

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **LONGDEN CE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Longden, Shrewsbury

LEA area: Shropshire

Unique reference number: 123546

Headteacher: Mr C Tay

Reporting inspector: Mrs V Farrow  
22428

Dates of inspection: 17 – 19 June 2002

Inspection number: 242888

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 aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Plealey Lane Longden Shrewsbury
Postcode:	SY5 8EX
Telephone number:	01743 860480
Fax number:	01743 861104
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr W Higgins
Date of previous inspection:	29 September 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22428	Val Farrow	Registered inspector	Equal opportunities Foundation stage Special educational needs Art and design Design and technology	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
12674	Robert Collinson	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?
22575	Martin Golds	Team inspector	Geography History Mathematics Science	How well are pupils taught?
30724	Delia Hiscock	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Music Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Longden CE Primary is a Voluntary Aided School situated five miles south west of Shrewsbury in a rural location at the edge of the village of Longden. The school caters for boys and girls aged four to 11 years from the village of Longden and other local villages. It also serves some families from Shrewsbury. Most families live in private housing and a few in council owned or tied accommodation. There are 103 pupils on roll and the school is smaller than most primary schools. Three pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. There are no pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or with statements of special educational need. Most children have benefited from pre-school provision and their attainment on entry to the school is above that expected nationally for children of this age.

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

The school provides a sound education within a caring environment. It successfully promotes pupils' personal development reflected in the school's values of 'care, share and be fair'. In reading, Year 2 pupils attain standards in line with the national average but they do not do as well as they should in writing. In the juniors, pupils make good progress in English so that by Year 6 they do better than other pupils nationally. In mathematics, pupils in Years 2 and 6 do better than other pupils of the same age. In science the attainment of Year 6 pupils is in line with the national average but for Year 2 pupils it is below. The higher attaining pupils do better than average in the national tests in English and mathematics with the exception of Year 2 pupils in writing. Teaching is satisfactory overall and more of the good teaching is found in the junior classes. The headteacher and governors are committed to the life and work of the school. They provide sound leadership and a clear sense of purpose. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

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

- Pupils have good attitudes to their work and want to learn.
- The school cares well for its pupils and makes good provision for their personal development.
- Pupils show respect for each other and behave well in class and around the school.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is good. Extra-curricular activities are very good.
- The strong sense of community and good provision for pupils to extend their learning through a variety of projects enriches the life and work of the school.

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

- Standards in writing are not high enough in the infant classes.
- Pupils do not do as well as they should in science.
- There are weaknesses in the quality of provision for children in the reception year.
- The role of co-ordinators is not well developed so that they have a clear overview of pupils' work and the standards achieved in the subjects for which they are responsible.
- The information obtained from checking pupils' progress is not used well enough in helping them to improve.

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

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

The school was last inspected in 1997 when there was a different headteacher in post. Since his appointment, the current headteacher has worked hard with staff and governors to identify the strengths and areas for school improvement. As part of this process the school has also taken into account issues which needed to be addressed from the last inspection and satisfactory progress has been made overall. The headteacher has made a satisfactory start in checking teaching and learning and pupils' work but this role needs to be further extended to subject co-ordinators. The achievement of the higher attaining pupils has been raised through increased opportunities for problem-solving and investigative work. Teachers have analysed the outcomes of test results and this has raised their expectations of what these pupils can achieve. Greater emphasis has been placed on the teaching of reading through



the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy and this has had a positive impact on the rate of progress made by higher attaining pupils in the infant classes. Improvement since the last inspection in respect of their writing skills has been unsatisfactory. Long term plans and a scheme of work have been developed in design and technology. This has satisfactorily identified how pupils can develop their skills across the school and ensured that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met. There has been slight improvement in respect of the Foundation Stage but it has not been enough. In planning links have been established between the Early Learning Goals for children aged three to five and the National Curriculum for older pupils. Planning does not take account of the links between the different areas of learning for the reception children and this slows the progress that they make in their creative and physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Children have some opportunities for investigation and exploration but not enough chances to develop their own ideas.

## 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	
English	A	C	A	C
Mathematics	A	C	C	D
Science	B	B	E	E

**Key**

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

When children enter the school they have benefited from pre-school provision and most are doing better than children of a similar age nationally. The 2001 national tests indicate that they achieve steadily in the infants in reading and mathematics so that by Year 2 they achieve standards that match the national average. Their progress in writing and science is slower and the standards they achieve are below average. In the junior classes the 2001 national tests show that the rate of pupils' learning has increased so that they do better than the national average in English. They sustain their achievements in mathematics but do not make up the necessary ground in science and their attainment remains well below average. When compared to similar schools results for Year 2 pupils are well below average in reading and mathematics and very low in writing. By the end of the juniors pupils do as well as those in similar schools in English but less well in mathematics and science. There is some variation to pupils' achievements year on year but this can be attributed to the small number of pupils in each year group. Inspection evidence shows that currently by Year 6 pupils' achievements in English remain above average. In mathematics standards have improved and are now above average throughout the school. This is because there is a higher proportion of good teaching in the junior classes and the introduction of the National Strategy for Numeracy has had a positive effect. There has been some improvement in science by Year 6 because these pupils are taught in a single year group. Standards now match the national average but this is still not good enough for the higher attaining pupils. This is because the science curriculum does not sufficiently build upon what pupils already know.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes, want to learn and most concentrate well in lessons. They are enthusiastic and hard working.

Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave well in classrooms and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Good emphasis is given to pupils' personal development and as a result they form constructive relationships with adults and with each other.
Attendance	Attendance is above the national average. Pupils arrive punctually for the start of lessons.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

*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.*

Teaching is satisfactory overall. It is good and occasionally very good in just under a third of lessons in Years 2 to 6. It is occasionally unsatisfactory in Year 1 and in the Foundation Stage where teachers are not secure enough in their knowledge of how young children learn. Literacy and numeracy are taught competently throughout the school and as a result pupils are improving their skills in these areas. More emphasis could be given to the teaching of writing and science to pupils in the infant classes so that they make better progress in these areas. Good learning takes place when teachers organise lessons well and encourage pupils to reflect on what they are doing in order to improve their work. A good balance is provided between teacher demonstration and practical activities and pupils sustain their interest. Learning is slower when teachers do not set work at the right level based on a secure understanding of what pupils already know. Work tends to be over directed and pupils do not have enough chances to explore their own ideas. On these occasions pupils do not find it as easy to concentrate on their work. Since the last inspection teachers have a better understanding of what the higher attaining pupils can achieve and as a result these pupils are doing better with the exception of science in the juniors. Satisfactory provision is made for pupils with special educational needs and it is good when they work with the learning support assistant.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	There is a satisfactory range of learning opportunities enriched through visits and visitors. There is a very good range of extra curricular activities. The curriculum is not planned well enough in some areas to take account of what pupils already know. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage does not meet all of their needs.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	These pupils make satisfactory progress. It is good on those occasions when they are helped in literacy and numeracy by support staff.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Pupils show tolerance and respect for the values and feelings of others. They understand what is right and wrong and care well for each other.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Staff show genuine care and concern for pupils and take good steps to ensure pupils' welfare. Assessments of pupils' progress are not always

	well used in helping them to understand how to improve.
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Overall the school works well in partnership with parents and receives good support demonstrated in the high return of parental questionnaires prior to the inspection. There is good parental involvement in school and with children's work at home. The school benefits from an active and successful parent teacher association and the home/school council works well.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher leads by personal example and has a good understanding of what the school does well and how it needs to improve. The role of co-ordinators and other key staff is not sufficiently focused on the improvement of standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are committed to the development of the school. They understand the need to extend their role as a critical friend with a direct concern for quality and standards.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school evaluates its performance well through the analysis of data and by reflecting on its practice. There are no systematic procedures in place for checking the quality of teaching, learning and pupils' work.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The school seeks best value by looking at its performance and taking steps to improve. The right priorities have been identified in the school development plan but this does not address longer term issues. Resources have been targeted to raise standards.

