, art and music. Displays of objects from other faiths provide some opportunities for pupils to reflect on and develop respect for different beliefs. Religious education lessons offer further opportunities for spiritual development.
39. There is very good provision for moral development. The school very effectively promotes the principles of fairness, honesty, self-esteem and the values which distinguish right from wrong. These are reflected in the very good behaviour and relationships in the school. This is an area that particularly pleases parents. The school works hard to promote and reward good behaviour and to raise pupils' self-esteem through a house system where pupils earn team points and certificates. Clear rules, set by the pupils, are displayed in all classrooms and all staff promote good behaviour by following the school's discipline policy. Pupils also have good opportunities during assemblies to reflect on the part they play in making the school a friendly and supportive community. Personal, social and health education lessons provide good opportunities for pupils to listen to stories dealing with morality, discuss issues and establish codes of behaviour. All these activities have a very positive influence on relationships in the school.
40. The school provides very good opportunities for pupils to develop socially and increase their understanding of living in a community. Within classrooms, pupils carry out a range of tasks that encourage them to take responsibility and help each other. Year 6 pupils have added

responsibilities in and around the school helping with delivery of registers, helping daily in the nursery, setting up the hall and working the overhead projector and tape recorder in assembly. All these activities develop initiative and independence. However, there are few opportunities for older pupils to be consulted and take part in the school's decision-making processes and this is an area for development. The wide range of extra-curricular clubs and activities provide very good experiences for older pupils to work co-operatively and to take part in inter-school sporting activities. A popular annual residential visit, shared with a local school, provides further opportunities for personal and social development as pupils undertake a range of adventurous and challenging activities. All adults in the school provide good role models and work positively with pupils.

41. Provision for cultural development and understanding is good overall although multi-cultural opportunities are less well developed. There is very good provision for pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions through subjects such as art and design, music, history and geography. In history, they learn about some of the important cultures, civilisations and events in the past, for example, the Greeks, Vikings, Incas, Tudors, the Victorian era and World War Two. In geography, pupils learn about life in the immediate locality and in contrasting localities, for example, a mountain region and St Lucia. These lessons make valuable contributions to their wider cultural understanding. The school ensures pupils gain valuable first-hand experiences through visits to museums and places of interest. A range of visitors to school, including musicians, theatre groups, artists, writers, 'Viking' and 'Roman' soldiers, representatives of the police and the health service, also extend pupils' cultural development well. However, pupils have limited opportunities to learn about the wide diversity of cultures in this country.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42. There is a welcoming, friendly atmosphere in the school, with generally excellent relationships between pupils and staff and among pupils themselves. Staff work well as a team, know the pupils well as individuals and provide good role models. They expect, and achieve, high standards of behaviour. The school aims to reward kindness to others as well as good work, behaviour and manners, with various incentives offered for achievement. A citizenship award is made at the end of each year. There is scope, however, to involve pupils more extensively in decision-making. Bullying is actively and consistently discouraged. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting were agreed that, should an incident of bullying occur, the school deals with it very effectively. Pupils in Year 2 and above take part in weekly 'circle time' activities in which they are encouraged to share their feelings and discuss any difficulties that may arise.
43. First aid and medical matters are efficiently managed. Lunchtimes are well organised and supervision is good throughout the day. The school provides a safe environment for its pupils on an attractive and spacious site.
44. Child protection procedures are well organised with staff training soon to be updated. There are efficient measures to monitor attendance and punctuality, with termly visits from the education welfare officer. The importance of good attendance is promoted in a number of documents and, as a result of this, the number of holidays taken in term time is relatively low.
45. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good. There is very good liaison between the reception teacher and the staff of the nursery that shares the school's site. Children are assessed soon after entry to the reception class and meticulous records are kept about their early development. Assessments are used well to develop a thorough understanding of each child's particular learning needs. The teacher and classroom assistant use their good knowledge of the children well to inform their teaching. Across the school, appropriate procedures are used to assess pupils' progress in the key areas of English, mathematics and science. A simple but effective recording form has been introduced for most other subjects. These supplement personal records kept by teachers. Results of national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 are analysed carefully and used to review the effectiveness of provision and teaching. A

battery of non-statutory test and assessment materials are also used to check on pupils' progress. These are used well to identify any gaps in learning that need to be filled.

46. Most teachers use assessment information effectively to group pupils according to their ability in literacy and numeracy lessons, especially for the older pupils. However, in other subjects, assessments are not always used effectively to set tasks for pupils that match their learning needs. This was noted in several mathematics lessons, for example. This often means that higher attaining pupils, who learn quickly, are not always challenged sufficiently and their learning is restricted, whilst lower attaining pupils struggle and do not experience the success that they should. Pupils have individual targets for improvement and these are often referred to by teachers to help pupils towards achieving their goals. Target boards are displayed on the walls in each class and pupils' names are moved closer to the bull's eye as they achieve success.
47. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs is regularly assessed and their work monitored on a daily basis. Teaching assistants record pupils' progress carefully. The results of this monitoring are used well to plan the next step in each pupil's learning. The record keeping systems and the maintenance of pupils' files are very good. Provision for pupils with statements of special educational needs is particularly good. Each pupil has a separate weekly timetable detailing the support given in the classroom and when withdrawn for individual help or for group work. The support given by the special support assistants is of high quality. These pupils are fully included in all class and school activities. Procedures as laid down in the new nationally agreed Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs are appropriately implemented and records are kept up to date.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. Parents are in general very supportive of the school. Of those who expressed an opinion, most felt confident that teaching is good, that the school is well led and managed and that their children are making good progress. Some parents did not feel that the right amount of homework was being set but inspection findings indicate that the amount of homework is appropriate. There was general agreement that the introduction of home/school logs had improved communication but a few parents said their usefulness was limited by a lack of information. Inspectors found the pocketed ring binders cumbersome and difficult for some children to maintain neatly.
49. The school is committed to maintaining a close partnership with parents and the information it provides for them is good. Annual reports clearly describe pupils' attainment and progress. They contain appropriate targets for improvement and a summary of personal development over the year. There is, however, no space for parents or pupils to add their comments.
50. Following the analysis of a parents' questionnaire in which improved communication was identified as an issue, the governing body has established a parent-pupil communication committee. Among other responsibilities, this produces the school prospectus and a lively governors' annual report to parents. Frequent newsletters, calendars and curriculum information are sent home. Parents have the opportunity to discuss their child's progress both informally and by appointment throughout the academic year. Class teachers are available for discussions with parents for an hour every Tuesday afternoon and there are two open evenings each year, in the autumn and spring terms. Additionally, there is a formal annual consultation evening in the summer term with teachers following the issue of pupils' annual reports.
51. Parents support the work of the school in various practical ways. An average of six volunteers regularly help in class, particularly with reading and cooking. The very active Friends Association organises an imaginative range of social and fund-raising activities. Over £4,500 was raised last year which helped to purchase such items as computer equipment, a digital piano and stage lighting for the hall. There is very good support for events such as sports day, parents' assemblies and school productions. Almost all parents attend the formal consultation evening and a significant number come to the governors' annual meeting with parents.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher and key staff have been working in close partnership with the governing body for a good number of years and a strong, open form of management has been established. There is a close working relationship between the headteacher and the chair and vice-chair of governors. The headteacher provides firm leadership as he guides the school towards improving standards across the curriculum whilst maintaining a rich, well balanced range of learning opportunities for pupils. There is, however, considerable scope for improving curricular provision for children in the foundation stage. There is a clear commitment, shared by governors and staff, that the curriculum will not be narrowed by striving exclusively to improve the school's published test results but will retain a strong emphasis on developing pupils' creativity through the arts. The school has been highly successful in improving standards and maintaining a rich diversity in the curriculum it provides.
53. The governing body is successful in fulfilling its responsibilities and individual governors are exceptionally supportive in many ways. Each governor has well defined areas of responsibility and, under the able leadership of the chair, all fulfil them well. One, for example has used the Audit Commission's web site to produce a remarkably definitive analysis of the school's spending patterns compared with other schools. Together with analyses that compare the school's annual test results with schools nationally, this analysis helps the governing body to determine to what extent it is following the principles of best value and whether standards are high enough. Another governor, who is an expert on local history and geography, uses his expertise well to support pupils' learning in lessons and by providing the school with a superb set of historically accurate prints representing the life and important events that took place in surrounding villages at various historical periods. Another governor uses her expertise well in art and design to support teaching and learning. The governing body have supported the school well during a difficult phase when a new building project failed, through no fault of the school, to go according to plans. Governors are taking a keen interest in assisting with plans for developing a field that the school has recently acquired and transforming it into a learning resource. The degree of governors' active involvement in the school is remarkable and does much to promote the school's success.
54. The governing body monitors and evaluates the school's performance closely. It sets challenging targets for the head and deputy and acts as the school's critical friend by asking searching questions about the use of resources and the maintenance of standards. The school set realistic targets for its performance in English and mathematics in the National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds in 2001. The targets for the proportion of pupils expected to reach at least Level 4 in English was 81 per cent and in mathematics 88 per cent; it exceeded its target in English last year and narrowly missed its target in mathematics. More challenging targets of 87 per cent in English and 90 per cent in mathematics have been set for this year and the school is well on course to meet them.
55. Teachers and support staff work well together to maintain good provision. All share a commitment to improving standards and to maintaining a secure, productive learning environment within which pupils are able to enjoy their schooling. Responsibilities are delegated appropriately and key staff are conscientious in leading the areas of the curriculum for which they are responsible. Together, staff maintain an effective overview of the curriculum so that they are aware of areas of strength as well as areas for development. The headteacher and the governing body promote a systematic approach to school development.
56. The school improvement plan is an important document as it helps to focus attention on the school's most pressing needs. It is reviewed annually by staff and governors who work together to produce a revised plan each year. The governors ask for parents' views on school developments and in their annual report to parents make it clear that they welcome suggestions from parents on possible improvements. The most important areas for development are prioritised and there is a close link with budgetary planning to ensure that all developments are properly funded. The main

curricular priorities for development in this academic year are the development of information and communication technology and the improvement of standards in English, mathematics and science. Each subject in the curriculum features in the plan for some degree of development. The plan details how the improvements will be tackled, who will be responsible for making the improvements, the financial resources needed, a timetable for completion and the criteria against which success will be measured. One ambitious, overarching area for development is to improve the school's good teaching so that it becomes excellent.

57. Good procedures are in place for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching in order to make improvements. The headteacher conducts regular lesson observations against agreed criteria. Staff are given oral and written feedback on all monitoring. Areas for development and any points for action are noted. Such carefully planned procedures make a strong contribution to the high proportion of good teaching in the school.
58. The special educational needs co-ordinator manages the provision for pupils with special needs very well. She is active in providing learning support and guidance. She maintains the register of pupils with special educational needs and keeps thorough records. She organises reviews of progress and checks provision for pupils by observing them in class.
59. The school has produced a sound policy for gifted and talented pupils. A register of gifted and talented pupils is maintained. The school recognises the need for further guidance on how these pupils are identified and taught. Both boys and girls have equal access to all aspects of the curriculum. The school's analysis of its performance indicated that boys were not doing as well as girls in reading so appropriate action was taken to redress the imbalance. The curriculum is not biased towards either boys or girls and all have equal opportunities to participate in all activities. Girls present a powerful presence on the rugby pitch, for example.
60. The governing body set an annual budget that takes into account the school's specific needs over the following few years. A substantial surplus was developed last year, for example, because governors recognised that the new hall, resource area and classrooms would need equipping. The anticipated under-spend this year is earmarked for the further development of resources to support the development of information and communication technology. The school has commenced developing a newly acquired field as a learning resource and the governing body have made sound plans for managing this exciting project. Money and resources are used wisely and the school deliberately spends an above average sum on providing classroom assistants for each class. This has a positive impact on pupils' learning opportunities, especially for pupils who require extra support. The assistants are not always deployed efficiently, however, and there is scope for developing their roles further. On occasions their role is passive while the teacher is teaching and they are not actively involved in supporting learning. They are often given responsibility for taking groups of pupils and for teaching specific skills. In this role they are highly effective.
61. School accounts are kept meticulously and financial allocations are used carefully to maintain and improve provision. Allocations of money for specific purposes, such as those to provide support for pupils with special educational needs or the money to improve information and communication technology, are used for the purposes intended. The school secretary and administrative assistant ensure that the office runs smoothly and efficiently. The school benefits from substantial sums of money donated or raised by parents and this is used carefully to improve resources. The governing body makes sure that the principles of best value are applied to major projects by, for example, insisting on competitive tendering and checking to see if lower prices for services can be obtained elsewhere whilst also retaining quality. The consortium of local schools helps to promote cost effective purchasing. They gather together to share training, for example, so that the cost of consultants and advisers are minimised. The governing body have ensured that there is an adequate level of resources to support teaching and learning in all subjects. There are shortcomings in the school's accommodation, however. A third of the classes are still taught in temporary classrooms, the library shares space with the computer suite so neither space can be used independently of the other, the space for children in the foundation stage is cramped and there is no well developed outdoor area for the youngest children to develop physical and creative skills.

62. The high proportion of good teaching, which contributes strongly to the high standards that pupils attain, and the generally high quality of educational provision, show that the school provides good value for money. The strong leadership and management of the school and the good value for money provided have been maintained since the last inspection.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

63. In order to improve standards further the headteacher, governing body and staff should:
- 1) Raise standards in mathematics by making sure that tasks provided for pupils are more closely matched to the learning needs of all and by providing more opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills in practical situations. *(paragraphs 4,10,21,22,25,31,32,92)
 - 2) Improve learning opportunities for the children in the foundation stage. (paragraphs 18,28,52,64,67)
 - 3) Develop the use of computers to support teaching and learning across the curriculum.* (paragraphs 23,85,87,93,98,131)
 - 4) Make more effective use of the library to support teaching and learning.* (paragraphs 61,83)

Other less significant areas for development:

There is insufficient emphasis on developing pupils' understanding of the cultural diversity in our society. (paragraphs 41, 148)

There are too few opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of citizenship. (paragraphs 15,29,40,42)

* These areas for development have already been identified by the school and feature in its improvement plan.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	53
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	43

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	7	28	17	0	0	0
Percentage	4	13	52	31	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		152
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		28

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	20

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	15	12	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	11	14
	Girls	11	8	11
	Total	23	19	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (93)	70 (93)	93 (97)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	12	12
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	19	21	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	70 (93)	78 (97)	79 (97)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	7	9	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	15	13	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	94 (83)	81 (77)	100 (93)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	15	13	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	94 (83)	81 (72)	100 (86)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	144
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.6
Average class size	24.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	163

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	
Total number of education support staff	
Total aggregate hours worked per week	
Number of pupils per FTE adult	

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

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.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	388,564
Total expenditure	366,158
Expenditure per pupil	2,441
Balance brought forward from previous year	47,621
Balance carried forward to next year	70,026.

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	150
Number of questionnaires returned	45

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	33	2	4	2
My child is making good progress in school.	53	40	2	2	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	47	47	2	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	24	53	13	4	4
The teaching is good.	64	24	2	2	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	40	42	7	4	7
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	36	2	2	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	49	47	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	29	58	9	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	56	24	7	4	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	51	44	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	20	56	13	4	7

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

The results of the survey show high levels of satisfaction with the school's provision. A significant proportion of parents do not feel that pupils receive an appropriate amount of homework and the same proportion feel that the range of activities outside lessons could be improved. A minority of parents are not entirely satisfied with the amount of information they receive about their children's progress.

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

64. Since the previous inspection a different curriculum for children in the foundation stage has been introduced and now the expectations of provision for the youngest children are much higher than they were. Current provision in the mixed reception and Year 1 class is unsatisfactory in a number of respects. Lack of space in the classroom is a constraint for setting up activities that provide enough variety within the six areas of learning and there is currently limited outdoor provision for pupils during their time in reception. This restricts learning opportunities, especially for creative, social and physical development.
65. Children are admitted to the reception class at the beginning of the term in which they are five. New children are admitted each term; some children spend three terms in reception, some two terms and others one term. This makes planning provision for reception children complex because the teacher has to plan for new children each term and ensure other reception and Year 1 pupils in the class continue to make the progress they should.
66. Many children enter school with early skills in reading, writing and mathematics that are generally below the standard expected for their age. Their skills in speaking and listening and in personal, social and emotional development are at the expected levels. These findings are confirmed by the initial assessments conducted with these young children. Most make sound and often good progress and are well on course to attain the early learning goals in aspects of language and literacy, personal, social and emotional development, aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and in their ability to handle and manipulate pencils, paint brushes and other tools. Some are unlikely to reach the early learning goals in early reading and writing skills, mathematical development and in the precision that children usually develop in physical activities. It is not possible to make direct comparisons with the findings of the last inspection because it took place before the new foundation stage curriculum was introduced.
67. Teaching is sound overall and there are many good features. In creative development, personal, social and emotional development and in knowledge and understanding about the world, the teaching is good and children achieve well in consequence. The reception teacher plans lessons well, using national guidance, and prepares materials and equipment thoroughly to ensure everything is to hand when needed. Class routines are well established and clear explanations are given to the children. The children receive good direct teaching and relationships are excellent. Exceptionally thorough assessments of children's attainment and progress are made and detailed records are kept on children's progress. This is excellent practice. However, teaching is not as effective as it should be for the youngest children in the class mainly because the teacher is obliged to teach the National Curriculum to Year 1 pupils at the same time as the foundation stage curriculum to reception pupils. This is a difficult task. The impact of this is that reception children are not always taught according to the early learning goals. They are expected to sit and listen for too long, sometimes the work set is too hard for them and not enough activities are set up to provide children with experiences that promote development across the areas of learning in practical ways. The need for more activities organised for the youngest children is acknowledged by the school. The teacher fully understands that young children have short spans of concentration and that they should not be expected to sit and work for too long at any one aspect of learning. Overall, standards of teaching are not as high as those described at the last inspection but this is largely because circumstances and expectations of provision for the youngest children have changed.