Some parents feel that classes are too big. There is a sufficient number of qualified and experienced teachers although the organisation of classes means that some contain mixed age-groups and are larger than average. This makes it more difficult for teachers to match work to pupils' different levels of ability. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

### PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The good teaching.</li> <li>• The school expects children to work hard.</li> <li>• The leadership and management of the school.</li> <li>• The good behaviour.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The provision of homework.</li> <li>• Information about how children are getting on.</li> </ul>

Some parents are not happy with the information they receive about their children's progress. Whilst a good range of information is provided to parents about the life of the school, inspectors support the view that more information could be provided to parents about the curriculum. The school has plans to address this. Some parents feel that their children do not get the right amount of work to do at home. The school has recognised the need to adopt a more consistent approach to the setting of homework.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. In the 2001 national tests for pupils at the end of Year 2, standards were in line with the national average in reading and mathematics but were well below in writing. In the teacher assessments for science, results were well below the national average. In comparison with similar schools standards of attainment were well below average in reading and mathematics and very low in writing but account needs to be taken of the small number of pupils in each year group. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels in the national tests and in the teacher assessments for science was better than the national average. This is because the school has improved the achievement of the higher attaining pupils since the last inspection by placing more emphasis on learning through investigation and problem solving. Not enough has been done since the last inspection to increase the rate of progress in writing. Standards over the last three years have fluctuated and this can be attributed to the small number of pupils in each year group.
2. Inspection evidence shows that standards attained by Year 2 pupils are broadly the same in English as they were in the 2001 national tests. The below average attainment in writing remains because pupils' sentence writing and spelling strategies have not improved. Standards are higher than they were in the 2001 national tests in mathematics. This improvement is because the teaching of mathematics is better than it was during the last inspection. It is now good in one out of every two lessons. The successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has had a positive effect on pupils' learning. Standards in science are improving in relation to pupils' investigative skills but remain below average overall. This is because the science curriculum is not systematically planned to take account of pupils' previous learning. In the mixed age classes, teachers do not always match the work well enough to the different stages pupils are at by taking into account their prior learning. In both science and writing, teachers' knowledge of the work needed to move a child up from one National Curriculum level to the next is not secure and this slows the progress pupils make.
3. In the 2001 national tests for pupils aged 11, standards were well above the national average in English, close to the national average in mathematics and well below in science. When compared with similar schools the school's performance was close to the average in English, below the average in mathematics and well below in science. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels in the national tests was well above average in English and mathematics. In this respect the school has successfully addressed the key issue from the last inspection that related to raising standards and increasing progress for the higher attaining pupils. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels in the national tests for science was well below the national average. This has not been satisfactorily addressed since the last inspection despite the greater emphasis on investigative work. There was no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.
4. Inspection findings indicate that in English and mathematics pupils' standards by Year 6 are above average. This represents an improvement since the last inspection and reflects the high priority given by the school to the development of these areas. There is now more good teaching and greater emphasis is given in junior classes to the links between reading and writing and to the development of basic numeracy skills. This accelerates the rate of progress made, particularly by older pupils. Good analysis of test results has been undertaken to identify the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning. The next step is to use this information more systematically so that pupils know what they need to do to improve. Pupils' attainment in science by Year 6 is in line with the national average, which is better than the 2001 national test results. This is because these pupils are grouped together in a single class and have covered much of the necessary ground during this year. Overall pupils do not cover enough work in science and the gap is too long before pupils can revisit a particular topic. This slows the progress they make and pupils' depth of knowledge is not great enough.



5. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 attain in line with the national expectation in design and technology, history, geography and information and communication technology. The attainment of Year 2 pupils is in line with the national expectation in physical education. It is not possible to make judgements on pupils' attainment in music and for Year 6 pupils in physical education since little direct teaching of the different aspects of these subjects was observed during the inspection. The appropriate emphasis given by the school to English and mathematics has led to less focus on other areas of the curriculum.
6. Reception aged children benefit from pre-school provision and their attainment on entry to the school is above that expected nationally for children of this age. They make good progress in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development and are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage when they reach the age of five. They generally make satisfactory progress in all the other areas of learning and are on line to meet the national expectation although there are too few opportunities for creative development. Reception aged children are taught in a mixed age class with Year 1 pupils who are working on the National Curriculum. The curriculum is more geared to the needs of the older pupils and does not take enough account of the different ways in which children in the reception year group learn. This has not been satisfactorily addressed since the last inspection.
7. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in respect of the targets set out to improve their literacy and numeracy skills in their individual education plans when supported individually by the school's learning support assistant. They make satisfactory progress in all other respects.
8. The school has set suitably challenging targets for pupils in English and mathematics including those for higher attaining pupils.

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

9. Pupils have positive attitudes to work and learning. They are enthusiastic and hard working, well motivated and respond well to encouragement and praise. They co-operate successfully in pairs or groups, listening to each other thoughtfully and offering constructive criticism. Most pupils follow instructions diligently, settle to work quickly and meet set deadlines. They treat resources with care, tidy away efficiently after lessons and are sensible when engaged in practical tasks. Their commitment and enthusiasm for learning are apparent in their sustained application to their work. They clearly enjoy the opportunities presented to them in all areas of the curriculum.
10. Children under five benefit from the positive role models presented by older pupils in the class. They have a good sense of right and wrong. Children settle quickly into school life and establish good relationships with their friends. They work happily in groups and sustain interest well in practical activities. Their behaviour around school is good and they are generally well behaved in class. Children under five find it more difficult to concentrate when tasks are not well matched to their needs and on those occasions where they are required to sit and listen for too long.
11. The behaviour of older pupils is good both inside the classroom and in all aspects of school life. In lessons where pupils are well motivated by teachers their behaviour is very good. In assemblies they respond sensitively to the content. At break times and lunchtimes they are sensible and play happily together. Older pupils show due regard for the needs of younger ones. Pupils are courteous at all times and extend a warm welcome to known visitors.
12. Relationships throughout the school are generally positive and result from mutual respect and trust between pupils and staff. Pupils readily acknowledge one another's achievements and show respect for different points of view. They demonstrate a well developed awareness and concern for the interests and feelings of others. In information and communication technology activities for example, higher attaining pupils show maturity and care in helping those of lower ability. There are good opportunities for older pupils to show initiative and take responsibility, for example in setting up and putting away games equipment at playtime.

13. The level of attendance in the school is significantly better than the national average. Examination of attendance registers indicates that holidays in term time account for a significant proportion of authorised absence. Unauthorised absence is very low compared with the national average. Punctuality is good and the school has effective arrangements for recording late attendance. There have been no exclusions.

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

14. Overall teaching is satisfactory in just under two thirds of lessons and good or occasionally very good in just under one third. This represents a slight improvement since the last inspection. Although the teaching observed was good or better in almost a third of lessons, inconsistencies in planning, marking and teaching in the different curriculum areas indicate that the overall quality is satisfactory in all subjects. Teaching is occasionally unsatisfactory in Year 1 and in the Foundation Stage.
15. In the infant classes teaching is satisfactory or better in nine out of every ten lessons. It is good in two out of every ten lessons and very good in one out of every ten lessons. There is a small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching and this occurs in one out of every ten lessons. The teaching is stronger overall in the juniors and is good and occasionally very good in just under half of the lessons. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed in junior classes. The higher incidence of good and occasionally very good teaching boosts pupils' positive attitudes to learning in all subjects and raises their attainment. Teaching is weaker in the Foundation Stage and this presents a similar picture to that found in the last inspection. One in every 6 lessons observed is unsatisfactory because teachers do not have a secure enough understanding of how young children learn.
16. There have been changes in the year groups taught by staff in the infant and junior classes since the 1997 inspection and teachers are coming to terms with the demands of the curriculum for the age of pupils that they teach.
17. Several key strengths underlie the teaching throughout the school and have a positive impact on the pupils' learning. In the better teaching staff are conscientious in the preparation of materials needed for their lessons. They take time to establish routines. This is well exemplified by a lesson seen in the Year 2/3 class where all the materials for a science lesson had been well prepared and the management of the classroom through the use of well established routines meant that the children were able to work independently and little of the time available for teaching was wasted. There are clearly established expectations of pupil behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility when working in groups, which are managed well by teachers in order to meet the challenge of teaching classes with a wide span of age and ability. A good balance is provided between clear explanation and demonstration from teachers and practical work. A key strength of the teaching is the consistency in the use of praise and encouragement to sustain pupils' interest. Adults are firm but positive in managing pupils' behaviour and quick to acknowledge success.
18. Where the teaching is weaker, teachers' planning is less precise in identifying what is to be taught and learnt and tasks are therefore not always well matched to the wide span of ability in the mixed age classes. Often for the younger pupils teaching is over directed and this slows the pace of the lesson. This was seen in a science lesson when children were exploring how much water is retained by different materials. Each of the different groups was expected to wait until the whole class had completed the same task before moving on to the next activity. This slowed the rate of progress that pupils made and restricted the opportunity for them to learn by developing their own ideas.
19. All teachers follow the recommended structure for the daily numeracy sessions and increasingly for literacy. This provides a good framework for the lesson. In English and mathematics lessons, teachers employ a good range of teaching methods for teaching basic numeracy and literacy skills and these are effectively supported through planning. Occasionally the mental mathematics

sessions are not brisk enough to sharpen pupils' intuitive use of numbers and the plenary too brief to emphasise what the pupils need to remember. Teachers are aware of these occasional difficulties and on the whole the teaching of mental arithmetic and basic literacy skills is strong.

20. Teachers across the school display pupils' work attractively. All place a high importance on fostering the pupils' self esteem and pride in their own successes. They have drawn on effective ideas from other schools to develop their own ladders of success. Pupils understand and are enthusiastic about this system to reward behaviour and achievement.
21. The school analyses the end of year tests in Years 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 in English and mathematics and uses this information to set targets for the following year. This is beginning to have a positive impact on standards.
22. The school makes good use of external specialists to strengthen the teaching in many areas, notably in art and music. Individual expertise and good subject knowledge boost the quality of teaching in some lessons. This is most evident in physical education in the Year 2/3 class and in English, art and design technology in the Year 4, 5 and 6 classes where teachers' questioning challenges the pupils to reflect and improve upon their work. Handwriting is taught consistently well throughout the school.
23. The quality of support offered by the learning support assistant to pupils with special educational needs is good and on these occasions pupils make good progress in the development of their literacy and numeracy skills. The provision for the higher attaining pupils is better than during the last inspection.
24. Teachers do not always know why, how and when to assess pupils. This stems from a lack of clarity in detailing lesson objectives from the school's medium term plans. This means that in some lessons teachers are not clear about the ways in which the work will help the pupils acquire new knowledge, skills and understanding in an appropriate order. The Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have supplied frameworks for teaching in these key subjects but in other subjects there is not a secure link between the national guidelines and individual lessons. This results in a lack of coherent development notably in science, geography and art where the teachers' knowledge of the work required to move a child from one National Curriculum level to the next is not secure. This is also the case in writing in the infant classes. Good use is made of information and communication technology to support learning in most subjects.