Personal, social and emotional development

68. Most children enter reception with average skills in personal, social and emotional development. Teaching in this area of learning is good and as a result children achieve well. Most are well on course to attain the early learning goals by the time they transfer to Year 1. Children are

continually encouraged to take part in lessons. When they do, their contributions are valued highly by adults and their peers.

69. In reception, children play and work together well. They are enthusiastic about their learning. They were especially eager to find out about old toys prior to their visit to the toy museum. Adults provide good role models for the children. They treat each other courteously and promote good relationships in the class. Adults give all children opportunities to play leading roles in activities and this helps to develop their self-esteem. For instance, a number of different reception children acted out their parts in number songs during a numeracy lesson.

Communication, language and literacy

70. Children enjoy listening to stories. For instance, they listening intently to the story of Zaccheus when it was read to them. The teacher and teaching assistant talk to the children well and they listen carefully to them. They show children they value their contributions. Most children are well on course to achieve the early learning goals in communication by the end of the reception year. They talk sensibly and confidently about their work and engage in lengthy conversations with their friends.
71. Many children enter the school with poorly developed ability to recognise sounds in words. In particular, their knowledge of initial letter sounds is weak. In spite of good teaching in this area, many pupils are insecure in their knowledge and understanding of phonics and are unlikely to attain all the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. They read simple words with help and follow shared text during literacy lessons using well-known stories. Higher attaining children know some letter sounds and they 'have a go' at sounding out new words. Children understand that print is interesting as it contains stories. The reception class is well resourced with books.
72. The majority of children hold pencils well and form recognisable letters. They are confident enough to dictate and copy sentences about their visit to the toy museum. This good teaching is encouraging the children to think of themselves as writers.

Mathematical development

73. Many children are unlikely to achieve the early learning goals in mathematics by the end of the reception year. Most can count to five and understand the effect of adding one more and taking away one. They recognise simple shapes, such as square, rectangle, circle and triangle. They use mathematical language appropriately in their work. They are less confident in developing mathematical ideas and methods to solve practical problems.
74. Sound teaching promotes appropriate understanding and allows time for this to be established in the children's minds. For example, the children looked around the classroom and identified simple shapes around them. This lays foundations that help children to think like mathematicians and solve problems. Children sing a good range of number songs, often with associated actions, to help their understanding of adding and taking away, shape recognition and sharing.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

75. Children enter reception with a sound basic general knowledge, especially about living plants and animals and objects from the recent past. They build upon this knowledge to help them understand more about the world around them. They understand why different types of footwear are used on different occasions and why it is important for the construction of shoes, boots and wellingtons to take account of the purposes for which they will be used. They know that workmen's boots have steel caps to protect their toes should heavy objects fall on them. They understand aspects of building through the topic about 'Bob the Builder'. They have visited a brickworks and know that bricks are made by baking clay. They recognise certain features of old toys. They understand what toys are used at bath time and which are used outside on the playground.

76. Teaching is good and adults support children well in exploring the world around them. For instance, the teacher brought into school a wide range of old toys for the children to help them understand the similarities and differences between old and new toys. A parent helper regularly helps children with cooking, which helps them to understand about weights and measures and how materials change when heated. This good teaching helps children to achieve well and, by the end of the reception year, most achieve the early learning goals.

Physical development

77. Most children are well on course to attain some, but not all, the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. They have well developed skills in manipulating tools such as pencils, scissors and brushes and attain the standard expected nationally in this area of physical development. They hold pencils and crayons correctly and use them with a reasonable accuracy. They form letters that are legible. They can stick shapes to form a recognisable outline of a person. They are developing good weaving and sewing skills.
78. Teaching is sound but the outdoor play area is underdeveloped and this restricts opportunities for pupils to learn how to balance on wheeled vehicles, to climb up high on apparatus and to drive pedal powered trucks, cars and bicycles. The absence of regular opportunities for such physical development means that pupils' skills in movement and co-ordination are not as advanced as would normally be found in most schools.

Creative development

79. Teaching is good and most children achieve well and are likely to reach the early learning goals in this aspect of their learning. They sing tunefully and with enthusiasm. A number of lessons, such as mathematics and art include opportunities to sing songs related to their work. Most pupils recognise colours and use charcoal and paints to pleasing effect. For example, they painted pictures of toys they saw at the toy museum. Some were challenged by the teaching assistant to think about how paint dries best. In the topic about 'Bob the Builder', children had opportunities to dress up and play characters from a building site. Some were canteen staff, others plumbers, bricklayers, the site foreman, building inspector and surveyors. They thoroughly enjoy these rich learning opportunities.

ENGLISH

80. Scrutiny of books and observations of lessons show that pupils are on course to attain average standards by the end of Year 2, and standards that are above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils enter school with skills in language and literacy that are not as well developed as would normally be expected so it is clear that pupils achieve well from year to year to attain so well by the time they are ready to leave the school. Speaking and listening skills and reading are above average throughout the school and these are significant strengths. Writing is not so strong in Years 1 and 2. Last year's National Curriculum test results for pupils in Year 2 largely reflect inspection findings; when compared with all schools the school's performance was average in reading but below average in writing. In the tests for pupils in Year 6 the school's performance was well above average. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in every year because of the good support they receive in the classroom and when withdrawn for work in small groups.
81. Attainment in English at the time of the last inspection was judged to be above average by the end of Year 2 and by the end of Year 6. It would appear, therefore, that standards for pupils at the end of Year 2 are not as high as they were but the above average standards attained by the end of Year 6 have been maintained. Over the last three years girls have outperformed boys but by less than the extent nationally.

82. When pupils enter the school their speaking skills and to a lesser extent, listening skills are slightly below average. From the beginning they are encouraged to express themselves and to ask and answer questions and by Year 2 these skills are already at least in line with expectations. In a Year 2 lesson, after looking at a picture of 'St George and the Dragon', the class split into groups to discuss a copy of the picture provided by the teacher. She made it clear that this was not a 'quiet session' and the pupils responded by discussing the picture animatedly. This good use of paired and small group discussion is a key element in the school's success, and is particularly effective in involving all pupils in discussion, including those who might be reluctant to speak in front of the whole class. Later in the same lesson the pupils made up their own drama featuring the characters they had discussed, and then showed their 'plays' to the rest of the class in an unselfconscious way. The success of this approach is clear at the top end of the school where in many lessons and subjects, pupils 'brainstorm' in pairs or small groups before sharing opinions with the rest of the class. Drama too is widely used throughout the school to stimulate ideas and provoke response. A lovely example of this was provided in a Year 6 history lesson where the teaching assistant dressed up and played the part of a housewife in World War Two.
83. Standards in reading are already just above average by the end of Year 2. Pupils read regularly with their teachers in group reading sessions and during individual sessions, sometimes with classroom assistants or volunteers. They are taught a wide range of strategies to tackle new words and take reading books home regularly. By Year 6 pupils are reading a good range of fiction and non-fiction and are able to talk knowledgeably about different authors and genres. Pupils have very positive attitudes to reading, including those with special educational needs who continue to benefit from regular extra help. All pupils have a reading log, but opportunities are sometimes missed to record common errors and use them as short-term targets for improvement. In Year 6 pupils record answers to questions set by the teacher on their group reading book. This is effective in promoting higher order reading skills such as inference and deduction. These skills are also used well in subjects such as history and geography where pupils are often challenged to find specific information in a text. Pupils are also skilled in interrogating the Internet for this purpose. The library is well stocked and used on a regular basis, but because it doubles as the computer suite, it cannot easily be used informally or when an unexpected question arises. A significant minority of pupils find difficulty in using the library effectively for research. They know how to use indexes and how the classification system works but are still not familiar with the books available.
84. Standards in writing by the end of Year 2 are broadly average, and by the end of Year 6 are above average. This represents steady progress and good achievement by pupils throughout the school. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to write in different styles and for different purposes. In Year 2 pupils have illustrated fairy stories such as 'Red Riding Hood' accompanied by lively speech 'bubbles' such as, 'Oh Granny, how funny you are'. Pupils in Year 3, when retelling the story of Hansel and Gretel from the point of view of one of the characters, show good understanding of different angles on a story. Pupils in Year 4 have written reports for 'The Daily Prophet' with lively and humorous reports on the 'Quidditch World Cup' based on a 'Harry Potter' book. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils are producing some high quality work. Using pictures as a stimulus, many have produced sensitive and thoughtful pieces of poetry or prose under the title 'fine words – fine art'. Following a visit by a Shakespeare company they wrote about the play, 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', including well considered opinions about some of the main characters. For example one pupil wrote, 'I think Oberon was wrong to do what he did.... change the emotions and feelings of other people ... make people love each other when they didn't feel that way'. Some of the higher attaining pupils have also produced complete stories of very high quality based on their history topic about the Second World War. They show an excellent understanding of what makes a good story, and are able to involve the reader and build the tension as the stories move towards their climax. There are lots of good dialogue in some of these stories including some written in colloquial English to give extra realism to the characters. Handwriting is developed soundly throughout the school, and by Year 6, nearly all pupils are able to write in a fluent and legible style.

85. Good links are made with other subjects such as history where pupils are often challenged to write about the past from different points of view, or to say how they would feel if they were in a particular situation. For instance, pupils in Year 2 have written about how they would feel if they were a pupil in a Victorian school. A good example of using literacy skills was provided in a Year 6 history lesson where pupils used 'post it' sheets to rapidly write bullet points highlighting the key information gleaned from various sources. Note taking is a feature of many lessons and pupils are encouraged to use drafting books for this purpose. For example, during a Year 5 geography lesson, some of the higher attaining pupils were able to note down many of the main points during a fascinating talk about local transport through the ages given by a local historian. However, teachers are not always explicit enough about what type of written work they expect from the pupils in these other subjects. Pupils are sometimes unsure whether they are writing instructions, as in a recipe for example, or writing a narrative. Teachers do not always make clear what they expect from the higher attaining pupils in terms of quality or quantity. There are inconsistencies in expectations in different classes. Generally, information and communication technology is still underused in support of literacy. Although there are good examples of word-processed work on display, these are mostly 'neat copies' which do not make full use of the range of writing skills that can be promoted through direct use of the technology.
86. Teaching in both key stages is almost invariably good and often it is very good. The good teaching results in effective learning. Teachers plan well for a variety of stimulating and interesting activities. Most lessons have good pace and challenge pupils well. Teachers often use humour to illustrate a point, and because relationships are so good pupils can enjoy the joke without losing concentration. A particular strength in a number of classes is the way the teachers and classroom assistants work as a team, sometimes play acting and improvising to illustrate a particular point. This worked brilliantly in a lesson with the oldest pupils where by improvising a conversation between different characters in a shared text they were successful in enabling the pupils to understand feelings and emotions which were hinted at but not openly expressed in the story. High expectations are evident in much of the written work produced in the older classes, which is often carefully thought out and beautifully presented. Expectations are not consistently high in all classes. Marking of work is of a high standard giving clear guidelines for improvement such as, 'good blend of action, description and dialogue.... the last comment is a bit rushed a jump in emotions'. However, there are occasions in the classes for pupils in Years 3 and 4 when teachers need to be more explicit about what standards they expect in the written work. The attention to grammar and spelling does not always match the quality of the content, and this sometimes prevents the more able pupils from achieving the higher levels of attainment in writing.
87. The curriculum is enriched by a variety of extra activities such as 'book weeks' and visits by theatre companies. At an after school drama club pupils received expert tuition in the art of stage fighting, which not only deepened their understanding of the theatre but was very effective in promoting personal and social skills. The curriculum is well organised. Each year group is taught through the literacy hour every day, and in the classes for older pupils separate periods are set aside for group reading, spelling and handwriting practice. Good support is given to those who need it through the use of well-targeted extra tuition. Resources are adequate and generally used well though the use of computers to support teaching and learning is underdeveloped. Leadership in the subject is good. Through her in-depth analysis of test results and monitoring of teaching and learning, the co-ordinator has a clear idea of the present position, and has identified areas for development. The school is well placed to improve still further on its performance in the future.

MATHEMATICS

88. Inspection evidence shows that by the end of Year 2, and again by the end of Year 6, pupils are on course to attain standards that are broadly average. These findings do not concur with last year's National Curriculum test results. Results of the national tests in 2001 for pupils in Year 2 and in Year 6 show that standards were above average. Factors that contribute to the variation in performance from year to year are the small number of pupils in some year groups, the high proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties in some year groups and the number of

pupils who enter and leave during the course of their schooling in the primary phase. Boys performed much better in the tests than girls but no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls were noted during the inspection.

89. Most pupils, including those identified as having special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily. However, teachers do not always expect enough of higher attaining pupils who do not always achieve as well as they should.
90. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. The quality of teaching has improved significantly. Planning, an area of weakness at the time of the last inspection, is much improved as the school now uses the national numeracy guidance to plan lessons. However the National Numeracy Strategy is not firmly embedded in the school's practice. The recommended three-part lesson structure is not always used to full advantage. Mental and oral sessions do not always challenge pupils sufficiently and the final session does not always give them enough opportunity to discuss what they have done and learnt. Other improvements include better assessment procedures, more effective monitoring of teaching and learning, and updated resources.
91. Standards of work seen in books and discussions with pupils indicate that, by the end of Year 2, pupils are likely to attain standards that are similar to those expected nationally in number, shape, space and measures. Most pupils, including those identified as having special needs, make good progress and are achieving satisfactorily. The majority of pupils have sound mental arithmetic skills because of the mostly satisfactory opportunities provided. They understand that the position of a digit in a number affects its value and the more able pupils are confident at working in hundreds. Most pupils can recognise odd and even numbers and count confidently at least to 100 in steps of 2, 5 and 10. They learn methods for adding 9 and 11 and double and halve numbers. Less able pupils work comfortably with numbers to 50, counting in 2's and 5's. More able pupils add tens and hundreds to a given number. Most recognise and use coins in different combinations to make a £1 in shopping activities and change pence into pounds and pence accurately. Most recognise and know the names of regular two and three-dimensional shapes and are developing their measuring skills well.
92. By the end of Year 6, pupils are well on course to attain standards that are similar to those expected nationally in number, shape, space and measures as well as handling data. Most pupils have developed sound skills in mental arithmetic and the majority work confidently with numbers in hundreds and more able pupils with much higher numbers. The majority have a sound grasp of place value and of the four number operations, addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, and can halve and double large numbers. Most complete written calculations involving multiplication and division of three-digit numbers by one and two-digit numbers confidently. Most pupils can arrange fractions in numerical order and understand the link between equivalent fractions, percentages and decimals. More able pupils use this understanding confidently to solve problems. Pupils find perimeters and areas of regular shapes and use co-ordinates successfully to locate position and rotate shapes. Most have a sound grasp of common weights and measures and time. Most can use a protractor to draw and measure angles accurately. However, data handling activities and the interpretation of line and block charts are less well developed. Pupils demonstrate very good attitudes to their work. They relate very well together especially when working in group activities. However, throughout the school pupils lack confidence in applying their knowledge to solving problems. The setting of work involving real-life problem solving, to encourage pupils to use their knowledge and understanding, does not feature enough in lessons. There are practical activities, such as cooking, that give good opportunities for pupils to practise skills of weighing, measuring and estimating, but such opportunities are too infrequent. The vast majority of pupils enjoy mathematics and this results in very positive attitudes and behaviour.
93. The quality of teaching and learning across the school was good in most of the lessons seen but in several lessons there were significant shortcomings. There were no unsatisfactory lessons observed. This is a big improvement since the last inspection when a third of the lessons in the classes for pupils in Years 3 to 6 was unsatisfactory. Scrutiny of the work that pupils produce indicates that, in the longer term, teaching is broadly satisfactory and confirms the shortcomings. Work is not always closely matched to pupils' widely varying stages of development and the pace

of learning is inconsistent; in Year 3 it is slower than in the other year groups. Teachers usually share the purpose of the lesson clearly with pupils so that they are aware of what they will be learning and what is expected and this creates interest and awareness. Teachers do not regularly explain the purpose of activities, however, or explain how skills might be of practical use. Most teachers have good subject knowledge but the numeracy strategy is not yet firmly embedded in the school's practice. The three-part lesson structure is not well established in all lessons; the initial mental activity is frequently too short. Sessions are not always taught with sufficient pace and not all pupils are sufficiently involved. Teachers do not always manage time and resources efficiently. Activities are not always well matched to the needs of all pupils as they often undertake the same tasks regardless of their widely varying stages of development. This means that more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged and the less able find activities too difficult. Lessons usually end with a review of what has been learnt when pupils are given the opportunity to explain their thinking and talk about what they have been learning but these are often too short. Throughout the school, teachers provide insufficient opportunities for pupils to use mathematics involving real-life problems. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly but there are few useful comments which let pupils know how they can improve and the use of marking procedures is not consistent across the school. Teachers ensure that all pupils are fully involved in all mathematical tasks although their needs are not always sufficiently met with appropriate activities. Regular homework activities support and extend pupils' learning and they receive good support at home. Support assistants are used very well to support groups of pupils in the classrooms.

94. Computers are not used sufficiently to support and extend pupils' learning and this is an area for development. Most teachers are unaware of the range of programs available or how to use them effectively. There are occasions when pupils use mathematics effectively in other subjects. For example, they are involved in drawing charts and taking accurate measurements in science, using timelines in history, and using measurement and weighing in design and technology activities. Opportunities to practise numeracy across the curriculum are not planned systematically, however.
95. The co-ordinator provides sound leadership and support to colleagues and manages the subject satisfactorily. Analysis of test results is thorough and results are used well to identify any areas of weakness in pupils' learning. However, the information is not always used effectively to ensure activities are matched to the needs of all pupils. There has been regular monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher but this needs to be developed further and opportunities made for the co-ordinator to monitor teaching and learning more directly rather than just monitoring learning by looking at pupils; books and studying test results. Recently introduced assessment and recording systems and target setting for pupils, have not yet had time to take effect. There is a good range of accessible learning resources which are of good quality and used well in lessons to support pupils' learning.