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

25. Curriculum improvements since the previous inspection have resulted in a satisfactory range of learning opportunities across the school that meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. Some rich experiences are provided on occasions that lift the quality of learning and promote very positive attitudes.
26. The school has satisfactorily addressed some of the previously identified shortcomings. A planned range of activities for design and technology is now in place and the school has improved the opportunities for investigation in mathematics and science. Many of the school's policies and guidelines for subjects do not reflect current curriculum priorities and practices and are therefore in need of review. Exceptions to this are English and mathematics, where good quality, newly drawn up guidelines are in place. Some improvements have been made to planning for the Foundation Stage by linking aspects of the National Curriculum to the Early Learning Goals. The full range of activities is planned over a year but few links are made between the areas of learning in the Foundation Stage and not enough use is made of the outdoor environment. This narrows the breadth and quality of experiences for children in reception. These children do not have enough opportunities to engage in exploratory, creative or play-enriched activities and this has not been satisfactorily addressed since the last inspection.



27. Throughout the school the curriculum is not always planned well enough to assure coverage or to ensure that pupils can build on their previous learning. The amount of time allocated to some National Curriculum subjects does not provide pupils with enough access and this slows their progress. For example, in science, pupils age six to nine do not have enough learning opportunities to ensure that they achieve as well as they can. The range of planned music activities is too narrow and fragmented particularly for those pupils who do not subscribe to the additional lessons when they can learn how to play an instrument. In contrast the school is particularly effective in extending skills and in raising pupils' awareness by enriching their common experiences through the whole school approach to a special topic. This is seen particularly in the wide range of art-based work that has grown from the National Gallery 'Take One Picture'. Through this work, the school has created pathways into other subjects for pupils to observe, reflect, study, explore and respond in drama, art and personal writing.
28. The school places appropriate emphasis on the teaching of literacy and teachers are increasingly using the nationally recommended methods of the National Literacy Strategy to secure appropriate standards of attainment for all pupils. A large amount of time is devoted to the teaching of English, mainly writing. This is reflected in the improved standards by the Year 6 pupils but has yet to impact on the attainment of Year 2 pupils because teachers do not expect enough of pupils and are not secure in their knowledge of how writing should be taught. In mathematics the National Numeracy Strategy has been effectively applied and the teaching of numeracy is good in half of the lessons observed. Teachers give good attention to oral mental practice at the start of lessons and this has contributed significantly to the rise in standards for the higher attaining pupils.
29. The school makes very good use of imaginative cross-curricular links that extend and inspire pupils, often linking art, drama, historical enquiry and writing. However, the school's blend of topic work and discrete subject teaching results in fragmented planning with significant gaps. Many of the National Curriculum foundation subjects are not taught to the same depth because there is not a consistent approach to planning, despite some good models in physical education and in Years 4, 5 and 6. The planning in other foundation subjects is mainly based on the nationally recommended range of activities which relies on an ad hoc approach rather than a coherently mapped out series of activities within the school's two year cycle of curriculum activities for the mixed aged classes. When teachers prepare lessons, teaching and learning objectives are not drawn from a secure overall planning framework that sets out increasingly challenging activities as pupils progress through the school. Provision for information and communication technology is better because overall planning of the different elements in the subject is in place.
30. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall in both infant and junior years. Where pupils are given specialist support from the learning support assistant they make good progress over short periods of time in catching up on their literacy and numeracy skills. The school has partly resolved the inadequate provision for higher attaining pupils seen at the last inspection, but has yet to raise standards in science for these pupils and in writing for pupils by Year 2. However, the breadth of writing opportunities has gone some way towards this and the school is better placed to develop this in the future.
31. The school continues to improve the facilities for information and communication technology, corresponding with nationally increasing demands. Many pupils readily use computers to enhance their work in art and writing, often using the Internet browsing facilities as a research resource. Many pupils use computer tools to enhance presentation of their work, to make signs and labels and to explore art by manipulating images and text. This extends the range of facilities for independent learning and the shared central learning resource area encircled with library books, offers good learning conditions for pupils.
32. The school offers a very good range of extra-curricular activities and includes infant pupils where possible. For a small school this continues to be impressive. The extension of skills is particularly good in rounders, tag-rugby and through the environment club to which parents

contribute very well. These extra activities contribute significantly to pupils' personal development and enthusiasm, particularly about the environment.

33. Links with the local community are good. There is an interesting range of educational visits and visitors and these add relevance and inspire pupils' further interest in learning. For example, the use of artists such as a print maker extends pupils' key skills and enthusiasm. Pupils have good opportunities to participate in residential visits that significantly add to their achievement in a variety of subjects.
34. The school has good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (P.H.S.E.) but has yet to plan for citizenship. There is a planned programme of sex and drugs education. Health professionals regularly visit the school to improve pupils' understanding of health related issues in their lives.
35. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good and central to what the school does well. Teachers mostly make good use of opportunities to widen pupils' understanding of these areas of their development.
36. Pupils' spiritual development is consistently well promoted. Drama, history and art opportunities create vibrant experiences through which pupils can grow in spirituality. Daily acts of worship fulfil statutory requirements and provide strong opportunities for pupils to reflect together in worship. This builds a strong central message so that pupils understand how everyone works and plays together. Pupils contribute to this message by composing prayers and interpreting them in their classroom activities with each other.
37. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is also strength of the school. Pupils are very generous to each other in understanding their differences. A keen sense of fairness is seen in pupils' everyday conversations with each other that show that they understand the need for rules and also that care for others is important. Awareness of others on a larger scale is well embodied in activities such as the Environment Club where young children learn to respect the world around them and also that communication is important. In one such instance, a Year 2 pupil wrote a garden label saying, 'The nettles have got an old chimney pot around them to stop them spreading'.
38. Pupils have a growing awareness of different cultural traditions because provision is planned throughout the curriculum in art, history and religious education. Pupils learn about the special thoughts and feelings in beliefs and the lifestyle of different religions. As a result, pupils have great respect for other values and beliefs and are well prepared for their role in a diverse multi-cultural society. Musical performances and visits to historical places are used well to enrich pupils' work. The range of artefacts from other cultures is satisfactory and has improved since the last inspection.

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

39. The school makes good provision for the personal support, welfare and guidance of pupils. Care and concern for pupils are apparent in all aspects of the daily life of the school. Teachers know their pupils well and are able to provide a level of support and guidance that contributes positively to their well being. Positive reinforcement and praise of pupils' academic and personal achievements are good features of the school. Teachers show genuine kindness and concern for their pupils. Monitoring of pupils' personal development is good and takes place both on an informal basis by class teachers and through the use of individual files that effectively track pupils' academic progress and personal development throughout the school.
40. The school has well developed measures to promote good attendance, including close monitoring of attendance figures and thorough follow up of all unexplained absences. There is effective promotion of behaviour and discipline in school with a positive approach through praise and

example and the use of a system of rewards and sanctions that is well known and understood by pupils.

41. Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. There is a clearly written health and safety policy that is kept up to date. Fire drills are carried out termly. The deputy headteacher is primarily responsible for health and safety matters, supported by a committee of the governing body. Together they carry out regular safety inspections. Two members of staff have received first aid training and well stocked first aid boxes are maintained throughout the school.
42. There is a clearly defined child protection policy and the headteacher effectively carries out the duties and responsibilities of child protection co-ordinator. The headteacher has received training in child protection and related issues and ensures that the relevant procedures are known to and understood by teaching and non-teaching staff. The school successfully promotes the health, safety, care and protection of its pupils.
43. The school has a range of satisfactory procedures to collect and interpret information so that teachers can assess what pupils know and can do. Teachers have an increasing awareness of the need to track the progress of individual and groups of pupils with common learning needs but often do not use the information well enough. This is because there is no coherent system to enable teachers to translate the pupil progress information into daily teaching plans.
44. As part of the strategies identified in the school development plan, staff have begun to analyse weaknesses in curriculum provision in areas of English and mathematics from Year 2 to Year 6. This is not always translated into consistent and effective learning targets to determine and measure how much progress can be expected. This affects below average and higher attaining pupils by reducing the rate at which they learn in a range of subjects but particularly in writing by Year 2.
45. Good account is taken of information to identify and support pupils with special educational needs. As a result most of these pupils reach satisfactory standards of attainment by Year 6 because careful checks of progress through individual learning plans are matched by the support provided. This process is less consistent for below average attaining pupils in Year 1 and 2 when activities do not always match pupils' levels of attainment.
46. In the Foundation Stage information is collected at the start of children's school life and used to check how well they are achieving in all the areas of their learning. This information is not always well used in matching tasks to children's abilities.
47. The school is in the early stages of developing ways to assess pupils' progress in information and communication technology. Samples of work are collected and the school has undertaken some measures to look at the curriculum coverage rather than to gauge pupils' progress. However in the other National Curriculum foundation subjects not enough attempt is made to identify next steps because the systems are too informal. This affects the rate of progress pupils make because they all receive similar learning experiences whatever level of knowledge or skills they already have.
48. Staff do not always have a clear enough picture of how much pupils should achieve in relation to their level of attainment and the available information is not analysed sharply enough for the different levels of ability. There is a need to draw out a clearer system so that staff can assess and plan for pupils' achievement accurately and target future learning.