SCIENCE

96. In the national tests in 2001 for pupils in Year 6, the school's performance was well above average when compared to all schools and above average when compared to schools in similar contexts. Standards attained by higher attaining pupils were well above average when compared to all schools and average when compared to schools in similar contexts. This is an improvement from the standards attained at the time of the last inspection. Over the past three years, the girls have outperformed boys in science. Over the past four years, standards have been variable, but overall, there has been a rising trend of improvement. In the teacher assessments for pupils in Year 2 in 2001, standards have not been as good as this. Standards were well below those attained nationally in all aspects of science. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 attained well below national averages when compared to all schools, except in investigative science and physical processes where they reached average standards.
97. Inspection evidence indicates that the rising trend of improvement in science is being maintained. Most pupils are on course to attain average standards by the end of Year 2 and many are likely to

attain standards that are above average. Most pupils design, make and explain simple electric circuits and include them in models they have made. They understand the effects of pushing and pulling on objects and record findings from their investigations on block graphs. They are taught these topics in depth and have a good understanding of them. Most pupils are likely to attain standards that are above average by the time they reach the end of Year 6. Most understand that filtration helps purify water. They understand about the properties of some materials. For instance, most understand about conductors and insulators; they know why heat travels through some materials, such as metal, quicker than through others, such as wood. Most understand that certain materials conduct electricity and use electrical symbols in their diagrams. They understand that the type of surface is important to make pushing and pulling easier or more difficult. Higher attaining pupils know that different types of electrical circuit make lights brighter.

98. The quality of teaching is generally good throughout the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The level of subject expertise of the staff is mostly good. Lessons are well planned and include a clear focus for the learning. The most effective lessons are well prepared with all equipment and materials to hand. Tasks are planned that provide appropriate challenge to pupils of all abilities, and these tasks often inspire pupils. This occurred in a Year 2 lesson during the inspection when pupils were asked to make a circuit that would work in a simple model. Some pupils were captivated by this idea and produced models of caves that included lights. In all lessons observed, the quality of direct teaching of scientific knowledge and understanding was a strength. At best, this was supported by clear instruction given to pupils about how they should record their work. This included a suitable structure for their writing, the spelling of key words and the use of white boards to draft out sentences. Most teachers maintained high expectations of behaviour and pupils responded positively to this and behaved well. A further feature of the good teaching is the detailed assessment records teachers maintain about pupils' progress in the subject. This is good practice. All these positive features of the teaching help pupils of all abilities to make good progress. Pupils respond positively to this good teaching and they are keen to learn. However, teaching is not always of this high standard. On occasions, equipment was not always to hand, the pace of learning was too slow and higher attaining pupils could have been given work that extended their thinking further. These factors slowed down the pace of learning in these lessons.
99. The subject is organised and managed well by the co-ordinator. She has organised the teaching of all aspects of the National Curriculum according to a logical long-term plan. Pupils receive good opportunities to carry out investigations, following scientific principles of hypothesising, carrying out fair tests and reporting conclusions in logical ways. However, they do not receive enough opportunities to use computers in science lessons. The co-ordinator monitors and evaluates pupils' work in science and takes appropriate action to correct any weaknesses found. She promotes work of high quality and leads by example. The priorities set by the school for maintaining improvements are appropriate. Resources are good and well maintained.

ART AND DESIGN

100. This is a strength of the school. Most pupils are well on course to exceed national expectations by the end of Year 2 and again by the end of Year 6. This is a similar judgement to that made in the last inspection. Work displayed round the school is of a high quality. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, achieve well as they move through the school.
101. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use a wide range of media and techniques successfully in their work. From an early age, they are introduced to colour matching and mixing and they regularly produce boldly painted portraits. They print carefully with sponge rubber, use printing ink and rollers effectively and create polystyrene printing blocks with intricate designs, showing great care and concentration when arranging printed patterns. Pupils in Year 1 use colour washes most effectively as a background to their landscapes of 'Views from the Classroom Window'. They print symmetrically shaped butterflies and learn the technique of marbling. They use their drawing skills well in other subjects. They created a good series of drawings to illustrate their visit to a

brickfield as part of a project on buildings and their carefully drawn pictures of articles, such as kettles and sewing machines, from olden times, show exceptional attention to detail. Pupils use fabric to create collages of houses and weave coloured wool on card looms. The circular symmetrical patterns woven around straws provides a good link with work on shapes in mathematics. Computers are used well to produce pictures of houses. Pupils in Year 2 studied Modigliane's 'Girl with Pigtails' and used this to inspire exceptionally sensitive pictures using oil pastels.

102. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 build on the skills developed in earlier years. By the end of Year 6, they have mastered a wide range of techniques that they use to good effect in their work. Pupils in Year 3 greatly appreciated a lesson where they were given good opportunities to study patterns in nature. Cabbages, shells, leaves, fruit and vegetables were studied closely. When a red cabbage was cut in half to reveal the pattern inside there were gasps of awe and one pupil expressed his wonder with simple eloquence, 'It's beautiful'. They noted the similarities between the internal structure of a loofah with the pattern inside a cucumber and understood how the loofah derives from a sea cucumber. After such careful observation good, detailed drawings were produced. Pupils in Year 4 studied the pointillist technique used by Seurat in 'Bathers at Asnieres' and used computers well to replicate the effect, creating a similar texture by using a spray painting tool. The work produced was highly detailed and captured light in a similar way to the work of Seurat. Work is developed well around particular themes. In Year 4, for example, a study of leaves was illustrated by fine pen and ink drawings of each cellular detail of leaves, water colour paintings of leaves with work culminating in leaf prints on hessian with the main features of the skeleton picked out in carefully stitched threads. These pupils also enjoy studying the work of Mary Cassat and copy some of her Impressionist work into their sketch books. The regular use of pencils of differing degrees of hardness by pupils throughout the school enables them to produce realistic sketches of good quality. In a lesson for pupils in Year 6 pupils used charcoal and chalk to produce remarkably accurate portraits of their friends. Most managed to capture particular poses and facial expressions exceptionally well. The high quality drawings and bold images created by pupils in Year 6 demonstrate how well they have mastered art and design skills over their years in the school.
103. The quality of teaching across the school is good and often it is even better. The most effective teaching occurs where skills are taught through explicit demonstration. In Year 1, for example, the teacher herself carefully draws an article, such as a wooden washing dolly, as pupils watch. She gives a running commentary as she describes the technique of using shading, for example, to add depth to the drawing. This gave pupils a good understanding of the quality of work expected. Good teaching was seen in Year 2 where pupils were studying paintings that depicted different versions of the story of St George and the Dragon. A good discussion session on Paolo Uccello's painting generated great enthusiasm and captured pupils' imagination. They were amazed that the work had been painted six hundred years ago and were fascinated by the teacher's clear explanation of how painters at that time had to mix their own paints from pigments. The teacher re-iterated instructions so that pupils were in no doubt about what was expected of them. The teacher emphasised that the key to producing good quality work was high quality looking. They used viewfinders well to select and focus on details from pictures before copying them carefully. In an excellent lesson in Year 6, pupils studied pencil sketches by John Singer Sargent projected from overhead projector transparencies. The teacher's questioning strategies challenged pupils' thinking and made them highly aware of proportion, light and the various effects that the artist achieved by varying his use of pencils. Pupils answered thoughtfully concluding, for example, that the strong pencil lines used to draw an old man were very different from the lighter touch that produced gentler tones that captured a young child's soft complexion. A digital camera was used well too capture each child's pose and expression, and the prints were used well to develop the drawings. Children were encouraged to concentrate on where light fell and how to use chalk to create a contrast between light and dark areas. The lesson generated not only great enthusiasm but also a serious approach to the work in hand. Pupils concentrated hard and used the skills they had learned well. The work that resulted was of high quality.
104. Good solid three-dimensional models of a giant snail and huge frog, for example, sit beside the school's entrance gate. These were constructed from plaster over wire armatures with the surface

decorated with mosaic tiles. This encourages an understanding of how the environment outdoors can be enhanced by appropriately placed sculpture.

105. A very good lesson in Year 3 was supported well by a parent who brought a great deal of expertise into the classroom. She demonstrated stencilling techniques in a clear, step-by-step way. She urged pupils to use paint sparingly and to apply it gently, 'Imagine you are brushing the paint onto a sleeping baby and you mustn't wake it up.' Delicate stencil designs were produced. Teachers plan and prepare their lessons carefully but classroom assistants are not always deployed effectively. In one lesson, for example, the classroom assistant had no particular role and spent most of the time admiring pupils' work. The work provided for pupils is often imaginative and stimulating. Teachers manage their pupils well and create a calm and purposeful working atmosphere that helps pupils to concentrate and produce their best efforts. Pupils are very enthusiastic about their work, discuss it in depth and behave well in all lessons. Teachers have good subject knowledge and this is supplemented well by encouraging governors and parents to share their expertise.
106. The subject helps to develop pupils' cultural awareness as when the whole school recently celebrated an African arts week. Bold paintings, prints and models of African animals, tribal masks and patterns, using appropriate colours, such as reds, oranges, yellows and black to give dramatic effect, were produced. Good masks depicting lions, tigers, elephants and giraffes formed the centre piece of displays of pupils' work. Three-dimensional work, such as a horned antelope built over a wire armature, added to the impact of the display.
107. The subject is well managed by the newly appointed co-ordinator and satisfactory levels of resources are maintained. The school follows a nationally recommended planning framework. This helps to promote good coverage of the National Curriculum but the learning objectives for lessons are often obscure. Teachers often take these objectives directly from the plans without modification to enable pupils to understand what they are supposed to be learning. Planning and completed work are looked at to monitor coverage and assess standards throughout the school. This monitoring gives the co-ordinator an overview of the provision and highlights areas requiring further development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

108. It was only possible to see a limited number of lessons during the inspection. Further evidence was drawn from displays of work, teachers' planning, pupils' folders, photographic evidence and conversations with pupils. This indicates that by the end of Year 2, pupils are on course to attain standards that are broadly in line with those expected nationally which is not quite as good as that found at the time of the last inspection. By the end of Year 6, pupils are likely to attain standards that are above those expected nationally.
109. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. The school has successfully adopted a nationally recommended planning framework and this provides continuity in learning across the school, which was a weakness at the time of the last inspection. The school now provides sound opportunities for pupils to design, make and evaluate in a range of materials and contexts. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress across the school and achieve soundly.
110. Sound standards at the end of Year 2 result from teaching that is at least satisfactory. From looking at pupils' books and finished models, pupils have experienced a range of activities planned to develop the stages of designing, planning, making and evaluating. Pupils talk enthusiastically about design and technology lessons and they enjoy activities. They use their imagination well and plan interesting ideas, for example, when designing and making a colourful coat and a moving toy. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their work and record what they have learnt and how they could improve what they have made.

111. By the end of Year 6, standards are above national expectations. Pupils build soundly on previously learnt knowledge and skills. They learn to refine basic cutting and joining techniques as, for example when they plan, design and construct a shelter. Good links are maintained with science when they design and make a fairground ride powered by an electric motor. Examples of writing show that pupils test and clearly evaluate their finished products. Pupils work well together in small groups, sharing ideas and modifying their plans with very good levels of interest and co-operation. They have a very positive attitudes to the subject.
112. The school tries hard to link activities with other subjects so that it is more meaningful to the pupils. For example, good links are made with history in Year 3 where pupils design and make a holder for an identity card and make carrot buns as part of their project on World War Two. In Year 5 and Year 6 they use computer technology well using an art package to design and print wall paper and floor designs for a model Victorian room. Progression is clearly evident in their knowledge and understanding of materials and how things can be joined. This includes using needle and thread when they make money containers in Year 4 and slippers in Year 6. However across the school insufficient emphasis is placed by teachers on the planning and evaluation stages. In some classes there are insufficient opportunities for small focused tasks and skills so that pupils have sufficient knowledge to produce quality items. Very good opportunities are provided to promote personal and social development and relationships as pupils work very well in their groups discussing and sharing what they are doing.
113. Evidence derived from studying teachers' planning, talking to pupils and looking at their work, indicates that teaching across the school is at least satisfactory. A lesson in Year 3 was good. The teacher was well prepared, maintained a brisk pace and managed pupils, time and the activity well. Good reference was made to knowledge gleaned from previous lessons through reflective questioning. The activity was clearly explained to pupils and, from the way they settled to the task of making a picture frame, was clearly understood. Good use was made of learning support assistants and helpful parents to support pupils undertaking other activities. This included the making of carrot buns, using dried egg and dried milk, linked to the World War Two history topic. Across the school, teachers make successful use of national guidance to plan and teach lessons. A range of projects are carried out, with tasks that enable pupils to make good use of the 'plan, make and evaluate' sequence. However, designs often lack sufficient detail and do not show how pupils will use materials and make the finished article. Occasionally items are not completed in some classes. Evaluations do not always provide enough information as to how pupils would improve what they have made and what was successful. Pupils use a wide range of materials and construction techniques to develop skills and knowledge and there are good links with science, history, art and design, numeracy and literacy. Regular cooking activities give pupils opportunities to practise practical mathematical activities as they weigh and measure ingredients. These activities also reinforce the importance of high standards of personal hygiene and clean utensils. Teachers ensure all pupils are fully involved in all activities and most pupils achieve well.
114. The subject is soundly managed by the newly appointed co-ordinator. There is a draft long-term planning framework in place, based on national guidance. This promotes good coverage of the National Curriculum requirements in a logical, sequential way so that skills, knowledge and understanding are developed cumulatively. Although the co-ordinator monitors planning there is insufficient emphasis on monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and this is an area for development. There is a good range of tools and resources available and these are well organised and used effectively to support the subject. A particular strength is the support given by parents so that all pupils have regular access to food technology, or cooking, linked to other areas of the curriculum. Learning is enhanced by events such as the recent 'Arts Fortnight' when activities included support from an artist who worked in the school providing guidance on puppet making.

GEOGRAPHY

115. Pupils are on course to attain standards that are in line with national expectations by the time they reach the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6. This was also the finding of the last inspection in 1997.
116. In Year 2, pupils have looked closely at the school, identified the attractive and unattractive aspects and have drawn a plan showing its main features. They have also drawn a plan of their route to school, and the more able have identified ways of making their journey safer, for instance by building a pelican crossing. They are beginning to learn about the wider world, and in their work on St Lucia show some understanding of maps, routes and differences between this island and our own country. Pictures, together with some sound writing by the more able under the title of, 'What I think it would look like', show that pupils are beginning to be aware of the features of a different environment, including such aspects as weather, food and lifestyle. In one lesson a pupil in Year 1 was able to confidently point out China on a world map.
117. In Year 6, pupils learn about a wide range of different places through such activities as a survey of the most popular holiday destinations. They relate political and environmental issues to particular parts of the world such as foot and mouth disease in the United Kingdom, bombing in Afghanistan or the controversy over the death penalty in the United States. Through looking at world-wide weather patterns they know that the earth is divided into different zones and that the climate and vegetation at the equator are quite different from that in the temperate zones. In this term's work they are looking at mountainous regions around the globe, and identifying aspects of this environment which have an impact on people's lives. A particular strength is their skill and confidence in knowing where to look for information, and how to sort and classify it so that the most important facts can be highlighted.
118. In one lesson observed, the youngest pupils were talking about the travels of 'Barnaby Bear' who is taken to different countries by parents, teachers and governors. Many of the pupils in Year 1 were able to remember the names of such countries as Portugal, France or Canada. The teacher talked about Barnaby's trip to China with a friend, and showed the class a book containing photographs, entry tickets and other souvenirs of the trip. This was very successful in gaining the pupils' interest and a good discussion ensued about aspects of the country such as transport, food and buildings like the Great Wall of China.
119. In a lesson for pupils in Year 5, the visit of a local historian was very successful in bringing to life the types of transport through the ages that might have used a local river crossing. Pupils had previously carried out a traffic survey at the bridge, which is now being replaced, and this lesson gave a fascinating insight into a great range of geographical knowledge, from why a settlement was established there in the first place, to the commercial importance of the bridge in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In a lesson for pupils in Year 6, groups of pupils who had been studying mountain ranges, gave a presentation with slides, text and sound using a computer program. This successfully challenged them to identify and explain which features of these environments are important to the people who live there.
120. Teaching of the subject is sound overall with some very good aspects. The greatest strength lies in the way teachers actively involve pupils in their learning. Visits, including a residential trip, and visitors are used creatively and well. There is much good discussion, both as a class and independently in groups and pairs. In the classes for older pupils they are encouraged to develop research skills and give presentations to others in the class. In this way the subject makes a good contribution to personal development, and is very inclusive in that it encourages all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to participate fully. It also makes a very good contribution to pupils' speaking and listening skills. Because they are interested and well motivated, pupils' behaviour at both key stages is invariably very good. However, there are times when the follow-up tasks are not explained sufficiently and pupils are unclear about how they should record the information. Expectations of the standard of presentation and the variety of writing required for different purposes are not always high enough, especially for the higher attaining pupils.

121. The school has adopted a planning framework that ensures good coverage and a logical progression of skills and knowledge. The co-ordinator is aware that this scheme needs further adaptation before it can be fully implemented, and this process has already begun. She has good ideas for further development including closer contacts with local industry, more use of technology, particularly e-mail, and more focused monitoring and evaluation to ensure standards are high enough. Given the high quality of much of the teaching going on in the school, the school is well placed to make further improvements.