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

49. Satisfactory information is provided to parents about pupils' work and progress and it is good in respect of school life and events. The information is given through weekly newsletters, annual reports and parents' meetings twice a year. In addition the school holds an annual open meeting for parents. Parents are welcomed in school at any time to discuss their children's progress

informally. There is a home/school council that provides an effective mechanism for communication between parents and staff.

50. Parents' responses to the questionnaire sent out prior to the inspection were generally positive, but approximately a quarter of the parents who responded did not feel well informed about their children's progress and one in ten of the responses received did not feel that the school works closely with parents. In contrast almost all parents who responded said that they would feel comfortable about approaching the school with a problem. The school recognises the need to provide greater information to parents about teaching and learning and plans to produce a curriculum pack of information for parents, leading to a curriculum evening in the near future. Some parents also did not feel that their children get the right amount of work to do at home. There is some inconsistency in the application of the homework policy and the school recognises that this needs to be reviewed.
51. Parental involvement in children's work at home mainly takes the form of helping with reading, spelling and maths. Parents are encouraged to share books with their children at home and communicate with the class teacher through the system of reading diaries. This is in use throughout the school and provides a valuable additional form of communication between parents and the school.
52. A number of parents are involved in helping in the classroom in a variety of ways particularly with reading and sports coaching. This help provides a significant contribution to the work of the school. Parents also accompany classes on educational visits.
53. The school has an active parent and teacher association, which is successful in organising a range of social events and providing valuable additional resources through fund raising. In the past year the PTA has raised almost £4,000. This has been used to provide a range of curriculum resources for the school and funding towards school trips. The school is well supported by parents and the local community.

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

54. The leadership and management provided by the headteacher, governors and key staff are satisfactory. Since his appointment just under three years ago, the headteacher has played a pivotal role in working with staff to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the school. As a result the school development plan identifies appropriate priorities for school improvement, well supported by a range of relevant strategies to improve teaching and learning and criteria against which to evaluate success. This has led to satisfactory overall improvement since the last inspection. For example placing greater emphasis on the development of exploratory and investigative work has led to the achievement of better standards for the higher attaining pupils in mathematics and English with the exception of writing in the infant classes. The school development plan, whilst a useful document, would benefit from the inclusion of longer-term priorities to better take account of how the school can develop over time. Satisfactory use is made of school finances and grant funding to support identified priorities within the school development plan.
55. The headteacher demonstrates a deep commitment to the life and work of the school. This is very much valued by parents and governors. He provides influential and supportive leadership and leads by personal example in setting the tone for good relationships and a happy, caring environment both in class and around the school. Care is taken to ensure that all pupils are fully included in the life and work of the school reflected in the Christian values promoted by staff and governors.
56. The headteacher has analysed data and monitored the quality of teaching, learning and pupils' work to check progress and subject coverage. In this respect the role of other subject co-ordinators is not well developed or sufficiently linked to raising standards, with the exception of

mathematics where the new co-ordinator has made a sound start in her role and where good use has been made of the numeracy consultant from the local education authority.

57. The system for appraisal is currently being implemented in line with national guidance linked to staff development opportunities. The headteacher has recently reviewed the management structure of the school to determine a more equitable distribution of management responsibilities. This is particularly appropriate given his large teaching commitment and significant subject responsibilities. The deputy headteacher provides appropriate management support to the headteacher but has less involvement in school improvement issues. She is released from class to develop projects such as parental involvement. The school has recognised the need to allocate future release time more in accordance with school improvement priorities such as checking the quality of teaching and learning and translating the analysis of data into learning targets which can help individual pupils to improve. These are areas where subject leaders could usefully be involved in the future.
58. The governing body meets regularly and fulfils its statutory requirements. Governors are kept well informed by the headteacher about the life of the school and the standards and quality of education pupils receive. They have actively participated in reviewing the school's mission statement and recognise the need to begin to work in a more strategic way. Governors are very committed to and supportive of the school's work. This is shown in the time that they give to committee meetings and through their participation in whole school events such as the trip to London to visit the National Gallery and ride on the London Eye.
59. Day to day administration is carried out efficiently by the school secretary. She ably supports the headteacher so that he is able to fulfil his teaching commitment of four days each week. All the recommendations of the most recent audit report have been implemented with the exception of one area that is currently being addressed. The school makes appropriate use of the new technologies and satisfactorily applies the principles of best value.
60. The school has a suitable number of appropriately qualified staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. Most classes in the school contain more than one year group and teachers would benefit from more co-ordinator support in matching the curriculum to the different needs of pupils. In the juniors the teaching time each week is less than the nationally recommended minimum. This means that it is difficult to ensure adequate coverage of all the National Curriculum subjects. This slows pupils' progress in areas such as science where sufficient time is not always allocated to the subject.
61. Release time has been provided this term for the special educational needs co-ordinator who is new to this role. She is in the process of ensuring that the requirements of the new Special Educational Needs Code of Practice are met. She is well supported by the school's learning support assistant who has very good knowledge of the different stages individual pupils are at and supports them well in relation to their academic achievement.
62. There is a satisfactory range of resources for each area of the curriculum. Good support is given by the PTA, which provides funding on a termly basis to enhance the resources in accordance with school priorities. The accommodation is satisfactory. Much time and effort has been given to the development of suitable alterations to the school to keep up with national developments such as whole class teaching within the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and to better support the delivery of the curriculum in the larger classes. Outdoor facilities include a playground and playing fields in addition to garden areas. All are adequate and pupils and staff make good use of them. There is no dedicated play area for children in the Foundation Stage and only limited use is made of the outdoor environment for the reception children.
63. Taking into account the attainment of most pupils on entry, and when they leave the school, the progress they make, and the quality of the education provided, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

64. The headteacher, staff and governing body should:

(1) Improve standards in science, and in writing for pupils in the infant classes by

- systematically planning the development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in science
  - increasing teachers' knowledge and understanding of what they have to teach in writing and of what pupils in the infant classes can achieve
- Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, 27, 28, 90, 109, 114*

(2) Improve the provision for children in the Foundation Stage by

- raising awareness teachers' awareness of the different ways in which young children learn
  - reviewing planning so that children can make better links in their learning
- Paragraphs 6, 15, 66, 68, 69, 72, 74, 76, 78, 82*

(3) Develop the roles of co-ordinators in taking responsibility for standards in all subjects by

- systematically checking pupils' work and teachers' planning
  - regularly observing teaching and learning
  - evaluating the findings to improve quality and standards
- Paragraphs 56, 107, 107, 116, 130*

(4) Improve the use of information gained from checking pupils' progress by

- teachers clearly identifying what is to be taught in planning
  - using this information to identify the next steps in learning
  - sharing it with pupils and parents so that they understand what they must do in order to improve
- Paragraphs 18, 24, 43, 47, 102*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	31
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	2	8	19	2	0	0
Percentage	0	6	26	61	7	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	YR - Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	103
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR - Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	12

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	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	95.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

National comparative data	93.9
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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)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	2	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	10	9	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (92)	69 (92)	92 (92)
	National	84 (83)	69 (92)	92 (92)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	10	12	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (92)	92 (77)	77 (92)
	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)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	11	4

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	13	11	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	87 (80)	73 (67)	87 (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	11	10	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (73)	67 (62)	67 (93)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

The figures for boys and girls are omitted because there are 10 or less of one gender group. This is to ensure that individual pupils cannot be identified.

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	101
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

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

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

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.4
Average class size	26

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

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	23

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2001-02
	£
Total income	218,233
Total expenditure	218,293
Expenditure per pupil	2,161
Balance brought forward from previous year	-60
Balance carried forward to next year	-2,973

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	103
Number of questionnaires returned	81

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	48	45	6	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	43	52	2	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	55	1	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	30	50	16	4	0
The teaching is good.	58	38	0	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	37	25	0	5
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	26	2	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51	43	2	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	44	42	10	0	4
The school is well led and managed.	72	25	2	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	47	50	1	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	49	44	5	1	1

### Other issues raised by parents

- Some parents expressed concern about large class sizes.