HISTORY

122. Throughout the school pupils are on course to attain standards that exceed national expectations. This was also the case at the time of the last inspection, but since then the learning opportunities for pupils have been considerably enriched and the teaching of history is now a particular strength of the school.
123. The school's success is rooted in the way that it provides a rich variety of experiences to stimulate pupils' imagination and curiosity. One of the first things to strike a visitor to the school are the displays, featuring artefacts from different periods, many of which are brought in by the pupils themselves. There are photographs taken on visits to places of interest, books, maps and posters, and lively, thoughtful writing composed by the pupils. An unusually rich resource is provided by a series of paintings by a local artist of people and events through history from pre-Roman to the 1920s. These are all set locally and based on real people and events and are accompanied by vivid descriptions of what is going on. Whether it is through visits to a local Roman site or hearing a first-hand account of life during the Second World War, pupils are receiving an exceptionally wide variety of stimulating experiences.
124. In Year 2 pupils have been learning about life in Victorian times, and important historical events like the Great Fire of London. They can place events in chronological order and give reasons for them, for instance what might have started the Great Fire. The more able are starting to think about the effect on people's lives and can write perceptively about the positive effects of the disaster, such as making people think more carefully about how houses were built. They are beginning to identify what they would like to find out, and to think about things from a different point of view, for instance writing about their feelings as a pupil in a Victorian school. In a lesson based on the story of St George, some showed good understanding of how stories were passed on by word of mouth and might have changed considerably by the time they came to be written down.
125. In Year 6, pupils are using a wider variety of sources to do their own research. They are analysing artefacts, studying texts and looking for evidence of the effect different periods of history have on our lives today. For example, studying the English language to see how many words they can find of Greek origin, or the theatre to see how our ideas of comedy and tragedy came from the Greeks. They are able to look at history from particular points of view, and are beginning to understand that people's lives can be affected by events in very different ways, for example, the changing role of women during the Second World War. They have a good understanding that aspects of the past can be represented and interpreted in different ways.
126. Across the school, teaching is good and there are examples of some outstanding teaching for the older pupils. This is because teachers stimulate and inspire the pupils to want to know more, because their subject knowledge is good and because they challenge pupils of all abilities. In the class for the youngest pupils, a visit to a toy museum was preceded by a lively discussion about how toys have changed. The teacher produced various toys from a bag and pupils asked perceptive questions, such as whether any were powered by clockwork. Preparation for this visit was very thorough so that pupils could get maximum benefit from their day out. The Year 4 class had recently visited a local Roman site and sketched many of the artefacts that had been discovered there. The teacher used these, and one of the school's historical paintings, to stimulate a lively discussion about what the artefacts would have been used for, and what this

tells us about life in Britain at that time. Teaching assistants play an important role in many lessons. An outstanding example of this was provided in Year 6, where the teaching assistant played the part of a wartime wife. She talked about her work in the munitions factory, the difficulty of getting enough food because of rationing and how her husband's letters from the front were censored. Pupils were spellbound, and because this was followed up with very good use of written materials to look for more specific information, learning in this lesson was excellent.

127. Learning for all groups of pupils is good, because all, including those with special educational needs, are fully involved in all activities. There are however, times when the follow-up work to these activities is not sufficiently adapted to challenge the more able pupils. The subject makes a good contribution to speaking and listening skills, but opportunities to enhance writing skills are underdeveloped. The subject makes a sound contribution to numeracy through such things as prices and quantities of rationed food. Computers are occasionally used well by the older pupils to gather information. Many opportunities are given for pupils to exercise initiative and co-operate in investigations and in these ways the subject makes a very good contribution to personal development and relationships.
128. The subject is well led and managed by the headteacher who has a clear vision for improvements and very good knowledge of history. Both he and the governor with responsibility for the subject, monitor lessons and give feedback to teachers. Weaknesses are then identified and teachers encouraged to use this knowledge positively to improve their teaching. Resources are good and very good use is made of visits, visitors and drama to bring the subject alive. An historical musical, written and composed by the deputy headteacher, was performed in association with pupils from local schools. This provided particularly rich learning opportunities. It was enacted in the grounds of a nearby castle and traced the history of the castle, and the surrounding area, over the last thousand years.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

129. Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 is likely to be below that expected nationally. By the end of Year 6, standards are on course to be broadly similar to those expected nationally and in some areas, such as media presentations, they exceed expectations. Overall standards are not as good as at the time of the last inspection when they were deemed to be above average. However, National Curriculum requirements and expectations of pupils are now far more demanding. Changes in staff, a lack of teachers' knowledge and expertise, major new building disruptions and insufficient modern computers in the past, meant that pupils did not have sufficient opportunities to develop necessary skills and knowledge. However, since the new computer area, equipped with modern computers, was established at the beginning of this academic year, progress has been good. The school now has the potential to raise standards much further.
130. By the end of Year 2, pupils' knowledge and understanding of technology and their understanding of how to use computers are both likely to be below national expectations although standards are improving. Most pupils are at an early stage of learning how to control the mouse, how to drag and drop images, how to move text around the screen, and how to save and print their work. Most understand how to use the space bar, shift key to make capital letters and use the delete key. Pupils enjoy computer activities and most show good concentration and perseverance as they log on and type out text. They usually work in pairs, taking turns and supporting each other well. However, they have little understanding and knowledge of the benefits of using information and communication technology in school and out in the wider world.
131. By the end of Year 6, pupils have varying standards of attainment; those who have regular access to a computer at home display more confidence and knowledge than those who do not. Most pupils have made good progress since the opening of the computer area through sound, well structured teaching. Most load up computers, retrieve, amend, print and save their work confidently. They know how to use a wide variety of fonts, sizes and colours and use the spellchecker effectively. They share and exchange ideas, using an art package, by designing and printing pictures, or retrieving them from clip art collections and combining these with writing.

Using a publishing program, they have produced some very good quality pamphlets about the school and a well made termly news sheet. They design a simple spreadsheet and input information to convert pounds to euros, using simple formulae. Most use the Internet and CD-ROMs confidently to find information in history and geography. As part of the geography topic on mountains they put together a good quality multi-media presentation using pictures, text, sounds and fades effectively. However, their understanding of the use of technology for control and monitoring is below expectations because the equipment has only recently been purchased and this area is planned to be taught next term. Their understanding of the use of information and communication technology and the benefits in the world beyond school is below expectations and is an area for development. Pupils are well motivated and are keen and eager to learn, which means they have a good attitudes and behaviour. Almost all have access to computers at home which has given them the opportunity to practise and reinforce skills such as ending e-mails, undertaking research and using the Internet.

132. The quality of teaching and learning across the school is sound and most pupils, including those with special needs, achieve satisfactorily. Most teachers have at least sound subject knowledge and are due to begin the next phase of training to improve this further and develop new skills at the beginning of the summer term. Soundly prepared lessons, making effective use of national guidance and support materials, ensure that an appropriate range of work is provided for pupils to develop new skills. Teachers usually introduce new work through focused whole class sessions. They share details of learning intentions with pupils at the beginning of each teaching session. However, the pace of this introduction is sometimes slow and this means pupils become restless as they are keen to get to work. Teachers manage pupils well and this ensures pupils have positive attitudes and behaviour is usually good. Pupils are effectively exploring the use of computers but machines in the computer area are letting pupils down as they are susceptible to crashing, especially when receiving e-mails. There is inconsistent use of computers in classrooms and most are not used effectively to support learning in other curriculum subjects. The school is well aware that this is an area for development and it features in the school improvement plan as an area of priority. All pupils are fully included in all activities.
133. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory support and guidance. The subject policy has recently been updated but an Internet policy is not yet in place. Recently introduced draft subject planning, using national guidance, provides a sound structure for teachers to plan their lessons. There is some informal monitoring of planning but no evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning or pupils' work and this is an area for development. Assessment procedures to monitor pupils' progress have recently been introduced but have not yet had time to raise standards and there are few examples of pupils' work on display. There is a need to undertake an audit of available software so that teachers know what is available to support other subject areas. Thought needs to be given to make more effective use of the computer area during morning sessions as it is currently underused. There is a good range of resources, such as the digital camera, scanners, cassette recorders, compact disc players, keyboards, televisions and video recorders which are used soundly. However, these need to be more closely linked to developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of the use of technology, especially with younger pupils. Most teachers use computers effectively to generate labels and writing for displays which enhances the importance of the subject and the quality of classroom displays, so that the subject has a high profile in the school. Specialist lessons for older pupils at the secondary school further enhances provision.
134. Progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory and, more recently, good. Hardware and software have been updated. Sound planning and assessment procedures have been established which are helping to raise standards. The subject has rightly been identified by the school as an area for continued development and staff training.

MUSIC

135. Music is a strength of the school. Most pupils are on course to attain standards that are above those expected nationally by the time they reach the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6. Most

pupils, including higher and lower attaining pupils, achieve well. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is generally good. This is a similar picture to that found at the time of the last inspection.