## **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**

65. Children enter the reception class at the beginning of the term in which they are five. At the time of the inspection several children had only been in school since the beginning of the summer term. Most children have benefited from pre-school provision and when they start school are doing better than the level expected for children of a similar age.
66. Reception children are part of the Foundation Stage for three to five year olds and are working towards the Early Learning Goals that set out the expectations for most children to achieve by the time they are five. These children are grouped together with older pupils aged five and six who are working on the National Curriculum. Most of the curriculum is delivered in discrete subject areas that relate to the National Curriculum. There has been some slight improvement since the last inspection, for example links have been established in medium term planning between the Early Learning Goals and the National Curriculum but this does not sufficiently allow the younger children to make links across the different areas of learning in the Foundation Stage. Since the last inspection the school has developed a policy for the early years but this is not fully reflected in practice, for example insufficient use is made of the outdoor environment to build upon children's interests and developmental needs.
67. High priority is given to the development of reading and mathematical skills and in these areas children make good progress so that they are likely to exceed the level expected of them nationally by the time they are five. They learn well in the middle part of whole class literacy and numeracy lessons when they participate in practically focused activities. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed in these areas.
68. In all of the other areas of learning children are on line to meet the Early Learning Goals by the time they are five. Although satisfactory, their progress is slower in these areas because the planning is geared to the older age group in the class. Activities are not always well matched to the needs of the four and five year olds and the teaching does not take enough account of the different ways in which young children learn. Children with special educational needs make satisfactory progress but appropriate strategies are not always used to manage those children with behavioural difficulties.
69. The teaching is satisfactory overall but is unsatisfactory in one in six lessons. Individual lessons are well planned, appropriately organised and good use is made of resources. Children are asked to complete practically based tasks that provide them with relevant opportunities to extend their learning through investigation and exploration. On balance this does not happen enough. Unsatisfactory features of the teaching are seen where activities are over-directed and tasks are too narrow. Too much emphasis is placed on the finished product such as the completion of a worksheet rather than the learning process. Good use is not always made of other adults and children have too few opportunities to make links in their learning, too little time to explore their ideas and interests in depth and not enough chances to engage in creative and imaginative play opportunities. Similar features of unsatisfactory teaching were evident in the last inspection and have not been satisfactorily addressed.

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

70. Children quickly settle into school and feel secure within the clearly established routines. They develop their personal and social skills well through interaction with each other and in particular with older pupils in the class who act as positive role models. Good emphasis is placed by

adults on the school's code 'care, share and be fair'. Children treat each other with respect and are quick to help their friends if they do not understand what has to be done. They are tolerant of other children who, because of their particular needs do not find it easy to follow the rules.

71. Children are generally well behaved and demonstrate good attitudes to learning. In the weekly session when children are provided with opportunities to organise their own learning they show confidence and maturity in planning what they are going to do. Children work well both independently and in co-operation with others. They take pride in reporting their achievements to the rest of the class who respond positively through spontaneous applause.
72. Children do not respond as well when the teaching is over directed and they are expected to sit and listen for too long on the carpet. They lose concentration when everyone in the class is expected to complete the same task and they have to wait for the whole group to finish before they can move onto the next activity. This slows the rate of their learning. Children would benefit from more regular opportunities to take responsibility, make choices and to use their initiative.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

73. Teaching is satisfactory. Children make good progress overall but it is only satisfactory in the development of writing skills. Children express themselves clearly and when given the opportunity speak confidently to the whole class about their work. Following the weekly free choice session for example, one boy spoke proudly to the class about the 'watch' he had made from construction apparatus, describing in detail the pop-up flap he had incorporated so that he could see the time more clearly.
74. Children enjoy stories and are keen to share them. They have the opportunity to take books home on a regular basis, which they choose with their parents. Good systems are in place to exchange information between home and school about reading. Children listen attentively to whole class stories such as 'The Hungry Caterpillar' and show good levels of involvement. They handle a range of books with care and quickly become absorbed in them, pointing out details to each other, commenting on what they have read. Children are able to identify initial letter sounds such as 't' in toy and 'p' in push. When given the opportunity they use this knowledge enthusiastically in their writing, for example producing notes and prescriptions in the role-play veterinary surgery, some of which are generated on the computer. Children's interest is not as great when they are directed by adults to less purposeful activities such as writing a sentence about a caterpillar from the class story or completing worksheets to record an activity.

### **Mathematical development**

75. Children make good progress overall. They recognise the properties of basic shapes and anticipate well which 3 dimensional shapes will roll down the slide. Children use these shapes imaginatively to construct small towers, showing good understanding of those that will balance and fit in the right place. Their rate of learning is faster when they are given opportunities to explore and test out their ideas through the effective use of additional adults.
76. Teaching is satisfactory. At the start of numeracy lessons children are well supported by practical resources such as individual number cards that help them to recognise numerals 1 to 10 and the relationships between them. Their progress is slower when questions are directed to the particular year group in the class rather than to individual children based on their prior learning.

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

77. Children develop their knowledge and understanding of the world well through a range of visits and visitors such as the trip to Acton Scott working farm museum where they learn about machines and carts used by farmers in the past. They benefit from being included as part of the whole school art project and celebrate the school's achievements through the excursion to London to visit the National Gallery and directly experience the London Eye.

78. In class children make good use of construction kits to build boats, focusing on their shape. They join pieces carefully and select those that are most appropriate. Children use digital cameras well to record their work and show delight when their model appears on the computer monitor. Their overall progress is slower than it might be because the curriculum is taught in the discrete areas related to the National Curriculum and this does not enable children to make links across the different areas of learning. Teaching is satisfactory but is occasionally unsatisfactory when tasks are not set at the right level for the reception children and are more suited to much older pupils in the school. For example in a science lesson too much emphasis was placed on the development of a fair test rather than exploring the most suitable material for a sail and the best use was not made of other adults in supporting learning.

### **Physical development**

79. The school has improved the provision for the development of children's physical skills since the last inspection by building in additional time on a daily basis. Children have access either to the school hall or to the playground each day. This means that children are now on line to meet the expected standard by the time they are five, which is an improvement since the last inspection. In dance lessons and outdoors children run and skip with an increasing awareness of space and of each other. Opportunities for them to respond creatively are too limited when they are expected to react directly to what the teacher tells them to do rather than developing a personal response through the use of a range of different resources. Outdoors children show control and co-ordination through their use of a range of small equipment as they steer hoops and kick and throw balls. Their progress is not as good as it might be because these sessions are not planned so that children build upon their skills.
80. Teaching is satisfactory and children make satisfactory progress in their handling of small equipment such as 3 dimensional shapes and construction apparatus. They use pencils with good control and manage the mouse effectively when using computer programs. Children do not have enough opportunity to handle and experiment with a range of tools and equipment such as paintbrushes, scissors and malleable materials on a regular basis.

### **Creative development**

81. Teaching is satisfactory. Children benefit from carefully resourced lessons such as when they look carefully at daisies and buttercups and as a result produce good quality paintings.
82. Children participate in self-initiated activities on a weekly basis when they have access to a range of different resources. At this time children make good use of their imagination, for example one child used a traffic cone to wear as a clown's hat. Overall the provision is unsatisfactory because there are too few chances for children to work imaginatively and creatively in a range of different ways across the areas of learning. This is because of the heavy emphasis placed on the National Curriculum. For example in music children are expected to focus on the pitch and frequency of notes during a demonstration by the class teacher rather than making their own music by exploring the sounds that different instruments make. There are few opportunities for children to develop their speaking skills through imaginative role-play activities or to express themselves through a range of media.

### **ENGLISH**

83. Standards are above average for Year 6 pupils and close to average in Year 2. The 2001 national test results indicate average standards for Year 2 pupils in reading but they are well below in writing. Standards achieved by Year 2 pupils are lower than those in similar schools. There is significant improvement in the proportion of pupils attaining higher levels by Year 6 in both reading and writing. The standards of work seen during the inspection indicate that this has been

maintained for the second year. Overall standards by Year 6 match those reached by similar schools.

84. The breadth of speaking, listening, reading and writing by Year 2 provides a solid grounding from which pupils in junior classes can accelerate their progress.
85. Strengths in the subject are:
- Above average standards for pupils by Year 6.
  - The subject leader emphasises and prioritises the breadth of literature and quality of pupils' writing achievement across the school.
  - Teachers plan effective links between reading and writing.
  - Pupils' enthusiastic and positive attitudes to the subject.
86. Areas for improvement are to:
- Improve pupils' sentence writing and spelling strategies in the infant years.
  - Improve the ways in which teachers use information about pupils' progress to plan the next learning steps.
87. Pupils start school with good levels of communication. They become confident speakers and reach above average standards by Year 2 and Year 6. Teachers value what pupils have to say, often not taking the first answers but encouraging pupils to refine their thoughts. Below average attaining pupils are generally given good opportunities despite some over direction by teachers in lessons that limit the rate of their progress.
88. Pupils' achievement in reading in Years 1 to 3 is satisfactory overall but the momentum increases in Years 4 to 6 where pupils have regular access to a rich and stimulating range of literature. Pupils now have a broader bank of early reading skills because the school has made use of a planned series of phonic activities to secure better achievement for average and lower attaining pupils. Reading diaries are used well and teachers and parents conscientiously contribute to them. Shared reading sessions are an effective part of lessons and this is mirrored in pupils' absorption in the details of characters and events in a story. When teachers plan reading sessions for those with similar needs pupils make better progress. For example, Year 1 pupils learned how to search and locate information about caterpillars by using the index and key words because the teacher had clear teaching intentions. Not all pupils achieve as well as they might in Year 1 because lesson organisation tends to reduce the pace of the pupils' overall achievement.
89. Teachers plan enriched opportunities for pupils to find information by extending the range of tools and sources. For example pupils' natural enthusiasm for finding out is often developed in Years 4 and 5 through historical enquiry, through art, books and by searching the Internet. As a result, older pupils often pursue reading to find out for themselves demonstrated in the beautiful 3 dimensional books made by Year 4/5 pupils to collate their findings about a local nineteenth century family, the Middle family of Longden. Year 4, 5 and 6 teachers are particularly effective in teaching pupils higher reading strategies that enable them to read at a deeper level than most pupils of a similar age. As a result most pupils talk about contrasting moods and themes in a story and explain the effect of the language used by prize-winning children's authors.
90. Correct letter formation and handwriting are taught early in the pupils' school life. This produces a mature personal handwriting style. Teachers make great efforts to teach spelling by planning regular sessions and weekly tests. Not enough Year 2 pupils transfer this into their personal writing to reach average standards of attainment because spelling strategies are not directly taught and pupils do not improve their spelling by using their existing knowledge about parts of words. In the junior classes pupils' spelling logs are effective and pupils achieve well.
91. The teaching of writing is often very good in the older junior years. Teachers draw very effective links between features seen in reading in both fiction and non-fiction so that pupils can use them later to explore them in their personal writing. For example, in the Year 4/5 class, the teacher invited the pupils to use similar story settings as that seen in the book 'Oranges' by skilfully linking their own feelings in a similar situation to get pupils into the skin of a character in the story. Pupils wrote with a very good level of skill as a result of the teaching. Teachers remind