136. By the end of Year 2, most pupils repeat simple rhythms by clapping or using untuned and simple tuned percussion instruments and understand that symbols, such as pauses, are used to create effect in music. Most pupils hold simple rhythms well. Higher attaining pupils can hold rhythms in their heads for some time. For example, during the inspection, the teacher indicated to the Year 2 class that they should hold the rhythm from the song 'Black Socks' in their heads until he gave them the signal to begin the clapping rhythm again. These pupils sing in parts well in the song 'A Dragon in the School'. By the end of Year 6, most pupils memorise tunes, such as the 'Swan' and repeat them with enjoyment. Using a variety of untuned percussion instruments such as claves, tambourines, shakers, drums and beaters, they accompany a poem about a busy town and sleepy evening with appropriate feeling, recognising that sounds create mood. Higher attaining pupils improvise appropriate rhythmic accompaniment as part of a class performance designed for inspectors entitled, 'It's a big, big day' and 'Capital Letters and Full Stops'. They evaluate their performances and those of their peers sensibly and suggest ways in which they might be improved. Most pupils throughout the school sing tunefully and with enthusiasm. They enjoy their singing in class and in assemblies.
137. All classes are taught by the school's music specialist. The quality of the teaching is generally good across the school. The considerable expertise of this specialist is a significant factor in the rate of progress made by pupils. This teacher is able to play a number of instruments confidently and inject enjoyment and fun in the subject. He has written a number of child focused songs mentioned above that appeal to the sense of humour of the children. The wide variety of untuned percussion instruments also helps pupils make good progress. They help pupils gain a fuller understanding of matching sounds to different moods. The teacher encourages pupils to accompany poems by using musical instruments and introduces songs that link to other lessons. For example, pupils in Year 3 sang a song about the evacuation to link with the topic they are studying about World War Two. The teacher uses a variety of ways to teach music and keep pupils' interest in lessons. He plays the piano and guitar, uses tape recorded music, tuned and untuned percussion instruments and the overhead projector to maintain variety. Activities move at a brisk pace. Most pupils respond positively to this quality of teaching and most enjoy music lessons. However, on occasions, some pupils become easily distracted from the activities in which they are engaged and disturb the lesson. Pupils do not learn as much in these lessons as the flow of the teaching is disrupted.
138. The pupils are taught the full range of the National Curriculum programme of study. Lessons are adapted effectively to suit the needs of the pupils. The co-ordinator assesses the progress pupils make in music and keeps appropriate records on each pupil. A teacher employed by the local education authority teaches lessons for the violin, guitar and piano. Recorder lessons for beginners are also offered to pupils. These are taught by two of the school's teachers. The quantity and range of resources for music are good. The subject is well co-ordinated.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

139. Attainment across the school was judged as being broadly in line with national expectations at the time of the last inspection. Only one dance lesson was seen during this inspection, so it is not possible to make judgements about the overall standards of attainment or the quality of teaching. However, from looking at teachers' planning and talking to pupils and staff, it is apparent that the subject is in need of some further development.
140. In the one lesson seen, pupils were learning well. The teacher had planned effectively to link the dance with the story of 'The Hobbit' and good use was made of sound effects and an electronic keyboard. Pupils were urged to consider carefully their movement and facial expressions, and good imaginative sequences soon developed. The teacher used group demonstrations very well to

evaluate performance and challenge the pupils who thoroughly enjoyed the demanding tasks. Using parts of previous lessons and this lesson, pupils were able to put together high quality, dramatic dance sequences. In this lesson pupils attained standards that were above national expectations.

141. Planning, teachers' records and discussions with pupils indicate that games and sport is a strong element of the provision. The new school hall is well equipped and there is a good playing field. Most pupils enjoy their games activities, and the older pupils are proud of their participation in inter-school football, netball, rugby and athletics. The curriculum is well supplemented by professional coaches and after school clubs for the older pupils. Older pupils also have the opportunity to participate in outdoor and adventure activities during the school's annual visit to the Lake District.
142. Until recently, provision for gymnastics and dance has been hampered by the lack of an adequate indoor space. Since last September the school has had the benefit of an excellent hall, and this is now having a positive effect on provision in these two areas. However, this good facility is underused at present and is empty for a good part of each school day. All classes are timetabled for one period of physical education each week, but if this is an outdoor activity or swimming, the hall sometimes gets very little use. The school has not explored the possibility of having more short periods of physical education, so that pupils participate more regularly in a variety of activities.
143. Swimming tuition takes place in Year 6. Most pupils meet or exceed the nationally expected levels, but as the lessons are in their last year at primary school, there is no opportunity to give extra time to any pupil who may fall short of that mark. Planning for the swimming lessons is very thorough and includes specific tasks for pupils with special educational needs who are fully included in all activities.
144. The school has adopted a published planning framework that is designed to ensure adequate coverage of National Curriculum requirements, and pupils are assessed against targets in the relevant curricular area at the end of each term. This is increasingly useful in making sure that there is a systematic progression of skills and knowledge throughout the school. The co-ordinator is conscious of the fact that the subject has had a relatively low profile over the last few years, and that it may need to feature more prominently in the school improvement plan in the future.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

145. At the end of Years 2 and 6 standards are on course to be higher than those described in the locally agreed syllabus and this is an improvement since the time of the last inspection when standards were in line with expectations. The achievement of both boys and girls is good. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a good knowledge of stories from the Bible as well as a sound understanding of celebrations, such as Easter and Christmas and of ceremonies such as weddings and christenings. The thematic approach helps them to make links with their own lives. The theme of friendship is explored, for example, and pupils learn about the disciples as friends of Jesus. Many pupils can relate the story of Zaccheus and explain why Zaccheus, the little tax collector, was rich but not happy. Many understand that Jesus told stories that had an underlying meaning and in Year 1 they record their learning well in vibrant drawings. The parable of the lost sheep inspired exceptionally good pictures that captured the joy experienced by both the shepherd and the sheep that he recovered. Pupils in Year 2 also know a considerable amount about Judaism. They know that Hanukkah lasts for eight days, that Jewish men wear a kippah to show respect for God and that a mezuzah is a parchment scroll placed in a case and fixed to the doorposts by some Jewish families as a sign of their faith. They explain that the Shema prayer is recited each morning and evening. Pupils are interested to learn about different religions and are developing a good understanding of the similarities between many of the basic tenets of the major world faiths.

146. Older pupils can confidently give a personal response to religion and human experience. For example, a group of pupils in Year 6 were able to express that they think it is important to learn about faiths, because it helps with daily life and guides people against being greedy and selfish. Discussions with pupils and an examination of their work shows that pupils are knowledgeable about the stories and symbols associated with other religions and show an understanding of customs and how they affect family life. They know that people worship in different places according to their religion. Pupils learn about a range of celebrations such as Christmas, the Festival of Light, Divali and the Jewish festival of Hanukkah. They learn that different groups of people believe different things. They have a good understanding of the beliefs and practices of the major world faiths they have studied. They have a good understanding of the significance of artefacts used by different faiths.
147. Pupils in Year 4 knew that the fish was the secret sign of the early Christians and that it was well chosen because it was easy to recognise. Good links were made with their study of the Romans and they understood how the occupied people wanted a leader to release them from the grip of Rome. They puzzled over why Jesus had entered Jerusalem on a donkey and, after a sensible debate, concluded that he did not want to show off but wanted to demonstrate that everybody is equally special. They related this to driving into town in a Rolls Royce limousine or a bicycle. Pupils in Year 6 have a good understanding of the structure of the Bible. They know how to look up chapter and verse and that the sayings of Solomon, David the shepherd's son, are to be found in the book of Proverbs. They each describe and paint an oak tree and note that everybody's perspective is different and that the finished works are dissimilar. In this way they explain why the four gospels tell the same story in different ways. Good work on redesigning a new temple of Solomon to house the Ark of the Covenant was produced. The designs were traditional because pupils decided that it would be inappropriate to create modern designs, though one drawing did include security cameras concealed in door handles. Pupils understand the close links between the Jewish festival of Savuot, when thanks are given for the first fruit of the crop, and harvest festival celebrations.
148. Due to the unfortunate absence of several teachers, too few lessons taught by established teachers were seen to make overall judgements about the general quality of teaching across the school. Pupils' good knowledge and understanding, however, indicate that teaching has been effective. Work in exercise books does not always reflect pupils' achievement, mainly because much of the lesson time is devoted to discussions of issues to do with belief and the interpretation of events so that there is little time for much written work and partly because much of the work is recorded in pictures. The quality of presentation is inconsistent and occasionally it does not represent the quality of work that pupils are capable of producing. Pictures are drawn on lined paper in exercise books, for example, and written pieces remain unfinished. There is a great deal of scope to review how best to record the results of pupils' learning. In the lessons seen, pupils were attentive during discussions and keen to offer answers or share their ideas and thoughts. They were good at listening to their teachers and reflecting on what they heard or felt. They respected each other's views. They worked collaboratively and with good concentration on tasks that were set. Teachers assess pupils' attainment well and record progress thoroughly. In one teacher's record book, for example, each pupil's attainment in each of the fifteen lessons taught so far during the course of this academic year had been carefully recorded. This provides good information for teachers when compiling end of year reports.
149. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator collects samples of work to monitor what teaching is taking place and how well pupils are achieving. Visits to places of worship, other than Christian churches, are difficult because there are none close at hand. The subject makes some contribution to pupils' cultural awareness by exploring different beliefs and associated lifestyles. The school lacks sufficient emphasis on developing a clear understanding, however, of how the different cultures within our nation contribute to the rich diversity of society. Resources to support teaching and learning are limited and there was little evidence that the resources stored in the school are used very much. There was no evidence that computers or videos are used to enliven lessons. The programme of assemblies supports the religious education syllabus because it deals with common themes, such as unselfishness, that are reflected in lessons, such as those that deal with signs of friendship, such as sharing.