pupils to 'use paragraphs to build up the action'. This very good teaching in the upper juniors leads pupils to write some thoughtful and well-constructed stories. Suitable use is made of information and communication technology for example when pupils write articles for the Longden Gazette.

92. Pupils with special educational needs achieve suitably well in literacy because they have full access to a breadth of English and good additional support where appropriate.
93. In the infant classes pupils' achievement in reading is generally satisfactory but teachers do not have high enough expectations of what they can achieve and learning activities do not always move them on fast enough. Not enough pupils in Year 2 attain as well as they could in writing because worksheets often limit the writing of higher attaining pupils and below average pupils are not taught to punctuate sentences well enough.
94. Teachers are particularly good at planning opportunities for pupils to write responsively outside lessons. In one example, infant pupils compiled a garden diary as part of their after school Environment Club, reflecting their on-going feelings and activities. These successful uses of literacy in and beyond the curriculum are germinating enthusiastic readers and writers.
95. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and good in two out of five lessons. Where it is good, pupils are animated especially by the shared reading start to most lessons. Teachers prepare well for literacy lessons and have good clear learning intentions in each lesson. In some lessons the pace is slower and the activities do not challenge higher attaining pupils well enough. In Year 2 the teacher prepared worksheets are mainly well presented and devised to encourage pupils to read more closely. In one instance, pupils were asked to compare and contrast two versions of the story 'Pandora's Box' and write their preference. The activity suitably challenged most pupils and helped them to see the different features. Some worksheets limit pupils' written answers into boxes that restrict their responses. Teachers use the National Literacy Strategy as guidance and some of the techniques and resources to develop early reading and writing. These include good use of small whiteboards for infant children to practise and rehearse letter sounds, words and sentences.
96. Relationships in the classroom are generally very positive and pupils are enticed into reading by teachers' very good choice of stories that nourish their enjoyment of reading in a range of story, poems, letters, reports and descriptive accounts. As a result pupils respond very well to figurative language and this is mirrored in pupils' writing achievement in the juniors. Marking is satisfactory overall. In the best practice seen, teachers show pupils how to improve their work. The school has improved the provision of dictionaries and thesauruses and now has a good range, including resources for those pupils with additional spelling needs.
97. The subject leader provides a very good model of the use of literature to stimulate pupils to write narrative stories. The new literacy guidelines match teaching needs to sustain the improvements made and to tackle shortcomings. Planned priorities to develop teacher supported groups of pupils in reading and writing are appropriate as the school moves towards scrutinising the outcomes of its work more closely. A suitable start has been made in observing teaching and learning.

## **MATHEMATICS**

98. By Year 2 and Year 6 pupils' attainment in mathematics is above average. This reflects a slight improvement on the results of the most recent published national tests. Progress for pupils throughout the school is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress when helped by the learning support assistant. Improvement in the subject since the last inspection is satisfactory.
99. Strengths in the subject are:
  - The provision for higher attaining pupils.
  - A systematic analysis of pupils performance at the end of years 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6.

- The teaching of basic numeracy skills.
  - Opportunities to undertake short investigations into number patterns.
100. Areas for improvement are:
- Monitoring of the teachers' planning and pupils' work by the co-ordinator.
  - More regular assessment so as to know more clearly what individual and groups of pupils need to do next in order to improve.
101. Throughout the school the quality of teaching is satisfactory. In half the lessons it is good. Pupils show good attitudes to their learning in mathematics. They work co-operatively, frequently discussing mathematical strategies and sharing ideas with each other. They sensibly share equipment and encourage each other. Teachers' knowledge of mathematics and how to teach it is generally good so that most lessons are well planned and purposefully taught. In the good lessons teachers share the purpose of the lesson with the pupils and usually return to it at the end of the lesson to check on pupils' learning. Teachers use a good range of mathematical vocabulary when discussing the lesson and as a consequence the pupils explain their work using correct terminology. Most of the mental and oral sessions at the start of lessons are delivered with enthusiasm and encourage pupils to use their number knowledge. The teachers use a wide range of equipment and methods to help pupils practise their recall of number facts. They manage pupils and resources efficiently and effectively so that lessons run smoothly. Teachers provide opportunities for investigations into number patterns and mathematical relationships.
102. Some aspects that are slowing the overall pace of improvement are:
- Teachers are not using their marking and regular assessment to identify areas that they need to reinforce or rehearse with groups of pupils.
  - In a few lessons the starting activities go on for too long not allowing enough time for pupils to work on the main part of the lesson.
103. In the good lessons pupils learn quickly because mathematics is placed into a context that is meaningful by the use of practical apparatus and reference to real life situations. Teachers plan well and provide different work for pupils of different abilities. In one lesson seen Year 2 pupils showed impressive speed of recall of number facts in adding and subtracting mentally 10 from any two-digit number.
104. Year 2 pupils talk about the mathematics they have learned and take pride in their ability to solve mental arithmetic problems. They have good factual recall of numbers that add up to 10. They are confident in counting forwards or backwards from a given number in steps of one or two. Their knowledge of measure is good. They know the names of common 2- and 3-dimensional shapes.
105. By Year 6 pupils read numbers up to one million. Their ability to double and half numbers is good as is their knowledge of multiplication facts. They are confident in communicating their knowledge of mathematics and use correct vocabulary. Their ability to estimate an answer to a calculation is not as well developed. Their ability to interpret graphs is good. As yet they are not completely confident in the standard methods of multiplication and division where the calculation involves numbers of a hundred or more.
106. There are no marked differences overall in the performance of girls and boys but the small year groups make this difficult to judge. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by the learning support assistant who works closely with class teachers. They are skilfully included in the mental and oral sessions by the teachers' choice and use of questions, which are carefully directed towards pupils of different abilities. The higher attaining pupils are well supported by appropriately challenging work.
107. The co-ordinator is relatively new to the post and enthusiastic to improve the subject. She has sought help from outside the school from the local authority's numeracy consultant in auditing work throughout the school. Regular monitoring of work, planning or teaching is not fully established. End of year tests are being used to set targets for the pupils' attainment that are sufficiently challenging. There are appropriate links with ICT and other curriculum areas.

## SCIENCE

108. The last three years have seen the standards in science for Year 6 pupils fall to a point where they were well below the national average. These pupils, who have been taught in a single year group during the last academic year, have recently completed the current national tests but the results are not yet available. Present standards are judged on the basis of lesson observations, pupils' work and from talking to pupils. On the basis of the available evidence standards for Year 6 pupils are satisfactory. Pupils generally make satisfactory progress across the junior classes but it accelerates in Year 6 when they are taught in a discrete year group.
109. Standards for pupils by Year 2 have also fallen and are unsatisfactory. Pupils make unsatisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2. In the last inspection report attainment was judged to be satisfactory for pupils aged seven and for those aged 11. Improvement since the last inspection in this respect is therefore unsatisfactory. Satisfactory progress has been made in addressing the need to increase the opportunities for pupils to engage in problem solving and investigative work and this is beginning to raise standards. There are still areas that need to be addressed, mainly ensuring that there is a full coverage of the science curriculum throughout the school.
110. Strengths in the subject are:
- Improvement in the teaching of investigative science.
  - Pupils respond well to scientific investigation.
111. Areas for development are:
- Ensuring that all elements of the science curriculum are taught.
  - Examining the cycle of science teaching to ensure there are no long periods before children revisit a particular topic.
  - Ensuring there is regular assessment of pupils' progress.
112. The lesson observed in the Year 2/3 class showed that the teaching of investigational science is good. Strong emphasis was placed on helping pupils to understand the need to investigate and test statements such as 'all rocks are hard'. The lesson was well prepared and organised by the teacher. For example four groups of pupils rotated to a variety of activities to explore the properties of different rocks and soil. The good classroom management contributed to the smooth running of the lesson and therefore gains were made in pupils' knowledge. The pupils responded in a lively way showing interest and curiosity. They were enthusiastic and articulate in their explanations. This does not work as successfully in Year 1 when over direction by the teacher inhibits learning through the development of personal first hand investigation. The lack of regular assessment means that the teaching, even when good, does not systematically help pupils recognise key aspects of subject knowledge.
113. Throughout the juniors teachers exhibit sound subject knowledge. They carefully plan their science lessons based on a common approach to promoting an increasing emphasis on pupils undertaking their own experiments and investigating for themselves. This leads to the improvement of pupils' enquiry skills but is at the cost of some subject knowledge such as classification of animals and the earth and space. Pupils enjoy investigative work. They cooperate with each other and act with maturity. In a Year 6 lesson measuring heart rate before and after exercise, pupils worked in groups deciding upon their own roles and who would be the recorder, timer and which child would complete the exercise. They discussed the problem presented to them and reached a joint decision on how to proceed. In another lesson involving Year 4 and 5 pupils groups designed an experiment to measure friction by finding out which shoes have the best grip. Pupils acted with maturity, sensibly discussing the problem, designing the experiment and assigning roles to particular individuals.
114. Whilst there have been recent improvements to science teaching in the junior classes there is not yet a systematic development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. The scheme of

work needs careful examination to ensure that this happens. Pupils' work and achievement need to be monitored with regular reviews of what pupils have learned.

115. Science is linked well to other subjects, in particular English, mathematics and information and communication technology so that pupils can communicate the results of their experiments in a variety of ways.
116. The co-ordinator has introduced changes to the scheme of work, methods of planning and curriculum content. There has been some recent observations of teaching but systematic monitoring procedures are not yet in place. Current improvements are yet to have a significant impact on standards.

## ART AND DESIGN

117. Much of the pupils' work is currently on display at the National Gallery in London as part of the school's involvement in the 'Take One Picture' initiative. This reflects the above average standards achieved by pupils in this project as a result of the rich experiences provided through art and other linked curriculum areas, culminating in a whole school trip to London to see the school's achievements on display. Further evidence comes from an analysis of pupils' sketchbooks, displays, photographs, teachers' lesson plans and discussion with teachers. This shows that in all other respects pupils' attainment in art is in line with that expected nationally. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 make good progress in their work on special projects and it is satisfactory over time in the development of skills across the school.
118. Strengths in the subject are:
- The good use of specialist teaching from visiting artists.
  - Links to other curriculum areas.
  - The significant contribution made to pupils' cultural development.
  - The rich experiences provided through the raised profile of art.
119. An area for development is:
- Planning to ensure the progressive development of skills.
120. As part of the school's involvement in the 'Take One Picture' project pupils in each year group have studied the painting of Bacchus and Ariadne by Titian and considered particular aspects in great detail to produce carefully detailed work. Year 1 pupils replicate the different shades of blue and green found in the picture to develop blue and green wool wraps. They look for movement in the picture and show their interpretation as they produce 3 dimensional figures using wire and mod roc. In Year 2/3 pupils develop colour tiles incorporating colour shades from dark to light. They build on this work to recreate landscapes in mosaic tiles. Pupils in Year 4/5 use visual clues to show how something feels through collograph printmaking. They relate this work well to the use of adjectives in literacy as they develop complex and compound sentences. In science they use natural materials mixed with oil and water to create new colours. In Year 6 pupils work with a visiting artist to create tiles for collograph printing. They consider how colour and texture can be used to create an interesting design. Art is also undertaken through topic work, for example pupils in Year 2/3 create Mexican masks and Year 1 pupils paint pictures of their pets for the role play Veterinary Surgery.
121. In the lesson observed the teaching is good. A good range of resources is provided and there is a suitable balance between demonstration and creativity. The specialist artist gives direct emphasis to the development of demanding skills and techniques and pupils are encouraged by the class teacher to be self-reflective in order to improve their work. This results in the good progress made. Good links are made with literacy and ICT as pupils use scanners to incorporate their own writing in different colours when considering effective design features.
122. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning. They show sustained involvement and concentration, pay close attention to detail and take pride in their work.
123. There are very good links to other curriculum areas for example in physical education Year 1 pupils dance to instruments included in the painting by Titian and jump off apparatus in physical education lessons to represent the leap of Bacchus through their exploration of movement in the picture. Year 6 pupils make links to drama as they produce a video recording of 'A Dream in the Wood'. Topic work provides a suitable focus for artwork such as Mexican paintings in Year 2/3 where wool is used to produce images of animals.
124. Art is featured in the school development plan. The co-ordinator has provided good subject leadership and positively impacted upon teaching and learning through the school's participation in the 'Take One Picture' project. He is aware of the need to further develop medium term plans to allow pupils to build up their skills across the school. The planning that has developed as a result of the whole school project provides a sound basis which can be built upon.



## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

125. By the end of Years 2 and 6 pupils' attainment in design and technology is satisfactory. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 make satisfactory progress including those with special educational needs. Only two lessons were seen in total, in Year 1 and Year 4/5. Further evidence comes from an analysis of pupils' work, photographs, displays, lesson plans and discussion with teachers and pupils. During the last inspection not all of the requirements of the National Curriculum were met. This has been satisfactorily addressed by mapping out what should be taught across each age group in the school.
126. Strengths in the subject are:
- The improved planning allows for the progressive development of skills.
  - The opportunities for older pupils to learn through investigation.
  - Pupils have positive attitudes to learning.
127. Areas for improvement are:
- More challenge for the higher attaining pupils.
  - The monitoring of teaching and learning.
  - The assessment of what pupils achieve.
128. Year 2 pupils design and make puppets. They are able to account for their choice of materials and detail what works best. By Year 6 pupils consider their classmates' preferences as they design and make biscuits and evaluate their success through a taste test. They produce a design specification for slippers that take account of the type of user, the appearance and cost. Pupils identify potential difficulties and make any necessary adjustments. They extend their knowledge of electrical control through their work on alarm systems.
129. The teaching seen in Year 1 is satisfactory and in Year 4/5 is good. In Year 1 lessons are well planned and good links are made with information and communication technology when pupils use the digital camera to record their plans for the construction of a boat in preparation for the next lesson. Sometimes the range of resources is too prescribed and this restricts the learning that takes place. In the Year 4/5 class pupils work collaboratively and make good improvements to their bird table designs so that more birds are attracted, for example adding a roof so that the food stays dry and incorporating more places for the birds to land. Clear demonstrations are given so that pupils can work safely and independently in using glue-guns and saws. Good use is made of ICT in supporting pupils to develop simple programs aimed at bird spotting, for example a light coming on when a bird lands on the switch. Pupils learn well from their explorations and help each other if they are stuck.
130. The subject co-ordinator has produced a useful portfolio of work. This demonstrates subject coverage and progression of skills. This is a helpful reference document for staff changing year group. Procedures for assessing pupils' work and monitoring teaching and learning are not in place.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

131. Since it was only possible to see two lessons during the inspection judgements are based on these lessons, discussion with pupils and the co-ordinator, the analysis of pupils' work, teachers' planning, displays of work and policy documents. Pupils make satisfactory progress in geography throughout the school. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils' attainment in geography is satisfactory. In the last inspection report attainment was judged to be above average. Since then the focus for the school has been a greater emphasis on the teaching of numeracy and literacy. Progress since the last inspection is therefore unsatisfactory. However the school has already identified geography as an area to improve in the coming academic year.

132. Since the last inspection the school has adopted national guidance to structure its scheme of work. This is intended to give breadth and balance to what is planned to be taught, but as yet is not fully integrated into the school's teaching.
133. Strengths in the subject are:
- Pupils' attitudes to the subject.
  - The use of the school grounds and local environment.
134. An area for improvement is:
- To review the policy and scheme of work.
135. By Year 2 pupils have a good knowledge of local places. They are aware of the differences between the local environment and towns. They describe and compare man-made features and offer some explanation for the location of these features. Pupils' use appropriate geographical language and articulate clearly the improvements they would like to see in their local environment.
136. By Year 6 pupils have compared two localities in different parts of the world. They begin to appreciate the importance of wider geographical location in understanding places. They describe what places are like in terms of climate and weather, for example Longden and Cape Town. They begin to ask geographical questions and communicate in ways appropriate to the task and audience, for example writing newspaper reports and stories. They use correct vocabulary to describe the features of a river such as 'mouth', 'source', 'tributary' and 'meander'.
137. Teaching is satisfactory. Year 1 pupils have opportunities to discuss their own locality and immediate surroundings. The development of language is well promoted through discussion and by relating the activity to stories such as 'Town Mouse and Country Mouse'. On occasions too much time is spent completing worksheets. In Year 4/5 pupils photographs are used to good effect in illustrating the progress of a river prior to pupils identifying different features on a map.
138. The pupils display positive attitudes to geography. They are enthusiastic and keen to talk about their work.
139. The current geography co-ordinator has only had this responsibility for two terms. She has not yet had the opportunity to monitor planning, teaching or learning in the subject. She is aware that further resources are required to deliver the subject and there are plans to buy further resources funded by the PTA. She is also aware that the scheme of work will need adjustment to allow the local environment to be utilised fully.

## **HISTORY**

140. Since it was only possible to see one lesson during the inspection, judgements are based on this observation, discussion with pupils and the coordinator, an analysis of pupils' work, teachers' planning, displays of work and policy documents. Standards remain satisfactory across the school and pupils make satisfactory progress.
141. Since the last inspection the school has adopted national guidance to structure its scheme of work. This has helped give breadth and balance to what is taught. But there is still a need to review what is actually taught to ensure pupils develop an understanding of chronology.
142. Strengths in the subject are:
- The use of national guidance to form a scheme of work.
  - The good use of local resources.
143. Areas for improvement are:
- Ensuring that there is monitoring of what is taught in different classes.
  - Developing a better understanding of pupils' attainment throughout the school.



144. In the last inspection the quality of teaching was judged as satisfactory and sometimes good. It is not possible to judge the teaching for Year 2 and Year 6 pupils because no lessons were seen. Only one lesson was seen in Year 2 and in this the teaching was satisfactory.
145. The policy and scheme of work for history outline the importance of developing pupils' skills as historians in thinking about the past, using and interpreting evidence from the past and making visits to understand the value of surviving evidence. This is largely evident in pupils' work. For example work in Years 4 and 5 shows that the local history study on the Middle family, whose children died in a measles epidemic in Victorian times, makes pupils aware of how living conditions in the area have changed over time. Discussion with the pupils shows that they have a good understanding of changes in transport, occupations and how people kept themselves alive and well.
146. In the infant classes pupils acquire knowledge about different periods in history and begin to learn to evaluate evidence from different sources. Seven-year-olds look at the causes and effects of the Great Fire of London and the Diary of Samuel Pepys. Good use is made of local resources such as the different buildings in Longden.
147. In the juniors the programme of work is organised over a two year rolling programme to ensure appropriate allocation of study units to different academic years. Current school organisation means this needs some slight adjustment. There are good examples of historical enquiry. Pupils are encouraged to ask and answer questions, select and record information. Good use is made of local resources such as St. Ruthin's Church and the Shropshire Records and Research Centre. This is well supported by the use of information and communication technology. Pupils demonstrate a growing competence in communicating what they have learned in a variety of ways for example in narrative, descriptions, artwork and graphs.
148. The co-ordinator has had little opportunity to monitor and evaluate teaching, planning or assessment. Since she only works two days a week an overview of standards in history is difficult for her to ascertain. She manages resources, which are satisfactory for the delivery of the subject.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

149. By the end of Year 6, attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) is typical of that seen nationally and pupils in the juniors make satisfactory progress. No judgement was made at the end of Year 2 because no lessons were planned during the days of the inspection. A high proportion of pupils use computers at home and this significantly adds to their rate of progress. Pupils with special educational needs achieve appropriately and have good access to computers.
150. Strengths in the subject are:
- Pupils' use of the central ICT resources as learning tools across many subjects.
  - Pupils' positive attitudes towards the subject and growing knowledge of capability and scope for learning.
  - Pupils' strong presentational and graphic skills in Year 6.
151. Areas for improvement are:
- Use of ICT in science investigations, particularly data logging.
  - Measures to assess pupils' achievement in the different areas of the subject.
  - Long term planning to build on pupils' achievements in all aspects of their computer use.
152. The school has satisfactorily improved the resources for the control aspect of technology, which was an identified shortcoming in the last inspection report. Further hardware has been added and the subject leader has ensured that aspects of ICT in the National Curriculum have interesting and relevant resources to enable pupils to develop skills in each area. She has identified the need to plan for data logging across the curriculum and longer term planning to develop the use of computers in the school.

153. Teaching is good. There is very good teaching at the end of the juniors that enables pupils to use skills rapidly in exciting and stimulating activities. Year 6 pupils are taught to scan photos, import them into software and manipulate the images by cutting, rotating, magnifying and sometimes repeating sections to create new images and patterns.
154. The whole school work currently on display in the National Gallery as part of the 'Take One Picture' project involved the pupils closely examining parts of a picture and cutting tiles which they translated into recurring patterns. Pupils make good use of the digital camera to enhance the quality of their work in other subjects and beyond the school curriculum in the 'Environment Club,' where pupils have incorporated photos into labels and books logging their activities as the garden develops. Teachers make good use of the Internet facilities to enable pupils to browse and retrieve information across subjects. In Year 5, pupils log onto the "Mary Rose" Tudor warship website as part of their History activities, thoroughly enjoying the experiences. Pupils with special educational needs and below average attaining pupils often use commercial programs to improve their spelling skills and are generally involved in the often animated and creative multi-media activities. These pupils achieve well in relation to their previous skill levels because teachers ensure that the work is appropriate. Additionally, other pupils assist them particularly well, often helping them to find the route through to their own individual pupil files.
155. One of the strengths of the work in ICT is the good access that pupils have during wet playtimes and when they need to present their work or write letters. A Year 5 boy wrote a very good account of his pre-viewing trip to the National Gallery in the school's 'Gazette'. Other pupils show great enthusiasm for the camera, the electronic linked microscope and the new music software. Higher attaining pupils start school with good computer skills and understanding of CD ROMS and what is needed to start a program. The majority of Year 1 pupils have good mouse control and can use draw, fill and flood tools well.

## **MUSIC**

156. No judgement could be made about standards in music In Years 2 and 6. No lessons were planned during the time of the inspection for these year groups and evidence of pupils' achievement in the subject was very limited.
157. The school has made few improvements to the music provision for all pupils except in information and communication technology where new software is giving junior pupils the opportunity to explore beats, rhythms, textures and enjoyable experiences. Discussion with pupils about their musical experiences indicate that there are too few lessons systematically planned in junior classes and this curtails the achievement of pupils who do not subscribe to the specialist instrumental tuition service. Attainment in singing is above average in the assemblies seen.
158. Strengths in music are:
- The quality of singing.
159. Areas for improvement in music are:
- Whole school planning to ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they can in the different areas of music in the National Curriculum.
  - Teachers' knowledge and confidence in teaching the subject.
160. A small proportion of pupils in the school bring good musical skills and enthusiasm for instrumental work. The curriculum is enriched for these pupils, who learn to play a flute, clarinet, trumpet, keyboard or guitar. Approximately twenty children learn to play instruments of their choice and demonstrate commitment and a good degree of interest in their lessons.
161. In Year 1 teaching is satisfactory and pupils make satisfactory progress. They identify higher and lower sounds using instruments and are beginning to show some developing awareness of long and short notes. Teachers' planning of lessons show clear learning intentions but overall, teachers are not confident in implementing the series of activities nationally recommended that sets out

key aspects of the music curriculum. This substantially limits achievement for many pupils in the school.

162. There is currently no subject specialist on the teaching staff but the school volunteers are particularly helpful in providing additional tuition in recorders for a good number of pupils. The school has appropriate plans to ensure secure provision from September 2002 so that all pupils can achieve consistently as they move through the school.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

163. Standards by Year 2 are average. It is not possible to judge standards attained by Year 6 pupils because lessons no lessons were planned for these pupils during the days of the inspection. As at time of the last inspection, it was not possible to observe any work in athletics, or gymnastics. However, evidence of work seen in Years 4/5 indicate that pupils' achievement is satisfactory in games skills.
164. Strengths in the subject are:
- The very good range of extra-curricular sporting activities and competitive sports.
  - The wide range of outdoor pursuit activities which older pupils enjoy in their residential visit to Arthog.
  - The good achievement in swimming.
165. An areas for improvement is:
- Use of the specialist PE subject leader to increase the rate of pupil achievement.
166. The quality of teaching is very good in Years 2/3 where the subject specialist teaches She builds quickly on pupils' earlier skill levels in throwing and catching and shows a high level of coaching knowledge and lesson organisation. As a result, pupils have a good grasp of what they can do to improve their hand and arm movements with technique and practice. In the Year 1 dance lesson observed teaching is unsatisfactory. Pupils are not given sufficient stimulus to enable them to respond imaginatively to the theme of playing on the beach. Teaching is over-directed and this results in too much stopping and starting, which restricts pupils' creative flow and slows the progress that they make. There are very few opportunities for pupils to evaluate their work in order to improve upon it.
167. Teachers have good awareness of health and safety matters and prepare well for pupils' individual needs such as medical conditions. The good guidance and clear instructions ensure that pupils are aware of routines, expectations of behaviour and the space in which they are working. Infant pupils increasingly understand the effects of exercise on their bodies and why they need to warm up and cool down after exercise. Overall, pupils follow teachers' instructions well and they enjoy physical education. All pupils have good access to sports and games. Girls are included in rugby.
168. The subject leader is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and management of the subject is satisfactory. Resources are well managed and the subject has some good planning to ensure all strands of the subject are taught. Although the subject leader's strong planning and organisation reflect the strengths in the subject, the Year 4/5 lesson indicated some lack of challenge for a good proportion of the pupils. As a consequence, these pupils had limited awareness of their own skill level on which they might improve in the next lesson. The school facilities and resources for sports are good overall and include an orienteering course and recently upgraded storage facilities.